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**Abandoned, The** (2006, GBR/SPA/BUL) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Nacho Cerdà. Starring Anastasia Hille, Karel Roden, Valentin Ganev, Paraskeva Djukelova, Carlos Reig-Plaza. A 40-year-old woman travels to her birth-place in Russia to investigate the mystery behind her childhood. She hires a truck driver to drive her out into the wilderness, to the house of her parents. Once there, her life becomes a nightmare. The cottage seems strangely alive, with doppelgangers, eerie sounds and a man who claims to be her twin brother. It seems the past is prying its way back into reality and it's bringing murder and mayhem. At first confusing and illogical, but this surreal horror film becomes scary as hell and is stylishly shot. The plot is less thrilling, but horror fans won't mind, considering the retro-style effects and atmospheric sets. Cowritten by Richard Stanley (HARDWARE, DUST DEVIL).

**Abattoir** (2016, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Jessica Lowndes, Joe Anderson, Lin Shaye, Michael Paré, Dayton Callie. Atmospheric mystery horror from the director of some of the SAW movies. After her sister's family is brutally murdered, journalist Lowndes is baffled to find the entire crime scene has been removed from their house. She starts to investigate and ends up in a remote town, where cult leader Callie has created a macabre project. Not fully on target, with some corny dialogue, but offers great atmosphere, eerie sound effects and score, as well as a smoking hot main actress.

**ABCs of Death, The** (2012, USA/NZL) **C-123m. \*\* D:** 26 directors. Horror anthology with 26 shorts, each starting with a different letter of the alphabet. Pretty senseless, with many episodes just plain pointless, disgusting or stupid. Remains watchable, especially because the segments are only a few minutes each. Among the best are D (directed by Marcel Samiento), O (by the directors of AMER), and V (made by Kaare Andrews). Composer Simon Boswell also coproduced this. Followed by a sequel in 2014.

**ABCs of Death 2, The** (2014, USA) **C-122m. \*½ D:** various directors. Sequel to ABCS OF DEATH (2012) is a waste of time and talent. 26 new horror shorts are shown, but most of them are just plain silly, not to mention disgusting or tasteless. The first few hold your attention (letters C and D, for example), but it gets more and more tiring. Worst of them all may be letter P, after which you will likely switch off - if you haven't done so before.

**Aberration** (1997, NZL) **C-93m. \*\*½ D:** Tim Boxell. Starring Pamela Gidley, Simon Bossell, Valeri Nikolayev, Helen Moulder, Norman Forsey. Amusing, if nonsensical, horror comedy about Gidley, who moves into a small hut in the middle of nowhere and soon finds herself under attack by mutated lizards. Self-proclaimed scientist Bossell is out to help. Not your ordinary run-of-the-mill splatter movie, it shows the weaknesses of a beginner's film (little continuity, uneven plotting) but deliciously steps over the line, especially in the finale which will have you chuckle at the improbability of the going-ons. Not bad, has cult possibilities.

**Able Edwards** (2004, USA) **B&W-81m. \*\*½ D:** Graham Robertson. Starring Scott Kelly Galbreath, Keri Bruno, David Ury, Steve Beaumont Jones, Michael Shamus Wiles. Independent feature executive produced by Steven Soderbergh has an intriguing story set

in the future, after the Earth has become uninhabitable and people orbit the planet in so-called Civilization Pods. During a court hearing, we learn of an entertainment mogul (modelled after Walt Disney), who has been cloned to revive his ailing company. In the testimonials we learn of the clone's life and career. Occasionally pretentious (all of this was shot against a green screen), but film's biggest weaknesses are the self-conscious direction and the variable acting. An interesting experiment nevertheless, worth watching for the curious. The score is good.

**About a Boy** (2002, GBR/USA) **C-101m. \*\*\*** D: Paul Weitz, Chris Weitz. Starring Hugh Grant, Toni Collette, Nicholas Hoult, Rachel Weisz, Sharon Small. Well-written drama from the novel by Nick Hornby about Grant, a bachelor who is pushing forty but does not feel like taking a commitment at all. All this changes, when a troubled 12-year-old boy enters his life. Cliché-free, refreshing film with a sense of humor. Adapted by the directors and Peter Hedges.

**About Adam** (2000, USA/GBR/EIR) **C-98m. \*\*½** D: Gerard Stembridge. Starring Stuart Townsend, Frances O'Connor, Charlotte Bradley, Kate Hudson, Alan Maher. Quite pleasant romantic comedy with a twist: Townsend is Hudson's hot new lover, but as it turns out he also creates emotional responses in her sisters – quite willingly. Same story is told from several perspectives, which makes it interesting, if not original enough. Fans of Hudson (pre-ALMOST FAMOUS) should give it a look. Written by the director.

**About Time** (2013, GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Richard Curtis. Starring Domhnall Gleeson, Rachel McAdams, Bill Nighy, Lydia Wilson, Lindsay Duncan, Margot Robbie, Vanessa Kirby, Richard E. Grant. Wonderful romantic comedy drama with a fantasy twist: 21-year-old Gleeson, desperately wanting to fall in love, is informed by his father Nighy that the men in their family can turn back the time to relive some events and change their outcomes. He uses this gift at first for simple purposes, but when he falls in love with American McAdams and later travels back in time, she doesn't remember who he is. But this is only the simple start of an exhilarating journey through life with pitch-perfect performances and a heart-breaking finale. Bittersweet drama laced with wonderful moments cleverly conveys what life is ultimately really about – love and family. Written by director Curtis (LOVE ACTUALLY, THE BOAT THAT ROCKED).

**Abre los Ojos** (1997, SPA/FRA/ITA) **C-117m. \*\*\*** D: Alejandro Amenábar. Starring Edoardo Gero, Penélope Cruz, Chete Lera, Fele Martínez, Najwa Nimri, Alejandro Amenábar. Amenábar's follow-up to his debut stunner TESIS (1996) is equally fascinating if admittedly outrageous psycho fantasy. Rich and handsome Noriega can get any girl he wants, but shies away from commitments. When he meets his friend's latest acquaintance Cruz, he is immediately infatuated, but does not live to see the romance bud, as his ex-girlfriend crashes their car deliberately – which kills her and leaves him disfigured. From then on, it's anyone's guess what's real and what's a dream or imagination. At least the frame narrative, where Noriega tells his story to a psychiatrist in prison, seems real. Unique thriller is not for all tastes, but Amenábar keeps things bubbling and makes some interesting observations about individual perception. Have *you* ever really opened your eyes? Fine score by Mariano Marín and the director, who also coscripted with Mateo Gil. Remade by Cameron Crowe in 2001 as VANILLA SKY, which also starred Cruz. English title: OPEN YOUR EYES.

**Abrafaxe – Unter Schwarzer Flagge** (2001, GER/KOR) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: Gerhard Hahn, Tony Power. Starring (the voices of) Nena Kerner, Kim Hasper, David Turber, Ilona Schulz, Helmut Krauss. Entertaining kids movie, an animated feature based on a comic book series (previously adapted for East German TV in 1980!). Three pals stay behind in a museum one

night and with the help of an ancient gold plate are transported to the time of the pirates, where they become involved in the search for the legendary treasure of El Dorado. Colorful animation captures the pirate spirit, and the three boys fit in very well. English title: THE PIRATES OF TORTUGA: UNDER THE BLACK FLAG.

**Abre tu Fosa, Amigo, Ilega Sábata!** (1971, SPA/ITA) **C-78m. BOMB** D: John Wood (=Juan Bosch). Starring Richard Harrison, Fernando Sancho, Raf Baldassare, Alejandro Ulloa, Tania Alvarado, Gustavo Re, Luis Induni. Extremely cheap, weakly made spaghetti western about unlikely duo Harrison and Sancho, who ultimately team up to avenge the murder of Harrison's father. For the most undemanding brood of fans. Uncut print runs 90m. English title: DIG YOUR GRAVE FRIEND... SABATA'S COMING.

**Absentia** (2011, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Mark Flanagan. Starring Katie Parker, Courtney Bell, Dave Levine, Morgan Peter Brown, Justin Gordon. Pregnant woman is about to have her missing husband declared dead after seven years, when he starts making ghostly apparitions everywhere. Her sister has come to help her move house, and when she goes jogging she finds a motorway tunnel the source of the supernatural phenomena. Low-budget chiller is repetitive and slowly paced but has some effective scenes. Worth a look for cult movie buffs.

**Absolutely Anything** (2015, GBR/USA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Terry Jones. Starring Simon Pegg, Kate Beckinsale, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Rob Riggle, Robert Bathurst, Eddie Izzard, Joanna Lumley, Brian Cox, voices of Robin Williams, John Cleese, Eric Idle, Terry Gilliam, Michael Palin. Monty Python director Jones' first feature in almost twenty years is incredibly silly comedy fantasy about ordinary guy Pegg, who is chosen by some aliens to show if the Earth should be annihilated or not. They endow him with special powers that allow him to wish for absolutely anything. Of course, he creates utter chaos. Does not offer more than a few chuckles. Beckinsale looks incredibly vain. This was Williams' last film, he voices the dog.

**Absolute Power** (1997, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Gene Hackman, Ed Harris, Laura Linney, Scott Glenn, Dennis Haysbert, Judy Davis, Buddy Van Horn. Eastwood plays a brilliant thief who accidentally witnesses a murder involving none other than the U.S. President (Hackman). He soon realizes that he must serve as a scapegoat but uses all of his wit to clear himself. Implausibilities are overcome by good storytelling, but the ending is not satisfying. Eastwood fans should stick to TRUE CRIME (1999).

**Accident** (1967, GBR) **C-105m. \*\*\*½** D: Joseph Losey. Starring Dirk Bogarde, Stanley Baker, Jacqueline Sassard, Michael York, Vivien Merchant, Delphine Seyrig, Brian Phelan, Terence Rigby, Harold Pinter, Nicholas Mosley. Oxford professor Bogarde contemplates cheating on his wife with nephew York's latest girlfriend Sassard, who is also one of his students. Meanwhile, his wife is pregnant with their third child. Subtle, intelligent handling of a man's midlife-crisis and adultery, superbly performed, superbly written by Harold Pinter. Based on Nicholas Mosley's novel. Director Losey followed this with the even more fascinating SECRET CEREMONY (1968).

**Accidental Husband, The** (2008, USA) **C-90m. \*\*** D: Griffin Dunne. Starring Uma Thurman, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Colin Firth, Sam Shepard, Lindsay Sloane, Brooke Adams, Isabella Rossellini. Successful radio therapist and novelist Thurman is getting ready to marry her fiancé Firth, when she falls prey to a prank by Morgan, whose girlfriend left him because of Thurman's advice. All of a sudden the computer says he is married to her and when she tries to get the divorce papers signed, their lives intertwine. Completely contrived and none too funny. Thurman keeps wasting herself in subpar romantic comedies.

**Accused, The** (1988, USA) **C-110m. \*\*\*** D: Jonathan Kaplan. Starring Kelly McGillis, Jodie Foster, Bernie Coulson, Leo Rossi, Ann Hearn. Fine drama about woman (Foster) who has

been gang-raped and gets her revenge in court. McGillis plays her attorney. Well-acted (Foster won an Oscar for her multi-faceted performance) and also well-scripted (based on a real case).

**A Cena col Vampiro** (1988, ITA) **C-92m**. BOMB D: Lamberto Bava. Starring George Hilton, Isabel Russinova, Patrizia Pellegrino, Riccardo Rossi, Yvonne Sciò. Apart from quite creepy chillers like FINO ALLA MORTE and UNA NOTTE AL CIMITERO, Lamberto Bava also made crap like this for television: A horror director with fangs invites four would-be actors to his mansion to spend the night. Harmless, amateurishly acted, completely unfunny. Reportedly, Bava left the project before production was finished. Also known as DINNER WITH A VAMPIRE.

**A Ciascuno il Suo** (1967, ITA) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Elio Petri. Starring Gian Maria Volonté, Irene Papas, Gabriele Ferzetti, Salvo Randone, Luigi Pistilli. Understated, low-key but rewarding crime drama about teacher (Volonté) who investigates the murder of two men on Sicily. He soon discovers that politicians were involved in the murder scheme. Well-acted, well-photographed (by Luigi Kuveiller), and the score by Luis Enrique Bakalov is especially good. Based on the novel by Leonardo Sciascia. Winner of the best screenplay award in Cannes.

**Adaptation**. (2002, USA) **C-114m**. \*\*\*\*½ D: Spike Jonze. Starring Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep, Chris Cooper, Cara Seymour, Tilda Swinton, Ron Livingston, Brian Cox, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Curtis Hanson, David O. Russell. Astounding, typically eccentric film by the director of BEING JOHN MALKOVICH (1999). Cage is featured in a double role as screenwriter Charles Kaufman and his twin brother Donald. Terminally self-conscious Charles struggles to adapt book *The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean (Streep), which is about colorful character Cooper, an orchid expert, whose extraordinary life is traced. Streep's own struggles with the book are dealt with in second plot strand (three years before the adaptation). Intellectually challenging, unique movie with a brilliant script by real-life writers Charles and (the fictional) Donald Kaufman (adapting Susan Orlean's *The Orchid Thief*). In a way, this movie could be compared to a snake that is eating itself. Get it?!? Its success may depend on your personal response to it. Coproduced by Jonathan Demme. Score by Carter Burwell.

**Addams Family, The** (1991, USA) **C-102m**. \*\*\* D: Barry Sonnenfeld. Starring Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, Christopher Lloyd, Elizabeth Wilson, Christina Ricci, Judith Malina, Dan Hedaya, Paul Benedict. Fine black comedy about well-known Addams family, who live in a sinister villa and indulge in all kinds of macabre doings. One day, their lawyer tries to trick them out of a fortune by introducing their long-lost uncle, who is in fact the son of one of his creditors. Intelligent script, excellent performances, a funny homage to the TV series. Sonnenfeld's directorial debut after photographing some films for the Coen brothers. Followed by ADDAMS FAMILY VALUES in 1993 and a TV sequel in 1998.

**Addicted to Love** (1997, USA) **C-100m**. \*\*½ D: Griffin Dunne. Starring Meg Ryan, Matthew Broderick, Kelly Preston, Tchéky Karyo, Maureen Stapleton, Dominick Dunne. A romantic comedy, and a quite black one. When Ryan and Broderick are dumped by their lovers, they team up to make Ryan's lover's life hell, spying on him with the help of Broderick's telescope. And that's not the end of their tricks. Amusing, if you can take the mean gags, mostly for the Meg Ryan cult (and she *is* at her loveliest). Dunne's directorial debut.

**Addiction, The** (1995, USA) **B&W-82m**. \*\*\* D: Abel Ferrara. Starring Lili Taylor, Christopher Walken, Annabella Sciorra, Edie Falco, Paul Calderon, Kathryn Erbe, Michael Imperioli, Fredro Starr. Difficult but fascinating allegory on addiction, evil and spirituality by cult director Ferrara. Taylor is good as philosophy student who is bitten by a female vampire and sees her life transformed, as her surfaced personal evil conflicts with her condemnation of human cruelties committed in the wars. Slow-moving and awfully meta-physical, but stylish

black-and-white photography and intelligent approach to the material make this an intellectually challenging picture for cineastes. Multiple viewing recommended.

**Addio, Fratello Crudele** (1971, ITA) **C-105m.** \*\*½ D: Giuseppe Patroni Griffi. Starring Charlotte Rampling, Oliver Tobias, Fabio Testi, Antonio Falsi, Rik Battaglia. Occasionally hypnotic film version of the play by the Shakespeare contemporary John Ford. Rampling (breathtakingly beautiful) falls in love with her brother Tobias, who returns from his studies. However, she must marry nobleman Testi. It all ends in tragedy when she becomes pregnant from her brother. Rather stagy and redundant, but dreamy photography by Vittorio Storaro and medieval Ennio Morricone score help. Remade for TV in in 1978 and 1980. English title: 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE.

**Addio, Zio Tom** (1971, ITA) **C-123m.** **SCOPE \*\*** D: Gualtiero Jacopetti, Franco Proserpi. Pseudo-documentary by the makers of the MONDO CANE films. The two filmmakers travel back in time to 18th century America, where they examine slavery and how black people were exploited. The film itself, of course, also exploits this in a sensationalistic way and shows Africans in degrading situations, all of which were staged for this film. Film's production values and sweeping Riz Ortolani score make it watchable, if not even a cult item! Judge for yourself. Filmed on Haiti, with the support of the authorities (dictator Papa Doc Duvalier). Also shown at 136m. and in many shorter versions. English title: GOODBYE, UNCLE TOM.

**Ad Ogni Costo** (1968, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-114m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Giuliano Montaldo. Starring Edward G. Robinson, Janet Leigh, Adolfo Celi, Klaus Kinski, Georges Rigaud, Robert Hoffman. Agreeable TOPKAPI clone with a fine cast. School teacher Robinson has masterminded a plan to steal diamonds worth \$10 million from a top security mansion in Rio de Janeiro. Among the recruits for this job are Kinski, Rigaud and Hoffman. Will they succeed? Suspenseful time-capsule isn't perfect and neglects characterization but remains entertaining and highly watchable. Also known as TOP JOB and GRAND SLAM. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**A Doppia Faccia** (1969, ITA/GER) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Riccardo Freda. Starring Klaus Kinski, Christiane Krüger, Günther Stoll, Annabella Incontrera, Sydney Chaplin, Barbara Nelli, Margaret Lee, Alice Arno. Unspectacular sex-and-crime thriller with Kinski (cast against type) as a businessman who is accused of having killed his wife Lee. When he sees her act in a lurid sex movie, he is convinced that she is still alive and tries to find her. Very slowly-paced mystery, based on an Edgar Wallace novel. The twisted ending helps. Among the writers: Director Freda and Lucio Fulci. Runs 88m. in Italy. Also known as DOUBLE FACE, PUZZLE OF HORRORS and DAS GESICHT IM DUNKELN.

**A Double Tour** (1959, FRA/ITA) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Madeleine Robinson, Antonella Lualdi, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jacques Dacqmine, Jeanne Valérie, Bernadette Lafont, Claude Chabrol. Highly interesting early Chabrol (his third movie) examines upper-class mores in contemporary country setting. Belmondo has a key role as a free-spirited vagabond, who breaks the harmony of a family, as his friend, gorgeous Lualdi, starts an affair with the patriarch. All this will expectedly lead to a crime. Chabrol's direction is remarkable, as he further develops his spatial style and camera moves. Excellent color cinematography (by Henri Decae) further enhances beautiful scenery, score adds melodramatic touch to the proceedings. Chabrol coscripted with Paul Gégauff, adapting Stanley Ellin's *The Key to Nicholas Street*. Philippe de Broca was assistant director. Also known as LEDA, WEB OF PASSION.

**Adventurers, The** (1970, USA) **C-177m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Lewis Gilbert. Starring Bekim Fehmiu, Fernando Rey, Candice Bergen, Ernest Borgnine, Charles Aznavour, Rossano Brazzi, Olivia de

Havilland, Leigh Taylor-Young, John Ireland, Ferdy Mayne, Anthony Hickox, Lois Maxwell, Michael Balfour, Jaclyn Smith. Pulp melodrama disguising as a (somewhat) historical epic about the son of a South American leader, who becomes a playboy travelling the world, but later returns to carry on his father's legacy. Long, rather trivial (it was based on the novel by Harold Robbins), but late 60s/early 70s aesthetics, photography by Claude Renoir, future Bond-director Gilbert at the helm, and a ravishing Candice Bergen will make it worthwhile – sort of. Set highlight: Aznavour's secret basement. Also shown in edited versions.

**Adventurers, The** (1995, HGK) **C-110m**. \*\*\* D: Ringo Lam. Starring Andy Lau, Rosamund Kwan, Paul Chu, George Cheung, David Chiang, John Ching, Phillip Ko, Victor Wong. First-rate action melodrama by cowriter-director Lam. Andy Lau plays a Cambodian orphan, who lives with his uncle in Thailand. When he meets the man responsible for the massacre of his family, he feels his chance at revenge has come. He starts working for the CIA, in order to get familiar with the wealthy crimelord. Plot is hardly above-average, but direction and photography are stunning. Long and difficult to watch at times, but packs a wallop most of the times. Aka GREAT ADVENTURERS.

**Adventures of Baron Munchausen, The** (1988, GBR/GER/ITA) **C-125m**. \*\* D: Terry Gilliam. Starring John Neville, Eric Idle, Sarah Polley, Oliver Reed, Charles McKeown, Valentina Cortese, Jonathan Price, Uma Thurman, Ray di Tutto (=Robin Williams), Sting, Terry Gilliam. Big, overblown production, a disappointment considering that this was Gilliam's follow-up to BRAZIL (1985). The story (about the famous lying Baron and his quest to find his friends again) is episodic and uneven, the slapstick scenes are only occasionally funny. For a family film, this is far too violent and profane. For adults, there is sumptuous production design and enough star cameos to keep you watching. Some consider this to form a trilogy with TIME BANDITS (1981) and BRAZIL (1985). The other two films had more plot. Filmed before in Germany as MÜNCHHAUSEN (1943).

**Adventures of Pinocchio, The** (1996, GBR/USA/FRA/GER) **C-99m**. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Steve Barron. Starring Martin Landau, Jonathan Taylor Thomas, Geneviève Bujold, Udo Kier, Bebe Neuwirth, Rob Schneider, Corey Carrier, John Sessions, voice of David Doyle. Well-produced, highly visual adaptation of Carlo Collodi's popular story about a wooden puppet who lives through many adventures on his way to become human. Episodic and poorly paced but creates some moments of genuine movie magic, thanks to fine Animatronics special effects and good photography. Kids aged 6 to 10 should love the film.

**Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl 3-D** (2005, USA) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Taylor Lautner, Taylor Dooley, Cayden Boyd, George Lopez, David Arquette, Kristin Davis, Jacob Davich. After the SPY KIDS movies (and especially after the computer game-like third one), Rodriguez delivers another eye-popping action adventure with plenty of CGI. Story is about a boy, who'd rather escape from his boring life and dreams up the title characters, who take him on an adventure to Planet Drool. Filled with non-stop action, film works because of director Rodriguez' directing style. He just cuts it loose from minute one. Script is based on his own son's stories and dreams. Good score by the director himself.

**Adventures of Tintin, The** (2011, USA/NZL) **C-107m**. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Steven Spielberg. Starring (the voices of) Jamie Bell, Andy Serkis, Daniel Craig, Nick Frost, Simon Pegg, Toby Jones. Director Spielberg (in his first 3D movie) pays homage to the Belgian cartoon character of the 1930s with this old-fashioned adventure that takes the teenage detective out to sea to find a mysterious treasure ship. Typical Spielberg fare, although film takes until the finale to really build excitement.

**Aenigma** (1987, ITA/YUG) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Jared Martin, Suzy Kendall, Kathi Wise, Ulli Reinthaler, Riccardo Acerbi, Lucio Fulci. One of Fulci's latter-day works, this

horror thriller is a cross between CARRIE and PHENOMENA/SUSPIRIA. When a young student at a girl's school falls into a coma after having been bullied by classmates, her substitute (Kendall) proves to have a spiritual tie to her and takes gruesome revenge. Derivative, almost plot-heavy thriller is nothing special. Fulci's trademark gore effects are not the film's *raison d'être* this time.

**Afflicted** (2013, USA/CDN) **C-86m.** \*½ D: Derek Lee, Clif Prowse. Starring Derek Lee, Clif Prowse, Michael Gill, Baya Rebaz. Found-footage horror film about two friends (the directors), who set out on a year-long trip around the world. A few days after setting out, one of them seems to have contracted a terrible disease. Poorly plotted tripe for the PARANORMAL ACTIVITY crowd.

**Afraid of the Dark** (1991, GBR/FRA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Mark Peploe. Starring James Fox, Fanny Ardant, Paul McGann, Clare Holman, Robert Stephens, Susan Wooldridge, Ben Keyworth. Ambitious but not quite successful psycho thriller drama about a little boy, who fears his blind mother may be killed by serial killer who kills only blind women. A surprising twist half-way through is a plus, but otherwise this film is too slowly paced to score a higher rating. Some effective scenes amidst general lethargy.

**After Earth** (2013, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Jaden Smith, Will Smith, Sophie Okonedo, Zoe Kravitz. Science-fiction thriller set in the future after Earth has been abandoned long ago. Smith's estranged son is on the verge of puberty, trying hard to become a ranger like his fearless father. In an attempt to come closer he takes him on a mission that causes them to crashland on Earth, which is overrun by creatures intent on killing man. As his father is badly injured, the boy has to travel across wilderness territory to retrieve an emergency beacon. Good-looking but contrived story (by Smith himself) unfortunately never rings true. Just adds one dangerous situation after another. A slight disappointment.

**After Hours** (1985, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Martin Scorsese. Starring Griffin Dunne, Rosanna Arquette, Verna Bloom, Tommy Chong, Linda Fiorentino, Teri Garr, John Heard, Cheech Marin, Catherine O'Hara, Dick Miller, Will Patton, Robert Plunket, Bronson Pinchot, Martin Scorsese. Computer specialist Dunne spends his evening at a bar and meets a mysterious woman (Arquette), who only leaves her phone number. When he gets in touch with her that same night, he enters the New York netherworld – and embarks on a nightly odyssey through the city. Increasingly bizarre comedy with oddball characters has become a cult film and can be regarded as the PULP FICTION of the 1980s. Best enjoyed at night. Written by Joseph Minion. Score by Howard Shore (though classical music is featured more prominently). Photographed by Michael Ballhaus, edited by Thelma Schoonmaker.

**Aftermath, The** (1982, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Steve Barkett. Starring Steve Barkett, Lynne Margulies, Sid Haig, Christopher Barkett, Forrest J. Ackerman. Another MAD MAX-inspired post-apocalyptic horror film about two astronauts who return to a devastated planet Earth. As the astronauts go in search of civilization, they realize that mob gangs have taken over the rule in the derelict landscape. Ambitious, but rather poorly directed and acted, with some potent gore effects reminiscent of Tom Savini. Worth a look for horror fans, but the level of expertise is quite low. Over-elaborate score sounds like it is lifted off another (bigger-budgeted) movie. Written and produced by the director. Also known as NUCLEAR AFTERMATH, and ZOMBIE AFTERMATH.

**Aftershock** (2012, USA/CHL) **C-89m.** \*\*\* D: Nicolás López. Starring Eli Roth, Andrea Osvárt, Ariel Levy, Natasha Yarovenko, Nicolás Martínez, Lorenza Izzo, Selena Gomez. Fun action thriller starts amusing with Roth arriving with his friends in Valparaiso, Chile, to party hard. When later an earthquake happens, the group have to run for their lives from collapsing

buildings and looting gangs, and film turns into a full-fledged disaster movie-cum-action horror. Erratic editing and directing barely mars this guilty pleasure, a B-movie gem. But be warned not to take it too seriously. Most of the cast later reunited for *THE GREEN INFERNO* (2013).

**Agatha** (1978, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Michael Apted. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Dustin Hoffman, Timothy Dalton, Helen Morse, Celia Gregory, Paul Brooke. In December 1926 famed mystery writer Agatha Christie disappeared for eleven days, this film suggests where she was while everybody was looking for her. Redgrave, as Christie, is remarkable in this good drama, Hoffman okay as American reporter. Works better as a period piece than as a mystery.

**Agente 077 dall'Oriente con Furore** (1965, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Grieco. Starring Ken Clark, Margaret Lee, Philippe Hersent, Fabienne Dali, Fernando Sancho, Franco Ressel, Calisto Tanzi. Early James Bond rip-off, as serious, but generally a far cry from the originals. Clark lacks the charisma of Sean Connery to make his secret agent role work. Here, he has to find abducted scientist Hersent, who has invented a dangerous ray gun. Leisurely paced, low-budget, most of the action is in brawls. A follow-up to *AGENTE 077: MISSIONE BLOODY MARY*. Also known as *AGENT 077 OPERATION ISTANBUL*, *FURY IN THE ORIENT*, and *FROM THE ORIENT WITH FURY(!)*.

**Agente 077: Missione Bloody Mary** (1965, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Terence Hathaway (=Sergio Grieco). Starring Ken Clark, Helga Liné, Philippe Hersent, Mitsouko, Umberto Raho. Early James Bond imitation, the first of several directed by Grieco. Clark plays a CIA agent assigned to find a suitcase with a nuclear warhead inside. He travels to Paris, Greece and other places to get it. Fairly close to Bond plots, even with some copycat scenes, but still tedious, perhaps not as talky as others in the Eurospy genre. Immediately followed by *AGENTE 077 DALL'ORIENTE CON FURORE* (1965) aka *FROM THE ORIENT WITH FURY(!)*. English title: *MISSION BLOODY MARY*.

**Agent 505 – Todesfalle Beirut** (1966, GER/ITA/SPA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Manfred R. Köhler. Starring Frederick Stafford, Genevieve Cluny, Willy Birgel, Chris Howland, Harald Leipnitz. One of countless 007 clones, this mild spy actioner is set in Beirut, where agent Stafford (quite good) is called to investigate who is planning to influence the weather with mercury and why. Brassy score by Ennio Morricone, okay location work, but film drags immensely. The director named the villain after himself! English titles: *AGENT 505: DEATH TRAP BEIRUT*, and *FORMULA C-12 BEIRUT*.

**Agression, L'** (1975, FRA) **C-96m. \*\*** D: Gerard Pires. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Catherine Deneuve, Claude Brasseur. Revenge drama about Trintignant, who insults some motorbikers on the highway, who proceed to rape and kill his wife and son. A broken man, he is obsessed with finding them and getting his revenge. Thematically similar to Chabrol's *QUE LA BÊTE MEURE* (1969), but does not have its depth. The storytelling is also second-rate, as the film seems much longer than it is. Deneuve is wasted. English title: *ACT OF AGGRESSION*.

**Ahi Va el Diablo** (2012, MEX/USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Adrián García Bogliano. Starring Laura Caro, Francisco Barreiro, Michele Garcia, Alan Martinez. During a day trip to Tijuana, two children disappear climbing around on some rock formations. They return to their desperate parents on the next day, but they seem to have changed. There are disquieting rumors of a serial killer, who may still be roaming the caves. Horror film from the maker of *SUDOR FRIO* (2010) is a mixed bag. Overtly (and gratuitously) sexual, with subpar acting and an odd direction, film is effective in some scenes, totally pretentious, even amateurish in

others. Plot is a mess, too, although central idea is chilling. Not really worth your time, though. English title: HERE COMES THE DEVIL.

**A-i-deul...** (2011, KOR) **C-132m. \*\*\*½ D:** Lee Ky-maan. Starring Park Yong-woo, Ryoo Seung-yong, Song Dong-il, Sung Ji-ru, Kim Yeo-jin. Remarkable Korean true crime drama based on a real case from 1991, where ve children disappeared without a trace. An ousted TV reporter and a college professor try to shed light on the mysterious vanishing, but it takes years for them to make any progress. Emotional, engrossing drama almost seems like a remake of MEMORIES OF MURDER (2003), only the police are not depicted as complete idiots this time. Brilliant, haunting score by Choi Seung-hyun improves on the sometimes not fully plausible plotting and has an Ennio Morricone flavor. Excellent performances. Cowritten by director Lee, whose second film this was, the other one being RI-TEON aka RETURN (2007). English title: CHILDREN...

**Aile ou la Cuisse, L'** (1976, FRA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Claude Zidi. Starring Louis de Funès, (Michel) Coluche, Ann Zacharias, Julien Guiomar, Claude Gensac. Enjoyable comedy about restaurant critic Duchemin (de Funès), whose adversary (Guiomar), a fast-food producer, does everything to ruin his reputation. Duchemin's son (Coluche) is also causing him headaches, because he would rather become a circus clown than follow in his father's footsteps. Well-acted satire, with Louis de Funès in great form. The factory sequence is a highlight. Photographed by Claude Renoir.

**Aimée & Jaguar** (1999, GER) **C-126m. \*\*\* D:** Max Färberböck. Starring Maria Schrader, Juliane Köhler, Johanna Wokalek, Heike Makatsch, Elisabeth Degen, Detlev Buck, Inge Keller, Kyra Mladeck, Peter Weck. Meticulously produced historical drama set in the latter years of World War Two. Schrader plays a lesbian who falls in love with "straight" Köhler, whose marriage to soldier Buck hasn't prevented her from having several affairs. Film sensitively depicts their budding relationship. Fine production values, assured direction by Färberböck make the difference. Good period piece (with a narrative frame set in the present day) might have been slightly more dramatic (and shorter). Based on the novel by Erica Fischer.

**Ai No Borei** (1978, JAP/FRA) **C-104m. \*\*½ D:** Nagisa Oshima. Starring Tatsuya Fuji, Kazuko Yoshiyuki, Takahiro Tamura, Takuzo Kawatani. Follow-up to AI NO CORRIDA (1976) examines the guilt experienced by Fuji, who has killed her husband with her lover. The husband returns as a ghost and haunts the woman. Slowly paced, but horror buffs will find this satisfying as fine photography creates a spooky atmosphere. A definite influence on RINGU (1998). Director Oshima adapted the novel by Itoko Namura. Filmed in VistaVision (approx. 2.0:1). Also known as EMPIRE OF PASSION, IN THE REALM OF PASSION, PHANTOM LOVE, and THE GHOST OF LOVE.

**Ai No Corrida** (1976, JAP/FRA) **C-102m. \*\*½ D:** Nagisa Oshima. Starring Tatsuya Fuji, Eiko Matsuda, Aoi Nakajima, Yasuko Matsui, Meika Seri. Classic Japanese sex drama focusing on the obsessive love affair between Fuji and Matsuda. Especially the woman becomes addicted to sex and develops an obsession with the male sex organ. Openly sexual, erotic character study may be considered pornography by some, though there is some value in the going-ons. Written by the director. Based on a true story that took place in 1936, previously filmed as JITSUROKU ABE SADA (1975). Followed by a sequel, AI NO BOREI (1978). English title: IN THE REALM OF THE SENSES, and EMPIRE OF THE SENSES.

**Air Force One** (1997, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Wolfgang Petersen. Starring Harrison Ford, Gary Oldman, Glenn Close, Dean Stockwell, William H. Macy, Xander Berkeley, Jürgen Prochnow. Presidents die hard too: Harrison Ford plays the U.S. president, whose plane is hijacked by a group of Kazachian terrorists headed by merciless Oldman. Although an escape pod might have easily rescued Ford he prefers to stay aboard because his wife and daughter

are in the hands of the hijackers. If you accept this terribly American premise and go along with the thrills, this DIE HARD-meets-SPEED action blockbuster will keep you on the edge of your seat for the whole running time. The script is occasionally mean and manipulative but superbly entertaining nonetheless.

**Airplane!** (1980, USA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, David Zucker. Starring Robert Hays, Julie Hagerty, Lloyd Bridges, Leslie Nielsen, Robert Stack, Peter Graves, Lorna Patterson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Jim Abrahams, James Hong, Nicholas Pryor, David Zucker, Jerry Zucker. After a decade of disaster films, it was only a matter of time when AIRPORT spoofs like this were made. Gag-filled comedy details transatlantic flight with shell-shocked ex-pilot Hays trying to win back stewardess Hagerty's affection. The only problem may be the fish that was served for dinner... Contains some funny, laugh-out-loud bits but also more than its share of gratuitous gags and a few tasteless ones, like pilot Graves' fondness for little boys and a suffering girl who is waiting for an organ transplantation. Still, has achieved cult status over the years. Enjoy in company. Good score by Elmer Bernstein. Followed by AIRPLANE II: THE SEQUEL (1982).

**Airport** (1970, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** George Seaton, Henry Hathaway. Starring Burt Lancaster, Dean Martin, Jean Seberg, Jacqueline Bisset, George Kennedy, Helen Hayes, Van Heflin, Maureen Stapleton, Barry Nelson. Top-notch thriller set in stormy winter night at a metropolitan airport, where several characters and their problems are introduced: Worried chief of air traffic control Lancaster, his number-one technician Kennedy, smooth pilot Martin and his pregnant lover, stewardess Bisset, old stowaway Hayes, and suicidal, nervous Heflin. Professionally done, with great dialogues and most of the film operating on an emotional level. First-rate entertainment, from the novel by Arthur Hailey, also became the blueprint for more than a dozen disaster films to follow in the 1970s and was itself followed by three sequels, starting with AIRPORT 1975. Dramatic score by Alfred Newman. Uncredited Hathaway directed some of the outdoor scenes.

**Airport 1975** (1974, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE ⅔ D:** Jack Smight. Starring Charlton Heston, Karen Black, George Kennedy, Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., Susan Clark, Helen Reddy, Gloria Swanson, Linda Blair, Dana Andrews, Sid Caesar, Myrna Loy, Nancy Olson. Terrible sequel to AIRPORT takes 45m. for *anything* to happen (pilots are killed when jumbo jet collides with private plane) and goes absolutely nowhere from then on. Good cast is wasted, including Swanson in her last film.

**Airport '77** (1977, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jerry Jameson. Starring Jack Lemmon, Lee Grant, Brenda Vaccaro, Joseph Cotton, Olivia De Havilland, James Stewart, George Kennedy, Darren McGavin, Christopher Lee, Robert Foxworth, Robert Hooks, Monte Markham, Kathleen Quinlan, M. Emmet Walsh. Best of the AIRPORT sequels, this disaster thriller is about the maiden flight of billionaire Stewart's new airplane, which is carrying his daughter and grandson among other celebrities. When a trio of hijackers attempt to get control over the aircraft, it crashes into the sea and sinks slowly. Will the rescue teams be there on time? Plot is only so-so, but cast is interesting and score (by John Cacavas) is excellent. Photographed by Philip H. Lathrop. Followed by THE CONCORDE: AIRPORT '79.

**Ajeossi** (2010, KOR) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lee Jeong-beom. Starring Won Bin, Kim Sae-ron, Kim Tae-hoon, Kim Hee-won. Contrived plot hampers otherwise stylish thriller about a quiet pawn shop keeper with a violent past, who involuntarily becomes the protector of a little girl (much too wise for her age), whose crack-addict mother has just stolen some drugs from the local mafia boss. When she is kidnapped, he goes after her. Works in spurts, has a good score, but pace is flawed, too. English title: THE MAN FROM NOWHERE.

**Akarui Mirai** (2003, JAP) **C-115m.** \*\* D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Jô Odagiri, Tadanobu Asano, Tatsuya Fuji, Takashi Sasano. Marumi Shiraishi. Difficult, slowly-paced drama from acclaimed director Kurosawa, about the friendship between two alienated young workers in Tokyo. One of them runs amok, and the other sees it his task to take care of his pet jellyfish that ultimately escapes into the sewage system. Not a horror film a la ALLIGATOR (1980), this one is more a character study and a study of loss and alienation. See for yourself if you can make any sense of it. English title: BRIGHT FUTURE.

**Akira** (1988, JAP) **C-124m.** \*\*\* D: Katsuhiro Otomo. Impressive animated feature set in Neo-Tokyo after World War III, where a group of motorbikers battle a rival gang, while the government is conducting secret experiments with human beings, which give them strange hallucinatory powers. One day a gang-member is kidnapped, undergoes such a treatment and turns into a vicious destroyer. Violent adult animation is very uneven in terms of plot but visually dazzling. Based on the graphic novel *Akira* by the director. Contributed largely to the popularity of so-called Mangas, Japanese animation movies.

**Akmaruel Boatda** (2010, KOR) **C-142m.** \*\*\* D: Kim Jee-woon. Starring Lee Byung-hun, Choi Min-sik, Jeon Gook-hwan. Korean cult shocker about sadistic murderer Choi (OLDBOY), who is hunted down by an ex-cop whose young wife was slaughtered by the madman. Blind with fury, he makes the killer suffer for his crimes, torturing him and letting him go several times. Plot setup may be weakest part of this harrowing character study. The psycho duel between the men is highly intense and extremely violent. Transcends its subject matter about half way through and becomes a fascinating tale of revenge. English title: I SAW THE DEVIL.

**Akumu Tantei** (2006, JAP) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Ryuhei Matsuda, Hitomi, Masanobu Ando, Ren Osugi, Yoshio Harada, Shinya Tsukamoto. Stylish supernatural horror thriller from cult director Tsukamoto about mysterious suicides which happen while sleeping. The suicidal victims dream of someone stalking them and proceed to knife themselves in their sleep. Female detective Hitomi tries to solve these cases with the help of depressed 'nightmare detective', who can enter people's dreams but is suicidal himself. Interesting storyline never catches fire, and the three main characters (including Tsukamoto's own) are just not right in their roles. So what's left is the stylistic value, which is good. Tsukamoto also wrote, photographed, edited, produced and designed the production. Followed by a sequel in 2008. English title: NIGHTMARE DETECTIVE.

**Albatros, L'** (1971, FRA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Jean-Pierre Mocky, Marion Game, Paul Muller, André Le Gall, R.J. Chauffard, Dominique Zardi. Unusual, unconventional thriller about the headhunt for a copkiller (Mocky), who has escaped from prison and taken the daughter of a prominent politician hostage. Apart from following their fates, film also looks at the political repercussions of the kidnapping, since preparations for the elections have already begun. Screenplay, cowritten by Mocky, is ambitious and quite lyrical but also very uneven. Of interest mostly to cineastes, others beware.

**Aldila, L'** (1980, ITA) **C-86m.** SCOPE \*\* D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Katherine McColl, Lucio Fulci. Absolutely senseless story of a woman who moves into a house - unaware of the fact that there's one of the 'seven doors of death' in the basement - is the excuse this time for unmotivated scenes of slaughter and over-the-top gore. Horror fanatics will surely go for it, but even they will need a strong stomach to endure it. One of the goriest and slimiest pictures ever made. Released as SEVEN DOORS OF DEATH in the U.S., film is also known as THE BEYOND.

**Al di là della Legge** (1968, ITA/GER) **C-89m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Giorgio Stegani. Starring Lee Van Cleef, Antonio Sabato, Gordon Mitchell, Lionel Stander, Bud Spencer, Graziella Granata, Herbert Fux, Romano Puppo, Günther Stoll. Okay spaghetti western about outlaw Van Cleef,

who wins the trust of young manager Sabato despite having just robbed a lot of money from him. He even becomes sheriff to fight the bad guys. Interesting cast (with Van Cleef and Spencer cast against type) in fairish western. Nice Riz Ortolani score. Fernando Di Leo was among the writers. Runs 111m. in uncut version. English title: BEYOND THE LAW, BLOODSILVER, and THE GOOD DIE FIRST.

**Alexander** (2004, USA/GBR/GER/NED) **C-175m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Oliver Stone. Starring Colin Farrell, Anthony Hopkins, Angelina Jolie, Val Kilmer, Christopher Plummer, Jared Leto. Technically faultless epic about the life of Alexander the Great, played by Farrell. Told in flashback style by Hopkins, film deals with the conqueror's relationship to his parents (Jolie, Kilmer), and his rise to greatness when he conquered many parts of the world. Well-directed, superbly photographed (Rodrigo Prieto), remains a worthwhile view throughout its 3 hours. Fine symphonic score by Vangelis (his first in a long time).

**Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day** (2014, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Miguel Arteta. Starring Steve Carell, Jennifer Garner, Ed Oxenbould, Dylan Minnette, Kerris Dorsey, Dick Van Dyke. Nice family comedy about a twelve-year-old boy, who wishes that everyone else in his family would experience a bad day like him, and then his wish really comes true. Everyone, his father Carell, his mother Garner, his brother Minnette, and his sister Dorsey have the worst possible day and everything goes wrong. Mostly funny situations, short and sweet.

**Al Final del Túnel** (2016, ARG/SPA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Rodrigo Grande. Starring Leonardo Sbaraglia, Pablo Echarri, Clara Lago, Federico Luppi. Thriller about a paraplegic engineer, who rents a part of his house to a single mother with child. She is a strip dancer and obviously tries to force herself into his life. Then he realizes odd construction noises next door and investigates with a camera and microphone. Are the workers planning a heist? Interesting, with elaborate camerawork, plot almost stalls in mid-section, then delivers a riveting conclusion. This screams for a niftier, more emotional Hollywood remake. English title: AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.

**Ali** (2001, USA) **C-159m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Michael Mann. Starring Will Smith, Jamie Foxx, Jon Voight, Mario Van Peebles, Ron Silver, Jeffrey Wright, Jada Pinkett Smith, Giancarlo Esposito, Ted Levine. Glossy attempt at a screen biography of the great boxer Muhammad Ali, with Smith in the title role. Script covers the years 1964-1974 (a pivotal period in which Ali had contact with Malcolm X and converted to the Islam), but film wallows in flashy depictions instead of providing *descriptions*. For people less familiar with the star, this may seem superficial. Partly redeemed by Smith's performance and Emmanuel Lubezki's brilliant cinematography. Also notable for Mann's unconventional directorial style (if only his script was better).

**Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore** (1974, USA) **C-112m. \*\*\* D:** Martin Scorsese. Starring Ellen Burstyn, Kris Kristofferson, Billy Green Bush, Diane Ladd, Lelia Goldoni, Harvey Keitel, Jodie Foster, Laura Dern. Early Scorsese drama about widowed 35-year-old mother Burstyn, who, after the death of her brutish spouse, promises her son to take him to Monterey – in search of a better life. Moody, authentic, well-acted drama isn't among Scorsese's top achievements; he tries too hard to imitate the Nouvelle Vague and keeps movie slightly too episodic. Still, some found this excellent. Burstyn won Best Actress Oscar, Scorsese went on to direct TAXI DRIVER (1976). Larry Cohen is credited as production executive. Followed by a TV series.

**Alice in Wonderland** (1951, USA) **C-72m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske. Starring (the voices of) Kathryn Beaumont, Ed Wynn, Richard Haydn, Sterling Holloway, Good Lewis Carroll adaptation from Disney, not among their

masterpieces but well-worth watching. Young girl Alice is bored with her life, then follows a rabbit (with a watch, no less) into a rabbit hole and stumbles (or falls) into a wondrous land which seems to have its own laws. Rather episodic, and so fast-paced that it becomes annoying at times, but well-animated, with many delightful sequences. Legend has it that Aldous Huxley contributed to the script.

**Alice in Wonderland** (2010, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\* D:** Tim Burton. Starring Mia Wasikowska, Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Anne Hathaway, Crispin Glover, Matt Lucas, Stephen Fry, Michael Sheen, Alan Rickman, Timothy Spall, Marton Csokas, Tim Pigott-Smith, voices of Christopher Lee, Michael Gough. Extravagant filmization of Lewis Carroll's novels sends a 19-year-old Alice, on the brink of an unwanted engagement, back to Wonderland, where she has encounters with well-known characters and goes on a mission to defeat the Jabberwocky. Beautifully designed, like any Burton movie, this one almost misses the mark plotwise – becoming far too LORD OF THE RINGS-like – but Danny Elfman's fine score and an engaging finale pull it off. Also released in 3D, but the effects are nothing special.

**Alice ou la Dernière Fugue** (1976, FRA) **C-93m. \*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Sylvia Kristel, Charles Vanel, André Dussollier, Fernand Ledoux, Thomas Chabrol, Jean Carmet. After leaving her husband Alice Carol (Sylvia Kristel - star of EMMANUELLE) stumbles into a strange mansion where time seems to stand still. When she wakes up the following morning she discovers that she cannot leave the premise. Strange psycho drama, oddly fascinating at its best, terribly slow and redundant at its worst. An experiment which is almost impossible to rate, but only recommended to followers of the director, others may find this parable too slow or difficult to decipher. Obviously inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. English title: ALICE OR THE LAST ESCAPE.

**Alice's Adventures in Wonderland** (1972, GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** William Sterling. Starring Fiona Fullerton, Michael Jayston, Hywel Bennett, Michael Crawford, Ralph Richardson, Fred Cox, Roy Kinnear, Peter Sellers, Dudley Moore, Dennis Price, Spike Milligan. Interesting – to say the least – musical version of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is fairly close to its source. Alice (Fullerton) follows a white rabbit into a magical, bizarre land, where nothing is as it seems. Even if the movie itself may not fully succeed, some of its components are truly fascinating: Beautiful set decoration, fine special effects, excellent camerawork (by Geoffrey Unsworth), good score (by John Barry), and appealing performances by a stellar cast, with Sellers a stand-out as the March Hare. Well-worth tracking down, also as a companion piece to Tim Burton's remake of 2010.

**Alien** (1979, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt, Ian Holm, Yaphet Kotto. One of the most acclaimed sci-fi horror movies of all time: On their way back to Earth, Skerritt and Weaver's spacecraft is intercepted by an S.O.S. signal. When they are out to investigate, an evil organism attacks Hurt and is brought on board. Soon the crew must combat an alien life form that seems indestructible. Top cinematography, art direction, production design, film's plot is of secondary interest (it's actually based on the 1958 low-budgeter IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE), but suspense doesn't give you much time to think anyway. A modern classic and perhaps the most intense science-fiction film of all time. Watch it in a theater for maximum effect. Alien design by H. R. Giger. Story by Dan O'Bannon, co-produced by Walter Hill. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. Followed by three sequels, starting with ALIENS. Director Scott went on to make another sci-fi classic, BLADE RUNNER.

**Alien: Covenant** (2017, USA/GBR/AUS/NZL/CDN) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston, Billy Crudup, Danny McBride, Demian Bichir. Sequel to Ridley Scott's original ALIEN (1979) and PROMETHEUS (2012) is not terribly

original but delivers the goods. A space vessel on a colonizing mission to a distant solar system receives a distress signal and takes a detour to find out who is sending it. The planet seems habitable at first, but alien organisms soon decimate the crew. It turns out somebody is waiting for new hosts for the Alien queen. Exciting, superbly designed sci-fi also provides potent doses of horror. Might have fleshed out the characters some more (no pun intended!) and made them less easy prey, but those are just minor quibbles.

**Alien Dead, The** (1980, USA) **C-73m.** D: Fred Olen Ray. Starring Buster Crabbe, Raymond Roberts, Linda Lewis, George Kelsey, Fred Olen Ray. Amateurish horror movie made on a shoe-string about an alien invasion in rural Southern community. The 'aliens' walk around like zombies attacking people. Ed Wood-ish director Ray obviously gathered his friends and family to make this inept mess after watching DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978). Also known as IT FELL FROM THE SKY, and SWAMP OF THE BLOOD LEECHES. 'Movie Dead' is more like it.

**Alien from the Deep** (1989, USA/ITA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Daniel Bosch, Julia MacKay, Alan Collins, Robert Marius, Charles Napier. Two Greenpeace activists stumble upon a monster created by radioactive waste which a ruthless company has been dumping into a volcano. Trashy but fast-moving ecological thriller that turns into a sci-fi-horror flick in the second half. The monster is not convincing, however. Nearly all of director Dawson's films are watchable if you can accept the worthless plots. Italian title: ALIEN DEGLI ABISSI.

**Alien Predator** (1987, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Deran Sarafian. Starring Dennis Christopher, Martin Hewitt, Lynn-Holly Johnson, Luis Prendes, J.O. Bosso. Trashy but not unexciting sci-fi horror film in the ALIEN-vein, about an alien organism which fell from space with the SkyLab and is threatening to take over a small Spanish town – and then the world. Not very intelligent, but quite well-made and contains enough gore to please genre fans. Written and coproduced by director Sarafian. Filmed in 1984. Some consider this to be a sequel to NIGHT SHADOWS.

**Alien Resurrection** (1997, USA) **C-109m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Winona Ryder, Ron Perlman, Dominique Pinon, Dan Hedaya, J.E. Freeman, Brad Dourif, Raymond Cruz, Michael Wincott. On a space vessel, Lt. Ripley (the character from the original ALIEN) is cloned by some scientists in order to get hold of the alien organism that started to breed in her before her death at the end of ALIEN<sup>3</sup>. When a bunch of outlaws board the ship - wouldn't you know it - the alien queen escapes from the lab, and Ripley must do her best to kill it. Muddled script bombs, no doubt, but special effects are explosive (and quite gory). A telling comment about this film is made in the movie itself: 'How can you bear this life?' (Ryder to Weaver). So, non-science-fiction/horror fans beware!

**Aliens** (1986, USA) **C-137m.** \*\*\* D: James Cameron. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Carrie Henn, Michael Biehn, Michael Biehn, Paul Reiser, Lance Henriksen, Bill Paxton, Jenette Goldstein. Lt. Ripley returns to Earth after floating in space for 80 years. When she learns that settlers have established a colony on the Alien's planet, she is willing to travel back – only to find that all the settlers have been used as cocoons for breeding new aliens. Unlike Scott, director Cameron (THE TERMINATOR) places the emphasis on action. The sequel is less subtly stomach-churning than the original but contains some excellent sequences, especially the finale. Also shown in a 154m. Director's Cut version. Like the first part (ALIEN), this won a Special Effects Oscar. Followed by ALIEN<sup>3</sup>.

**Aliens in the Attic** (2009, USA/CDN) **C-86m.** \*\*\* D: John Schultz. Starring Carter Jenkins, Austin Butler, Ashley Tisdale, Ashley Boettcher, Doris Roberts, Robert Hoffman, Kevin Nealon, voices of Thomas Haden Church, Josh Peck, Kari Wahlgren J.K. Simmons. When the family is going for a summer break in their recently leased holiday home, they haven't

reckoned with an invasion of imp-sized aliens, who are planning to take over the planet. How can you stop the creatures, when they use mind-control techniques and your parents won't believe you? Fast-paced, exciting, funny popcorn movie that never takes itself seriously. Hoffman is a hoot as Tisdale's remote-controlled boyfriend. A nice throwback to THE GOONIES and CRITTERS days.

**A l'Interieur** (2007, FRA) **C-82m.** \*\* D: Alexandre Bustillo, Julien Maury. Starring Alysso Paradis, Jean-Baptiste Tabourin, Claude Lulé, Béatrice Dalle. A pregnant woman barely survives a car accident, and four months later, on Christmas Eve, shortly before giving birth, she is visited by a stranger, who tries to enter her flat by all means. Who is the woman and what does she want? What follows is an *extremely* violent, stomach-churning blood orgy that crosses not one but several lines. Among the most viciously violent films of all time, this is fairly well-made, but its story (and bloodletting) becomes ultimately absurd and enters the realm of fantasy. Still, deserves credit for so unrelentingly stepping over the line. In a way a must-see for horror buffs. From the directors of LIVIDE (2011).

**Alla Ricerca del Piacere** (1972, ITA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Silvio Amadio. Starring Farley Granger, Barbara Bouchet, Rosalba Neri, Umberto Raho. Bouchet is writer Granger's new secretary, but she only applied for the job because her friend, Granger's old secretary, has mysteriously disappeared. Soon she finds herself entangled in all-night parties, sex and drugs. Quite interesting, well-mounted giallo bogs down a little in mid-section but is worth watching alone for seeing Neri and Bouchet make love in slow motion. Hypnotic score by Teo Usuelli. Alternative titles: AMUCK!, HOT BED OF SEX, LEATHER AND WHIPS, REPLICA DI UN DELITTO, and MANIAC MANSION.

**Allegro Non Troppo** (1977, ITA) **C/B&W-85m.** \*\*\* D: Bruno Bozzetto. Starring Marialuisa Giovannini, Néstor Garay, Maurizio Micheli, Maurizio Nichetti. Italian animation classic rivals Disney's FANTASIA (1940), albeit this is not for children. Frame story is awkward, even off-putting as it is set during an orchestra rehearsal, with a presenter talking straight into the camera. The conductor is the animator who turns pieces of classical music (by Debussy, Dvorak, Vivaldi etc.) into visual poems. Some sequences show off Bozzetto's artistic mastery, especially the rhythmical one set to Maurice Ravel's *Bolero*. Recommended to buffs. The director's most famous character, Signor Rossi, makes a cameo appearance.

**Alleluia** (2014, BEL/FRA) **C-93m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Fabrice Du Welz. Starring Lola Duenas, Laurent Lucas, Héléna Noguerra, Edith Le Merdy. Powerful, earthy psycho drama based on the case of the infamous 'honeymoon killers'. Duenas plays a lonely single mother, who falls for suave Lucas. When she finds out that his hobby is seducing and ripping off women, she doesn't leave him but offers herself to be his accomplice. Things then soon get terribly out-of-hand. Du Welz, director of CALVAIRE (2004) and VINYAN (2008), manages to get under your skin with his mise-en-scene, he's like Chabrol with gore here. Fine performances and truly shocking set-pieces. Previously filmed as THE HONEYMOON KILLERS (1969) and PROFUNDO CARMESI (1996).

**Aller Simple, Un** (1971, FRA/ITA/SPA) **C-102m.** \*\* D: José Giovanni. Starring Jean-Claude Bouillon, Nicoletta, Maurice Garrel, Jean Gaven, Paul Beauvais, Alain Mottet, Rufus, Giancarlo Giannini, Ottavia Piccolo. Typically ponderous crime drama by Giovanni, a former crook himself. Bouillon is a small-time gangster, who robs a jeweller's shop, then shoots a policeman in self defense. In hospital, he realizes that he hardly stands a chance against the accusations. Makes one point – again and again and again. Based on the novel by Henry Edward Helseth. English title: ONE WAY TICKET.

**Alligator** (1980, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Lewis Teague. Starring Robert Forster, Robin Riker, Michael V. Gazzo, Dean Jagger, Henry Silva. A monster alligator kills humans in the sewers

of Chicago, cop Forster is investigating the murders with zoologist Riker. It turns out that hormone experiments are responsible for the unnatural growth of the reptile. Monster movie doesn't take itself seriously and offers some nice shock scenes. This okay animal horror was written by John Sayles and directed Lewis 'CUJO' Teague. Followed by ALLIGATOR II: THE MUTATION in 1991.

**Al Límite** (1997, SPA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Eduardo Campoy. Starring Juanjo Puigcorbé, Lydia Bosch, Béatrice Dalle, Bud Spencer, Mabel Lozano, José Manuel Lorenzo, Rafael Romero Marchent, Rosanna Yanni. Slickly made if familiar thriller about a serial killer on the loose in Madrid and state attorney Bosch's attempt to catch him. Her rival: Radio celebrity Dalle, who'd do anything to get him on the show. Attractive Bosch is good, but thriller remains too obvious. English title: TO THE LIMIT.

**Almost Famous** (2000, USA) **C-123m. \*\*\*½ D:** Cameron Crowe. Starring Billy Crudup, Frances McDormand, Kate Hudson, Jason Lee, Patrick Fugit, Zooey Deschanel, Fairuza Balk, Anna Paquin, Philip Seymour Hoffman. Bijou Phillips. Fugit plays a 15-year-old who gets inspired by his sister's records to become a rock'n'roll journalist in 1973. He goes on the road with an up-and-coming rock band and finds himself torn between the budding love for 'band-aid' Hudson, the band's extravagance and his over-protective mother McDormand. Superior cast, heart-felt (semi-autobiographical) script by the director make this a winner from start to finish. Hudson and McDormand give Oscar-worthy performances (both were nominated). Crowe's screenplay won the Academy Award.

**Along Came Polly** (2004, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** John Hamburg. Starring Ben Stiller, Jennifer Aniston, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Debra Messing, Alec Baldwin, Hank Azaria, Bryan Brown. Thoroughly clichéd but still quite enjoyable romantic comedy about risk manager Stiller, who's an ace with statistics, and his bride Messing, who cheats on the poor guy on their honeymoon and calls their relationship off. Devastated Stiller questions his entire existence, but then... along comes Polly (Aniston), who's a chaotic friend from junior high. Scriptwriters make this completely artificial, but Stiller is funny (especially when dancing Salsa).

**Alouette, Je Te Plumerai** (1987, FRA) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Philippe Zucca. Starring Claude Chabrol, Valérie Allan, Fabrice Luchini, Micheline Presle, Jean-Paul Rousillon. Film director Chabrol is well-cast as a cunning old man who moves from an old people's home into the flat of a young couple who hope that they'll inherit a vast fortune. However, the old man only pretends to be sick, which he cannot hide forever. Sometimes funny, sometimes serious satire on money and human relationships, intelligently scripted by the director. Acting, direction, score uniformly fine. In fact, film comes close to being a 'Chabrol' itself. English title: THE LARK.

**Alphaville** (1965, FRA/ITA) **99m. \*½ D:** Jean-Luc Godard. Starring Eddie Constantine, Anna Karina, Akim Tamiroff, Howard Vernon, Laszlo Szabó, Michel Delahaye, Christa Lang, Jean-Pierre Léaud. *Very* strange science-fiction film about private eye Lemmy Caution (Constantine), who is called to futuristic city of Alphaville, where a computer is controlling everything. He is supposed to rescue an abducted scientist. Or something like that. Seems dated and pretentious, hardly makes sense. Still, a cult film in some circles. Based on Paul Eluard's novel *Le Capitale de la Douleur*. Full title: ALPHAVILLE, UNE ETRANGE AVENTURE DE LEMMY CAUTION.

**Altar** (2014, GBR) **C-94m. \*½ D:** Nick Willing. Starring Olivia Williams, Matthew Modine, Antonia Clarke, Adam Thomas Wright. Mystery horror starts okay, then becomes tiresome: Williams moves into a derelict mansion with her family in order to restore it for a rich customer, then they realize it's haunted. Foreseeable, by-the-numbers haunted house film

that becomes annoying in its ordinariness. Avoid. Also known as THE HAUNTING OF RADCLIFFE HOUSE.

**Altrimenti Ci Arrabbiamo** (1973, ITA/SPA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Marcello Fondato. Starring Terence Hill, Bud Spencer, John Sharp, Donald Pleasance, Patty Shepard. Typical Hill/Spencer comedy, made after their spaghetti western days, about two friends who have just won a nice buggy, which is destroyed by “villain” Sharp’s gang. His adviser and psychologist (Pleasance, in a rare comic turn) wants to demolish a theme park, which the boys happen to like. Slapstick comedy is quite engaging and funny (and also rather silly). Some scenes go on for too long. For kids. English title: WATCH OUT, WE’RE MAD.

**Al Tropico del Cancro** (1972, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Eduardo Mulargia, Gian Paolo Lomi. Starring Anthony Steffen, Anita Strindberg, Gabriele Tinti, Umberto Raho, Stelio Candelli, Alfio Nicolosi. Just okay giallo about doctor Steffen, who has developed an important serum or drug on Haiti that many businessmen are after. When people around him turn up dead, it becomes clear that the formula is worth more than a human life. Interesting setting, replete with voodoo references, but plot is too vague for too long and hardly exciting. Some bizarre slow-motion scenes involving Strindberg almost make it worthwhile. Spaghetti western actor Steffen also co-authored the story. Nice period soundtrack by Piero Umiliani. English titles: DEATH IN HAITI, PEACOCK’S PLACE, TROPIC OF CANCER.

**Alucarda – la Hija de las Tinieblas** (1977, MEX) **C-78m. BOMB D:** Juan López Moctezuma. Starring Claudio Brook, David Silva, Tina Romero, Susana Kamini. A young woman is brought to a convent after her parents’ death. There’s another girl living there, the title character, who has a penchant for satanism and witchcraft. Abysmal horror film seems like performance art at times, Romero tries her best, but plot is a disaster. Boring, disgusting, with an amateurish score. Nunspoitation at its worst.

**Alyce** (2011, USA) **C-94m. \*\* D:** Jay Lee. Starring Jade Dornfeld, Tamara Feldman, James Duval, Eddie Rouse, Larry Cedar. Horror drama about a woman in her early twenties, who during a night of drinking and taking drugs, accidentally pushes her friend off a roof, almost killing her. She is then stricken by guilt and proceeds to lose her mind, resorting to more drug-taking, and eventually killing. Some stylish directorial touches cannot overcome general lack of plot. Goes completely overboard in finale, which is out-of-sync with the rest of the movie. At least gorehounds will get their satisfaction. From the writer-director of films such as THE SLAUGHTER (2006) and ZOMBIE STRIPPERS (2008). Also known as ALYCE KILLS.

**Amante del Vampiro, L’** (1960, ITA) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Renato Polselli. Starring Hélène Rémy, Tina Gloriani, Walter Brandi. Director Polselli’s first foray into horror is not-bad but dated and poorly paced story of a group of ballet students, who stumble into seemingly abandoned castle which is inhabited by a vampire. Some expressionistic elements, but story is barely interesting. Cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi, his first screen credit. English title: THE VAMPIRE AND THE BALLERINA.

**Amanti del Mostro, Le** (1974, ITA) **C-84m. \*\*\*½ D:** Sergio Garrone. Starring Klaus Kinski, Katia Christine, Marzia Damon, Stella Calderoni. After her father’s death, Christine goes to claim her inheritance, a castle. Her husband Kinski is about to discover the laboratory downstairs, where Christine’s father used to conduct experiments with animal blood, resulting in a kind of Jekyll/Hyde schizophrenia. One of the last gothic horror chillers produced in Italy, this one is unusually soft-spoken but eventually too low-key for its own good. Still, this obscure title is worth seeking out for genre fans and those of Kinski, who seems ideally suited to this role. Director Garrone made a similar film simultaneously, which is called MANO CHE NUTRE LE MORTE (1974). The two films are sometimes mixed up. English title: LOVER OF THE MONSTER.

**Amanti d'Oltretomba** (1965, ITA) **104m.** \*\* D: Allan Grünewald (=Mario Caiano). Starring Barbara Steele, Paul Miller (=Paul Müller), Helga Liné, Laurence Clift, Rik Battaglia. Doctor Müller conducts secret experiments in his castle's dungeon in order to rejuvenate the blood of his lover Liné. His wife Steele, who is having an affair with Battaglia, may be his first victim. It turns out that Steele has a sister that looks exactly like her. Euro-cult horror has atmospheric setting and the likes of Barbara Steele (twice!), but film is poorly paced and written. Still, it's a quite famous example of its subgenre, the Italian Gothic horror chiller, which was – as this one clearly shows – influenced by the Poe adaptations by Roger Corman from the early 60s. Score by Ennio Morricone. Also shown in 90m. version. Alternative titles include THE FACELESS MONSTER, LOVERS BEYOND THE TOMB, NIGHTMARE CASTLE, NIGHT OF THE DOOMED and even ORGASMO (for no obvious reason).

**Amazing Captain Nemo** (1978, USA) **C-103m.** \*½ D: Alex March. Starring José Ferrer, Burgess Meredith, Lynda Day George, Tom Hallick, Mel Ferrer, Horst Buchholz. Juvenile fantasy with Ferrer rather looking like Captain Birdseye than Captain Nemo. He goes against a mad scientist (Meredith) who threatens to blow up Washington, D.C. Along the way they also visit Atlantis. Pretty unspectacular, only kids will find this an okay view. Received only limited theatrical release.

**Amazing Mr. Blunden, The** (1972, GBR) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Lionel Jeffries. Starring Laurence Naismith, Lynne Frederick, Garry Miller, Rosalyn Landor, Marc Granger, Diana Dors, James Villiers, Madeleine Smith. Delightful children's fantasy about poor London family, who are visited one day by a mysterious stranger by the name of Mr. Blunden, who offers the mother a job as a housekeeper in an allegedly haunted house. The single parent accepts and along with her three children (one of whom is a toddler) moves into the derelict mansion. Soon the children learn that two kids died in the house a hundred years ago, and Mr Blunden may be a ghost! Short of effects, but fine, old-fashioned story (based on *The Ghostsby* Antonia Barber) offers enough joy. Fine score by Elmer Bernstein. Produced by Barry Levinson.

**Amazing Spider-Man, The** (1977, USA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: E.W. Swackhamer. Starring Nicholas Hammond, David White, Michael Pataki, Hilly Hicks, Lisa Eilbacher, Dick Balduzzi. Corny, naive, rather cheap comic book adaptation made for television about photographer Peter Parker, who is bitten by a spider and turns into the title character, a kind of superhero. Doesn't hold up well today, but is quite engaging, best for kids. Followed by two sequels and a TV series.

**Amazing Spider-Man, The** (2012, USA) **C-136m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Marc Webb. Starring Andrew Garfield, Emma Stone, Rhys Ifans, Denis Leary, Martin Sheen, Sally Field, Embeth Davidtz, C-Thomas Howell. Incredibly, a Hollywood remake of a 2002 Hollywood blockbuster, this seems to have been made in order not to lose the rights or to cash in on the 3-D trend, whatever. Familiar story about Marvel's comic book superhero, here played by THE SOCIAL NETWORK's Andrew Garfield, is not that much different from Sam Raimi's 2002 version. What's been improved is the pace: The movie is not overlong, despite its 136 minutes. The effects are good.

**Amazzoni – Donne d'Amore e di Guerra, Le** (1973, ITA/SPA) **C-103m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: Alfonso Brescia. Starring Lincoln Tate, Lucretia Love, Paola Tedesco, Robert Widmark (=Alberto dell'Acqua), Frank Brana, Solvi Stubing. Tired, pointless actioner, an Italian-Spanish co-production set in ancient Greece, where the Amazon women (called the Devil Women here) are terrorizing the countryside. Enter a few tough men, who teach the local farmers to defend themselves a la THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (1960). Pretty ridiculous, only surprise is how professional the score is amid this inept mess of a movie. Cowritten by Bruno

Corrucci. English titles: THE DEVIL WOMEN, BATTLE OF THE AMAZONS, BEAUTY OF THE BARBARIAN.

**Ambulance, The** (1990, USA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Larry Cohen. Starring Eric Roberts, James Earl Jones, Megan Gallagher, Red Buttons, Janine Turner, Eric Braeden, Stan Lee. Barely believable thriller about Roberts, who discovers that there are ambulance cars in New York City that abduct patients. It turns out some doctor is using them for his evil schemes. Film starts out quite well, but some self-conscious (unintentional?) comic touches, slow pace and dumb plotting ruin it. Who advised Jones and Buttons to be in this? Director Cohen also scripted.

**Amer** (2009, FRA/BEL) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani. Starring Cassandra Forêt, Visually dazzling experimental horror drama about a little girl, who lives a suppressed existence in her parents' villa, with an unidentified, monstrous nanny and her dead grandfather, who's lying embalmed in one of the rooms. Later, we meet her again as a young adult and as a grown-up, but her behavior is anything but normal. Barely any plot or dialogue, film lives off its hypnotic close-up images (using primary colors red, green and blue extensively) and creepy soundtrack, both obviously a tribute to Dario Argento's *SUSPIRIA*. While this is not a conventional horror film like the Argento classic, it does have its scares, but works best as a character study. Bogs down somewhat in the last third, but highly recommended to cult movie buffs. Score and film poster pay tribute to 1970s giallos, with themes mostly from Stelvio Cipriani.

**American Beauty** (1999, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sam Mendes. Starring Kevin Spacey, Annette Bening. Laced-in-acid satirical drama about 'typical' American suburban family, consisting of sexually frustrated, forty-ish Spacey and hysterical, equally frustrated wife Bening. Their daughter N.N. currently lives through the pangs of puberty, until her classmate, precocious N.N. enters the scene and turns Spacey's life upside down. And disturbed teenager N.N. has just moved into the neighborhood with his apathic mother and shell-shocked vietnam-vet father. Study of mid-life crisis is buoyed by fine performances but remains unpleasant throughout. Actually no more than a paraphrase of the much more atmospheric and moody *THE ICE STORM*. Several surreal scenes make it worthwhile, but ultimately film fails to make a point, except that American beauty can be found in a plastic bag dancing in the wind. Depressing. Oscar winner for Best Picture, Best Actor, Screenplay, Photography.

**American Dreamz** (2006, USA) **C-107m. \*\*\*** D: Paul Weitz. Starring Hugh Grant, Dennis Quaid, Mandy Moore, Willem Dafoe, Chris Klein, Jennifer Coolidge, Sam Golzari, Marcia Gay Harden, Seth Meyers, John Cho, Bernard White, Lawrence Pressman, Chao Li Chi, Carmen Electra, Judy Greer. Amusing satire of American values follows two contestants to a talent competition hosted by Grant (the highest rated show on TV), one of them bumbling Arab terrorist Golzari, who is supposed to explode himself and the confused President (Quaid) at the finale. A bit obvious and not always credible, but stars (especially Grant and Quaid) make up for it. Another solid piece of entertainment, written and produced by director Weitz (*AMERICAN PIE*, *ABOUT A BOY*).

**American History X** (1998, USA) **C/B&W-119m. \*\*\*** D: Tony Kaye. Starring Edward Norton, Edward Furlong, Beverly D'Angelo, Jennifer Lien, Ethan Suplee, Fairuza Balk, Avery Brooks, Elliott Gould, Stacy Keach, Paul Le Mat. Engrossing, at times powerful drama about racist, neo-Nazi Norton, who is sent to prison after killing two blacks, leaving his desolate family – especially his teenage brother Furlong – to themselves. The boy eagerly embraces his ideology, but when Norton is released from prison completely changed, conflicts break open. Told in flashbacks, film's best scenes deal with the family, but it also has important

things to say about racism and hatred in general. Good performances. Score tends to be too overblown. Photographed by first-time director Kaye.

**American Hustle** (2013, USA) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David O. Russell. Starring Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Bradley Cooper, Jeremy Renner, Jennifer Lawrence, Louis C.K., Jack Huston, Michael Pena, Alessandro Nivola, Anthony Zerbe, Colleen Camp, Barry Primus, Robert De Niro. Irresistible crime drama set in the late 1970s about con artists Bale and Adams, who are busted by hot-headed FBI agent Cooper but can get off the hook if they help him to incriminate mayor Renner and some other politicians. Brilliant performances and great production design overshadow amusing plot that is not consistently intriguing. Adams is especially sizzling and should have had the Oscar. In fact, film was nominated for ten statuettes, but didn't win any. Co-written by director Russell. Score by Danny Elfman.

**American Mary** (2012, CDN) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jen and Sylvia Soska. Starring Katharine Isabelle, Antonio Cupo, Tristan Risk, David Lovgren, Paula Lindberg, Clay St. Thomas. Quite off-beat horror thriller about aspiring surgeon Isabelle (GINGER SNAPS), who realizes she can make a lot of money with underground surgery, performing illegal or daring operations. Dark, dirty, sexy, with Isabelle bringing conviction to her role. A sleeper, but doesn't hold up to the very end. The two directors, who are twin sisters, have a disturbing cameo.

**American Nightmare, The** (2000, USA/GBR) **C-73m. \*\*\* D:** Adam Simon. Featuring interviews with John Carpenter, Wes Craven, David Cronenberg, Tobe Hooper, John Landis, George A. Romero, Tom Savini. Interesting look at the influence of real-life events on American horror films of the late 1960s and 1970s. Famous directors are interviewed about why they made the films, some experts discuss the phenomenon in general. NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968), LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972), THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE (1974), SHIVERS (1975), DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978) and HALLOWEEN (1978) are discussed in detail, clips are shown from these movies and others. Very informative documentary, although the endings of the movies are also shown and/or explained (spoiler alert!).

**American Perfekt** (1997, USA) **C-100m. \*\*½ D:** Paul Chart. Starring Amanda Plummer, Robert Forster, David Thewlis, Fairuza Balk, Paul Sorvino, Joanna Gleason, Geoffrey Lewis, Chris Sarandon, Jay Patterson. Odd, intriguing road movie with Plummer reprising the neurotic character from earlier roles. A maniac causes her to have an accident on the road in the desert, and by chance she is helped by passing-by Forster, who claims to be psychiatrist. He evades decisions by tossing a coin each time he is unsure what to do. And yes, there's a serial killer on the loose. Interesting, to say the least, but not very believable and exciting. The ending disappoints a little. Still, this thriller is recommended to all lovers of the bizarre cinema. Produced by Irvin Kershner. Score by Simon Boswell. Written by director Chart.

**American Pie** (1999, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Weitz. Starring Jason Biggs, Shannon Elizabeth, Alyson Hannigan, Chris Klein, Natasha Lyonne, Thomas Ian Nicholas, Tara Reid, Seann W. Scott, Eugene Levy, Lawrence Pressman, Mena Suvari. Formulaic but very funny teen comedy about four college pals who decide Prom Night's the deadline for losing their virginity. More profane and explicit than others of its kind (and not exactly credible) but also more entertaining and likable. Fast-paced fun. Followed by a sequel.

**American Pie 2** (2001, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** James B. Rogers. Starring Jason Biggs, Shannon Elizabeth, Alyson Hannigan, Steve Klein, Thomas Ian Nicholas, Natasha Lyonne, Mena Suvari, Tara Reid, Seann William Scott, Casey Affleck. Hilarious sequel to the 1999 box-office hit follows the exploits of Biggs and his friends as they rent a beach house during the holidays and try to get laid by as many chicks as possible. Full of amusing vignettes (the lesbian house

sequence is a scream!), good performances by an enjoyable cast. Scott is especially fun to watch. Followed by AMERICAN WEDDING (2003).

**American Psycho** (2000, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Mary Harron. Starring Christopher Bale, Willem Dafoe, Jared Leto, Josh Lucas, Samantha Mathis, Matt Ross, William Sage, Chloë Sevigny, Reese Witherspoon. Adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis' cult novel about a Wall Street yuppie whose luxurious but ultimately meaningless existence drives him to brutal murder. Bale succeeds in breathing life into the main character and, though not as violent as the book, director Harron captures the tone of the novel quite well. However, the final third offers no novelties, and the film peters out without a satisfying climax. All in all, not a bad stab at filming the unfilmable. Cowritten by director Harron.

**American Sniper** (2014, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Clint Eastwood. Starring Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Cole Konic, Ben Reed. Tense war drama about the life of famed sniper Chris Kyle, who may have been the best of his trade, killing dozens, if not hundreds, of people in his five tours of the Middle East with the US Army. Stateside, he falls in love and starts a family with Miller, who is more than unhappy to see him return to battle sites again and again. Action drama is well-handled by Eastwood and well-acted by Cooper, though the Southern drawl can be difficult to understand at times. Based on Kyle's own book.

**American Wedding** (2003, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jesse Dylan. Starring Jason Biggs, Seann William Scott, Alyson Hannigan, Eddie Kaye Thomas, Thomas Ian Nicholas, January Jones, Eugene Levy, Lawrence Pressman. Conclusion of the AMERICAN PIE films follows the preparations to Biggs and Hannigan's wedding. Needless to say, Stiffler (Scott) is fouling things up, while trying to score on Hannigan's best friend Jones. More episodic, with a weaker plot, but fans should still get their share of belly laughs.

**American Werewolf in London, An** (1981, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** John Landis. Starring David Naughton, Jenny Agutter, Griffin Dunne, John Woodvine, Brian Glover, John Landis. Two American tourists travelling through Scotland are attacked by a werewolf one night. One of them dies, the other (Naughton) is brought to a London hospital. He eventually moves in with nurse Agutter, but must learn that he is now a werewolf and his transformation is pending. Effective, well-directed horror movie manages to be both funny and serious, and quite violent, too. A cult hit. Rick Baker won an Oscar for his good, bloody effects. Score by Elmer Bernstein. Followed by a loosely related sequel in 1997.

**American Werewolf in Paris, An** (1997, USA/FRA) **C-98m. \*\*\*½ D:** Anthony Waller. Starring Tom Everett Scott, Julie Delpy, Vince Vieluf, Phil Buckman, Julie Bowen, Pierre Cosso, Thierry Lhermitte, Anthony Waller. American Scott, touring Europe with two friends, meets a young woman (Delpy) in Paris under unusual circumstances and falls in love with her. Little does he know that she is a werewolf, and there are more of her kind roaming the streets at night. Well-paced, effective comic horror thriller with atmospheric sets suffers from a second-rate plot that has a few good ideas but not enough of them. This sequel to John Landis' AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON is better than expected, however, and horror fans will boost the rating by half a star.

**Amiche Mie** (1982, ITA) **C-79m. \*½ D:** Michele Massimo Tarantini. Starring Nadia Cassini, Carmen Russo, Olivia Link (=Olinka Hardiman), Michele Gammino, Gianfranco D'Angelo, Carla Gravina. In the late 1970s and early 1980s there was obviously a market (in Italy) for silly erotic comedies like this one: Three sexy friends will only receive the inheritance of 1 billion Lire if they cheat on their husbands within three days. If you expect something titillating, forget it.

**Amityville Horror, The** (1979, USA) **C-101m. \*\* D:** Stuart Rosenberg. Starring James Brolin, Margot Kidder, Rod Steiger, Don Stroud, Murray Hamilton, Helen Shaver. Obviously plotted

horror film about a young family who moves into a house where a gruesome murder has taken place. Soon they discover that the house is haunted as terrible things start to happen. Pretty dull, but technically okay and well-scored (by Lalo Schifrin). Steiger is much too dramatic in a pointless role as a priest. Based on a novel by Jay Anson, who claims that this things happened to him in real life! Followed by seven sequels (so far), starting with AMITYVILLE II: THE POSSESSION. U.S. version runs 117m.

**Amityville II: The Possession** (1982, USA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Damiano Damiani. Starring Burt Young, Rutanya Alda, James Olson, Jack Magner, Diane Franklin, Andrew Prine, Ted Ross, Moses Gunn. Young moves into the notorious house with his family and is confronted with eerie going-ons. Sequel to the above retreads the familiar path (haunted house/exorcism) but is competently made and has better production values. Based on the novel *Murder in Amityville* by Hans Holzer. Score by Lalo Schifrin. Produced by Dino de Laurentiis. U.S. version runs 104m. Followed by AMITYVILLE 3-D.

**Amityville 3-D** (1983, USA) **C-92m.** SCOPE 2 D: Richard Fleischer. Starring Tony Roberts, Tess Harper, Robert Joy, Candy Clark, John Beal, Leora Dana, John Harkins, Lori Loughlin, Meg Ryan. Third film of the series was shot in widescreen and 3D, but this is about the only novelty in this tired horror movie. Roberts moves into haunted house, is faced with paranormal going-ons. Tame and unconvincing; horror fans should stay away. Ran 105m. in U.S. theaters. Followed by AMITYVILLE 4: THE EVIL ESCAPES (a TV-movie), THE AMITYVILLE CURSE, AMITYVILLE 1992: IT'S ABOUT TIME, and AMITYVILLE: A NEW GENERATION.

**Amore Amaro** (1974, ITA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Florestano Vancini. Starring Lisa Gastoni, Leonard Mann, Maurizio Fiori, Rita Livesi, Franco Patano. Quiet, serious drama, set in Italy of the 1930s, about 26-year-old Mann, who falls in love with an older woman, while beginning to be critical of the emerging Fascist movement. In prolepses (flash-forwards), we see the protagonists at an advanced age). This film ought to have been better, it wavers too undecidedly between the two plot strands. Based on the novel by Carlo Bernari. Beautiful score by Armando Trovajoli, who also collaborated with Mario Bava. From the director of the intense spaghetti western I LUNGHI GIORNI DELLA VENDETTA. English title: BITTER LOVE.

**Amore, Piobo e Furore** (1978, ITA/SPA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Monte Hellman. Starring Warren Oates, Fabio Testi, Jenny Agutter, Sam Peckinpah, Isabel Mestres, Richard C. Adams, Romano Puppo, Helga Liné, Tony Brandt. Interesting spaghetti western, one of the genre's last gasps, and clearly influenced by American hands. Hellman tries to create a hybrid of PAT GARRETT & BILL THE KID (1973) and ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST (1968) with a prevailing, lumbering melancholic tone, but story fails to ignite sparks. Testi is saved from the gallows and given a chance to survive if he kills gunfighter-turned-farmer Oates, who is opposing the railroad. Testi falls in love with his wife Agutter and together they conspire to kill him. Slow but fairly meaningless, endowed with a beautiful Pino Donaggio score, film will only interest you if you like that cast. Peckinpah has an impressive cameo role. Also known as GUNFIRE, CLAYTON & CATHERINE, CLAYTON DRUMM, LOVE, BULLETS AND FRENZY, and most commonly CHINA 9, LIBERTY 37.

**Amour** (2012, FRA/GER/AUT) **C-127m.** \*\*\* D: Michael Haneke. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Emmanuelle Riva, Isabelle Huppert. Typically minimalistic Haneke drama about a cultivated old couple (Trintignant, Riva), whose life is suddenly changed when she has a stroke, which sends her into a downward spiral of becoming a 24/7 special care patient. Her husband tries to deal with the situation, but ultimately must come to terms with the inevitable. Successful as a realistic depiction of an increasingly common final period in someone's life, with fine performances by its stars, although absolute lack of style or

direction, even score, makes it a dire view – and a matter of taste. Haneke comes up with one metaphor (the pigeon), and that's it. The point is also questionable. Winner of the Palm D'Or. English title: LOVE.

**Anaconda** (1997, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Luis Llosa. Starring Jennifer Lopez, Ice Cube, Jon Voight, Eric Stoltz, Jonathan Hyde, Kari Wuhrer, Owen Wilson, Vincent Castellanos, Danny Trejo. Standard monster horror film about a giant snake which terrorizes a documentary film crew in the Amazon jungle. Some exciting moments and Voight's over-the-top performance as the bad guy save this flick from a worse rating. The snake is all too obviously made of rubber, when not animated by computer graphics.

**Analyze This** (1999, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*** D: Harold Ramis. Starring Robert De Niro, Billy Crystal, Lisa Kudrow, Chazz Palmintieri. Witty comedy about mafia kingpin De Niro, who seeks out psychiatrist Crystal to be cured from his sudden shifts in mood that make it impossible for him to do his job. Crystal is about to be married to Kudrow, but De Niro considers his problems to be more important than her - and the shrink's other patients. Funny, hilarious at times, this comedy's biggest drawing card is the chemistry between De Niro and his suffering psychotherapist Crystal.

**Anastasia** (1997, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Don Bluth, Gary Goldman. Voices of Meg Ryan, John Cusack, Kelsey Grammer, Angela Lansbury, Christopher Lloyd, Hank Azaria, Bernadette Peters, Kirsten Dunst. In 1916, little Anastasia, the Russian Czar's daughter, gets lost during revolution and is rediscovered ten years later... but she doesn't remember her heritage and may fall prey to two loafers, who are eager to cash in the money promised by Anastasia's grandmother to those who find her. However, there's love to be found and the evil spirit of Rasputin to be contended with. Fanciful entertainment for kids, though some dramatic and graphic scenes may make it unsuitable for very small ones. Adults may fret about 1990s dialogue and gestures in a movie that is supposed to be set in 1926. The fluid animation is complemented by (all too visible) computer graphics.

**Anatomie** (2000, GER) **C-99m. SCOPE \*½** D: Stefan Ruzowitzky. Starring Franka Potente, Benno Fürmann, Anna Loos, Sebastian Blomberg, Holger Speckhahn, Rüdiger Vogler. Young medical student Potente discovers a secret society of doctors, who conduct illegal experiments on live victims, and from then on must fear for her life. Poor thriller lacks style, atmosphere, suspense and credibility. Artificial plot situations prevail. You're better advised with watching COMA, NATTEVAGTEN or RE-ANIMATOR. A major disappointment from the director of the acclaimed DIE SIEBELBAUERN.

**Anaza Hevun** (2000, JAP) **C-132m. \*\*** D: Jôji Iida. Starring Yôsuke Eguchi, Miwako Ichikawa, Takashi Kashiwabara, Yukiko Okamoto, Haruhiko Katô. A serial killer is baffling police detectives in Japan. He removes his victims' brains, then cooks them. It turns out the killer is not human but a supernatural force that moves from host to host. Detective Ichikawa is trying to catch and eliminate it. Fairly good thriller is well-made but a bit overlong, by the finale your interest will have waned. From the producer of RINGU (1997) and the director of the RINGU sequel RASEN (1998). English title: ANOTHER HEAVEN.

**Anche gli Angeli Mangiano Fagioli** (1973, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: E.B. Clucher (=Enzo Barboni). Starring Giuliano Gemma, Bud Spencer, Robert Middleton, Bill Vanders, Georges Rigaud. Parody of gangster movies, with wrestler Spencer and petty criminal Gemma teaming up to find work in Middleton's syndicate. However, they are much too lenient and give more money to the poor than they earn. Amusing comedy with typical Spencer brawls. Good production values (recreating Chicago of the 1920s) put this a notch above the usual Italian slapstick comedy. English title: EVEN ANGELS EAT BEANS. Followed by a sequel (without Spencer): ANCHE GLI ANGELI TIRANO DI DESTRO (1974).

**Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy** (2004, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Adam McKay. Starring Will Ferrell, Christina Applegate, Paul Rudd, Steve Carell, David Koechner, Seth Rogen, Danny Trejo, Adam McKay, Judd Apatow, Luke Wilson, Tim Robbins, Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Jerry Stiller, Vince Vaughn. Typical Ferrell comedy, though not his funniest. He plays a news anchor in San Diego (some time in the late 70s), who is confronted by a new woman (Applegate) on the team. Some laugh-out-loud gags but story is a drag. Carell comes off best, and there are a lot of cameos to enjoy. Followed by a sequel in 2013.

**Anderson Tapes, The** (1972, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\*** D: Sidney Lumet. Starring Sean Connery, Dyan Cannon, Martin Balsam, Ralph Meeker, Alan King, Margaret Hamilton, Christopher Walken, Garrett Morris. Good thriller, based on Lawrence Sanders' novel, about plan of ex-convict Connery to rob an entire apartment building. However, he has been under (illegal) surveillance ever since he left prison. Film really comes to life in last 30 minutes, when the heist is actually performed. Good cast, good score (by Quincy Jones), superior entertainment. Adaptation is not flawless, though. It never becomes clear that the surveillance tapes are the reason why we know about the details of the story in the first place. Walken's first film.

**Andromeda Strain, The** (1971, USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Wise. Starring Arthur Hill, David Wayne, James Olson, Kate Reid, Paula Kelly, George Mitchell, Michael Crichton. Suspenseful story about mysterious organism from space that is discovered to have wiped out entire village in New Mexico. A group of scientists gather in ultra-sophisticated laboratory to isolate virus and study it. Good widescreen photography, expert direction by Wise, one of the first science-fiction movies of an incredibly innovative decade. Written by Nelson Gidding, from the novel by Michael Crichton. Douglas Trumbull did the special effects.

**Andromeda Strain, The** (2008, USA) **C-180m. \*\*½** D: Mikael Salomon. Starring Benjamin Bratt, Eric McCormack, Christa Miller, Daniel Dae Kim, Viola Davis, Justin Louis, Barry Flatman, Ted Whittall, Ted Atherton. Made-for-TV remake of the 1971 disaster movie (based on Michael Crichton's novel) about an alien organism that falls on Earth and kills the population of a small Utah town within minutes. The army are trying to contain it, while scientists are studying the virus, and politicians are discussing the use of a small atom bomb. Quite exciting first half, with touches of potent horror, but film bogs down in the second half, especially in its dialogues, which don't convey the panic convincingly and are rather complicated and stilted. Also, the subplot involving a renegade reporter is rather silly. Co-executive produced by Ridley and Tony Scott.

**And Soon the Darkness** (1970, GBR) **C-98m. \*\*** D: Robert Fuest. Starring Pamela Franklin, Michèle Dotrice, Sandor Elès, John Nettleton, Clare Kelly, Hana-Maria Pravda, John Franklyn, Claude Bertrand, Jean Carmet. Potentially intriguing thriller about two British girls cycling through the French countryside, unaware of the fact that there is a sex murderer at large, falls flat because of unimaginative direction, tired plotting. Score is appropriately eerie but film leaves you wondering what Claude Chabrol would have made of the material. At the very least you'll get a chance to brush up on your French in some dialogues.

**And Then There Were None** (1974, GBR/ITA/FRA/SPA/GER) **C-92m. \*\*** D Peter Collinson. Starring Oliver Reed, Richard Attenborough, Gert Fröbe, Elke Sommer, Adolfo Celi, Herbert Lom, Charles Aznavour, Stéphane Audran, Alberto de Mendoza, Maria Rohm, Rik Battaglia, voice of Orson Welles. Rather uninspired retelling of Agatha Christie's fine story of ten guests in remote mansion, who all have committed a crime which they are now about to be punished for by a mystery host. Some 70s style, interesting cast, but film will please only

those that haven't seen the earlier versions. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. Also known as TEN LITTLE INDIANS.

**Angel Heart** (1987, USA/CDN/GBR) **C-113m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alan Parker. Starring Mickey Rourke, Robert De Niro, Lisa Bonet, Charlotte Rampling, Stocker Fontelieu, Pruitt Taylor Vince. Impressive exercise in noir filmmaking, an atmospheric maelstrom. Rourke is worn-down private eye Harry Angel, whose latest case puts him in search of a missing singer in the netherworld of 1950s New Orleans. Rourke's mysterious client De Niro obviously has a score to settle with the elusive man. Soon, people around Harry start dying gruesome deaths. Great mystery plot, brilliant use of settings and fine camerawork make this one of the best mysteries of the 1980s. A highly interesting, well-made movie about identities and finding yourself, might be considered as a link between *BLADE RUNNER* (1982) and *JACOB'S LADDER* (1990). It also has a great soundtrack. Written by the director, based on the novel *Falling Angel* by William Hjortsberg, who wrote Ridley Scott's *LEGEND* (1985).

**Angelo con la Pistola, L'** (1992, ITA) **C-115m.** \*\*½ D: Damiano Damiani. Starring Tahnee Welch, Remo Girone, Eva Grimaldi, Nicola D'Eramo, Franco Scaccia. Another one of director Damiani's political thrillers, this one focuses on unlikely couple Welch and police inspector Girone, who find themselves attracted to each other, as they have different motives for taking (merciless) revenge on corrupt politicians. Interesting subject matter, but too tame, too slow. This stuff belongs to a 1970s potboiler (it was coscripted by Dardano Sacchetti). Score by Riz Ortolani is a little reminiscent of the one for *HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER*. English titles: *ANGEL OF DEATH*, *ANGEL WITH A GUN*.

**Angelo per Satana, Un** (1966, ITA) **90m.** \*\*\* D: Camillo Mastrocinque. Starring Barbara Steele, Anthony Steffen, Betty Delon, Mario Brega, Claudio Gora. Steele is at her best as woman who may be the reincarnation of a witch who died centuries ago. She manipulates the population of a small village using her natural beauty. Good photography, score, atmosphere in superior, typically European horror film, highlighted by suggestive eroticism. English title: *AN ANGEL FOR SATAN*.

**Angst** (1983, AUT) **C-75m.** \*\*½ D: Gerald Kargl. Starring Erwin Leder, Silvia Rabenreither, Edith Rosset, voice of Robert Hunger-Bühler. The Austrian version of *HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER* (1986), perhaps an influence on this classic, is based on a true story. Psychopath Leder is released from prison and immediately sets out to find new victims to satisfy his urge. He breaks into in a seemingly abandoned villa, whose inhabitants return from shopping soon after. Interesting camera angles, good performances in this okay psycho drama that has a few strange goofs that weigh it down. Score by Klaus Schulze fits nicely, though. Cinematographer, editor and co-producer Zbigniew Rybczynski won an Oscar the same year for an animated short (*TANGO*). There's an alternate 8m. prologue in the DVD extras. Also known as *SCHIZOPHRENIA*.

**Anguilla da Trecento Millioni, Un'** (1971, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Salvatore Samperi. Starring Ottavia Piccolo, Lino Toffolo, Mario Adorf, Rodolfo Baldini, Gabriele Ferzetti, Senta Berger. Light-weight crime comedy, pretty much a relic of its time. Toffolo is dim-witted eel thief who constantly angers Adorf. One day he and his friend help out a wealthy friend by looking after his spoilt daughter. Only it turns out that she is not his daughter but his kidnap victim! Some funny twists make this worthwhile, but pace slows down considerably at times. Berger's role as a sex-hungry contessa is one big joke. Cowritten by Aldo Lado, who also assisted director Samperi (*MALIZIA*). English title: *AN EEL WORTH 300 MILLION*.

**Angulimala** (2003, THA) **C-105m.** \*\*½ D: Sutape Tunnirut. Starring Jayanama Nopachai, Stella Malucchi, John Rattanaverroj, Kamron Gunatilaka. Another Thai film (presumably) based on an ancient legend about a young man, who receives a prediction from a mountain

god that he is destined to kill all unbelieving people and he then sets out to kill one thousand after which he thinks he will find redemption. Stylish enough to make this partly gory fantasy an okay view, but the storytelling has very little energy.

**Anguria** (1987, SPA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Bigas Luna. Starring Zelda Rubinstein, Michael Lerner, Talia Paul, Clara Pastor, Craig Hill. Clever horror thriller about psychopath Lerner, who is under the spell of his wicked mother Rubinstein and kills people by cutting out their eyes. Puzzling twist after twenty minutes: Everything that has been shown is actually a movie (within the movie) and there is an imitation killer loose in the cinema! Minimal plot but good suspense in effective shocker, scripted by the director. Alternative Spanish title: ANGUSTIA. Released abroad as ANGUISH.

**Animal Factory** (2000, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: Steve Buscemi. Starring Willem Dafoe, Edward Furlong, Seymour Cassel, Mickey Rourke, Steve Buscemi, Tom Arnold, John Heard, Danny Trejo. Realistic prison drama focusing on young delinquent Furlong and his association with hardened inmate Defoe, who has acquired special status and knows the tricks of the trade. Not an artistic milestone, but good acting, unpretentious handling of the material make this a winner. Cowritten by Edward Bunker, based on his novel.

**Anima Persa** (1977, ITA/FRA) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Dino Risi. Starring Vittorio Gassmann, Catherine Deneuve, Danilo Mattei, Anicée Alvina, Ester Carloni. Intriguing mystery drama about 19-year-old student Mattei, who moves in with his uncle and aunt in their derelict Venetian mansion. Soon he realizes there are noises coming from the attic, and there's a family mystery to be solved. Quite bizarre psycho drama with an excellent performance by Gassmann, almost loses its focus in the mid-section, but finale is fine again. The setting (and set) is great. Based on the novel by Giovanni Arpino. From the director of the fascinating FANTASMA D'AMORE (1981). Shot in 1.96:1 VistaVision. Also known as LOST SOUL.

**Anna and the King** (1999, USA) **C-147m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Andy Tennant. Starring Jodie Foster, Chow Yun-Fat, Bai Ling, Tom Felton. Expensive remake of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical casts Chow Yun-Fat as the proud prince and Foster as the headstrong English teacher, who learns a great deal more than she teaches in exotic Siam. Majestic, pompous, lavishly decorated epic falls flat dramatically as Foster and Chow's romance never really rings true. Ambitious but overlong and less engrossing than it purports to be. First-rate photography and production design used as a camouflage for dramatic flaws.

**Annabelle** (2014, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John R. Leonetti. Starring Annabelle Wallis, Ward Horton, Tony Amendola, Alfre Woodard. Bland prequel to THE CONJURING (2013) is set in the late 60s and early 70s, as a young couple's home is invaded by Satanists who unleash a demon inside the titular vintage doll. Main characters are cold, story is uninteresting and formulaic apart from the fact that the doll never moves. A disappointment. Director Leonetti photographed the INSIDIOUS movies.

**Anna Karenina** (1935, USA) **94m. \*\*\*** D: Clarence Brown. Starring Greta Garbo, Fredric March, Freddie Bartholomew, Maureen O'Sullivan, May Robson, Basil Rathbone. Hollywood adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's classic love drama casts Garbo as the title character, a woman who is torn between the love for General March and her son, who is protected by her estranged husband. Well-acted, swiftly paced, although film is clearly in need of a more stylish direction and a more compelling script. Filmed before as LOVE (with Garbo) and remade several times, as LEO TOLSTOY'S ANNA KARENINA in 1997 and ANNA KARENINA in 2012.

**Anna Karenina** (2012, GBR) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Joe Wright. Starring Keira Knightley, Jude Law, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Kelly Macdonald, Matthew McFadyen, Domhnall Gleeson, Ruth Wilson, Olivia Williams, Emily Watson. Cinematically outstanding adaptation of the Leo

Tolstoy novel. Knightley plays the title character with heart and soul, as a woman respected in society who becomes undone as she falls in love with young count Taylor-Johnson. Her husband (Law, equally convincing) refuses to accept her decision. Wright's brilliant direction melts time and space, blissful cinematography (by Seamus McGarvey) and heartfelt score (by Dario Marianelli) make this a magical experience. The costumes and decors are nothing short of sensational. The plot is sometimes neglected, but Wright's handling of Tom Stoppard's screenplay is awe-inspiring.

**Anna, quel Particolare Piacere** (1973, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Giuliano Carnimeo. Starring Edwige Fenech, Corrado Pani, Richard Conte, John Richardson, Laura Bonaparte, Ettore Manni, Corrado Gaipa, Antonio Casale, Umberto Raho, Tom Felleghy, John Bartha. Drama with crime elements (not a giallo) starring attractive Fenech as a simple cashier, who falls in love with crook Pani, is abused and battered, even sent to work as a prostitute but somehow can't get away from him or his criminal circles. Sweeping score by Luciano Michelini, Fenech and Pani's acting (and looks) make this appealing B-movie fare. Script cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi. English title: SECRETS OF A CALL GIRL, and ANNA: THE PLEASURE, THE TORMENT.

**Année Dernière à Marienbad, L'** (1961, FRA/ITA) **94m. SCOPE \*\*\*D:** Alain Resnais. Starring Delphine Seyrig, Giorgio Albertazzi, Sacha Pitoeff. French art-house classic uses a stream-of-consciousness narrative to ponder upon the passing of time and the power of recollection. At an anonymous hotel, in an anonymous society, whose conversations are presented in fragments, gentleman Albertazzi tries to persuade lady Seyrig that they met before once – last year at Frederiksbad or Marienbad. Slowly she allows the memory of their encounter to come back. Unconventional movie can best be described as a cinematic poem, with excellent black-and-white cinematography by Sacha Vierny. Not for all tastes, slightly pretentious, but intriguing, even fascinating. Recommended to cineastes and readers of Marcel Proust or Virginia Woolf. Director Resnais also scripted with Alain Robbe-Grillet, Volker Schlöndorff was his assistant. Reportedly based on a novel by Adolfo Bioy Casares, which was filmed again in 1974 (as L'INVENZIONE DI MOREL). English titles: LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD, LAST YEAR IN MARIENBAD.

**Anomalisa** (2015, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Charlie Kaufman, Duke Johnson. Starring (the voices of) David Thewlis, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Tom Noonan. Intelligent animated feature about a middle-aged expert in customer service, who flies to Cincinnati for a day to give a presentation. In the hotel he at first tries to contact a former lover, then falls in love with another woman, Lisa, whose voice he heard. The twist: All the voices sound and all the faces look the same, all but (Anoma)Lisa's. Unusually but superbly animated drama, whose theme of alienation fits in well with writer-codirector Kaufman's other features (ADAPTATION, BEING JOHN MALKOVICH). It's based on his own play.

**Another Day in Paradise** (1998, USA) **C-101m. \*\*\* D:** Larry Clark. Starring James Woods, Melanie Griffith, Vincent Kartheiser, Natalie Gregson Wagner, James Otis, Brandon Williams, Brent Briscoe, Peter Sarsgaard, Lou Diamond Phillips. Grittily realistic look at the downfall of a teenage couple, who become involved with drugs and crime. They join drug dealer Woods and his wasted girlfriend Griffith to rob some pharmacy stores. Clark's direction creates an immediacy not found in many other films of this kind. A well-acted, realistic (and violent) drama reminiscent of HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER (1986), PULP FICTION (1994), and any version of Shakespeare's ROMEO AND JULIET. Based on the book by Eddie Little. From the director of the controversial KIDS (1995).

**Another Me** (2013, GBR/SPA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Isabel Coixet. Starring Sophie Turner, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Claire Forlani, Rhys Ifans, Gregg Sulkin, Geraldine Chaplin. Leaden

mystery about young Turner, whose father Ifans is suffering from a terminal disease. One day, she seems to be stalked by a young woman who looks like her. Is it her doppelganger? Poorly paced chiller has some solid performances, most notably Chaplin's, but never catches fire. Based on the novel by Cathy MacPhail.

**Anrakkî Monkî** (1998, JAP) **C-111m**. \*\*\* D: Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Starring Shin'ichi Tsutsumi, Hiroshi Shimizu, Akira Yamamoto, Ikko Suzuki. Kimika Yoshino. Tsutsumi is on his way to rob a bank, when a robber comes running out with a bag full of money. When the police kills the guy and his partner, Tsutsumi ends up with the money and manages to escape. During his flight he accidentally stabs a young woman, which haunts him for the rest of the film. In another (related) plot strand, three bumbling criminals also accidentally kill someone: a gangland boss. Funny, black crime comedy plays much like Quentin Tarantino's violence fantasies, but instead of ripping them off, remains quirkily unique, with rich texture and good performances. Another cult movie from the director of *DANGAN RUNNER* (1996). English title: *UNLUCKY MONKEY*.

**Ant Bully, The** (2006, USA) **C-88m**. \*\*½ D: John A. Davis. Starring (the voices of) Julia Roberts, Nicholas Cage, Meryl Streep, Paul Giamatti, Zach Tyler, Regina King, Bruce Campbell, Lily Tomlin, Ricardo Montalban, John A. Davis. Ambitious, star-studded animation feature about a boy, who's constantly bullied and resorts to flooding ant hills. One day he is shrunk to ant size and must try to survive in an ant colony. Some good animation, but plot is not compelling enough, despite obvious educational value. Based on the book by John Nickle.

**Antefatto** (1971, ITA) **C-85m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Claudine Auger, Luigi Pistilli, Claudio Volonté, Anna Maria Rosati, Chris Avram, Leopoldo Trieste, Laura Betti, Brigitte Skay, Isa Miranda, Paola Rubens, Guido Boccaccini, Roberto Bonanni, Giovanni Nuvoletti, Nicoletta Elmi. Bava's follow-up to *CINQUE BAMBOLE PER LA LUNA D'AGOSTO* is a gory slasher movie which anticipated the renaissance of the horror film in the late 1970s and early 1980s. When an old woman is killed, several characters fight for the inheritance, a beautiful bay in the countryside. Greed soon drives them to murder. Typically stylish and colorful, with a nice score by Stelvio Cipriani. Some of the gore effects are breath-taking. Screenplay by Mario Bava, Joseph McLee and Filippo Ottoni, from a story by Dardano Sacchetti, Franco Barberi. Mario's son Lamberto was assistant director. Alternative titles: *L'ECOLOGIA DEL DELITTO*, *TWITCH OF THE DEATH NERVE*, *BAY OF BLOOD*, *CARNAGE*, and *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT PART II* (to name a few). Also shown at 90m. (allegedly). Shot in Panoramic (1,85:1).

**Anthropophagus II** (1982, ITA) **C-87m**. ☞ D: Peter Newton (=Joe d'Amato). Starring George Eastman, Edmund Purdom, Ian Danby. Intoxicated Greek goes on a rampage in this boring slasher movie. It's painfully unexciting, all attempts at suspense are drowned out by sheer stupidity. Direction is somewhat OK, but otherwise film is unbearable. This follow-up to the director's *ANTHROPOPHAGUS* (English title: *THE GRIM REAPER*) is also known as *ABSURD*.

**Antichrist** (2009, DAN/SWE/POL/GER/FRA/ITA) **C/B&W-104m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*\* D: Lars von Trier. Starring Willem Dafoe, Charlotte Gainsbourg. Disturbing psycho drama reflects upon the aftermath of a tragic accident. Dafoe and Gainsbourg's toddler son falls to his death while they are having sex in another room of the house. She becomes mentally undone, and he, a psychotherapist, tries to cure her. Together they make a trip to Eden, a cabin in the woods, where she used to spend time with her son. She is soon overcome by fear, which she thinks is caused by the woods around her. Danish master director von Trier has fashioned a psycho horror drama of raw power, with incredibly brave performances by its stars. Film offers an examination of the link between eros and thanatos (sex and death) –

much like it is a theme in Japanese pinku movies – with rampant animal symbolism, a dark, broodingly atmospheric score, and brilliant cinematography (by Anthony Dod Mantle) that makes stylish use of ultra-slow motion, black-and-white and a soft lens. Requires multiple viewing – if you are strong enough. Dedicated to Andrei Tarkovsky, one of von Trier's idols. Also worth comparing to Robert Altman's IMAGES (1972). Gainsbourg won Best Actress at Cannes.

**Anticristo, L'** (1974, ITA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Carla Gravina, Mel Ferrer, Arthur Kennedy, George Coulouris, Alida Valli, Mario Scaccia, Umbero Orsini, Anita Strindberg. Unjustly dismissed Italian EXORCIST-clone about Ferrer's daughter Gravina, who has frightening visions of a witch trial. The paralyzed young woman is suffering from a childhood trauma and slowly starts showing signs of a demonic possession. Her uncle Kennedy, a priest, knows what to do... Some good, effective sequences highlight this chiller that is not really that similar to the Friedkin classic. Unsettling score by Ennio Morricone, who – like director De Martino – pulls all the stops at the thrilling finale. Photographed by Joe D'Amato! Released in the U.S. as THE TEMPTER. Other title: THE ANTICHRIST.

**Antiviral** (2012, CDN) **C-108m. \*\*** D: Brandon Cronenberg. Starring Caleb Landry Jones, Sarah Gadon, Douglas Smith, Joe Pingue, Nicholas Campbell. Science-fiction drama from the son of David Cronenberg, who takes up some of his father's themes. In the near future, it's the latest fashion to contract diseases and viruses by celebrities. Jones works for such a clinic and smuggles viruses out for the blackmarket. Then he manages to contract his favorite star's disease, from which she is about to die. Slow, ponderous movie could have used a dose of caffeine. Some nice visuals, interesting ideas, but is so focused on its production design that it neglects pace and plot completely.

**Ant-Man** (2015, USA) **C-117m. \*\*½** D: Peyton Reed. Starring Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Evangeline Lilly, Corey Stoll, Judy Greer, Michael Pena. Marvel blockbuster about yet another superhero. Scientist Douglas has withdrawn from his company, trying to prevent his invention from being commercialized by the wrong people. When his former protégé comes close to replicating his discovery, he is forced to select someone who can don the costume of Ant-Man. Fairly entertaining but also strictly by-the-numbers action fantasy will give Marvel fans what they expect. Edgar Wright planned to direct this for a long time; he is still credited as a co-writer.

**Antonio è Placido Attenti Ragazzi... Chi Rompe Paga** (1975, ITA/TUR) **C-79m. \*½** D: Giorgio Ferroni. Starring Giancarlo Prete, Gianni Rizzo, Lars Bloch, Brad Harris. Italian buddy movie, typical of that time. Two machos team up in driving a tomato truck and battle a local wanna-be gangster boss. Obscure action comedy is pretty much obsolete and irrelevant today. Director Ferroni's last film. English title: WHO BREAKS... PAYS.

**Antz** (1998, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\*** D: E. Darnell, L. Guterman. Voices of Woody Allen, Sharon Stone. Delightful computer-animated feature from Spielberg's Dreamworks Studios about 'Z', an ant living in a giant colony, who is unhappy with his life as a worker but soon stumbles into an incredible adventure with a beautiful princess. Together they embark on a journey to find 'Insectopia', a legendary place somewhere outside their ant-hill. Stunning animation, especially the facial expressions of the characters are meticulous. Kids will find the film even more appealing.

**Anywhere But Here** (1999, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Wayne Wang. Starring Susan Sarandon, Natalie Portman, Hart Bochner, Shawn Hatosy, Bonnie Bedelia, John Diehl. Neurotic mother Sarandon decides to leave her home town in Minnesota to find happiness in Beverly Hills and drags her frustrated 14-year-old daughter Portman along. Their love-hate

relationship slowly develops into a friendship. Sensitively handled, bittersweet drama unfortunately lacks dramatic impact. Based on the novel by Mona Simpson.

**Any Which Way You Can** (1980, USA) **C-116m**. \*½ D: Buddy Van Horn. Starring Clint Eastwood, Sondra Locke, Geoffrey Lewis, William Smith, Harry Guardino, Ruth Gordon, Glen Campbell, Anne Ramsey, Logan Ramsey, Barry Corbin, James Gammon. Rather stupid, annoying comedy, a sequel to EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE. Eastwood plays a street fighter, who travels through the country with an Orang-Utan. Plot simply an excuse for final fight. Pointless, hardly funny action film.

**Apartment Zero** (1988, GBR) **C-124m**. \*\*\* D: Martin Donovan. Starring Colin Firth, Hart Bochner, Dora Bryan, Liz Smith, Fabrizio Bentivoglio. Absorbing psycho drama about homophobic film buff Firth, who is forced to take a tenant in his flat in Buenos Aires when his movie theater threatens to go bankrupt. He seems to have found the perfect man in Bochner, an American who works for a local computer firm. But is he really the man he pretends to be? And who is responsible for the gruesome murder series that has taken the lives of nine innocent people? Somewhat aloof atmosphere is completely overcome by brilliant acting, especially by Firth as the nervous, fastidious movie expert. The script by director Donovan and David Koepf is fine, the characterizations psychologically valid. The ending is a little bit of a letdown, though. This does not lag far behind films like THE TENANT and BARTON FINK. The director cut the film by eight minutes for video release.

**Ape** (1976, USA/KOR) **C-87m**. **SCOPE BOMB** D: Paul Leder. Starring Rod Arrants, Joanna Kerns, Alex Nicol. Terrible, amateurish movie about a giant ape that runs rampant and destroys everything in his way until military action is on its way. Ridiculous shots of a man in a gorilla costume walking through miniature sets. Avoid. Also known as A\*P\*E.

**Apocalypse Domani** (1980, ITA/SPA) **C-91m**. \*½ D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring John Saxon, Elizabeth Turner, John Morghen (=Giovanni Lombardo Radice), Cinzia De Carolis, Tony King, Wallace Wilkinson, Venantino Venantini. Sloppy, grungy actioner filmed in Atlanta about a bunch of Vietnam vets who must realize that they have returned to the States with a virus that slowly turns them into cannibals! Saxon is actually quite good as one of the vets, and script is certainly ambitious (by Italian B-movie standards), but result is a mess. A subplot involving a precocious girl is completely pointless. Some typical gore scenes may make it worthwhile for gorehounds. Australian video version is said to run 97m. Has a slew of alternative titles, the most common being CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE or APOCALYPSE CANNIBAL, HUNTER OF THE APOCALYPSE, INVASION OF THE FLESH HUNTERS and SAVAGE APOCALYPSE.

**Apollo 18** \*\*½

**Apollo 13** (1995, USA) **C-139m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ron Howard. Starring Tom Hanks, Bill Paxton, Kevin Bacon, Gary Sinise, Ed Harris, Kathleen Quinlan, Miko Hughes, David Andrews, Xander Berkeley. The Apollo 13 mission was to be the second time human beings should walk on the Earth's moon. This film reenacts the dramatic rescue operation after an electric error in the shuttle puts the crew in danger. Will the astronauts make it back to Earth before their oxygen runs out? The outcome is no surprise. Well-made, quite dramatic space drama isn't very compelling to non-Americans, who might wonder what the fuss is all about. Like NIXON, this is a film mostly for U.S. American audiences. Based on real-life astronaut Jim Lovell's and Jeffrey Kluger's book *Lost Moon*. Oscar winner for Best Film Editing and Best Sound.

**Appointment, The** (1981, GBR) **C-90m**. \*½ D: Lindsey C. Vickers. Starring Edward Woodward, Jane Merrow, Samantha Weysom, John Judd. Three years after a girl is found murdered in the woods, apparently by a mysterious entity, Woodward's 14-year-old daughter might be in contact with that force and might just use it against her father. After

a promising start, this horror mystery goes absolutely nowhere, with tiresome, unconvincing family scenes and seemingly endless scenes of Woodward on the road. Some unusual special effects don't redeem it. Written by the director.

**Apt Pupil** (1998, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Bryan Singer. Starring Ian McKellen, Brad Renfro, Bruce Davison, David Schwimmer, Elias Koteas. A high-school student (Renfro) discovers one of his neighbors (McKellen) to be a wanted Nazi criminal. The boy blackmails him into telling him everything about his job in the Third Reich - and the old man complies - but it turns out it's not just the boy that controls the situation. Intriguing but terribly uneven, well-paced but lacking valuable characterization of the boy. Director Singer shows talent (again) in this adaptation of a Stephen King novella.

**Aquarius** (1986, ITA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Michele Soavi. Starring David Brandon, Barbara Cupisti, Robert Gligorov, Martin Philips, Ulrike Schwerk, Mary Sellers, Joanne Smith. Soavi's debut feature is a classic slash-and-stalk picture about a group of rehearsing actors trapped in a theatre where an escaped maniac is about to kill them all. Story is ordinary but Soavi provides enough gimmicks in order to make this fun: The killer is wearing a huge owl's mask (a Boschian fantasy) and is using all kinds of tools to kill (axe, drill, chainsaw). The final third is really good, with some stylish, even poetic touches. Good score by Simon Boswell. Alternative titles: STAGE FRIGHT, DELIRIA, BLOODY BIRD.

**Aquella Casa en las Afueras** (1980, SPA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Eugenio Martín. Starring Javier Escrivá, Silvia Aguilar, Alida Valli, Mara Goyanes, Carmen Maura. Mystery drama from the maker of HORROR EXPRESS (1972). Pregnant Aguilar moves with her husband into a villa outside of Madrid, Spain. Almost immediately she recognizes the place and believes she has been there before. What is the secret of the house and does sinister caretaker Valli know more than she pretends? Intriguing sleeper holds up almost to the very end. English title: THAT HOUSE IN THE OUTSKIRTS.

**Arabesque** (1966, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Stanley Donen. Starring Gregory Peck, Sophia Loren, Alan Badel, Kieron Moore, Carl Duering. Amusing thriller, a kind of Hitchcock/Bond hybrid, about professor Peck, who is asked to decipher an Egyptian code and teams up with beautiful Loren. Soon they have to run for their lives. Second-rate plot is easily pulled off by the stars. Donen's fine direction and Henry Mancini's cool score add to the fun. Set in London, with ample 60s period flavour. Based on a novel by Gordon Cotler.

**Arachnophobia** (1990, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*** D: Frank Marshall. Starring Jeff Daniels, Harley Jane Kozak, John Goodman, Julian Sands, Stuart Pankin, Brian McNamara. A venomous Venezuelan spider chances to travel to rural village in a coffin and puts up cobwebs in General Practitioner Daniels' barn. Only after several deaths does scientist Sands suspect that his newest eight-legged discovery has found its way to the States. Scary, effective horror thriller with a welcome sense of humor. Goodman is funny as the exterminator. Produced by Amblin Entertainment, a company owned by Steven Spielberg.

**Arbalète, L'** (1984, FRA) **C-90m. \*½** D: Sergio Gobbi. Starring Daniel Auteuil, Michel Beaune, Marisa Berenson, Marcel Bozzuffi, Didier Sauvegrain. Parisian drug lords and their warring gangs have run out of drugs and cop Auteuil considers this the best opportunity to go undercover and nail them for good. Ordinary, boring action thriller without highlights. Jacques Revaux's score is quite good. English title: ASPHALT WARRIORS.

**Arcano Incantatore, L'** (1996, ITA) **C-96m. \*\*\*½** D: Pupi Avati. Starring Carlo Cecchi, Stefano Dionisi, Arnaldo Ninchi, Andrea Scorzoni, Consuelo Ferrara, Renza Rinaldi. In 16th century Italy a young priest is forced to leave the seminary and led to an eremite living in a castle ruin to replace his deceased servant. The old recluse is referred to as 'The Evil One', and indeed he makes experiments and studies the supernatural. Slow-moving drama with horror

touches is interesting but too heavy-going. Good score by Pino Donaggio. Writer-director Avati would not make another mystery until the excellent IL NASCONDIGLIO / THE HIDE-OUT (2007). English titles: ARCAN SORCERER, THE MYSTERIOUS ENCHANTER.

**Arena, The** (1974, USA/ITA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Steve Carver, Joe D'Amato. Starring Margaret Markov, Pam Grier, Lucretia Love, Paul Muller, Daniele Vargas, Marie Louise, Sara Bay (=Rosalba Neri), Mimmo Palmara, Tom Felleghy. Change of setting for usual WIP formula as Markov, Grier and other women are enslaved and become gladiators in Rome. Weak plot made watchable by Grier's physique. The score by Francesco de Masi is also not bad. Co-director D'Amato also photographed the picture. Produced by Roger Corman and Mark Damon. Co-edited by Joe Dante! Remade in 2001. Alternative title: NAKED WARRIORS.

**Argent des Autres, L'** (1978, FRA) **C-106m. \*\*** D: Christian de Chalonge. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Catherine Deneuve, Claude Brasseur, Michel Serrault, Umberto Orsini, Juliet Berto. Bank exec Trintignant is suddenly fired, because the loan he granted to Brasseur vanished into thin air. His situation seems hopeless, when Brasseur re-appears and suggests a deal. Much too talky, none-too-interesting drama has good production values to offer but little more. The bizarre sound effects are unsuitable. Based on the novel by Nancy Markham. César winner for Best Film, Best Director. English titles: DIRTY MONEY, OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY.

**Argo** (2012, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ben Affleck. Starring Ben Affleck, Bryan Cranston, Alan Arkin, John Goodman, Victor Garber, Tate Donovan, Clea DuVall, Kyle Chandler, Zeljko Ivanek, Philip Baker Hall. Good thriller drama based on the 1979/1980 hostage crisis in Iran, where six Americans narrowly escaped the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran. They find shelter at the Canadian ambassador's house, and it's up to Affleck to come up with an idea how to get them out of the country. Together with producer Arkin and special effects master Goodman (playing John Chambers), they come up with an outrageous plan to fake a movie location scout and smuggle them out as members of the film crew. Almost unbeatable story weighed down somewhat by Affleck's one-dimensional performance; he is also the only one who doesn't come across as late 1970s, everything else, the decor, the clothes, even the hair is all impeccable. Fine score by Alexandre Desplat.

**Ari-Baba to Yonjuppiki no Tozoku** (1971, JAP) **C-55m. n/r** D: Akira Daikuhara, Hiroshi Shidara. Children's fairy tale about a king called Ali Baba (who is the 33rd generation after the original 'Open Sesame' one) and a little boy, who tries to cheat him with an army of cats. Obnoxious, loud, this anime is not worth rediscovering, despite having had Hayao Miyazaki as a key animator. English titles: ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES, and ALIBABA'S REVENGE.

**Arizona Si Scatenò... e li Fecce Fuori Tutti** (1970, ITA/SPA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Martino. Starring Anthony Steffen, Rosalba Neri, Aldo Sambrell, Roberto Camardiel, Raf Baldassarre. Boring spaghetti western about gunslinger Steffen, who is double-crossed by a bad guy and after escaping his hanging proceeds to get his revenge. Rather uninteresting western, at least it's technically okay. Score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: ARIZONA, ARIZONA COLT RETURNS (hinting at a 1966 western), ARIZONA LETS FLY AND KILLS EVERYBODY, and IF YOU GOTTA SHOOT SOMEBODY... BANG! BANG! Wow!

**Arlington Road** (1999, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mark Pellington. Starring Jeff Bridges, Tim Robbins, Joan Cusack, Hope Davis, Robert Gossett, Mason Gamble. History professor Bridges, whose wife was killed in a failed FBI operation, lives with his 10 year-old son in a quiet suburb. He befriends neighbor Robbins' family and soon starts wondering why his son starts talking about his dead mother with *them*. Research about Robbins shows that he may not be the man he claims to be, and the blueprints in his home office further add to Bridges'

puzzlement. Who is the man across the street and what is he planning to do? Multi-layered story is undermined by some improbable twists (mainly concerned with Bridges' motivation), but Pellington's direction is first-rate, and a pulsating score by Angelo Badalamenti adds to the excitement. Your reaction to this film will mostly depend on your acceptance of the unusual ending.

**Armageddon** (1998, USA) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Bay. Starring Bruce Willis, Ben Affleck, Billy Bob Thornton, Liv Tyler, Steve Buscemi. Crackerjack disaster thriller about attempts to change course - or destroy - giant asteroid that is headed towards Earth. Oil rig worker Willis is sent to the menace from outer space to avert the end of the world. Credibility is abandoned early on, but film is so quickly paced - thanks to breathless direction, tight editing and beautiful photography - that you won't notice until the film is over. The action is superb. Title song 'I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing' by Aerosmith among the film's highlights.

**Armagedon** (1976, FRA/ITA) **C-93m. \*\*½ D:** Alain Jessua. Starring Alain Delon, Jean Yanne, Renato Salvatori, Michel Duchaussoy, Michel Creton. Uneven drama about working class guy Yanne, who suddenly inherits a lot of money and dreams of an extravagant existence. To achieve international fame he becomes a dangerous blackmailer (calling himself Armagedon), and with the help of his dim-witted assistant Salvatori soon attracts the attention of psychologist Delon. Well-intended drama is too slow at the beginning but ends intriguingly. A showcase much more for Yanne than Delon, who produced the film and shows himself in an impeccable light. Director Jessua scripted, from a novel by David Lippincott. Also known as ARMAGEDDON.

**Armee Gretchen, Eine** (1973, SUI) **C-100m. \*½ D:** Erwin C. Dietrich. Starring Elisabeth Felchner, Karin Heske, Renate Kasché, Carl Möhner. Boring soft-sex film with lots of nudity. In the last days of World War Two, the Nazis force young women to join the army, in order to raise the morale of the soldiers. Barely any plot, not worth your while, unless you find watching old Nazi propaganda material (mostly posters) interesting. English title: SHE-DEVILS OF THE SS, SS CUTTHROATS, and FRÄULEINS IN UNIFORM.

**Armitage III: Poly-Matrix** (1995, JAP) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Hiroyuki Ochi. Well-paced manga about a detective and his cocky friend Armitage, who have allied to battle evil syndicates on Mars. This time they go against a mysterious stranger who murders female androids. When they find out what's behind all this, Armitage is in for a surprise. Quite good animation, acceptable story. At the very least this one goes to show how influential Ridley Scott's BLADE RUNNER still is. For fans of Japanese mangas. Subtitled ELECTRO BLOOD in the U.S.

**Armour of God, The** (1986, HGK) **C-87m. \*\*½ D:** Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Rosamund Kwan, Alan Tam, Lola Forna, Maria Dolores. What starts out as an amusing Indiana Jones-spoof turns out to be an ordinary adventure Jackie Chan-style, with our hero trying to rescue his girlfriend from an evil sect that is also in possession of some valuable antiques. The action scenes and stunts are fine as usual. Chan nearly got himself killed when performing one (see the outtakes at the end of the film). Filmed in Yugoslavia, France, Austria and Hong Kong. Also shown at 94m. Followed by a sequel in 1991.

**Armour of God 2: Operation Condor, The** (1991, HGK) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Carol Cheng, Eva Cobo de Garcia, Shoko Ikeda, Alfredo Brel Sanchez. Jackie Chan (playing himself) is hired to find Nazi gold hidden somewhere in the African desert. This 'Indiana Jones' parody is reportedly the most expensive Hong Kong film ever, but production values alone can't camouflage the poor script (co-authored by Chan). Childish humor won't have anyone laughing but kids, Jackie's female costars are positively

annoying with their yelling and screaming. Some eye-popping stunt work makes film endurable. The first 20 minutes are good, from then on silly slapstick takes over.

**Army of Darkness** (1993, USA) **C-89m. \*\*\*** D: Sam Raimi. Starring Bruce Campbell, Embeth Davidtz, Marcus Gilbert, Ian Abercrombie, Richard Grove, Bridget Fonda, Ted Raimi, Bill Moseley, Josh Becker, Harley Cokeliss, William Lustig, Bernard Rose, Sam Raimi. THE EVIL DEAD (1982) was pure horror, EVIL DEAD II (1987) was comic horror, and this third part in Sam Raimi's trilogy is pure comedy with splatter elements. Plot starts right where the previous film ended: Ash (Campbell) has landed in a medieval country and must get the Necronomicon (Book of the Dead) in order to be able to travel back in time. Lots of fights with monsters ensue. Episodic, occasionally silly, but predominantly hilarious horror comedy steps deliciously over the line. Originally released at 81m., later extended to 96m. Two different endings of the movie exist. The 'potion ending' is less corny and should be preferred over the 'supermarket ending'. Raimi also cowrote with his brother Ivan and coedited the picture. Campbell coproduced.

**Arnold** (1973, USA) **C-94m. \*\*½** D: Georg Fenady. Starring Stella Stevens, Roddy McDowall, Elsa Lanchester, Shani Wallis, Farley Granger, Victor Buono, John McGiver, Bernard Fox, Patric Knowles, Norman Stuart. Black horror comedy about recently deceased, super-rich Stuart, who weds his lover Stevens during his funeral(!), and returns from the grave (somewhat) to kill off his greedy heirs. Atmospheric, amusing, but unevenly plotted, badly timed. Still, an interesting, well-cast predecessor to MURDER BY DEATH (1976), which also starred Lanchester. Worth seeking out for cult movie buffs.

**Aro Tobulkin – en la Mente del Asesino** (2002, MEX/SPA) **C/B&W-95m. \*\*\*** D: Agustí Villaronga, Isaac Pierre-Racine, Lydia Zimmermann. Starring Daniel Giménez-Cacho, Carmen Beato, Zóltán Józán, Mariona Castillo. Remarkable semi-documentary about Hungarian serial killer Aro Tobulkin, who burned seven people alive in a rescue station in Guatemala in 1981. Real footage from an early 80s documentary filmed by Lise August is interspersed with (partly fictional) interviews with Tobulkin and those who knew him, as well as black-and-white sequences detailing his childhood in Hungary. Quite difficult to watch, even depressing, but fascinating and well-handled by director Villaronga (TRAS EL CRISTAL). Also known as GUATEMALA MASSACRE.

**Around the World in 80 Days** (2004, USA/GBR/EIR/GER) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Frank Coraci. Starring Jackie Chan, Steve Coogan, Cécile De France, Jim Broadbent, Ian McNeice, Richard Branson, Macy Gray, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Maggie Q, Sammo Hung, Rob Schneider, Frank Coraci, Luke Wilson, Owen Wilson, John Keogh, Mark Addy, John Cleese, Kathy Bates. Engaging remake of the Jules Verne adventure about inventor Phileas Fogg (Coogan) and his agile but bumbling valet Passepartout (Chan), who accept a wager to travel around the world in 80 days (all that at the turn of the century!). Juvenile humor well-balanced by trademark Chan-action. A diverting view. Was a major disappointment at the box-office, though.

**Arrebato** (1979, SPA) **C-110m. \*\*** D: Iván Zulueta. Starring Eusebio Poncela, Cecilia Roth, Will More. Spanish cult film about a low-budget horror filmmaker, who is contacted by an old acquaintance. The eccentric man has an enigmatic audio and video message for him. In flashbacks we see how the two originally met. It turns out drugs play a major role in seeking a new consciousness for both. Frustratingly slow-moving, almost defeatist psycho drama about what it means to be an artist, certainly not a horror film. See for yourself if you can connect to it. English title: RAPTURE.

**Arrival** (2016, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Denis Villeneuve. Starring Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner, Forest Whitaker, Michael Stuhlbarg, Mark O'Brien. Science-fiction drama about the

arrival of 12 extra-terrestrial vessels on Earth and humanity's attempt to communicate with the aliens on board. Linguist professor Adams is called on the team and together with physicist Renner slowly makes progress in understanding their language. Deliberately paced film intersperses memories of Adams' deceased daughter, which ultimately may help her figure out the mystery. Notable but not great, based on a story by Ted Chiang. Score by Johann Johannsson.

**Arrivano i Titani** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ducio Tessari. Starring Pedro Armendáriz, Giuliano Gemma, Antonella Lualdi, Serge Nubret, Jacqueline Sassard, Fernando Rey. Peplum epic, a bit better than your usual Italian one. Gemma plays one of the Titans, trapped in the underworld, who is sent up to Earth to fetch evil ruler Armendáriz. The despot's daughter Sassard has never seen a man before, since he has received a warning by an oracle. Sword-and-sandal fare is like a tour through Greek mythology and has a funny performance by Gemma. Sassard is lovely. Overlength and general silliness hem above-average efforts. English titles: MY SON, THE HERO, SONS OF THUNDER, and THE TITANS.

**Arrivederci Amore, Ciao** (2006, ITA/FRA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Michele Soavi. Starring Alessio Boni, Michele Placido, Isabella Ferrari, Alina Nadelea, Carlo Cecchi. Director Soavi's theatrical comeback (made more than 10 years after the cult movie *DELLAMORTE, DELLAMORE*) is okay thriller about cold-blooded opportunist Boni, who returns from a mercenary job in South America only to clash with police inspector Placido, who puts him behind bars for two years. Then he becomes a nightclub collaborator and ultimately joins forces with Placido, as an undercover agent. Soavi's direction is quite good, but otherwise this is standard crime drama fare, with several plot deficiencies. Works best as a character study. Placido gives a towering performance. Based on the novel by Massimo Carlotto. English title: THE GOODBYE KISS.

**Arsène Lupin** (2004, FRA/ITA/SPA/GBR) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jean-Paul Salomé. Starring Romain Duris, Kristin Scott Thomas, Pascal Greggory, Eva Green, Robin Renucci, Patrick Toomey, Mathieu Carrière. Adaptation of several of author Maurice Leblanc's *Arsène Lupin* stories about a French master thief, who investigates the murder of his father in 19<sup>th</sup> century France. Well-produced and visually appealing, but not storywise; its main character leaves us cold. From the director of *BELPHEGOR – LE FANTOME DU LOUVRE* (2001).

**Arthur et les Minimoys** (2006, FRA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Luc Besson. Starring Freddie Highmore, Mia Farrow, Penny Balfour, Doug Rand, Adam LeFevre. Quite endearing fantasy story about a young boy (Highmore) who stays with his grandmother Farrow (who looks incredibly young!) in the countryside. She keeps telling him stories of his grandfather, who disappeared three years ago. Now as they face eviction the boy sets out to retrieve a legendary treasure his granddad was after - but has to enter the land of the Minimoys for that - fantasy creatures that are even smaller than ants. Underground, film is computer-animated and provides adequate action and high adventure. Some story flaws offset by Besson's expert direction. Thrilling for kids - and adults will savor movie references from STAR WARS to LORD OF THE RINGS, and even PULP FICTION! Filmed in English (with even the animation fitting to English dialogue). English version features voice talents of Madonna, Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Chazz Palminteri, Emilio Estevez, and David Bowie. English title: ARTHUR AND THE MINIMOYS / AND THE INVISIBLES.

**Arthur et la Vengeance de Maltazard** (2009, FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Luc Besson. Starring Freddie Highmore, Mia Farrow, Jimmy Fallon, Logan Miller, Ron Crawford. Still appealing but basically disappointing sequel to *ARTHUR ET LES MINIMOYS* (2006). Highmore has waited ten months to return to his Minimoy princess, but then he receives a call for help

and his parents won't let him stay on his grandmother's farm. He still enters the underground world and tries to find his princess. It turns out the villain from the first film is back with a vengeance. Expertly made fantasy by Besson, but it turns out film only advertises part three, ARTHUR ET LA GUERRE DE DEUX MONDES (2010) and ends on a cliffhanger. English title: ARTHUR 2: THE REVENGE OF MALTAZARD.

**Artificial Intelligence: AI** (2001, USA) **C-145m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Haley Joel Osment, Frances O'Connor, Sam Robards, Jake Thomas, Jude Law, William Hurt, Ken Leung, Brendan Gleeson, voices of Ben Kingsley, Robin Williams, Meryl Streep, Chris Klein. None other than Steven Spielberg tries his hand at Stanley Kubrick's legacy, the story the cinematic genius always wanted to film. Set in the future, film deals with creation of a revolutionary, incredibly life-like kind of android, a boy (Osment), who can be adopted and brought up like your own son. Osment's new family are skeptical at first and only slowly get accustomed to their new offspring. Problems are about to arise soon, however. This adaptation of Brian Aldiss' short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" is long, not always easy to digest but intelligent and ultimately worthwhile, thanks to a remarkable performance by the young Osment and John Williams' heart-felt score. Reminiscent of the classic BLADE RUNNER (1982) in many respects, and film's reputation and reception may also improve over the years. Multiple viewing recommended. This was the first film Spielberg wrote since the 1982 POLTERGEIST!

**Artists and Models** (1955, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\* D:** Norman Taurog. Starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Shirley Maclaine, Dorothy Malone, Eddie Mayehoff, Eva Gabor, Anita Ekberg, Jack Elam. Entertaining, funny comedy, a typical vehicle for its stars. Martin and Lewis play an unlikely duo, who would love to make it as (comic-book) artists in New York City. Maclaine and Malone are their love interests. Light-weight, carefree, colourful entertainment from the 1950s. Lewis is really funny here. Based on a play by Michael Davidson.

**Arts of the Snake & Crane** (1977, HGK) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lo Wei. Starring Jackie Chan, Lee Yin-Kuo, Kim Chin-Lan. Eight Shaolin masters develop a new fighting style and write it down in a book. When they mysteriously disappear and with them the book, Chan enters the scene, claiming that he has it. Soon, all kinds of clans (Black Tiger, Black Lion) are trying to get hold of it. Jackie is in top form in this well-directed eastern that is hampered by an undramatic plot. The fight scenes are good, especially the last fight. Produced and cowritten by director Wei (FIST OF FURY). Original version runs longer and may also be titled SNAKE & CRANE ARTS OF SHAOLIN.

**As Above, So Below** (2014, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** John Erick Dowdle. Starring Perdita Weeks, Ben Feldman, Edwin Hodge, Francois Civil, Marion Lambert. One of the better – if not best – found-footage films, this one starts like a nice adventure movie and develops into a full-fledged horror movie. Pretty archaeology professor Weeks travels to Paris, where her father thought was the location of the famous Philosopher's Stone. She ventures into the catacombs with a cameraman, her ex-boyfriend and a few French guides, but encounters eerie phenomena and, ultimately, their own worst fears. Technically astounding (if you can get past the shaky camerawork) from the director of the excellent DEVIL (2010), film has some flaws, but it's exciting, even riveting, and delivers some electrifying jolts. Back story, referencing Dante and other historical events, also adds to the fun.

**As Good As It Gets** (1997, USA) **C-138m. \*\*\*½ D:** James L. Brooks. Starring Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt, Greg Kinnear, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Skeet Ulrich, Shirley Knight, Yearley Smith, Jamie Kennedy, Harold Ramis, Lawrence Kasdan, Shane Black, Todd Solondz. Marvelous romantic comedy drama about ultra-neurotic writer Nicholson, who takes a liking to his regular waitress Hunt and finds himself taking involuntary commitments, even with his

homosexual next-door neighbor Kinnear. Simply wonderful. Script by Brooks and Mark Andrus presents true-to-life characters, whose problems the viewer is willing to accept and share. Funny and sad, one of director Brooks' best achievements.

**Ash Wednesday** (1973, USA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Larry Peerce. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Henry Fonda, Helmut Berger, Keith Baxter, Maurice Teynac. Turgid soaper about rich but unhappy Taylor and her disintegrating marriage to Fonda (who appears at film's resolution). She goes to Europe for a face lift, has doubts about herself and the world, meets gigolo Berger and contemplates cheating on her hubby. Maurice Jarre's score is appropriately melancholy and best thing about this ultra-boring misfire. Can't believe they made films like this (that pretty much disappeared despite star presence). Long live the 1970s. Original version ran 99m.

**Asmodexia** (2014, SPA) **C-81m.** \*\*½ D: Marc Carreté. Starring Albert Baró, Marta Belmonte, Pepo Blasco, Roser Bundó, Ramon Canals, Claudia Pons. Priest Baró goes through rural Spain as a kind of travelling exorcist with a young girl. Together they await the coming of a demon, which is connected to the end of the Mayan calendar in December 2012. Horror film lacks thrills, but it has some style and its visuals are interesting.

**Asphyx, The** (1973, GBR/USA) **C-99m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Peter Newbrook. Starring Robert Stephens, Robert Powell, Jane Lapotaire, Alex Scott, Ralph Arliss. Stephens is convincing as a man obsessed with capturing the Asphyx, a demon which appears at the moment of death. By trapping it, he intends to become immortal. Well-scripted, chilling horror, one of the best period shockers of that time. Good widescreen photography by Freddie Young. Former cinematographer Newbrook's only film as a director. Alternative title: SPIRIT OF THE DEAD.

**Assassin, The** (1993, HGK) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Chung Siu-Hung. Starring Zheng Feng Yi, Rosamund Kwan, Max Mok. An outlaw is trained to be an assassin for a Ming ruler. He becomes an emotionless fighting machine, until he meets an old love again and switches sides. Impressively directed and photographed martial-arts action is weighed down by a weak plot.

**Assassination Bureau, The** (1969, GBR/USA) **C-110m.** \*\*\* D: Basil Dearden. Starring Oliver Reed, Diana Rigg, Telly Savalas, Curd Jürgens, Philippe Noiret, Warren Mitchell, Beryl Reid. Fast-paced, colorful comedy about journalist Rigg's attempts to ruin title organisation, an international syndicate that specializes on murder. Brilliant set design, wonderful actors (Jürgens is especially funny), although story takes too long to get where it's going. That same year, Rigg and Savalas were adversaries in the James Bond adventure ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE (eight years later Jürgens also played the Bond villain). Based on a story by Jack London.

**Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford, The** (2007, USA) **C-160m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Andrew Dominik. Starring Casey Affleck, Brad Pitt, Sam Rockwell, Paul Schneider, Jeremy Renner, Sam Shepard, Garret Dillahunt, Zooey Deschanel, Michael Parks, Nick Cave, narrated by Hugh Ross. Epic demystification of the infamous bandit Jesse James (Pitt), whose fading 'career' is depicted here. His relationship to family and friends, fellow bandits, is elaborated, everything is set to marvelous photography (by Roger Deakins) and a fine score (by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, who also scored THE PROPOSITION). With the outcome given away by the title, there is no hurry getting to the end of this languid western. A remarkable achievement, despite mammoth length. Based on the novel by Ron Hansen, adapted by director Dominik (CHOPPER). Ridley Scott, Tony Scott and Brad Pitt were among the film's producers. Director's Cut runs four hours.

**Assassini Sono Nostri Ospiti, Gli** (1974, ITA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Vincenzo Rigo. Starring Anthony Steffen, Margaret Lee, Luigi Pistilli, Gianni Dei, Livia Cerini. Bleak, unpleasant thriller about a group of jewel robbers, who find refuge at the villa of doctor Steffen, who should help a wounded gang member. Things get more complicated when Steffen's estranged wife Cerini

returns home. Poorly directed by Rigo, whose editing ideas are the only redeeming feature of this relatively style-less film. Steffen and (luscious) Lee are not bad, but this giallo only becomes watchable in the final third. English title: THE KILLERS ARE OUR GUESTS.

**Assassino è Costretto ad Uccidere Ancora, Il** (1975, ITA/FRA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Luigi Cozzi. Starring George Hilton, Michel Antoine (=Antoine Saint-John), Femi Benussi, Cristina Galbó, Eduardo Fajardo, Teresa Velasquez. Argento protégé Cozzi's only foray into the giallo is quite good: Hilton is tired of his wife's neurotic behavior and when he chances to witness a killer disposing of a victim, he asks him to kill his wife, too. However, things get complicated when two lovers steal the car with the body inside. Interesting script has some pacing flaws, but there are also some striking moments (one wonders if Argento wasn't actually involved somehow). For fans. Produced by Umberto Lenzi. English titles: THE KILLER MUST KILL AGAIN, THE KILLER MUST STRIKE AGAIN, THE DARK IS DEATH'S FRIEND.

**Assassino Ha le Mani Pulite, L'** (1968, ITA) **C-80m. \*\* D:** Vittorio Sindoni. Starring Tom Drake, Femi Benussi, Ernesto Colli, Ivo Garrani. Early giallo entry about the death of a deaf (!) train station attendant, which leads to the reading of his will. It turns out his savings of 1 million Francs will go to his son, in three years, leaving the other relatives empty-handed. When the son is killed, all the others are suddenly being knocked off, too. Rather tame, style-less crime movie. Not bad, but far from exciting. Some period flavor. Also known as OMICIDIO PER VOCAZIONE and DEADLY INHERITANCE.

**Assault on a Queen** (1966, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jack Donahue. Starring Frank Sinatra, Virna Lisi, Anthony Franciosa, Richard Conte, Alf Kjellin. Tame, uneventful heist film with the stars the only redeeming aspect. Franciosa and Lisi hire weary seaman Sinatra to raise old German submarine and perform a heist on the ocean liner Queen Mary with it. Duke Ellington's jazz soundtrack plays like elevator music, the film isn't interesting at all. The ending is anti-climactic like no other. Scripted by Rod Serling, from a novel by Jack Finney.

**Assault on Precinct 13** (2005, USA/FRA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jean-Francois Richet. Starring Ethan Hawke, Laurence Fishburne, Gabriel Byrne, Maria Bello, Drea de Matteo, John Leguizamo, Brian Dennehy, Ja Rule, Matt Craven, Peter Bryant, Kim Coates. Fair remake of the 1976 John Carpenter classic about a small police station which is under attack one snowy night, as there's criminal and copkiller Fishburne among the inmates. Lacks the original's authenticity and atmosphere, but if you're new to it, it's an okay view. Score by Graeme Revell.

**Astérix et les Vikings** (2006, FRA/DEN) **C-78m. \*\*½ D:** Stefan Fjeldmark, Jesper Möller. Starring (the voices of) Roger Carel, Lorànt Deutsch, Sara Forestier, Jacques Frantz, narrated by Pierre Tchernia. Adequate continuation of the comic strip series about a Gallic community (among them the super-strong Astérix and Obelix), which has managed to resist the Romans around Caesar's time. Here, they are faced with a hip relative who is kidnapped by invading Vikings. Not bad, quite well-animated adventure also adds modern touches. The 10<sup>th</sup> entry in the series (not counting the live-action movies). English title: ASTERIX AND THE VIKINGS.

**Astro Boy** (2009, USA/HGK/JAP) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** David Bowers. Starring (the voices of) Nicolas Cage, Kristen Bell, Samuel L. Jackson, Charlize Theron, Elle Fanning, Bill Nighy, Donald Sutherland, Freddie Highmore, Matt Lucas, Nathan Lane, Eugene Levy, David Bowers. Nicely animated, fairly exciting science-fiction movie for kids about a science whizz kidd, who dies in a accident and is cloned by his inventor father as a robot. He falls off his city in the clouds and falls onto the polluted world below. PINOCCHIO meets FRANKENSTEIN in this manga adaptation, entertaining, fascinating for kids, adults might fret about occasionally careless plotting.

**Astronaut's Wife, The** (1999, USA) **C-109m.** \*\*½ D: Rand Ravich. Starring Johnny Depp, Charlize Theron, Joe Morton, Clea DuVall, Donna Murphy, Nick Cassavetes, Samantha Eggar, Gary Grubbs. After a near-fatal accident in space where he lost contact with the NASA base for two minutes astronaut Depp returns to his wife Theron on Earth. Slowly Theron realizes that her husband has changed, but what exactly this change implies she is unable to figure out, until his colleague's wife kills herself... Slow build-up, little logic, surreal touches due to storytelling perspective, sci-fi is chilling and highly suspenseful but falters at the conclusion. Depp seems miscast. Definitely NOT recommended to pregnant women and astronauts.

**Asylum** (1972, GBR) **C-88m.** \*\*\* D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring Peter Cushing, Britt Ekland, Herbert Lom, Patrick Magee, Barry Morse, Barbara Parkins, Robert Powell, Charlotte Rampling. Satisfying chiller about four tales of the macabre, told by inmates of an insane asylum. Frame narrative has doctor Powell trying to decide which of the inmates is the former chief. Well-handled by expert director Baker, good dramatic score. Written by Robert Bloch (PSYCHO). Aka HOUSE OF CRAZIES.

**Ataque de los Muertos Sin Ojos, El** (1973, SPA/GER) **C-82m.** \*\* D: Amando de Ossorio. Starring Tony Kendall, Fernando Sancho, Esther Roy, Frank Brana, Lone Fleming. Sequel to LA NOCHE DEL TERROR CIEGO is an improvement, thanks to better writing, quicker pace. The Templar Knights (a mix between zombies and vampires) rise from their graves and attack a small village, whose inhabitants killed them 500 years ago. There seems to be no escape. Pretty tepid stuff, for fans of the series. English title: RETURN OF THE EVIL DEAD. Followed by EL BUQUE MALDITO.

**At First Sight** (1998, USA) **C-128m.** \*\* D: Irwin Winkler. Starring Val Kilmer, Mira Sorvino, Kelly McGillis. Tear-jerker about bling masseur Kilmer and stressed New Yorker Sorvino, who falls in love and wants to help him to an operation which would restore his sight. But will he be able to deal with this new situation? Fatally overlong, clichéd, only sometimes endearing, you have seen this many times before.

**Atlantis: The Lost Empire** (2001, USA) **C-95m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. Starring (the voices of) Michael J. Fox, Corey Burton, Claudia Christian, James Garner, John Mahoney, Phil Morris, Leonard Nimoy, Jim Varney. Disney cartoon feature aimed at slightly older audiences than usual. Linguist fox is a dreamer, whose greatest wish is to make an expedition to the fabled Atlantis. When a friend of his dead grandfather comes forth and offers him a place in his submarine, the young man is eager to go. What will they find? More comic-book like than other Disney features, but also more cold-blooded and much too quickly paced. It's difficult to follow the action, even for adults. Followed by a direct-to-video sequel in 2003.

**Atonement** (2007, GBR/FRA) **C-124m.** \*\*\*½ D: Joe Wright. Starring Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, Brenda Blethyn, Saoirse Ronan, Julia West, Harriet Walter, Romola Garai, Vanessa Redgrave, Anthony Minghella. Outstanding drama based on the Ian McEwan novel about 13-year-old girl in 1930s England, who is inspired by the events around her and misinterprets the affair between her sister Knightley and McAvoy. After she catches them making love she uses an incident thereafter to accuse him of rape, thus forcing him to leave and take part in WW2. Wright, director of PRIDE & PREJUDICE (2005) has fashioned an artistic triumph. Irresistibly told period drama hypnotizes you with its stunning direction, interesting use of different time levels and good performances (though child actress Ronan owes her Oscar nomination to Wright's brilliant directorial touches). One of the most artistic films in recent memory, recalling the work of some stalwart directors of the 1970s. Screenplay by Christopher Hampton. Oscar winner for Best Score (by Dario Marianelli).

**Ator, l'Invincibile** (1982, ITA) **C-96m**. \*½ D: David Hills (=Joe D'Amato). Starring Miles O'Keefe, Sabrina Siani, Ritza Brown, Edmund Purdom, Laura Gemser. Pretty ridiculous CONAN rip-off features incompetent O'Keefe in a prehistoric setting as a prince destined for greatness, who must defeat evil spider sect. Must be seen to be believed. Score by Carlo Maria Cordio is rousing but belongs into another genre (the song during the closing credits is plagiarized from the FOR YOUR EYES ONLY title song!). Michele Soavi allegedly collaborated on the script with Joe D'Amato, who also photographed (as Federico Slonisco). Followed by three sequels! Also known as ATOR, THE FIGHTING EAGLE.

**Atrocious** (2010, SPA/MEX) **C-74m**. \*\* D: Fernando Barreda Luna. Starring Christian Valencia, Clara Moraleda, Chus Pereiro, Sergi Martin. Found-footage chiller about two teens who travel with their parents to their old country estate. There a story of a girl who disappeared in the nearby labyrinthine garden, and the kids soon get lost there, too. Lots of trivial scenes, drags on even at this running time. Has some chilling moments later on, but still requires a lot of patience.

**Attack of the Giant Leeches** (1959, USA) **B&W-62m**. \*\* D: Bernard L. Kowalski. Starring Ken Clark, Yvette Vickers, Jan Shepard, Michael Emmet. Quite atmospheric monster movie about the title creatures which terrorize a small community. Nothing exceptional here, in fact, the monsters are rather unconvincing. Clark soon after went to Italy to make more than a dozen B-movies there (mostly Bond clones). Also known as ATTACK OF THE BLOOD LEECHES, DEMONS OF THE SWAMP, SHE DEMONS OF THE SWAMP, THE GIANT LEECHES.

**Attack of the Lederhosen Zombies** (2016, AUT/ITA) **C-81m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Dominik Hartl. Starring Laurie Calvert, Gabriela Marcinkova, Oscar D. Giese, Margarete Tiesel, Karl Fischer. Zombie horror comedy set in the Austrian Alps. When a film shoot goes awry, a group of friends hole up in mountain cabin about to host the last party night of the year. Due to some chemical experiments with snow, people are infected with a virus and turn into zombies. Rather heavy-handed, with mostly poor timing, but okay of its type, quite gory.

**Attack the Block** (2011, GBR/FRA) **C-88m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Joe Cornish. Starring John Boyega, Jodie Whittaker, Alex Esmail. Fairly original take on alien invasions, this sci-fi horror entry is set in South London, where teen gang members are baffled when they find a live alien creature has just dropped from the sky. They kill the gremlin-like bugger, but must soon contend with dozens of other black hairy monsters with fluorescent fangs. Doesn't quite fully grasp your attention, with some faults in character development and storytelling, but horror fans might find this diverting. From the producers of SHAUN OF THE DEAD.

**Attention, les Enfants Regardent** (1977, FRA) **C-102m**. \*\* D: Serge Leroy. Starring Alain Delon, Richard Constantini, Tiphaine Leroux, Sophie Renoir, Thierry Turchet, Françoise Brion. Psycho thriller about four children who spend their summer holidays in their parents' villa at the sea, with only their nanny to look after them. One day they accidentally kill her, and a mysterious stranger (Delon) may be the only witness to the crime. However, it seems he won't tell the police. Intriguing premise, downed by ludicrous dialogue and altogether unbelievable plot development. Director Leroy coscripted, from the novel *The Children Are Watching* by Laird Koenig and Peter Dixon. Delon, who is quite good in the lead, also produced the film. Photographed by Claude Renoir. English title: THE CHILDREN ARE WATCHING.

**At the Devil's Door** (2014, USA) **C-93m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Nicholas McCarthy. Starring Catalina Sandino Moreno, Naya Rivera, Ashley Rickards, Mark Steger. Horror chiller is almost on a par with writer-director McCarthy's breakthrough debut THE PACT (2012). A real estate agent selling a foreclosed property makes the acquaintance of a teenage girl, who sold her soul years ago and is haunted by a menacing creature. Soon the threat becomes real to

everyone, including the agent's sister, artist Rivera. Serpentine story holds your interest throughout, and McCarthy creates an eerie atmosphere, but some unlikely twists and illogical choices mar the experience. The ending is rather weak, too. Originally released as HOME, but immediately retitled.

**At the Earth's Core** (1976, GBR/USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Kevin Connor. Starring Doug McClure, Peter Cushing, Caroline Munro, Cy Grant, Godfrey James, Sean Lynch, Keith Barron. Fantasy adventure based on the novel by Edgar Rice Burroughs. American McClure and British scientist Cushing board a drill that is supposed to bring them to the center of the Earth; instead, they come out in prehistoric land where a deformed species sacrifices humans to monsters. Effects are reminiscent of Japanese monster movies of the time and quite cheap, but direction is engaging and maintains a sense of excitement to the end. Cushing looks incredibly foolish, but he may have been playing for it. Sort of a mid-quel to Connor's THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT (1975) and THE PEOPLE THAT TIME FORGOT (1977), which both also starred McClure.

**Atticus Institute, The** (2015, USA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Chris Sparling. Starring Rya Kihlstedt, William Mapother, Sharon Maughan, Harry Groener, John Rubinstein. Horror mockumentary mixing lab footage from the 1970s with contemporary interviews. The title institution was home to researchers into supernatural phenomena. It had to close after their last patient Kihlstedt showed signs of telekinesis and demonic possession. Mapother plays the leading scientist in the institute. Starts well, with some nice 70s touches, but resorts to jump scares later on, which become repetitive, even anti-climactic.

**Au Coeur du Mensonge** (1999, FRA) **C-113m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Sandrine Bonnaire, Jacques Gamblin, Antoine de Caunes, Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, Bernard Verley, Dominique Zardi. Low-key crime drama from master Chabrol. Bonnaire's husband, an introvert arts teacher is suspected by the local community of having raped and killed a young girl (one of his students). Meanwhile, Bonnaire is about to start an affair with a TV celebrity. Drama is well-acted but has very little dramatic or emotional impact. Recommended to Chabrol adepts, others will find it hardly worth the effort. Cowritten by the director. English title: THE COLOR OF LIES.

**Au-delà de la Peur** (1975, FRA/ITA) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Yannick Andréi. Starring Michel Bouquet, Michel Constantin, Marilù Tolo, Jean-Pierre Darras, Paul Crauchet, Michel Creton, Moustache, Paolo Bonacelli. Underworld gangster Constantin accidentally reveals his plans to businessman Bouquet. When he realizes his mistake, he quickly takes Bouquet's wife and son hostage, lest the man reveal any details to the police. Dramatic thriller is well-acted, especially by Bouquet, whose intense, brilliant performance must be seen to be believed. Director Andréi also scripted this interesting film. English title: BEYOND FEAR.

**Au-delà des Grilles** (1949, FRA/ITA) **B&W-87m.** \*\*\* D: René Clément. Starring Isa Miranda, Jean Gabin, Andrea Checchi, Vera Talchi, Robert Dalban. Drama about luckless and penniless French immigrant Gabin and frustrated waitress Miranda, who hopes for a better future. Gabin, however, seems to have lost all hope. Pessimistic atmosphere, combined with good use of setting makes this worth watching. It's closely related in tone to the Italian Neorealismo. Won an Honorary Oscar for Best Foreign Film and the Best Director and Best Actress prizes in Cannes. English title: BEYOND THE GATES, THE WALLS OF MALAPAGA.

**Audrey Rose** (1977, USA) **C-113m.** \*\* D: Robert Wise. Starring Marsha Mason, John Beck, Anthony Hopkins, Susan Swift, Norman Lloyd, John Hillerman. Well-acted but only occasionally effective chiller about scientist Hopkins, who believes that Mason and Beck's nine year-old daughter is the reincarnation of his dead child. The girl suffers from nightmares, which only he seems to keep away. Soon their life is brought into turmoil, since

they are afraid to lose their only child. Film's attempt at realism makes it all the more silly, and it offers neither a satisfying explanation nor resolution. The initial family scenes seem like a complete contrivance. Based on the novel by Frank De Felitta, who also wrote the screenplay.

**Ausentes** (2005, SPA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Daniel Calparsoro. Starring Ariadna Gil, Jordi Mollà, Nacho Pérez, Omar Munoz. Good Spanish chiller / psycho mystery drama about a family who moves into a new suburban home after the mother suffered an emotional breakdown. Soon she starts having symptoms again, seeing people on the video monitor system that aren't there, and generally nobody else seems to live in the neighbourhood. Is she going insane? Intriguing premise, well-executed. Not your run-of-the-mill ghost story, well-worth a look for mystery adepts. Screenplay co-written by Elio Quiroga (LA HORA FRIA, NO-DO). English title: THE ABSENT.

**Aussi Longue Absence, Une** (1961, FRA/ITA) **88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Henri Colpi. Starring Alida Valli, Georges Wilson. An amnesiac clochard that is wandering the streets of a small town reminds café owner Valli of her husband, who was deported by the *Gestapo* 17 years ago. She seeks his company and has to discover that it is impossible to make his absence forgotten and win him back. Well-acted but very slowly paced psycho drama isn't up to the complexity of the situation and only hints at the problems involved. Script co-written by famed author Marguérite Duras. Winner of the Palme D'Or in Cannes.

**Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery** (1997, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jay Roach. Starring Mike Myers, Elizabeth Hurley, Michael York, Mimi Rogers, Robert Wagner, Seth Green, Fabiana Udenio, Charles Napier. Myers plays both hero and villain in this James Bond-spoof, which is not as funny as expected: Austin Powers, a superagent from the Swinging 60s, is thawed in 1997 to do battle with super villain Dr. Evil. Potentially funny premise gets lost in tired, plotless parody. Myers is fun, but too few jokes really work. Cameos by Tom Arnold, Carrie Fisher, Rob Lowe and Christian Slater. Followed by two sequels.

**Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me** (1999, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jay Roach. Starring Mike Myers, Heather Graham, Michael York, Robert Wagner, Rob Lowe, Seth Green, Mindy Sterling, Verne Troyer, Elizabeth Hurley, Burt Bacharach, Elvis Costello, Willie Nelson, Tim Robbins, Charles Napier, Woody Harrelson. Yeah, baby, yeah! Austin Powers, super-spy from the 60s is back, battling his arch-enemy Dr. Evil, who has stolen his mojo (libido) and threatens to destroy Washington with a laser installed on the moon. Starts very weakly, but second half contains enough low-brow humor to satisfy fans. Myers has fun playing three roles, Graham is breathtaking. A huge box-office success.

**Austin Powers in Goldmember** (2002, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jay Roach. Starring Mike Myers, Beyoncé Knowles, Seth Green, Michael York, Robert Wagner, Mindy Sterling, Verne Troyer, Michael Caine, Fred Savage, cameos by Tom Cruise, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kevin Spacey, Danny DeVito, Steven Spielberg, Quincey Jones, Britney Spears, Nathan Lane, The Osbournes, John Travolta, Burt Bacharach, Rob Lowe. The shagadelic spy is at it again, this time he must rescue his father (Caine), who was abducted by Dr. Evil. Helping the megalomaniac to flood our planet with a golden meteorite is a 1975 Dutch villain with a golden member, who was transported to the present time. Perhaps the funniest outing yet, this one loses its mojo in some tasteless gags, but Austin's fans won't mind. Knowles is a real find.

**Australia** (2008, AUS/USA) **C-165m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Baz Luhrmann. Starring Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman, David Wenham, Brandon Walters, Bryan Brown, Ben Mendelsohn, Jack Thompson, Bruce Spence, Yuen Wah. Brilliantly cinematic epic set in 1930s Australia, where uptight British noblewoman Kidman travels to be with her cattle-ranching husband, only to

find him dead. She joins forces with drover Jackman to continue her husband's work and protects a half-breed Aboriginal child from being deported to Mission Island. Irresistible story-telling despite massive length, film offers award-caliber work in many departments: editing, directing, camerawork, even acting all superb. Child actor Walters' performance is so intuitive, so real, he makes the film his own. Film has striking parallels to GONE WITH THE WIND (1939) while referencing another classic 1939 film, THE WIZARD OF OZ.

**Autopsy of Jane Doe, The** (2016, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*** D: André Ovredal. Starring Emile Hirsch, Brian Cox, Ophelia Lovibond, Michael McElhatton, Olwen Kelly. One evening coroners Hirsch and Cox receive a dead body for examination. It was discovered in the house of a family who was brutally murdered. As they proceed with the autopsy, they make mysterious discoveries, and soon supernatural things start to happen. Horror film starts well and is really scary and eerie, but goes down the obvious road with jump scares abound and even throws in some ridiculous twists. Too bad. Undiscerning teens might like it.

**Autostop Rosso Sangue** (1977, ITA) **C-104m. \*\*** D: Pasquale Festa Campanile. Starring Franco Nero, Corinne Clery, David Hess, Gianni Loffredo, Carlo Puri. After a hunting trip, married couple Nero and Clery travel home to L.A. On the road they pick up hitchhiker Hess, not knowing that he's an escaped lunatic. Pretty perverted thriller is overlong and has too many endings, but generally not bad – if you can take the sadistic touch. Based on the novel *The Violence and the Fury* by Peter Kane. Interesting score by Ennio Morricone. Also known as HITCH HIKE, DEATH DRIVE, and HITCHHIKE: LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (alluding to Hess' role in the Wes Craven film).

**Autumn in New York** (2000, USA) **C-105m. \*\*½** D: Joan Chen. Starring Richard Gere, Winona Ryder, Anthony LaPaglia, Elaine Stritch, Sherry Stringfield, Mary Beth Hurt. 48-year-old Gere falls in love with 21-year-old Ryder in this old-fashioned, simplistic love drama. The twist is that Ryder is terminally ill and may die any moment. Beautiful location photography and sensitive handling keep this afloat, although repeated type-casting of Gere is getting tiresome.

**Aux Yeux des Vivants** (2014, FRA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alexandre Bustillo, Julien Maury. Starring Anne Marivin, Théo Fernandez, Francis Renaud, Zacharie Chasseriaud, Damien Ferdel, Nicolas Giraud, Béatrice Dalle. Terror-filled, in-your-face horror movie from the makers of A L'INTERIEUR (2007) and LIVIDE (2011). Three schoolboys sneak into an abandoned movie town and find a kidnapping victim. When they are discovered (by the trailer-trash 'family' we met in the prologue), someone follows them home to shut them up forever. Has too many logical faults – especially as to how someone would deal with an intruder in their home – but the suspense and terror created are reminiscent of THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1974), as is the crazy family, of course. For horror fans, might be too sadistic and violent for some. The score is too sentimental. English title: AMONG THE LIVING.

**Avalanche** (1978, USA) **C-91m. \*½** D: Corey Allen. Starring Rock Hudson, Mia Farrow, Robert Forster, Jeanette Nolan, Rick Moses, Steve Franken, Barry Primus. Roger Corman produced this disaster film about Hudson's luxury ski resort in Colorado, which is threatened by an impending avalanche. Poorly done, even for late 70s disaster movie standards. Farrow and Hudson are wasted. Lewis Teague reportedly edited the avalanche sequence.

**Avaleuses, Les** (1973, FRA/BEL) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jess Franco. Starring Lina Romay, Jack Taylor, Alice Arno, Monica Swinn, Jess Franco. Sex film with horror elements about mute vampire countess Romay, who drains men of all their bodily fluids. Inspector Franco investigates the killings. Almost no plot, but Romay is sexy and the score moody, enticing. Film exists in several versions (some featuring hard-core scenes). Alternative titles: BARE BREASTED COUNTESS, THE BLACK COUNTESS, EROTIKILL, EROTIC KILL, FEMALE VAMPIRE,

INSATIABLE LUST, JACULA, YACULA, LAST THRILL, THE LOVES OF IRINA, and SICARIUS – THE MIDNIGHT PARTY.

**Avalon** (2001, JAP/POL) **C-106m**. \*½ D: Mamoru Ishii. Starring Malgorzata Foremniak, Wladyslaw Kowalski, Jerzy Gudejko, Dariusz Biskupski. Post-apocalyptic science-fiction film about a virtual-reality computer game that can really kill its players. Foremniak is one of the game's champions, but she cannot access the highest level and suddenly finds herself facing a competitor. Fatally boring sci-fi may have seemed avantgarde at its initial release, but when it comes to the important points in filmmaking (plot, characters, pace), it fails. The computer effects might catch your attention, the plot doesn't. It slows down to a screeching halt again and again. This was Ishii's first film after the acclaimed 1995 anime KOKAKU KIDOTAI (GHOST IN THE SHELL). Also known as GATE TO AVALON.

**Avanti!** (1972, USA) **C-144m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Billy Wilder. Starring Jack Lemmon, Juliet Mills, Clive Revill, Edward Andrews, Gianfranco Barra, Janet Agren. Beautifully realised comedy written by director Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond. American Millionaire Lemmon goes to Italy to bring back body of his deceased father, is surprised to learn that he had a lover there, meets that woman's daughter (Mills). Romantic entanglements are the consequence. Good location work, photography by Luigi Kuveiller (PROFONDO ROSSO). Some dialogue is outstanding; still, not quite in the league of Wilder's earlier comedies. Based on the play by Samuel A. Taylor.

**Avare, L'** (1979, FRA) **C-77m**. **\*\*\*** D: Louis de Funès, Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Michel Galabru, Claude Gensac. De Funès gives one of his most erratic performances as a greedy father, who intends his children to marry out of financial reason, not love. Madcap situations, simply hilarious. De Funès' most ambitious project, he codirected with Jean Girault and cowrote the screenplay. Strange score, but compact and funny, especially recommended to fans of the French star.

**Avatar** (2009, USA) **C-162m**. **\*\*\*** D: James Cameron. Starring Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver, Stephen Lang, Michelle Rodriguez, Giovanni Ribisi, Joel Moore, CCH Pounder, Wes Studi. James Cameron's return to the (movie) director's chair after 12 years is an expectedly overblown science-fiction fantasy set in a distant world, where mankind is hoping to set up a mining operation – despite the resistance of the planet's native population, 10 feet tall humanoid creatures that will do anything to defend their forests. A team of scientists has found a way of entering the bodies of so-called avatars, artificially created aliens, and using them to become friends with the tribe. Wheelchair-bound ex-marine Worthington enters the mission quite unexpectedly for his deceased twin brother and manages to win the aliens' trust. Visually overwhelming film delves us into a magical fantasy world with creatures and places often reminiscent of Hayao Miyazaki films (although Cameron also quotes himself throughout). After an intriguing introduction, plot treads a familiar path, however, and Cameron's criticism of the destruction of (rain) forests, exploitation of developing countries and America's affinity to war makes its point again and again. There's too little suspense and too much predictability in the proceedings, right down to the clichéd one-on-one finale. Still, an eye-popping achievement (even more so in 3D), if not the masterpiece expected, at least a movie that one has to have seen. Cameron also wrote, produced and coedited this picture. Sweeping score by James Horner.

**Aventures de Rabbi Jacob, Les** (1973, FRA) **C-95m**. **\*\*\*½** D: Gérard Oury. Starring Louis de Funès, Suzy Delair, Marcel Dalio, Claude Giraud, Renzo Montagnani. André Falcon, Miou-Miou, Jacques Francois, Claude Piéplu, Dominique Zardi. One of comedy star de Funès' best films, this one casts him as an antisemitic businessman, who is taught a lesson when he is taken hostage and forced to disguise as a Rabbi. Mad-cap slapstick comedy was one of Louis'

biggest hits (it was even given theatrical release in the U.S. and nominated for a Golden Globe). Intelligent script, unforgettable scenes in the chewing gum factory. Photographed by Henri Decae. English title: THE MAD ADVENTURES OF 'RABBI' JACOB.

**Aventuriers, Les** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Robert Enrico. Starring Lino Ventura, Alain Delon, Joanna Shimkus, Serge Reggiani, Hans Meyer. Melancholy, almost pessimistic adventure drama, a cult film for some. In a bleak suburb of Paris, three friends aim for higher things (mostly doing stunt work), and think their chance has come when they learn of a treasure lying on the sea floor just off the coast of the Congo. Uneven, slightly overlong but oddly engrossing. A typically faulty adaptation of a novel (José Giovanni's *Les Aventuriers*). Major asset is memorable score by Francois de Roubaix (LE SAMOURAI, LE ROUGE AUX LEVRES). English title: THE LAST ADVENTURE.

**Avventure di Pinocchio, Le** (1947, ITA) **89m. \*\*\*** D: Gianetto Guardone. Starring Alessandro Tommei, Mariella Lotti, Vittorio Gassman, Erminio Spalla, Luigi Pavese. Charming version of the Carlo Collodi classic about a wooden puppet that runs away from his maker and has some wild adventures before becoming a real boy. Interesting fantasy touches, almost bizarre costumes. Not a great film, like the Disney version for example, but quite entertaining and well-acted by Tommei. English title: THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO.

**Avventure di Pinocchio, Le** (1972, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-131m. \*\*\*** D: Luigi Comencini. Starring Nino Manfredi, Gina Lollobrigida, Franco Franchi, Ciccio Ingrassia, Andrea Balestri, Mario Adorf, Ugo D'Alessio, Lionel Stander, Jacques Herlin, Vittorio de Sica. Carlo Collodi's classic story gets a heavy dose of 1970s rural realism in this estimable adaptation. Film sticks relatively close to its source and has some fine actors to compensate for slight overlength. Cowritten by Comencini (LA DONNA DELLA DOMENICA). English title: THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO.

**Awakening, The** (2011, GBR) **C-107m. \*\*** D: Nick Murphy. Starring Rebecca Hall, Dominic West, Imelda Staunton. British horror chiller with a plot that seems derivative. Hoax exposé and "ghost" expert Hall is asked to investigate and explain mysterious ghost sightings in a boarding school for (mostly orphaned) boys in 1921 England. The chills are there, but it becomes more tedious as it goes along, as there is nothing to disprove here and the mystery of the apparitions not the main point of interest. Stay with THE OTHERS or THE ORPHANAGE.

**Awakenings** (1990, USA) **C-121m. \*\*\*** D: Penny Marshall. Starring Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, Julie Kavner, Ruth Nelson, John Heard, Penelope Ann Miller, Max von Sydow. Moving true story, set in 1969, about a shy doctor (Williams) and his work in a hospital ward with seemingly catatonic, narcoleptic people. When he they start showing reactions, he thinks to have made a breakthrough, but most of them are unable to deal with the fact that they have missed half of their life. Williams is fine as usual, and so is De Niro as one of his most important patients. Script by Steve Zaillian, based on the book by Dr. Oliver Sacks.

**Babadook, The** (2014, AUS) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Jennifer Kent. Starring Essie Davis, Daniel Henshall, Tim Purcell, Noah Wiseman. Psychological horror film about a single mother, who slithers into depression raising her hyper-active six-year-old son Wiseman. When they read a mysterious, morbid book called The Babadook, the boy soon seems obsessed with the title creature... and supernatural manifestations start all around the house. Surprisingly effective, creepy chiller works thanks to thoughtful script and searing performances, not to forget eerie sound effects. Young Wiseman is terrific; he rivals the boy from THE SHINING (1980). In fact, film references a slew of horror classics, including Bava's I TRE VOLTI DELLA PAURA (1963). Recommended fare! Written by the director.

**Baba Yaga** (1973, ITA/FRA) **C-85m. \*\*\*** D: Corrado Farina. Starring Carroll Baker, George Eastman, Isabelle de Funès, Ely Galleani. Moody pop-art mystery, based on a comic strip by

Guido Crepax. Avantgarde photographer de Funès (niece of Louis!) is approached by mysterious lady Baker, who seems to have a special interest in the young woman. De Funès soon starts having hallucinatory nightmares of a kinky kind, and something seems to be wrong with her camera ever since Baker touched it. Is the lady really a witch? With the help of film director Eastman, she sets out to solve the mystery. Slightly pretentious, bafflingly surreal film, creatively directed by writer-director Farina, who has a brief role in the surreal Nazi sequences. A little gem whose reputation should soar in future years. Great score by Piero Umiliani. Watch for Ely Galleani, who had a key role in Mario Bava's CINQUE BAMBOLE PER LA LUNA D'AGOSTO (1970). Contains a reference to German expressionist cinema and shows a clip from the classic DER GOLEM, WIE ER IN DIE WELT KAM (1920). Alternative titles: KISS ME KILL ME, THE DEVIL WITCH and BLACK MAGIC.

**Babe** (1995, AUS/USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Chris Noonan. Starring James Cromwell, Magda Szubanski, voices of Christine Cavanaugh, Miriam Margolyes, Hugo Weaving, narrated by Roscoe Lee Browne. Family film that traces the life of a pig, as it is "won" by quiet farmer Cromwell and his wife Szubanski. Soon the pig learns that its life on the farm is anything but easy. Good, Oscar-winning effects make you believe in the animals' conversations, but plotting is without momentum or cleverness. Cute for kids, immensely successful in theaters. George Miller (MAD MAX) produced and coscripted, from the novel *The Sheep Pig* by Dick King-Smith. Followed by a sequel.

**Babel** (2006, USA/MEX/FRA) **C-143m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alejandro González Inárritu. Starring Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, Mohamed Akhzam, Peter Wight, Harriet Walter, Trevor Martin, Matyelok Gibbs, Georges Bousquet, Nathan Gamble, Gael García Bernal, Rinko Kikuchi, Kôji Yakusho. Impressive thriller drama from the director of AMORES PERROS (2000) and 21 GRAMS (2003) interlocks four different stories: Pitt and his wife Blanchett are mourning the death of their infant child and have gone on a holiday to Morocco. During a bus ride she is accidentally shot by two Moroccan children, who have just received a gun from their father (story 2). In the third segment, Pitt and Blanchett's other children, back at home in San Diego, are taken to a wedding in Mexico by their nanny. Finally, in Tokyo, Japan, an aimless, deaf teenager desperately looking for love and attention is also linked to the other stories. Complex, engrossing drama showing tragedy in all corners of the world, superbly directed and extremely well-edited. Oscar winner for Best Score, also won the Best Director and Best Editing (Technical Grand Prize) awards at Cannes.

**Babe: Pig in the City** (1998, AUS/USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: George Miller. Starring Magda Szubanski, James Cromwell, Mary Stein, Mickey Rooney, voices of Elizabeth Daily, Danny Mann, Glenna Headley, Hugo Weaving, Roscoe Lee Browne, Naomi Watts. Sort of... different sequel to the charmer BABE (1995) forces the farmer's wife Szubanski and the pig to travel to Los Angeles, in order to save the farm. Babe meets many odd characters (monkeys, dogs, you name it) and has more than enough scary adventures. Dark, almost bizarre film recalls films of Jodorowsky, Burton, if only it wasn't a children's adventure! Excellent score and cinematography (by Andrew Lesnie, who also shot THE LORD OF THE RINGS films). Made by the director of the MAD MAX movies (and cowriter of the original BABE). Too gloomy for children, interesting for buffs.

**Baby Blood** (1989, FRA) **C-87m.** \*\*½ D: Alain Robak. Starring Emmanuelle Escourrou, Christian Sinniger. Woman becomes impregnated by African monster and develops a relationship with the baby creature in her womb by speaking to it(!). French horror with comic undertones is a mix between ROSEMARY'S BABY and BRAIN DAMAGE and as such comes up with few ideas of its own. American version, titled EVIL WITHIN, (purportedly) runs 1m. longer.

**Baby Driver** (2017, USA/GBR) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Edgar Wright. Starring Ansel Elgort, Kevin Spacey, Jon Hamm, Eiza Gonzalez, Lili James, Jamie Foxx, CJ Jones. Original thriller drama about the title character, a driver for criminal mastermind Spacey, whose crew perform heists and robberies. The troubled teen is great at his job, but would rather quit it and go on the lam with waitress/love interest James. Will Spacey let him go once they're even? Typically kinetic Wright film packs action, romance, drama, even music and rhythm as a central element into the plot, but it only really gets going in final third, when it cuts loose. Not quite in the league of cult movies *TRUE ROMANCE* (1993) or even the referenced *BONNIE & CLYDE* (1967), but a fresh take on heist movies and teen dramas, with some terrific performances, especially Foxx's. Written by the director.

**Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend** (1985, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½D:** Bill L. Norton. Starring William Katt, Sean Young, Patrick McGoohan, Julian Fellowes, Hugh Quarshie. Fantasy adventure about two scientists (Katt, Young), who go in search of legendary jungle monster, which turns out to be a dinosaur with a family. A fellow scientist wants to take it home to study it, but he hasn't reckoned with the couple's resistance. Not bad despite superficial plot, lively score by Jerry Goldsmith, photography by John Alcott. Also known as *DINOSAUR... SECRET OF THE LOST LEGEND*.

**Baby Sitter, La** (1975, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-112m. \*\*½ D:** René Clément. Starring Maria Schneider, Sydne Rome, Vic Morrow, Robert Vaughn, John Whittington, Nadja Tiller, Georg Marischka. Director Clément's final film is like his two previous thrillers a film about the kidnapping of a child. Schneider plays a French babysitter in Rome, who doesn't know what she is getting into when she checks into a villa to look after a little boy. Her friend Rome (ravishing), actor Vaughn and his wife Tiller, as well as tough guy Morrow all get mixed up in this crime. Not-bad but barely focused, interesting for fans of the director, whose *LA MAISON SOUS LES ARBRES* (1971) and *COURSE DE LIEVRE...* (1972) make up a nice (if flawed) trilogy with this. Score by Francis Lai. English title: *THE BABYSITTER*.

**Backcountry** (2014, CDN) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Adam McDonald. Starring Missy Peregrin, Jeff Roop, Eric Balfour, Nicholas Campbell. A young couple embark on a hiking trip in the Canadian wilderness towards the end of the season. He thinks he knows his way around, but soon they get lost and must contend with an aggressive grizzly bear. Pretty standard survival horror, the woman goes through a lot, but her demeanor is not convincing.

**Back in the USSR** (1991, USA) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Deran Sarafian. Starring Frank Whaley, Natalya Negoda, Roman Polanski, Ravil Issyanov, Dey Young, Andrew Divof, Brian Blessed, Harry Ditson. The first film made entirely in Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union is a meandering thriller about American tourist Whaley and his coincidental involvement with the stealing of a valuable icon. He is forced to cooperate with the underworld figures and finds himself running for his life. Idea is not bad, but script is hardly credible. Main interest springs from Polanski's role as a seedy smuggler.

**Back to Back** (1996, USA) **C-90m. 2 D:** Roger Nygard. Starring Michael Rooker, Ryo Ishibashi, Danielle Harris, John Laughlin, Koh Takasugi, Bobcat Goldthwait, Vincent Schiavelli, Tim Thomerson. Violent action trash produced for the video market about ex-cop Rooker who somehow gets to team up with Ishibashi, a Japanese Yakuza killer assigned to kill a Los Angeles mafia boss. Plot is highly improbable, the action scenes are strictly standard. Harris (as Rooker's daughter) has the most offensively stupid role.

**Back to Gaya** (2004, GBR/GER/SPA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Lenard Fritz Krawinkel, Holger Tappe. Starring (the voices of) Patrick Stewart, Emily Watson, Glenn Wrage, Alan Marriott, Bob Saker. Computer-animated fantasy adventure set in the land of the Gayans (pint-sized creatures with large ears), where life depends on a crystal that is stolen by a villain from the

real world. A group of Gayans is transported there as well, and they must fend for themselves in a huge city of humans. Exciting, atmospheric adventure doesn't give you much time to breathe; when it does, its lack of a consistent plot slows it down a lot. Still, a great roller-coaster ride for kids. Films like this deserve more attention. Excellent score by Michael Kamen, who died of a heart attack before film's premiere. International version is shorter by a few minutes. Also known as THE SNURKS, and BOO, ZINO & THE SNURKS.

**Back to the Future** (1985, USA) **C-116m.** \*\*\*½ D: Robert Zemeckis. Starring Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Lea Thompson, Crispin Glover, Thomas F. Wilson, Billy Zane. Outstanding sci-fi adventure has become a teen classic. Fox is perfect as a clever slacker, whose friend Lloyd, a scientist, has invented a time machine that can take you to the past and future. When some terrorists attack him, Fox boards the DeLorean and with the date set to 1955, he travels back 30 years in time. All the while figuring out how to return back to the future – with the help of the 1955 Lloyd – he interferes with the romance of his parents and puts his own existence in jeopardy. Great plot, first-rate direction, lightning pace, a bull's-eye. Fine score by Alan Silvestri.

**Back to the Future Part II** (1989, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*\* D: Robert Zemeckis. Starring Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Lea Thompson, Thomas F. Wilson, Elisabeth Shue, James Tolkan, Billy Zane. Delightful sequel to the 1985 hit movie takes Marty McFly to the future, where he must stop his own son from becoming a criminal. When the old Biff notices the time travel machine he hijacks the DeLorean and goes back in time to change the course of history in his favour. When Doc and Marty return to 1985 they find their present considerably changed. Not as funny or exciting as the first movie but entertaining and fast-paced all the same, with some crazy time travel logic. A good continuation of the story, though some criticized the abrupt ending that advertises Part III (1990), which was filmed back-to-back with this one.

**Backyard, The** (2002, USA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: Paul Hough. Starring The Lizard, Scar, Chaos, Heartless, Bongo, The Retarded Butcher, Rob Van Dam, James Weston. Straight-forward documentary (an attempted shockumentary) takes a look at the phenomenon of Backyard wrestling, which is done by kids who dream of making it in the wrestling business and try to imitate their idols and their shows. However, this is done in improvised rings in the backyard, and in ultra-violent fashion, with barb-wire fences, light bulbs, etc. and people are even set on fire. Sometimes shocking, but not because of the violence portrayed but because of the aimless youths who waste their childhoods injuring each other. Low-key narration should have made much more of the topic.

**Bad Biology** (2008, USA) **C-84m.** \*½ D: Frank Henenlotter. Starring Charlee Danielson, Anthony Sneed, Mark Wilson. Frank 'BASKET CASE' Henenlotter returned to directing after 17 years for this quite terrible sex/horror film. An insatiable woman with seven clits also gives birth to deformed babies two hours after having sex. A man with a monstrous sex organ might just be her match. Pretty gross and silly, not to mention boring and quite amateurish.

**Bad Company** (2002, USA/CZE) **C-116m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Joel Schumacher. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Chris Rock, Matthew Marsh, Gabriel Macht, Peter Stormare. Another lame-brained Hollywood concoction that somehow stays afloat because of competent direction. After losing his CIA colleague in a shoot-out, Hopkins turns to that man's twin brother (Rock), who has to function as a stand-in to make a major weapons deal (and subsequent bust) work. The problem is that the twins are completely different, and Hopkins has nine days to transform a street-smart hustler into an educated upper-class gentleman. Rock has some

very funny lines, but script is improbable (to say the least) and action thriller becomes ludicrously overlong.

**Badlands** (1973, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Terrence Malick. Starring Martin Sheen, Sissy Spacek, Warren Oates, Ramon Bieri, Alan Vint. A garbage man (Sheen) falls in love with a naive 15 year-old (Spacek), and they take it on the lam after he kills her father and burns down their house. The dream of living happily together ends for them in the Badlands of Montana. A well-scored, stylishly photographed, altogether highly lyrical road movie that is not entirely successful due a lack of psychological depth. Spacek's voice-overs, commenting on the events in retrospect, are effective, though. This directorial debut of Terrence Malick (*DAYS OF HEAVEN*, *THE THIN RED LINE*) has gained a cult reputation. Inspired by the real-life Starkweather-Fugate killings in the 1950s; more or less remade 20 years later as *TRUE ROMANCE*. Written and produced by the director, who has a cameo as a salesman. Film debut of first-rate cinematographer Tak Fujimoto (*THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*).

**Bad Milo!** (2013, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** Jacob Vaughan. Starring Ken Marino, Peter Stormare, Patrick Warburton, Gillian Jacobs, Stephen Root, Mary Kay Place. Outrageous horror comedy about office clerk Marino, whose life is turned upside down by a gremlin-like creature that lives in his intestines. Once in a while it comes out to kill and eat his victims. How can Marino maintain a normal life now? Kind-of funny idea, some laughs, some gore, best enjoyed in company, with some beers. Aka *MIL0*.

**Bad Moon** (1996, USA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Eric Red. Starring Muriel Hemingway, Michael Paré, Mason Gamble, Ken Pogue, Hrothgar Mathews. Standard werewolf movie with Paré visiting his sister Hemingway and her little son, keeping a secret that he was bitten by a wolf-like creature in the jungle. Their dog Thor senses the danger and begins following the man into the wood, where he transforms into a werewolf ... every night. Not really bad but unimaginative, apart from some attack scenes and the visceral finale. Based on Wayne Smith's novel *Thor*, which reportedly had the dog tell the story(!).

**Bad News Bears, The** (1976, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Michael Ritchie. Starring Walter Matthau, Chris Barnes, Tatum O'Neal, Ben Piazza, Vic Morrow. Popular sports comedy about down-and-out baseball coach Matthau, who gets the chance to coach team of 10-year-old losers and teaches them self-respect and courage. Funny, foul-mouthed film, a hit with kids. That rousing score is from George Bizet's opera *Carmen*. Followed by two sequels and a TV series.

**Bad Religion - Along the Way** (1989, GER) **C-75m. \*\*\* D:** Matthias Kollek, Thorsten Bach. Early concert footage of punk rock band Bad Religion is worth seeing alone for its phenomenal editing, which makes us believe that film was shot during one show; as a matter of fact, it contains material of *fourteen* gigs! Check out at what speed the singer changes his T-shirts! The band members give interviews between the musical numbers.

**Bad Ronald** (1974, USA) **C-78m. \*\*\* D:** Buzz Kulik. Starring Scott Jacoby, Pippa Scott, John Larch, Dabney Coleman, Kim Huner, John Fiedler. Small but fine thriller about Jacoby, a teenage boy who has accidentally killed a little girl and now hides in a secret room of his dead mother's house. Everything seems to work out fine, until ... Based on a novel by John Holbrooke Vance and originally made for television. One thing to add: Ronald is not really 'bad', he is a victim of circumstances.

**Bad Taste** (1987, NZL) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Peter Jackson, Terry Potter, Craig Smith, Mike Minett, Doug Wren. Peter Jackson's first feature was realized between 1983 and 1987 and shot its director to (splatter-)stardom. The story: Aliens (disguising as farmers and walking around like zombies) have invaded a small coastal village in New Zealand, intending to bring human flesh (delicatessen) back to their planet. Scientist Derek (Jackson) and his "boys" must stop them. Outrageous gore effects, funny lines and slapstick

(or, splatshtick), unfortunately outweighed by too many slow spots in the script. Still, rightfully put Jackson on the map, and provided him with the reputation (and money) to film his next movies, MEET THE FEEBLES and BRAINDEAD (thank God). Warning: The title of this movie is an apt description of it. Do not view, if in doubt. This was even shown at the Cannes Film Festival!

**Bad Timing** (1980, GBR) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Nicolas Roeg. Starring Art Garfunkel, Theresa Russell, Harvey Keitel, Denholm Elliott, Daniel Massey, Dana Gillespie. Cult director Roeg's follow-up to THE MAN WHO FEEL TO EARTH (1976) is visceral psycho drama about a university professor's infatuation with independent Czech-American beauty Russell in Vienna, Austria. Film examines their love affair, as well as her later near-fatal overdose investigated by inspector Keitel. Fascinating combination of two time-layers, not always easy to access and sometimes difficult to watch, but has some brilliant touches. Russell is excellent.

**Bakjwi** (2009, KOR) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Park Chan-Wook. Starring Song Kang-ho, Kim Ok-bin, Kim Hae-suk, Shin Ha-kyun. Unconventional (some would say weird) vampire drama from the director of OLDBOY (2003) and STOKER (2013). Song plays a priest, who contracts a disease that turns him into a vampire. He joins a dysfunctional family, trying to control his blood thirst. Lots of stylish bits, strikingly filmed by Park, but the story is slow and plodding; it lacks vigor. Some loved this anyway. English title: THIRST.

**Ballad in Blood** (2016, ITA) **C-94m. \*\*\*½** D: Ruggero Deodato. Starring Roger Garth, Ernesto Mahieux, Carlotta Morelli, Noemi Smorra. Veteran director Deodato's return to directing is fairly interesting thriller about a group of young people living together in an apartment. When they find one of their flatmates dead one morning, they begin to investigate how it could have happened. They use her smartphone to put together the pieces. Ample nudity and violence, but the acting is often sub-par.

**Ballad of Cable Hogue, The** (1970, USA) **C-121m. \*\*\*** D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring Jason Robards, Stella Stevens, David Warner, Strother Martin, Slim Pickens, L.Q. Jones, R.G. Armstrong. Peckinpah's follow-up to THE WILD BUNCH is a completely different western. Robards plays a simple-minded but determined drifter who finds water in the desert and decides to build a stop for stagecoaches. Stevens is a hooker who falls in love with him. Not very credible or realistic, and lacking Peckinpah's trademark directorial style, but fine performances, lyrical scenes make it worthwhile. Score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**Bambi** (1942, USA) **C-70m. \*\*\*\*** D: David Hand. Starring (the voices of) Hardy Albright, Stan Alexander, Tim Davis, Paula Winslowe. Timeless, brilliant Disney classic detailing the life of deer Bambi, from childhood to adulthood, in beautiful, haunting images. Full of delightful sequences, with the death of Bambi's mother and the forest fire standing out. This true masterpiece entails a message that withstands time. An awe-inspiring achievement, right up there with the best films of all time. Based on the novel by Felix Salten. Richly orchestrated score by Edward Plumb. This was Disney's follow-up to DUMBO (1941).

**Bambi II** (2006, USA) **C-72m. \*\*\*** D: Brian Pimental. Starring (the voices of) Patrick Stewart, Alexander Gould, Brendan Baerg, Carolyn Hennesy, Nicky Jones. Sequel to the 1942 Disney classic forgets the ending of the original and takes off where the deer is left alone with his father, the great prince of the forest. The stag (voiced by Stewart) is looking for someone to raise his son, while Bambi is waking up to the adventures of the world around him. Many memorable characters return in this spin-off. The animation – lovingly designed, with the original in mind – compensates for modest plotting.

**Banda del Gobbo, La** (1977, ITA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*½** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Tomas Milian, Pino Colizzi, Isa Danieli, Sal Borgese, Luciano Catenacci, Tom Felleghy. Crime drama

with Milian in a double role: he plays a ruthless hunchback and his twin brother, a mentally retarded mechanic. When Il Gobbo (=the hunchback) is double-crossed at a hold-up he seeks revenge on his partners who'd rather see him dead. Solidly filmed but boring, not funny and trivial. There's not even enough action to keep you entertained. Milian had played a hunchback before in Lenzi's ROMA A MANO ARMATA (1976). English title: BROTHERS TILL WE DIE.

**Bande à Part** (1964, FRA) **97m.** \*\* D: Jean-Luc Godard. Starring Anna Karina, Sami Frey, Claude Brasseur, Michel Delahaye, narrated by Jean-Luc Godard. French art-house icon Godard attempts to repeat the success of his instant classic A BOUT DE SOUFFLE (1960) but result is unmemorable and largely uninspired. Two no-gooders Frey and Brasseur get involved with Karina and decide to rob her aunt. Largely (completely?) improvised crime film goes nowhere with its characters, maintaining a paper-thin pretence. Highly regarded by many Godard enthusiasts, Quentin Tarantino even named his production company 'Band Apart' after this movie. See for yourself if this appeals to you. Based on the novel *Fool's Gold* by Dolores Hitchens. Score by Michel Legrand. English titles: BAND OF OUTSIDERS, THE OUTSIDERS.

**Bandidas** (2006, USA/MEX/FRA) **C-93m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Joachim Roenning, Espen Sandberg. Starring Penélope Cruz, Salma Hayek, Steve Zahn, Dwight Yoakam, Denis Arndt, Sam Shepard. Quite attractive western comedy about Cruz, a farmer's daughter, and Hayek, a landowner's daughter, who in turn-of-the-century Mexico join forces in battling ruthless enforcer Yoakam, who steals land for the railway. Filmed with gusto and fervor, but plot is less engaging. Cowritten and coproduced by Luc Besson, who may have been inspired by the Louis Malle classic VIVA MARIA! (1965).

**Bandits** (2001, USA) **C-123m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Barry Levinson. Starring Bruce Willis, Billy Bob Thornton, Cate Blanchett, Troy Garity, Brian F. O'Byrne, January Jones, Barry Levinson. Off-beat comedy, told in flashback style, about criminals Willis and Thornton (both with funny characterizations), who escape from the joint and perform clever bank robberies. Blanchett, a neurotic married woman, then complicates their relationship considerably. Tries hard to be unusual, but material isn't tightly woven or funny enough. Written by Harley Peyton, who wrote several Twin Peaks episodes. Photographed by Dante Spinotti.

**Bangkok Dangerous** (1999, THA) **C-105m.** \*\*\* D: Danny and Oxide Pang. Starring Pawalit Mongkolpisit, Preamsinee Ratanasopha, Patharawarin Timkul, Pisek Intrakanchit. Uncompromising, stunningly stylish debut feature from the Pang Brothers about a deaf-mute hitman in Bangkok, who drifts from job to job. When he falls in love with a shopgirl, he finds his life at a crossroads. When his partner falls prey to a syndicate, he also must run for his life. Uneven plot outdone by frenzied direction, editing. Written by the directors, who are twin brothers. Remade by Hollywood in 2008.

**Bangkok Dangerous** (2008, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: The Pang Brothers. Starring Nicolas Cage, Shahkrit Yamnarm, Charlie Yeung, Panward Hemmanee, Jame With. Gripping remake of the Pang's 1999 breakthrough hit, with Hollywood star power. Cage plays a hitman in Bangkok, who does his jobs with great precision, until he allows himself to become involved with two people, his messenger Yamnarm and a deaf-mute shop assistant, who he falls in love with. Extremely well-made, stylish action thriller, though finale is not its strongest part. Excellent score by Brian Tyler adds to great atmosphere. Cage also produced.

**Barbarella** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-98m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Roger Vadim. Starring Jane Fonda, John Phillip Law, Anita Pallenberg, Milo O' Shea, Marcel Marceau, Claude Dauphin, Veronique Vendell, David Hemmings, Ugo Tognazzi. Perfect late 60s time capsule about sexy astronaut Fonda, who is assigned to track down a mega-criminal that wants to change this peaceful,

love-oriented galaxy. Totally corny, at times embarrassingly so, with not-to-be-believed (studio) sets and costumes; a cult classic, also due to Fonda's striptease during title sequence. From a comic book by Jean-Claude Forest. Script by Terry Southern and Roger Vadim, who was married to Fonda at the time. Photographed by Claude Renoir. Produced by Dina De Laurentiis. Also released as BARBARELLA: QUEEN OF THE GALAXY.

**Bare Behind Bars** (1977, SPA/GER) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Osvaldo de Oliveira. Starring Maria Stella Splendor. Prison exploitation doesn't bother with plot, but turns out to be "study" of lesbianism in prisons. After 90m. this has a rather deadening effect. "Nude show" is more like it. Uncut print has hardcore footage.

**Barnyard** (2006, USA/GER) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Steve Oedekerk. Starring (the voices of) Kevin James, Courteney Cox, Sam Elliott, Danny Glover, Wanda Sykes, Andie McDowell, David Koechner, Steve Oedekerk. Entertaining animated feature about irresponsible party cow James, who is forced to take his foster father's role as protector of their barnyard, when a band of coyotes take his life. Not exactly BAMBI (1942), but funny and enjoyable, slightly anarchic, though not as much as SHREK (2001). Written by the director.

**Barrens, The** (2012, USA/CDN) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Stephen Moyer, Mia Kirshner, Erik Knudsen. From the director of some good SAW sequels comes this almost unwatchable horror thriller about a family that goes camping in the woods of New Jersey. Legend has it that the Jersey devil roams the forests, although it's more family father Moyer's inner demons that spoil the vacation. Depressing psycho trip puts a young boy into all kinds of disgusting situations. Moyer's psycho performance is quite good, although his British accent is totally out of place. Avoid.

**Barton Fink** (1991, USA) **C-116m.** \*\*\*\* D: Joel Coen. Starring John Turturro, John Goodman, Judy Davis, Michael Lerner, John Mahoney, Tony Shalhoub, Jon Polito, Steve Buscemi. Dark, brilliant satirical drama, the Coens' fourth film and perhaps their best. Barton Fink (Turturro), a successful dramatist from New York is called to Hollywood to write a screenplay for a wrestling picture. From his arrival at the Hotel Earle in Los Angeles, nothing goes as planned. Barton is suffering a writer's block and his next-door neighbor, insurance salesman Charlie Meadows (Goodman) keeps him from concentrating properly. Is experienced novelist Mahoney going to help? And why is the wallpaper peeling? Stylish, surreal masterpiece of filmmaking identifies Hollywood with hell for someone who fails to play according to its rules. BARTON FINK will "show you the life of a mind!". Turturro and Goodman are excellent, so is Carter Burwell's theme. Winner of several awards, including all of the important prizes at the Cannes film festival (the first film to accomplish this). One of the best films of the decade.

**Basic Instinct** (1992, USA) **C-128m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone, George Dzundza, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Daniel von Bargen, James Rebhorn. Fine erotic thriller with Douglas a frustrated cop on the search for an ice-pick killer and his involvement with prime suspect Stone, who's the prototypical *femme fatale*. Director Verhoeven creates a maelstrom of sex and violence and keeps the viewer involved at all times. This Hitchcockian thriller was written by Joe Eszterhas. Enticing score by Jerry Goldsmith. Photographed by Jan De Bont.

**Basket Case** (1982, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Frank Henenlotter. Starring Kevin VanHentenryck, Terri Susan Smith, Beverly Bonner, Robert Vogel, Diana Browne. A young man, carrying his mutated siamese twin around in a basket, comes to N.Y.C. to exact revenge on the doctors who separated them as children. Truly grotesque horror with tongue-in-cheek is well-made (despite the low-budget) but may be too disturbing for some viewers. A cult favorite, followed by two sequels. Written and edited by director Henenlotter.

**Basket Case 2** (1990, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Frank Henenlotter. Starring Kevin VanHentenryck, Judy Grafe, Annie Ross, Heather Rattray, Chad Brown, Ted Sorel, David Emge. Sequel to the 1982 cult favorite starts right where the original left off and follows VanHentenryck and his deformed twin to a house of freaks, where they find temporary refuge. Less original plotwise but still ambitious, with a twisted sense of humor and some astounding make-up creations that are reason alone to watch this film (credits list a “man with 37 noses”!). Written by the director. Followed by BASKET CASE 3 in 1992.

**Basket Case 3: The Progeny** (1992, USA) **C-84m.** \*\*½ D: Frank Henenlotter. Starring Kevin VanHentenryck, Annie Ross, Gil Roper, Dan Biggers, Jim O’Doherty. Final entry in the BASKET CASE series is similar to second film, as Van Hentenryck and his brother Belial are still protected by Ross’s family of freaks. This time, Belial is about to become a father, and Van Hentenryck finally goes completely crazy. Again, quite enjoyable thanks to some very good make-up effects and a perverted sense of humor. For series fans, others should not bother. Produced by James Glickenhau, coscripted by the director.

**Baskin** (2015, TUR/USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Can Evrenol. Starring Görkem Kasal, Ergun Kuyucu, Muharrem Bayrak, Mehmet Cerrahoglu. Unusual, bizarre cult horror film set one night in the Turkish countryside where five cops are passing their nightshift. One of them is Kasal, who had a creepy encounter as a child and seems to have a vivid imagination or lucid dreams. When an emergency call sends them to a remote abandoned building, nothing can describe the horrors that await them there. Unpredictable, enigmatic film has excellent camerawork, superb lighting and packs a gut punch during the terrifying finale. Decidedly not for all tastes, but an incredibly original offering and an instant cult film. Evrenol’s feature debut, expanded from his own short.

**Basquiat** (1996, USA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Julian Schnabel. Starring Jeffrey Wright, David Bowie, Dennis Hopper, Gary Oldman, Willem Dafoe, Michael Wincott, Benicio del Toro, Claire Forlani, Parker Posey, Christopher Walken, Courtney Love, Tatum O’Neal, Paul Bartel. Screen-bio of Warhol contemporary Jean-Michel Basquiat (Wright), who made an incredible career, starting out as a graffiti artist and growing to a respected expressionist painter. First half is fine, but film loses dramatic momentum in the second as it becomes all too clear that Basquiat’s lifestyle will inevitably lead to self-destruction. Well-filmed by first-time director Schnabel, but the biggest interest springs from the cast (including Bowie as Andy Warhol). Demonstrates how closely art and drugs are related, though SID AND NANCY was more consequent in that respect. Isabella Rossellini appears unbilled.

**Batman** (1966, USA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Leslie H. Martinson. Starring Adam West, Burt Ward, Lee Meriwether, Cesar Romero, Burgess Meredith, Frank Gorshin, Alan Napier, Neil Hamilton, Stafford Repp. Madge Blake, Reginald Denny, Milton Frome, voice of Van Williams. ‘Holy Batman!’ Movie spin-off from the 1966-1968 TV series (120 episodes), premiered between the first and second season. Batman and his sidekick Robin go against four super-villains (The Penguin, The Joker, The Riddler, and Catwoman), who are planning to sabotage U.N. meeting and take over the world. Rather slowly-paced and weakly plotted, worked better in the TV episodes, although it’s colorful and nostalgic. Meredith as the Penguin comes off best.

**Batman** (1989, USA) **C-126m.** \*\*\*½ D: Tim Burton. Starring Jack Nicholson, Michael Keaton, Kim Basinger, Robert Wuhl, Pat Hingle, Billy Dee Williams, Michael Gough, Jack Palance, Jerry Hall. Long-awaited big-screen debut of the caped crusader (not counting the Adam West TV spin-off) has Batman (Keaton) lock horns with super-criminal The Joker (Nicholson). Impressive production design and special effects almost outshine unspectacular plotting. Keaton is a poor Bruce Wayne, the story setup longish; film finally hits its stride in bombastic

finale. All in all slightly more disappointing than impressive ... a near miss. Danny Elfman's score is excellent. Oscar winner for Anthony First's production design. Prince contributed some songs to the soundtrack. Followed by BATMAN RETURNS.

**Batman & Robin** (1997, USA) **C-120m. \*\*\* D:** Joel Schumacher. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, George Clooney, Uma Thurman, Chris O'Donnell, Alicia Silverstone, Elle MacPherson, Michael Gough. Over-the-top thrill ride featuring Clooney as the new Batman, who has to contend with two super-villains, Mr. Freeze (Arnie) and Poison Ivy (Uma Thurman). Well-directed fourth Batman-film takes some time to get going, but when it does it never lets up. Brilliantly cast, with Schwarzenegger a hyper-cool Mr. Freeze and Thurman a seductive Poison Ivy, film's breathless pace matches the best action pictures of the 80s and 90s. Its success is mainly due to the fact that the movie is conscious of its comic-book origins and doesn't take itself seriously. Especially kids will be thrilled. This was the follow-up to BATMAN FOREVER.

**Batman Begins** (2005, USA) **C-141m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Christopher Nolan. Starring Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Liam Neeson, Katie Holmes, Gary Oldman, Cillian Murphy, Tom Wilkinson, Rutger Hauer, Ken Watanabe, Mark Boone Junior, Linus Roache, Morgan Freeman. Star-studded action blockbuster goes back to the winged crusader's roots, more or less ignoring the previous BATMAN films. As title indicates, this is one long prologue, following Bruce Wayne's frustrations after his parents' murder, his ritualistic exile and his decision to go back and fight crime in the streets of Gotham City. Takes its time to get going but is engrossing all the way, with high-octane action scenes and a typically intense turn by Bale. However: Look in vain for comic book style, this is a brooding noir action drama. Coscripted by director Nolan (MEMENTO). Followed by THE DARK KNIGHT (2008).

**Batman Forever** (1995, USA) **C-122m. \*\*½ D:** Joel Schumacher. Starring Val Kilmer, Tommy Lee Jones, Jim Carrey, Nicole Kidman, Chris O'Donnell, Michael Gough, Pat Hingle, Drew Barrymore, Rene Auberjonois, Don 'The Dragon' Wilson, Ed Begley Jr. Schumacher took over from Burton for this third BATMAN entry. Kilmer, replacing Keaton, has two new adversaries: Two-Face (Jones) and the Riddler (Carrey), both of whom have reason to go against Bruce Wayne *and* Batman. Kidman plays a psychologist with a definite interest in all of them. Stunning set design, eye-popping special effects cannot camouflage undramatic, strangely uninvolved plotting. Besides, the villains are not potent enough to make this work (in fact, they are rather annoying). Still, a rollercoaster ride of a movie, especially for kids. Followed by BATMAN & ROBIN (with much more potent villains).

**Batman Returns** (1992, USA) **C-126m. \*\*\* D:** Tim Burton. Starring Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito, Michelle Pfeiffer, Christopher Walken, Michael Gough, Michael Murphy, Pat Hingle, Vincent Schiavelli, Paul Reubens. Batman returns in this darker, meaner sequel and must face ruthless industrialist Schreck (Walken) and ugly, evil freak The Penguin, who intend to plunge Gotham City into chaos. Meanwhile, the Caped Crusader faces his biggest challenge yet in seductive Catwoman (Pfeiffer), who is beset by revenge. This entry in the series emphasises horror and stands as another triumph of style and production design. A definite improvement over its predecessor, especially in its treatment and conceptualization of good and evil. Well-acted by all, even Keaton is more convincing as Bruce Wayne this time, but Pfeiffer is most impressive and steals the show. Elaborate score by Danny Elfman, special make-up effects by Stan Winston. Followed by BATMAN FOREVER.

**Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice** (2016, USA) **C-151m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Zack Snyder. Starring Ben Affleck, Henry Cavill, Amy Adams, Jesse Eisenberg, Diane Lane, Laurence Fishburne, Jeremy Irons, Holly Hunter, Kevin Costner. Sequel or follow-up to MAN OF STEEL (2013) pits two superheroes against each other, as Superman (Cavill) has become a

controversial figure and Batman (Affleck) investigates Lex Luthor's business operations. Long, talky, almost uninteresting plot with little to no character development makes this a slight disappointment. Film is somewhat redeemed by special effects (especially in final battle). Best thing about it is Hans Zimmer's fine score.

**Battaglia di El Alamein, La** (1969, ITA/FRA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Calvin Jackson Padgett (=Giorgio Ferroni). Starring Frederick Stafford, George Hilton, Robert Hossein, Michael Rennie, Ira von Fürstenberg, Enrico Maria Salerno, Sal Borgese, Tom Felleghy. Standard war actioner detailing the strategies of the opposing forces in WW2 Africa and subsequent title battle. No depth whatsoever, but at least production values are adequate. Cast is quite interesting. Score by Carlo Rustichelli, executive produced by Sergio Martino. English titles: DESERT TANKS, THE BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN.

**Battaglia di Maratona, La** (1959, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jacques Tourneur. Starring Steve Reeves, Mylène Demongeot, Miranda Campa, Sergio Fantoni, Ivo Garrani, Daniela Rocca, Daniele Vargas. Colorful but emptyheaded spectacle, set 490 B.C., as Greeks have to fend off attacks by the Persians. Of course, the battle of Marathon is the climax of the film. Instead of concentrating on historical events, director Tourneur has muscleman Steele fall in love with beautiful blonde Demongeot. Interesting for fans of cinematographer Mario Bava, who photographed the film splendidly and also completed the film in Tourneur's absence. He may be responsible for increasingly violent scenes towards the end. English title: THE GIANT OF MARATHON.

**Battery, The** (2012, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jeremy Gardner. Starring Jeremy Gardner, Adam Cronheim, Niels Bolle, Alana O'Brien. Zombie horror drama made on a shoestring budget about two guys, bearded slacker Gardner (also writer-director) and his less-relaxed pal Cronheim, who travel the countryside scavenging houses and killing (very slow) zombies. Endless shots of them playing baseball or brushing their teeth, this is funny in some scenes, but it's not a comedy, it's a drama! Not completely without appeal, but general silliness prevails.

**Battle Beyond the Stars** (1980, USA) **C-104m. \*½** D: Jimmy T. Murakami. Starring Richard Thomas, Robert Vaughn, John Saxon, George Peppard, Darlaine Fluegel, Sybil Danning, Sam Jaffe, Jeff Corey. Or, JOHN BOY AND THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN IN SPACE. When his planet is under siege from spaceships by warlord Saxon, Thomas sets out to recruit mercenaries to help defend it. Sci-fi movie probably seemed okay in 1980 and five years later, but today it just seems ultra-cheesy. Notable only for some big names involved in the making. John Sayles cowrote the script, Roger Corman coproduced, James Horner composed the music and James Cameron did the art direction (this was his first screen credit). Has a minor cult following, but any 'Star Trek' episode is better.

**Battle for the Planet of the Apes** (1973, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: J. Lee Thompson. Starring Roddy McDowall, Claude Akins, Natalie Trundy, Severn Darden, Lew Ayres, Paul Williams, Austin Stoker, John Huston, John Landis. Fifth and final installment in the PLANET OF THE APES saga has orang-utan lawgiver Huston narrate around 2600 what happened after Caesar's revolution some 600 years ago. He has to deal with rebellious Gorillas led by Akins and radioactive humanoids attempting to win back dominance on the surface of the Earth. Almost nothing is left of the appeal of the first films (best sequence: the descent into the Dead City), but this is still a must, if you are a fan. Some prints feature two additional scenes. The series was followed by two television series.

**Battle Royale** (2000, JAP) **C-114m. \*½** D: Kinji Fukasaku. Starring Tatsuya Fujiwara, Aki Maeda, Taro Yamamoto, Masanobu Ando, Kou Shibasaki, Chiaki Kuriyama, Beat Takeshi (Kitano). Some thousand years in the future (which looks more like present day, however),

a school class is chosen to be the contestants of a grueling competition. They are flown to a remote island, where they are supposed to kill each other within three days, as there can only be one survivor. Of course, the spectacle will be televised. Lots of shoot-outs and screaming teenagers, but plot and character development is practically non-existent. What's more, it's not fun at all. Kitano's dead-pan performance doesn't help, either. Uncut print runs 122m. Film's success prompted a sequel in 2003.

**Baxter** (1989, FRA) **C-82m**. \*\*½ D: Jérôme Boivin. Starring Lise Delamare, Jean Mercure, Jacques Spiesser, Catherine Ferran, Jean-Paul Roussillon, Sabrina Leurquin. A movie with a quite daring premise: the dog (a pitbull terrier) is the main character, who narrates the film, giving us his life story as he is passed on from owner to owner. Some interesting observations of the human-dog relationship are offered, but plot is underdeveloped and mostly pointless.

**Bay, The** (2012, USA) **C-85m**. \*\*½ D: Barry Levinson. Starring Kether Donohue, Frank Deal, Kristen Connolly. Nansi Aluka, Christopher Denham. Found-footage sci-fi horror film by veteran director Levinson. A TV reporter has assembled footage that documents July 4th celebration in coastal town, where the dumping of chicken manure into the sea leads to abnormal growth of isopods (little sea bugs), which start attacking and infesting people. Not bad, but never fully convincing.

**Beach, The** (2000, USA) **C-119m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Danny Boyle. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tilda Swinton, Virginie Ledoyen, Guillaume Canet, Robert Carlyle. Thrill-seeking youngster (DiCaprio) goes to Thailand and hears of a mysterious, Paradise-like beach. He decides to travel there with a French couple and finds something beyond his expectations. Adventure drama is off to an energetic start and maintains interest until the final thirty minutes which are kind of odd and turn DiCaprio into a Col. Kurtz-like madman. Two thirds of a good movie, well-handled by director Boyle (unless you disagree with his off-beat touches). Based on Alex Garland's novel. Score by Angelo Badalamenti, photographed by Darius Khondji.

**Beach Blanket Bingo** (1965, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*½ D: William Asher. Starring Frankie Avalon, Annette Funicello, Deborah Walley, Harvey Lembeck, Marta Kristen, Linda Evans, Timothy Carey, Don Rickles, Buster Keaton. A group of slim, handsome teens hang out at the beach, go surfing and live through minor adventures. Beach comedy isn't much in terms of plot but actors are nicely subdued and scenery is beautiful. A cult film for 60s surf and beach movie lovers, this was actually the fifth in a whole series of films produced by AIP.

**Beast Must Die, The** (1974, GBR) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Paul Annett. Starring Calvin Lockhart, Peter Cushing, Charles Gray, Marlene Clark, Anton Diffring. Lockhart invites several people to a remote mansion, where he tells them that one of them is a werewolf. He plans to kill the monster during a full moon. The audience is also given a guess at who might be it. Horror draws most of its suspense from the premise. Several redundant sequences but above-average. Not very violent, either. Based on the short story 'There Shall Be No Darkness' by James Blish.

**Beasts of the Southern Wild** (2012, USA) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Benh Zeitlin. Starring Quvenzhané Wallis, Dwight Henry, Levy Easterly. Oscar-nominated drama about a six-year-old girl who has to fend for herself in slum settlement called the 'bathtub' somewhere in the Louisiana bayou. Her father is very sick and local population do not want to give up their existence behind the big dam, although a flood is imminent. The girl's imagination runs wild, conjuring up some mystical aurochs creatures. Essentially a psycho drama, an unsettling examination of a shattered childhood and environmental fantasy at the same time. Wallis (at 9, copping a Best Actress nomination) is exceptional, but she does it all with instinct. Good score, co-authored by director Zeitlin, who also coscripted, based on a play by Lucy Alibar.

**Beast Within, The** (1982, USA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Philippe Mora. Starring Ronny Cox, Bibi Besch, Paul Clemens, Don Gordon, R.G. Armstrong, Katherine Moffat, L.Q. Jones, Luke Askew. Not-bad horror film about Cox and his wife Besch, who got raped 17 years ago by a maniac in the woods. Today, Besch's son Clemens is showing disturbing tendencies, which the couple tries to investigate in the small town where the rape occurred. What is the populace trying to hide from them? Start out quite well, then becomes redundant and finally outright absurd. A okay view for horror aficionados. Tom Holland (FRIGHT NIGHT) scripted from a novel by Edward Levy. Elaborate score by Les Baxter.

**Beatrice Cenci** (1969, ITA) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Adrienne Larussa, Antonio Casagrande, Tomas Milian, Raymond Pellegrin, Georges Wilson. In 1599, the aristocratic Cenci family are accused of heresy and must flee from the wrath of the Pope. When the tyrannical head of the family falls prey to an intrigue and dies, his daughter, beautiful Beatrice (Larussa) is accused of murder. Confusing narrative hampers proceedings, but drama is well-acted, generally not bad. Surprisingly straight stuff from Fulci, the sixth filmization of the story (1956 version was directed by Riccardo Freda). Also known as PERVERSION STORY.

**Beau Serge, Le** (1958, FRA) **97m.** \*\*\* D : Claude Chabrol. Starring Gérard Blain, Jean-Claude Brialy, Michèle Meritz, Bernadette Lafont, Edmond Beauchamp. Claude Chabrol's first film is also the first film of the French *Nouvelle Vague*. Dramatic story concerns Brialy's return to his home village in the country. He encounters old friend Blain, who has started drinking, being unable to pull himself out of his misery. Not among the directors best films, but still highly recommended to cineastes. Philippe de Broca was first assistant director, Chabrol also wrote and produced.

**Beautiful Girls** (1996, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Ted Demme. Starring Timothy Hutton, Matt Dillon, Noah Emmerich, Annabeth Gish, Lauren Holly, Rosie O'Donnell, Max Perlich, Martha Plimpton, Natalie Portman, Michael Rapaport, Mira Sorvino, Uma Thurman, David Arquette. Pleasant-enough drama about Hutton returning to his hometown for a high school class reunion and finding his old pals haven't changed since. Most of them are unhappy with their lives, and he begins to doubt whether his relationship with his wife is so perfect. Good cast in bitter-sweet drama, which will appeal mostly to U.S. Americans, who can identify with the characters. Overlong but worthwhile. Good choice of songs on the soundtrack.

**Beautiful Mind, A** (2001, USA) **C-135m.** \*\*\* D: Ron Howard. Starring Russell Crowe, Ed Harris, Jennifer Connelly, Christopher Plummer, Paul Bettany, Adam Goldberg, Josh Lucas, Anthony Rapp, Judd Hirsch. Very well-directed biographical drama about real-life Math genius John Nash, whose schizophrenia prevented him from having a proper career. He imagined himself being part of a clandestine post-WW2 operation and his social life suffered immensely. Crowe's performance brought him the Academy Award. Other Oscars went to director Howard, supporting actress Connelly, producers Howard and Brian Grazer, as well as screenwriter Akiva Goldsman. Score by James Horner, photography by Roger Deakins.

**Beauty and the Beast** (1991, USA) **C-84m.** \*\*\* D: Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. Starring (the voices of) Robby Benson, Jesse Corti, Rex Everhart, Angela Lansbury, Paige O'Hara, Brian Cummings. Fine Disney version of the famous fable is perfect for kids. Free-spirited Belle opts to stay with ugly beast in his castle, so that her father gets released. The beast has reason to change his brisk behavior as his time on Earth is running out. Well-made, engrossing, though adults should stick with the more poetic Jean Cocteau version. The first animated feature ever to receive a Best Picture nomination at the Oscars. Later extended to 90m.

**Becoming Jane** (2007, GBR/USA) **C-120m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Julian Jarrold. Starring Anne Hathaway, James McAvoy, Julie Walters, James Cromwell, Maggie Smith, Joe Anderson,

Lucy Cohu, Laurence Fox, Ian Richardson. Plodding drama about famed writer Jane Austen, whose letters provide the basis for this feature film. Hathaway plays the novelist, who is confronted with doubts and sexism in late 18th century England. Production design is superb, but the plot shows very little development and moves at a snail's pace. Richardson's last film.

**Bedhead** (1991, USA) **B&W-9m. n/r D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Rebecca Rodriguez, David Rodriguez. Early short from the director of *EL MARIACHI* (1992) and *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN* (1996). A girl gets her revenge on her brother, when she suddenly acquires psychic powers after he made her fall on her head. Interesting to watch how Rodriguez is trying for some directorial style here (at the age of 22!), but otherwise pretty flat. Filmed with Rodriguez family members in the cast and crew.

**Bed Sitting Room, The** (1969, GBR) **C-91m. \*\* D:** Richard Lester. Starring Rita Tushingham, Ralph Richardson, Peter Cook, Harry Secombe, Dudley Moore, Spike Milligan, Roy Kinnear, Marty Feldman. Absurd post-apocalyptic satire set in a wasteland (or, rather waste *dump*) that was once London. A family – with pregnant Tushingham – travel around and meet all kinds of weird characters. Some funny bits, but plot is a mess. A curio at best. Based on Spike Milligan and John Antrobus' play. Feldman's film debut.

**Bedtime Stories** (2008, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Adam Shankman. Starring Adam Sandler, Keri Russell, Guy Pearce, Courtney Cox, Lucy Lawless, Jonathan Pryce, Carmen Electra, Rob Schneider. Feel-good Disney movie about janitor Sandler, who works for his father's hotel business but it now belongs to someone else. One day his sister Cox asks him to look after her kids, and when every bedtime story they concoct together comes true, Sandler sees a way to change his sullen life. Not completely believable, but fairly entertaining and warm-hearted. Okay family fare.

**Bee Movie** (2007, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\* D:** Steve Hickner, Simon J. Smith. Starring (the voices of) Jerry Seinfeld, Renée Zellweger, Matthew Broderick, Patrick Warburton, John Goodman, Chris Rock, Kathy Bates, Barry Levinson, Larry King, Ray Liotta, Sting, Oprah Winfrey, Megan Mullally, Rip Torn, Jim Cummings. Animated blockbuster from Dreamworks about a simple bee (Seinfeld) who doesn't want to be one of zillion honey workers and dreams of greater things. On a trip through New York City he befriends florist Zellweger, who can't believe that bees can talk (can you?). It all comes down to a court hearing where it's humans vs. bees. If you can get past the movie's silly plot twists and implausibilities, you'll be wonderfully entertained, because it has a lot of funny scenes, and that's what counts in this genre. Animation is first-rate, too.

**Beetle Juice** (1988, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\* D:** Tim Burton. Starring Alex Baldwin, Geena Davis, Annie McEnroe, Maurice Page, Hugo Stanger, Michael Keaton, Catherine O'Hara, Jeffrey Jones, Winona Ryder. Horror comedy with stop-motion effects, from the director of *NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS* (1993). Baldwin and Davis die in an accident but live on as ghosts in their house. When the new owners arrive they try to scare them away – to no avail. Then they turn to restless spirit Beetlejuice (Keaton), who has a few nasty tricks up his sleeve. Colorful, elaborate fantasy with a fine score by Danny Elfman. Plot doesn't quite hold up, but there's so much to see and marvel at, you won't mind. Keaton is terrific. Oscar winner for Best Makeup. Followed by an animated TV series.

**Before I Go to Sleep** (2014, GBR/FRA/SWE) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Rowan Joffe. Starring Nicole Kidman, Colin Firth, Mark Strong, Adam Levy. Weak mystery drama about amnesiac Kidman, who wakes up every day not knowing anything about herself. Her husband Firth cares for her, but her secret sessions with a psychiatrist reveal that not everything is what it seems. Convuluted thriller remains watchable thanks to the stars' performances, but in the end it

all goes down the drain, making you wonder whether this was specifically made for women (the emotional finale does not ring true at all). Based on a novel by S.J. Watson.

**Before Midnight** (2013, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*½ D:** Richard Linklater. Starring Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy, Seamus Davey-Fitzpatrick, Athina Rachel Tsangari. Third film after BEFORE SUNRISE and BEFORE SUNSET revisits the characters' lives after another exactly nine years. Hawke and Delpy are spending a holiday in Greece and discuss and get into fights about their twin daughters, his neglected son, their jobs, their future. The most mature and real of the films, a gem.

**Before Sunrise** (1995, USA/AUT) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Linklater. Starring Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy, Andrea Eckert, Hanno Pöschl, Tex Rubinowitz, Erni Mangold, Peter Ily Huemer. Wonderful romance about Generation X protagonists Hawke and French girl Delpy, who meet on a train to Vienna, fall in love and spend an unforgettable night in the Austrian capital, aware that after they part on the next day, they might never see each other again. Simple but touching drama, well-acted and shot on typically Viennese locations. This cult film for the nineties may be what BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S was for the sixties. Cowritten by director Linklater.

**Before Sunset** (2004, USA/FRA) **C-80m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Linklater. Starring Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy, Vernon Dobtcheff. Nine years after BEFORE SUNRISE (1995) Hawke has become a quite successful writer, and he is advertising his latest book in Paris when he meets Delpy again. On an hour-long odyssey through the French capital they exchange their philosophies and try to analyse what they have become. Charming, telling conversation piece unfolds in real-time and perfectly captures the fleeting moments of life as two former lovers re-unite. Contains some bitter truths about life and love. However, the short running time and the fact that it is subordinate to the first film wears it down a bit.

**Before the Rain** (1994, MAK/GBR/FRA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Milcho Manchevski. Starring Katrin Cartlidge, Rade Serbedzija, Gregoire Colin, Labina Mitevska. Intelligent, perceptive drama focusing on the lives of three people, who are all affected in a different way by the war in former Yugoslavia. Film is structured in three parts, which are linked together in a most unusual way. Well-made, beautifully photographed drama, which demonstrates the effects of war on a very personal level. Winner of the Golden Lion in Venice.

**Before Winter Comes** (1969, GBR) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** J. Lee Thompson. Starring David Niven, Topol, Anna Karina, John Hurt, Anthony Quayle. Right after the end of World War Two, somewhere in the Austrian Alps, there is a camp for displaced persons run by British major Niven. It's located right along the demarcation line separating the British and Russian occupation zones, which leads to some minor quarrels. Mainly, this rare drama is about interpreter Topol, who falls in love with Karina and tries to manipulate Niven, while in danger of being deported. Well-acted, with especially engaging turns by Topol and Hurt, but script is second-rate.

**Begotten** (1991, USA) **B&W-71m. n/r D:** E. Elias Merhige. Starring Brian Salzberg, Donna Dempsey, Stephen Charles Barry. Bizarre, almost legendary video experiment from the later director of SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE (2000). Dialogue-free, black-and-white, with often distorted visuals, this is extremely difficult to watch, as it has little coherence and contains explicit violence and nudity. The "plot" starts with a "god" who kills himself with a razor, then "Mother Earth" gives birth to a deformed creature called the "son of Earth". Impossible to rate, this – like all of expressive visual art – will depend on how you see it. One might ask why this is stretched out beyond short film length. Like it or not, this has become a cult item. Also shown at 78m.

**Beguiled, The** (1971, USA) **C-105m.** \*\*\* D: Don Siegel. Starring Clint Eastwood, Geraldine Page, Elizabeth Hartman, Jo Ann Harris, Darleen Carr, Pamelyn Ferdin. Unusual drama about wounded civil war soldier Eastwood, who comes to a girls' school in the South, where his wounds are treated despite him being a Yankee. The fact that he is a man causes much more upheaval (and jealousy) among the women. Engrossing drama, based on the novel by Thomas Cullinan, has a disappointing ending, but is highly recommended to fans of the off-beat. Good score by Lalo Schifrin.

**Behind the Wall** (2008, CDN/USA) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Paul Schneider. Starring Lindy Booth, Lawrence Dane, James Thomas, Andy Jones, Brad Hodder, Suzie Pollard. Low-budget horror drama about a traumatized woman, who returns to the lighthouse, where her father allegedly killed her mother twenty years ago. Some real-estate developers want to turn it into a tourist attraction, but priest Dane warns them to stay away. A sinister presence seems to be lurking in the basement. Watchable fare, apart from some stupid scenes about an hour in that don't work.

**Being, The** (1983, USA) **C-82m.** \*½ D: Jackie Kong. Starring Martin Landau, Marianne Gordon, Rexx Coltrane (=Bill Osco), José Ferrer, Dorothy Malone. Pretty bad horror film about a town which is terrorized by a slimy monster, a mutation caused by toxic waste. Basically an ALIEN-ripoff, only with a different setting. Actors are dull, so is script. Horror freaks might enjoy gory effects (and frequent nudity). Filmed in 1980. Alternative titles: FREAK, EASTER SUNDAY, THE POTTSVILLE HORROR.

**Being John Malkovich** (1999, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*\*½ D: Spike Jonze. Starring John Cusack, Cameron Diaz, Catherine Keener, Orson Bean, John Malkovich, Mary Kay Place, Charlie Sheen. Extraordinary, intelligent fantasy about brilliant but penniless puppeteer Cusack, who takes the job of sorting files on floor 7½ (!) of a skyscraper and subsequently discovers a strange, mind-expanding portal... Funny, even philosophical one-of-a-kind movie, highlighted by many offbeat characters, including Diaz as Cusack's ugly, animal-obsessed wife, Bean as his mysterious boss and lots of celebrities, who appear as themselves (Charlie Sheen, Brad Pitt, Dustin Hoffman, Michelle Pfeiffer, Gary Sinise, Winona Ryder). A must-see. Jonze's first film, perhaps influenced by Terry Gilliam's BRAZIL.

**Being There** (1979, USA) **C-130m.** \*\*\* D: Hal Ashby. Starring Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine, Melvyn Douglas, Jack Warden, Richard Basehart, Hal Ashby. Bitter-sweet drama based on the novel by Jerzy Kosinski about a middle-aged man, who spent his entire life as a gardener at a villa, knowing about the world only through television. When the owner of the villa dies, he packs his bags and sets out into the real world with naiveté and simple-mindedness. By chance he meets rich MacLaine, who takes him up, and he becomes an unlikely celebrity, even meeting the president. Slightly overlong, not completely convincing film was a pet project for Sellers, this was his penultimate film before his untimely death in 1980. His performance, which he modelled after Stan Laurel, is fascinating to watch, it got him his second Best Actor nomination at the Oscars (the other one being for DR. STRANGELOVE). Douglas won the award for Best Supporting Actor.

**Beiqing Chengsi** (1989, TIW) **C-157m.** \*\* D: Hou Hsiao-Hsien. Starring Tony Leung. Deadening chronicle of the hard times a Taiwanese family have to live through when the Japanese emperor resigns after World War Two. Quite ambitious but never lives up to its intentions. Uninvolving direction (the majority of scenes is shot from a far distance) gives the impression of an indifferent approach by the film-makers. This is about as exciting as a history book, but nevertheless won a prize at the Venice film festival.

**Bell Boy, The** (1960, USA) **72m.** \*\* D: Jerry Lewis. Starring Jerry Lewis, Bill Richmond. Plotless comedy about bell boy Lewis and his misfortunes in a hotel in Florida. Hardly funny,

although it was quite popular and successful when originally released. Richmond does a scary impression of the comedian Stan Laurel (of Laurel & Hardy fame). Lewis' first film as a director; he also wrote and coproduced.

**Belle Américaine, La** (1961, FRA) **100m.** \*\* D: Robert Dhéry. Starring Robert Dhéry, Colette Brosset, Alfred Adam, Louis de Funès, Christian Marin, Michel Serrault, Jean Carmet, Jean Lefebvre, Claude Piéplu, Pierre Tchernia, Grosso et Modo. Mild, dated comedy about factory worker Dhéry, who buys a used American car, which leads to his becoming the talk of the town. Slowly paced, old-fashioned nostalgia for fans of French cinema. Of interest mainly because of appearances of Serrault and de Funès (pre-stardom). Serrault gives a terrific performance, de Funès offers one of his pantomime routines. Also shown in computer-colored version. English titles: THE AMERICAN BEAUTY, WHAT A CHASSIS.

**Belle de Jour** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-101m.** \*\*\*½ D: Luis Bunuel. Starring Catherine Deneuve, Jean Sorel, Michel Piccoli, Geneviève Page, Pierre Clémenti, Françoise Fabian, Francisco Rabal, Francis Blanche, Bernard Fresson, Luis Bunuel. Outstanding character study and examination of bourgeois morals is one of master surrealist Bunuel's most famous films. Young Deneuve's seemingly perfect marriage and relationship with her husband, doctor Sorel, is flawed by masochistic tendencies inside herself. She flees into the world of prostitution and starts leading a double life. Her descent and guilt is followed consequently by director Bunuel. Altogether fascinating treatise on the corset of the bourgeoisie was a scandal when originally released. Today it is a key film of the mid-1960s. Photographed by Sacha Vierny, costumes by Yves Saint-Laurent. For a similar examination of sexual fantasies and obsessions turn to Stanley Kubrick's EYES WIDE SHUT (1999), for which this may have been an influence.

**Belle Époque** (1992, SPA/POR/FRA) **C-109m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Fernando Trueba. Starring Penélope Cruz, Miriam Díaz Aroca, Gabino Diego, Fernando Fernán Gómez, Michel Galabru. Seems familiar: In 1931 Spain a deserted soldier meets and falls in love with four sisters who happen to be visiting their father at his rural estate. Many amusing complications ensue until the man finally knows which girl to prefer. A hit in many countries but plot is overlong and not very stimulating (the actresses *are*, though). Nevertheless won a Best Foreign Film Oscar. For a more subtle (and sensuous) love comedy watch SIRENS (1994).

**Belly of the Beast** (2003, CDN/HGK/GBR) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Steven Seagal, Byron Mann, Monica Lo, Tom Wu. Almost completely worthless actioner with Seagal an ex-CIA agent going to Thailand to recover kidnapped daughter. Buddhist clichés abound, a fat, old "hero" and a plot that is a throw-back to 80s video store bombs. Photography and direction (by genre-great Ching) is actually quite good, but it can't save this turkey.

**Belphégor – Le Fantôme du Louvre** (2001, FRA) **C-97m.** SCOPE \*\*\*½ D: Jean-Paul Salomé. Starring Sophie Marceau, Michel Serrault, Frédéric Dieffenthal, Julie Christie, Jean-François Balmer, Juliette Gréco. An Egyptian mummy is brought to the famous Louvre in Paris, replete with ancient curse and angry pharaoh. Marceau, a young woman who lives near the museum is temporarily possessed by Belphégor... can her new lover Dieffenthal help, or old expert Serrault? Well-produced, flashy horror suffers from overly realistic, hi-tech setting but pace is swift, and Serrault and Christie are fun to watch. Based on the novel by Arthur Bernède, which was filmed before as a mini-series in the 1960s. English title: Belphegor – Phantom of the Louvre.

**Belva Col Mitra, La** (1977, ITA) **C-95m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Sergio Grieco. Starring Helmut Berger, Marisa Mell, Richard Harrison, Marina Giordana, Claudio Gora. Slightly above-average crime potboiler about unpredictable, sadistic escaped convict Berger, who gets his revenge on

Mell's husband, then runs from police detective Harrison, who uses Mell as a decoy. Bogs down after a great, furiously directed start, but Berger's rabid performance is quite worth seeing. Written by director Grieco, whose last film this was. English titles: THE MAD DOG KILLER, BEAST WITH A GUN, THE HUMAN BEAST, and STREET KILLERS.

**Belva dalla Calda Pelle, La** (1982, ITA) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Bruno Fontana. Starring Angelo Infanti, Laura Gemser, Gabriele Tinti, Giovanni Brusadore, Salvatore Lago. Pure exploitation about a group of mercenaries who are double-crossed and must fend for themselves in hot countryside (probably somewhere in Greece). Soon the men's loyalty to each other is put to a test, especially after they are seemingly seduced by a beautiful stranger (Gemser). Improves slightly after the appearance of Gemser (rather late in the movie). Exploitation fans watch this sleaze because of the dialogue (like "How long has it been since you had a hot cunt?"), others needn't bother. Also known as THE DIRTY SEVEN, and EMMANUELLE, QUEEN OF THE DESERT.

**Beneath the Planet of the Apes** (1970, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*½**D: Ted Post. Starring James Franciscus, Kim Hunter, Maurice Evans, Linda Harrison, Paul Richards, Victor Buono, Charlton Heston. After the startling revelation at the end of PLANET OF THE APES, Heston has traveled on into the wastelands of the Forbidden Zone. Astronaut Franciscus, on a mission to find out what happened to Heston and his crew, retraces his steps, meets the ape characters of the first film and stumbles into a mysterious subterranean maze. Is Heston, or at least an explanation for everything to be found there? Riveting sequel is fast-paced, tightly edited and even shocking and frightening, especially in the second half. The most violent and horror film-like of the series. Stunning sci-fi, best-enjoyed right after the 1968 original. Followed by ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES.

**Beneath the Valley of the Ultra-Vixens** (1979, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Russ Meyer. Starring Kitten Natividad, Ken Kerr, Stuart Lancaster, Henry Rowland, Uschi Digard, Russ Meyer. Typically engaging, tongue-in-cheek sex movie from the genre's master about Small Town, U.S.A., where the citizens have typical problems, mostly related to sex. Worker Kerr can't look his sexy wife Natividad in the eyes during the act, so he searches for a cure at a most unusual radio station. Fast-paced, with outrageous characters and ideas, and a purple-prose narrative that holds it all together. One of Meyer's best. This was his last theatrical film, despite the announcement of a sequel JAWS OF THE VIXEN, which was never made. Meyer made one more movie (for the video market) three years before his death, PANDORA PEAKS (2001). Cowritten by Roger Ebert, who had collaborated with Meyer for the classic BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS (1970) and the lesser UP! (1976).

**Beowulf** (2007, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Zemeckis. Starring Ray Winstone, Robin Wright-Penn, Anthony Hopkins, Sebastian Roché, John Malkovich, Crispin Glover, Angelina Jolie, Chris Coppola, Alison Lohman. Computer-generated adaptation of the epic medieval poem, much like director Zemeckis' earlier THE POLAR EXPRESS (2004). Aging king Hopkins makes a call out to heroes to free his people from monstrous creature Grendel that comes down from his mountain lair every once in a while to wreak havoc on the community. Enter heroic warrior Beowulf (Winstone), who might even become the king's successor if he can kill the monster. A bit simplistic storywise, but these flaws are quickly forgotten in bombastic action sequences, all set to a majestic score by Alan Silvestri. CGI effects are not entirely seamless, but with such a sweeping spectacle it doesn't really matter. A powerful movie experience, which was also shown in 3-D. Screenplay by Neil Gaiman and Roger Avary. Filmed several times before, most recently as BEOWULF & GRENDEL (2005).

**Berberian Sound Studio** (2012, GBR/GER) **C-92m. \*\*½** D: Peter Strickland. Starring Toby Jones, Cosimo Fusco, Antonio Mancino, Tonia Sotiropoulou. Unusual, experimental drama

about a sound effects engineer from Britain who travels to Rome for a job at a sound recording studio circa 1976. The movie they are dubbing is a supernatural horror film by director Mancino. Jones feels misplaced, is bullied by co-worker Fusco and ultimately loses his focus. The movie and its frightening sound effects are overwhelming him... Interesting to say the least, but plot never gets going, surreal elements are more awkward than fascinating. Some giallo references are found here, but don't expect this to be a thriller. Best thing is experimental soundtrack, which pays tribute to Goblin's score for Dario Argento's SUSPIRIA. Written by director Strickland (KATALIN VARGA).

**Bersaglio Altezza d'Uomo** (1979, ITA) **C-79m.** \*\* D: Guido Zurli. Starring Luc Merenda, Gabriella Giorgelli, Kadir Inanir, Paola Senatore. Third-rate actioner about inspector Merenda, who's a tough crime fighter. One day, the syndicate blackmail one of his colleagues into assassinating him. Guess what happens next. Tired plot somehow kept alive by rythmical Stelvio Cipriani score. Original version may run longer. English title: TARGET.

**Berserker** (1987, USA) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Jefferson Richard. Starring Joseph Alan Johnson, Greg Dawson, Valerie Sheldon, Shannon Engemann, George 'Buck' Flower. Mid-80s slasher fodder. Several teens go camping in the woods (so much for originality) and finds themselves stalked by a msyterious creature. Adequate acting saves this, although it is rather slowly paced. Also known as BERSERKER: THE NORDIC CURSE.

**Besat** (1999, DAN) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Anders Ronnow-Klarlund. Starring Ole Lemmeke, Kirsti Eline Torhaug, Ole Ernst, Niels Anders Thorn, Udo Kier. A Danish virologist investigates the mysterious death of a Romanian in Copenhagen and travels to Bucarest, where a similar case has been recorded. Was it a virus? And does enigmatic priest/astrologer Kier want to detroy the world with it? Good-looking horror thriller bears the mark of a talented but incomplete director. Interest comes and goes, but pace and suspense in finale will keep you watching. Not bad, but certainly not good either (it's closer to a \*\* than a \*\*\* rating). Aka POSSESSED. Produced by Lars von Trier's Zentropa Company.

**Be-Seu-Teu-Sel-Leo** (2010, KOR) **C-117m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Lee Jeong-ho. Starring Eom Jeong-hwa, Choi Kang-hee, Jo Jing-wong, Kim Hwa-yeong. Pretty wild Korean thriller about a successful writer who faces plagiarism charges and retreats to the country, moving into a derelict villa by a lake. She then finds out that a woman disappeared twenty years ago, and her little daughter may already be communicating with her ghost. Chilling twist half-way through puts this more in the thriller than horror category, the atmosphere and score is good, although it's often hysterically over-acted and the direction is frenzied. Give it a look if you like unusual mysteries, but it's a longish, uneven affair. Written by the director. English title: BESTSELLER.

**Bestia Uccide a Sangue Freddo, La** (1971, ITA) **C-83m.** **SCOPE** \*½D: Fernando Di Leo. Starring Klaus Kinski, Margaret Lee, Rosalba Neri, Jane Garret, John Karlsen, John Ely. Extremely weak giallo set at an insane asylum, where a maniac is stalking the mostly female patients. Sloppily made, devoid of suspense, with only the score by Silvano Spadaccino showing class. This seems almost like Jess Franco directed it. Also available in more sexually explicit 97m. version (which is said to contain hard-core footage). Also known as THE BEAST KILLS IN COLD BLOOD, THE COLD-BLOODED BEAST, SLAUGHTER HOTEL and ASYLUM EROTICA.

**Best Laid Plans** (1999, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Mike Barker. Starring Alessandro Nivola, Reese Witherspoon, Josh Brolin, Gene Wolande, Jonathan McMurtry. Noirish thriller about down-on-his-luck worker Nivola, who chances to meet an old friend (Brolin) from college. One night this guy calls him up and asks him a favor: A pretty blonde (Witherspoon) has spent the night with him and now threatens to accuse him of rape. How can the situation be

resolved? Nothing is as it seems in this well-made, unpredictable sleeper. Script by Ted Griffin has an interesting narrative structure.

**Best Men** (1997, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Tamra Davis. Starring Dean Cain, Andy Dick, Sean Patrick Flanery, Mitchell Whitfield, Luke Wilson, Fred Ward, Raymond J. Barry, Drew Barrymore, Brad Dourif. Strictly unbelievable, even ridiculous comedy-thriller-drama mix about a group of buddies who get mixed up in a bank robbery on their way to a marriage and have to discover that one of their best friends is the most sought after criminal in the States. He goes by the name of Hamlet and keeps quoting verses from the Shakespeare classic! Derivative, especially the ending, film rips off several classics like *RESERVOIR DOGS*, *BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID* and *TRUE ROMANCE*, but remains mildly entertaining throughout.

**Bête, La** (1975, FRA) **C-98m. \*\*\*** D: Walerian Borowczyk. Starring Sirpa Lane, Lisbeth Hummel, Elisabeth Kaza, Pierre Benedetti, Guy Tréjan, Roland Armontel, Marcel Dalio. Outstanding horror/sex drama about the carefully planned wedding between a beautiful heiress (Lane) and the unattractive, brutish son of an impoverished count. When she comes to meet him in his castle for the first time, she is infatuated by the scenery – and an old fable that is said to have happened to one of her spouse's ancestors: A beast from the woods allegedly attacked and raped a young woman 200 years ago. Lane dreams up the scenario, in the context of her sexual awakening. The (semi-)pornographic content made many critics turn away from a proper interpretation. In fact, this is a highly erotic parable about the fear of losing one's virginity and a paraphrase of the classic 'Beauty and the Beast'. It produced a scandal, simply because the filmmakers chose such a crass presentation. In fact, direction, camerawork, production design and set decoration are first-rate. Had the film been a technically inept, quick-shot porn production, it would certainly have disappeared in the X-Rated section of videostores without stirring emotions. Also notable for its frank (and surreal) depiction of female sexual fantasies. English title: *THE BEAST*.

**Better Than Sex** (2000, AUS/FRA) **C-80m. \*\*\*** D: Jonathan Teplitzky. Starring David Wenham, Susie Porter, Catherine McClements, Kris McQuade, Simon Bossell. A bit slight but intelligently observed sex comedy about Wenham and Porter, who agree on a brief fling, as Wenham will leave the country in three days. What follows is a nicely commented examination of a budding relationship that is absolutely true to life. Wenham had a key role, of course, in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING* (2003). Written by the director.

**Better Tomorrow, A** (1986, HGK) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: John Woo. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Ti Lung, Leslie Cheung, Waise Lee. The film that marked director Woo's and Chow Yun-Fat's breakthrough in Hong Kong and would later turn them into Hollywood stars. A dramatically charged action thriller about a corrupt cop and his brother, who blames him for the death of their father. Action scenes are relatively rare, but dramatic plotting and Yun-Fat's star-making performance as the brothers' best friend are main attractions of the film. A box-office smash in Hong Kong. Followed by two sequels, only the first of which was directed by Woo. The director also cowrote the screenplay.

**Better Tomorrow 3, A** (1989, HGK) **C-105m. \*\*½** D: Tsui Hark. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Tony Leung, Anita Mui, Shih Kien. Prequel to the hit series initiated by John Woo, who only functions as a coproducer here. During the Vietnam War, Chow tries to bring his uncle back to Hong Kong and falls in love with mysterious Mui, whose involvement with a gang leader allows no time for romance. Confusing story-setup, average action scenes, this one is not as kinetic as Part One and not as unrelenting as Part Two. A little disappointing given the fact that none other than Tsui Hark wrote and directed this overly melodramatic action film.

**Better Watch Out** (2016, AUS/USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Chris Peckover. Starring Olivia DeJonge, Virginia Madsen, Patrick Warburton, Ed Oxenbould, Dacre Montgomery, Levi Miller. Twisted X-Mas horror thriller about precocious twelve-year-old Miller, who intends to play a trick on his babysitter DeJonge, on whom he has a crush. The night soon gets out of control, revealing the boy's sick nature. Often silly, unconvincing, with bland performances. Also known as SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD.

**Bewegte Mann, Der** (1995, GER) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Sönke Wortmann. Starring Til Schweiger, Katja Riemann, Rufus Beck, Joachim Król, Ralf König. Quite funny sex comedy based on comic strips created by Ralf König about macho Schweiger who is dumped by his girlfriend Riemann after she finds out he's screwing other women. With no place to sleep, he agrees to move into the flat of a homosexual (Beck), which soon leads to complications because his (pregnant) girlfriend thinks he has turned gay! Sure to please fans of the comic strips, but to others film's plot will seem artificial, with the characters superficially drawn. Besides, Schweiger looks good but is no actor. Direction is above average. Quite obviously a matter of taste. Released in the U.S. as MAYBE ... MAYBE NOT.

**Beyond Hypothermia** (1996, HGK) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Patrick Leung. Starring Lau Ching Wan, Wu Chien Lien, Han Sang Woo, Shirley Wong. Cult action romance about a cold-blooded killer (Lau Ching Wan, star of BLACK MASK) who discovers warm feelings inside her when she falls in love with an ordinary cook. However, as a professional hitman it is most dangerous to get emotionally involved with someone. Does their love have a future? Stylish, well-made, even touching; the romance is much more interesting than the action here, though film scores in both departments. One of the best entries into this sub-genre since it was established by John Woo with his classic THE KILLER in 1989. Nice score by Ben Cheung.

**Beyond Rangoon** (1995, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Boorman. Starring Patricia Arquette, Frances McDormand, Spalding Gray, U Aung Ko, Adele Lutz, Victor Slezak, Charley Boorman. Impressively filmed drama about American Arquette, who has lost her son and husband and joins her sister in a trip to Burma, where the military turns the country into a battlefield. When she goes 'beyond Rangoon' with a tourist guide, she soon has to run for her life. Not very compelling, perhaps because of Arquette, who we are just not used to seeing in a dramatic role. Plot is too much reduced to her flight.

**Beyond Re-Animator** (2003, USA/SPA) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Brian Yuzna. Starring Jeffrey Combs, Jasno Barry, Simón Andreu, Elsa Pataky. Long-awaited sequel to RE-ANIMATOR (1985) and BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR (1990) is surprisingly good splatter movie about doctor Barry, who comes to work in a state prison, where he wants to collaborate with inmate Combs, who was responsible for the death of his sister before his arrest. And yes, he has brought the original green liquid that will turn dead people into zombies. Plot becomes increasingly wild and confusing, but characters are colorful and effects are outrageous. Splatter fans will find this a welcome re-animation of the series. Filmed in Spain.

**Beyond the Gates** (2016, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jackson Stewart. Starring Graham Skipper, Chase Williamson, Brea Grant, Barbara Crampton, Matt Mercer. Okay horror about two brothers, who reunite to clear their missing father's video store. When they find an obscure VCR board game in his office, they start suspecting that it caused their dad's disappearance. Indeed, it seems to be of supernatural nature. Nice idea, but film is neither too serious nor funny, and the performances are sub-par. Nice reference to cult horror DEAD PEOPLE aka MESSIAH OF EVIL (1973).

**Beyond the Limits** (2003, GER) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Olaf Ittenbach. Starring Darren Shahlavi, Russell Friedenber, Hank Stone, David Creedon, Joe Cook. Ambitious independent horror film shot on 16mm, about a journalist and her interview with a caretaker at a cemetery, who

spins two related tales. In the first, a dinner party among gangsters ends up in a bloodbath, in the second, set in medieval times, a sinister inquisitor tries to unlock the secret to a mysterious heart that is said to endow you with supernatural powers. Plot is uneven and some of the actors wooden, but if you forgive the cheapness of some scenes (and have a tolerance for gore), you won't have a bad time. The quite good effects are not the film's only drawing card here, thank God. Second story is better than the first. Ittenbach also produced and cowrote the script.

**Beyond the Poseidon Adventure** (1979, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Irwin Allen. Starring Michael Caine, Sally Field, Telly Savalas, Peter Boyle, Jack Warden, Shirley Knight, Shirley Jones, Karl Malden, Slim Pickens, Veronica Hamel, Angela Cartwright, Mark Harmon. Poor sequel to the exciting *THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE* (1972). Caine and Savalas enter the sinking luxury liner *The Poseidon* in order to raid the ship. Artificial disaster scenes, preposterous plotting, made at a time when the disaster movie had run its course. Only for fans of the cast members.

**Beyond the Valley of the Dolls** (1970, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Russ Meyer. Starring Dolly Read, Cynthia Myers, Marcia McBroom, David Gurian, John LaZar, Michael Blodgett, Edy Williams, Erica Gavin, Phyllis Davis, Charles Napier, Haji, Pamela (Pam) Grier, Russ Meyer, Strawberry Alarm Clock. Lively, colorful adult drama about three female musicians who make it to stardom only to discover the dark side of fame. This remake/spoof of *VALLEY OF THE DOLLS* (1967) takes time to get moving but when it does, it is just as dramatic and outrageous as director Meyer's best work. An indelible time capsule, with good songs and nice sets. John LaZar shines as a flamboyant, classical dialogue-spurting homosexual. Having said this, you might agree that this originally X-rated film may not be everyone's cup of tea. Written by Roger Ebert, story concocted by Ebert and Meyer. Meyer also produced the film.

**Bianco, il Giallo, il Nero, Il** (1975, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Sergio Corbucci. Starring Giuliano Gemma, Tomas Milian, Eli Wallach, Manuel de Blas, Jacques Berthier, Romano Puppo, Cris Huerta. Lighthearted attempt at spoofing Sergio Leone's 1966 classic *IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO* about three rascals who go after a chest full of money and must fend off several adversaries (when not battling each other). Worth watching for Milian's comic performance as a Jap (*il Giallo*) but script is mild and goes on too long. For fans. Also known as *THE WHITE, THE YELLOW AND THE BLACK*, and *SHOOT FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER*.

**Biches, Les** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-99m. \*\*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Stéphane Audran, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Jacqueline Sassard, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi, Claude Chabrol. Extraordinary adult drama marked the beginning of director Chabrol's most important phase of filmmaking. Young, naïve street artist (Sassard) is taken in by a rich, bored lesbian (Audran). They withdraw to Audran's villa in St. Tropez, living a carefree existence, until a man (Trintignant) enters their lives and changes them forever. Just about the final word on triangular relationships in cinema history, this has first-rate direction, photography and a subtle script (by Chabrol and Paul Gégauff) to compensate for deliberate pace. A stunning achievement, one of Chabrol's best, most acclaimed films. Photographed by Jean Rabier (assisted by Claude Zidi), score by Pierre Jansen. Also known as *BAD GIRLS, THE DOES*, and *GIRLFRIENDS*.

**Big Bad Mama** (1974, USA) **C-84m. \*\*\* D:** Steve Carver. Starring Angie Dickinson, Wiliam Shatner, Tom Skerritt, Susan Sennett, Robbie Lee, Tom Signorelli, Sally Kirkland. Good *BONNIE AND CLYDE* imitation about criminal Dickinson, mother of two young daughters, who goes on the lam, picking up bank robber Skerritt and pseudo-gentleman Shatner along the way. Fast-paced, well-scored action comedy with lots of nudity. A frivolous, exciting cult

film. Paul Bartel was second unit director, Bill Paxton decorated the set. Produced by Roger Corman. Followed by a sequel in 1987.

**Big Bad Wolves** (2013, ISR) **C-110m. SCOPE \*½** D: Aharon Keshales, Navot Papushado. Starring Tzahi Grad, Lior Ashkenazi, Rotem Keinan, Dov Glickman. Black thriller comedy about gruesome child murders, which lead to the kidnapping of a suspect, a teacher, who is tortured by a decapitated girl's father (a psycho himself) and a cop who has been taken off the case. Gratuitous plot goes nowhere, the torture victim is not at all convincing. Tries to go over the top, but with no cleverness behind it all, film starts to look ridiculous very soon. The ending is especially weak. Recommended by Quentin Tarantino! From the directors of KALEVET.

**Big Boss, The** (1971, HGK) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Lo Wei. Starring Bruce Lee, Maria Yi, Han Ying Chieh, Tony Liu. Lee, in his first starring role, plays a young man who has sworn to his mother to keep out of harm's way. When he discovers that his new employer is a druglord who unscrupulously kills workers, Lee is forced to break his oath. Kung fu action film spends too much time on its (admittedly ambitious) plot and is therefore short on action, but the charismatic Bruce Lee makes it well worth watching. Alternative title: FISTS OF FURY. Not to be confused with FIST OF FURY, which Lee made the following year.

**Big Bounce, The** (2004, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: George Armitage. Starring Owen Wilson, Sara Foster, Charlie Sheen, Vinnie Jones, Morgan Freeman. Willie Nelson, Gary Sinise, Bebe Neuwirth, Harry Dean Stanton. Elmore Leonard adaptation is silly but enjoyable. Screw-up Wilson loses his job on Hawaii and must leave the island, but judge Freeman wants him to stay and work for him. And there is rich Sinise's (incredibly sexy) girlfriend Foster, who wants him to help her steal some money. Good-looking thriller, shot by Jeffrey Kimball, is quite amusing. Score by George S. Clinton. Filmed before in 1969 with Ryan O'Neil.

**Big Brawl, The** (1980, USA/HGK) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Robert Clouse. Starring Jackie Chan, José Ferrer, Kristine DeBell, Mako, Ron Max. Acceptable action film set in Chicago of the 1930s starring Jackie Chan as son of Chinese immigrants who is selected by gangsters to compete against a wrestler in a brutal tournament. Obvious parallels to ENTER THE DRAGON, but film is hardly as successful. For one, Jackie Chan is likeable but no Bruce Lee, and fight scenes are hardly spectacular. Period flavor nicely captured, however. Screenplay by Clouse. Score by Lalo Schifrin. Produced by Raymond Chow.

**Big Bus, The** (1976, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: James Frawley. Starring Joseph Bologna, Stockard Channing, John Beck, Rene Auberjonois, Ned Beatty, Bob Dishy, José Ferrer, Ruth Gordon, Harold Gould, Larry Hagman, Sally Kellerman, Richard Mulligan, Lynn Redgrave. Strained spoof of disaster movies puts the title vehicle in all kinds of danger. The nuclear-powered bus has 180 passengers on board, who are entertained in a piano bar, eat in the dining-room or go swimming in a pool! Of course, there's sabotage involved. Good idea aside, this movie is hardly funny. Photographed by Harry Stradling Jr. B-movie icon Larry Cohen *did not* produce this movie (it was his namesake Lawrence J. Cohen).

**Big Combo, The** (1955, USA) **89m. \*\*\*** D: Joseph H. Lewis. Starring Cornel Wilde, Richard Conte, Brian Donlevy, Jean Wallace, Robert Middleton, Lee Van Cleef. Straightforward crime thriller about police detective Wilde, who plans to pin down and arrest elusive master criminal Conte. He finds help in the gangster's lover Wallace. Swift pace and interesting characters raise this film above par. Wallace is fine as the kingpin's frustrated, suicidal lover.

**Big Daddy** (1999, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Dennis Dugan. Starring Adam Sandler, Joey Lauren Adams, Jon Stewart, Cole Sprouse, Dylan Sprouse, Josh Mostel, Rob Schneider, Kristy Swanson, Joseph Bologna, Steve Buscemi, Tim Herlihy, Dennis Dugan. Amiable, if not credible comedy about work-shy slacker Sandler, whose friends have all become successful

lawyers. When his girlfriend leaves him, he seems all the more disoriented – until a little boy enters his life. Since Sandler's roommate – the kid's real father, who has no idea about his son's existence – is away on business, Sandler takes up the chore of spending time with the boy. Comedy goes completely overboard in ludicrous courtroom scene at the end. Sandler and the boy are appealing, though.

**Big Doll House, The** (1971, USA/FIL) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Jack Hill. Starring Judy Brown, Pam Grier, Roberta Collins, Brooke Mills, Pat Woodell, Sid Haig. Exploitation cult classic about several female inmates of a prison in the middle of the Filipino jungle and their struggles with sadistic, lesbian personnel, and lecherous delivery guys. Some cheesy moments, but a guilty pleasure most of the way, with showers, catfights, mud wrestling and torture scenes. One of the earliest – and best – W.I.P. (women in prison) movies. Grier's first major role after a brief bit in *BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS* (1970). Roger Corman and Cirio H. Santiago were among the producers. Followed by *THE BIG BIRD CAGE*. Also known as *BAMBOO DOLLS HOUSE*, and *WOMEN'S PENITENTIARY I* (and III).

**Big Empty, The** (2003, USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Steve Anderson. Starring Jon Favreau, Joey Lauren Adams, Bud Cort, Jon Gries, Daryl Hannah, Adam Beach, Gary Farmer, Rachael Leigh Cook, Brent Briscoe, Sean Bean, Patti Smith, Danny Trejo. A good cast does not make a cult movie: Minor crime drama about luckless actor Favreau, who accepts the job of bringing a suitcase to a town in the middle of nowhere, gets involved in murder and alien abductions. Starts out nicely, but final third is a letdown. Do not wait for the STP song of the same title. Written by the director.

**Big Eyes** (2014, USA/CDN) **C-106m.** \*\*\* D: Tim Burton. Starring Amy Adams, Christoph Waltz, Danny Huston, Krysten Ritter, Jason Schwartzman, Terence Stamp, Jon Polito. Bio-pic based on the life of artist Margaret Keane (Adams), who leaves her husband in late 1950s America and starts a new life in San Francisco. She meets and falls in love with fellow artist-cum-businessman Waltz, who quickly convinces her that selling her amazing Big-Eye paintings as his works is a good idea. Although this is one of Burton's less artistic films, it's still a resonant, good-looking drama with solid performances.

**Big Fish** (2003, USA) **C-125m.** \*\*\*\* D: Tim Burton. Starring Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Jessica Lange, Helena Bonham Carter, Alison Lohman, Robert Guillaume, Marion Cottillard, Matthew McGrory, Steve Buscemi, Danny DeVito. Marvelous, touching drama, vintage Burton. Crudup is at odds with his tale-spinning father Finney, who's been telling fantastic stories about himself all his life. Now, after three years, Crudup returns home with his pregnant wife, trying to come to terms with his father, who's dying of cancer. In flashbacks, we are told the fantastic stories that Finney insists are true, with McGregor playing the younger Finney. Outstanding fantasy based on the novel by Daniel Wallace, weaves a world of awe and wonder, much less dark and brooding than we are used to from Burton, but with performances so great and a mood so consistent, this is more than welcome. There's even a touch of Coen to detect. Fine score by Danny Elfman, excellent cinematography by Philippe Rousselot. Trivia note: The man playing the Banjo tune from *DELIVERANCE* (1972) is the boy from that movie!

**Big Heat, The** (1988, HGK) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: Andrew Kam, Johnny To. Starring Waise Lee, Philip Kwok, Chu Kong, Ken Boyle, Roy Cheung, Kirk Wong. Tsui Hark. Lee plays a troubled cop, who is about to resign, when he learns of the murder of a friend by a crime syndicate. Along with three colleagues he takes up the task to bust their boss. Somewhat familiar plot, but film is well-directed, has some good action, and it also includes some softer tones. Convincing performance by Lee (*A BETTER TOMORROW*, *BULLET IN THE HEAD*). Recommended viewing. Producer Hark reportedly also directed some parts.

**Big Hit, The** (1998, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Che-Kirk Wong. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Lou Diamond Phillips, Christina Applegate, China Chow, Avery Brooks, Bokeem Woodbine, Lainie Kazan, Elliot Gould. Juvenile but entertaining, exciting action comedy about hit man Wahlberg, who has a bad weekend: First his two(!) girlfriends give him trouble, and then the planned kidnapping involves him in even deeper trouble, when the girl's godfather turns out to be a crime lord. Film has its moments, but story is barely credible, which will bother anyone but action fans. Produced, among others, by Wesley Snipes and John Woo. Original version may run longer.

**Big Lebowski, The** (1998, USA) **C-117m.** \*\*½ D: Joel Coen. Starring Jeff Bridges, John Goodman, Steve Buscemi, Julianne Moore, John Turturro, Jon Polito, Ben Gazzarra, Harve Presnell, Flea, Sam Elliott, Peter Stormare. The Coen brothers' 7th film is a totally unconventional (and wildly uneven) comedy about lazy sleazeball Jeff Lebowski (Bridges), who gets involved in a kidnapping when he is mistaken for the millionaire Jeffrey Lebowski. Some truly off-beat moments, oddball characters (Goodman is terrific as a neurotic vietnam vet) and a meandering storyline make this a feast for the filmmakers' fans, but the fact that so much happens in the movie, not all of which makes much sense, wears it down a bit. Slightly overlong and not really funny enough, though you have to admire the Coens for not trying to make a mainstream movie after FARGO. At the very least, film is a most unusual, satirical homage to bowling.

**Big Mouth, The** (1967, USA) **C-107m.** \*½ D: Jerry Lewis. Starring Jerry Lewis, Harold Stone, Susan Bay, Buddy Lester, Del Moore, George Takei. Sloppily directed comedy made by Lewis at the decline of his skill. He plays the character he had portrayed for almost two decades, an idiot, who learns of a diamond loot from a dying criminal. He checks into the hotel where the diamonds are supposed to be, taking up another identity (one awfully similar to his 'Buddy Love'). Hardly funny, needlessly long, only his fans might find some value here.

**Big Sleep, The** (1946, USA) **114m.** \*\*\*\* D: Howard Hawks. Starring Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, John Ridgely, Martha Vickers, Louis Jean Heydt, Regis Toomey, Peggy Knudsen, Dorothy Malone, Bob Steele, Elisha Cook, Jr. Raymond Chandler's first novel is brilliantly brought to the screen, with Bogart a subdued Philip Marlowe, who begins investigating a black-mail case and stumbles into a complicated murder mystery. Excellent pacing, atmosphere make this one of the great detective thrillers. Superb dramatic score by Max Steiner. Script by William Faulkner, Jules Furtham and Leigh Brackett. A 116m. pre-release version of the film exists, which is slightly different from the original.

**Big Trouble in Little China** (1986, USA) **C-100m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: John Carpenter. Starring Kurt Russell, Kim Cattrall, Dennis Dun, James Hong, Victor Wong, Kate Burton, Chao Li Chi. Silly but engaging fantasy action movie set in San Francisco about truck driver Russell, who gets mixed up in the kidnapping of a friend's bride-to-be. It turns out an evil magician wants to marry her because she has green eyes. Plot is really indefensible, but film is undeniably entertaining, with funny one-liners and enough colourful action – some of it paying homage to easterns of the 60s and 70s. Originally a box-office failure, became a cult hit later on. Jackie Chan was Carpenter's first choice to play Russell's sidekick Dun.

**Big White, The** (2005, USA/CDN/NZL/GER) **C-105m.** \*\*½ D: Mark Mylod. Starring Robin Williams, Holly Hunter, Giovanni Ribisi, Tim Blake Nelson, W. Earl Brown, Woody Harrelson, Alison Lohman. Attempt at a cult movie about loser Williams, who hopes to cash in insurance money for his lost brother. When he finds a dead body in the trash, he decides to 'use' it for his purpose but hasn't reckoned with company's geeky agent Ribisi, who smells something fishy. Some funny scenes, mostly due to the professional cast, but just a tad too forced and contrived. Music by Mark Mothersbaugh.

**Bijo to Ekitainingen** (1958, JAP) **C-79m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ishirô Honda. Starring Yumi Shirakawa, Kenji Sahara, Akihiko Hirata, Koreya Senda. Not-bad Japanese companion piece to *THE BLOB* (1958), about the hysteria that ensues when people in Tokyo disappear, leaving only their clothes behind. It turns out that a mysterious, radioactive liquid is dissolving them. Good, colorful cinematography, interesting effects, although plot does drag a little. Originally ran 87m. Title translates as *BEAUTY AND THE LIQUIDMAN*. Also known as *THE H-MAN*.

**Bi-mong** (2008, KOR) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Kim Ki-duk. Starring Jô Odagiri, Lee Na-yeong, Jang Mi-hie. Artist Odagiri discovers that whatever he dreams, sleepwalker Lee will act it out. A strange relationship develops, in which they have to learn to deal with this situation. Dark romance lacks conviction, especially in the supporting characters. Interesting only for followers of writer-director Kim. English title: *DREAM*.

**Bin-jip** (2004, KOR/JAP) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Kim Ki-duk. Starring Lee Seong-yeon, Lee Hyun-kyoon, Kwon Hyuk-ho, Choi Jeong-ho. Typically low-key yet quirky drama from Korea's Kim Ki-duk. He follows an unusual burglar, who breaks into people's apartments and spends a few days there without stealing anything. One day he is discovered by a young woman who is abused by her husband. They form a bond and become companions. Very little dialogue, not easy to watch, but has lots of interesting, touching ideas. For the director's followers, this won multiple awards in Venice. Kim also scripted, edited and produced the picture. English title: *3-IRON*.

**Birdman Or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)** (2014, USA) **C-119m. \*\*\* D:** Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu. Starring Michael Keaton, Zach Galifianakis, Edward Norton, Emma Stone, Naomi Watts. Partly surreal character study about former acting star Keaton, who is preparing a serious role for Broadway. His biggest success from over 20 years ago was with a role in a blockbuster (*Birdman*), now he wants to show the critics (and himself) that he really can act. However, he has serious mental problems. Filmed to look like this is one long take, it can't fully shake off its experimental vibe, although the actors are first-rate. Winner of four Oscars: Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Screenplay and Best Cinematography (Emmanuel Lubezki).

**Bird on a Wire** (1990, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Badham. Starring Mel Gibson, Goldie Hawn, David Carradine, Bill Duke, Stephen Tobolowsky. Entertaining, fast-paced action comedy with Mel Gibson in great form. He plays a man living a new existence (thanks to the witness protection program), which is disrupted when criminal Carradine finds him. He must take it on the lam with former lover Hawn. Lots of action, enjoyable. Could have been a bit shorter, though.

**Birds, The** (1963, USA) **C-120m. \*\*\* D:** Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Rod Taylor, Jessica Tandy, Suzanne Pleshette, Tippi Hedren, Veronica Cartwright, Ethel Griffies, Charles McGraw, Alfred Hitchcock. Hitchcock's second horror film after 1960's *PSYCHO* has naïve blonde Hedren and lawyer Taylor fend for their lives in a remote coastal town, when thousands of birds start attacking the population. Given the fact that plot is well-known, the story setup takes too long. Hedren, in her first major film, looks like a puppet on a string, but Hitch's direction, extraordinary cinematography and lighting, as well as color dramaturgy and unnerving sound effects (credited to Bernard Herrman) make this a must-see, even if the story does not fizzle. Provided the pattern for nearly all ecological horror thrillers and disaster movies that were to follow (notably those of the 1970s). George A. Romero let zombies attack in a similar fashion in his horror classic *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*. Based on a story by Daphne Du Maurier. Followed by a made-for-TV sequel in 1994.

**Birds of Prey** (1973, USA) **C-81m.** \*\* D: William A. Graham. Starring David Janssen, Ralph Meeker, Elayne Heilveil, Harry Klekas. Made-for-TV thriller about war veteran and helicopter pilot Janssen, who happens to witness a hold-up and pursues the robbers by air. Tired plot has very little to offer, at least it aims for a relatively swift pace. Some daring helicopter stunts. Photographed by Jordan Cronenweth (BLADE RUNNER).

**Birth** (2004, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Jonathan Glazer. Starring Nicole Kidman, Cameron Bright, Danny Huston, Lauren Bacall, Alison Elliott, Arliss Howard, Michael Desautels, Anne Heche, Peter Stormare, Ted Levine. Kidman's husband dies while jogging in Central Park. Ten years later, as she is about to remarry, a ten-year-old boy steps into her life claiming that he is none other than her deceased husband. This baffling allegation throws Kidman off-balance and jeopardizes her relationship. Can it be true? Quietly fascinating psycho drama with echoes of such classics as SECRET CEREMONY (1968), ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968), and DON'T LOOK NOW (1973) keeps you pondering. Has cult film possibilities. Written by director Glazer (SEXY BEAST), Milo Addica, and Bunuel collaborator Jean-Claude Carrière. Fine score by Alexandre Desplat.

**Bite the Bullet** (1975, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Richard Brooks. Starring Gene Hackman, Candice Bergen, James Coburn, Ben Johnson, Ian Bannen, Jan-Michael Vincent, Robert Donner, Paul Stewart, Sally Kirkland. Several disparate characters compete in a 700-mile horse race circa 1906. The tough conditions let the bitter enemies form a bond that was unthinkable at the beginning of the race. Inauspicious but really flawless western adventure drama. Could have been a little more dramatic and tense perhaps. Fine score by Alex North, epic-scale photography by Harry Stradling, Jr. Written by the director.

**Bitter Moon** (1992, GBR/FRA) **C-139m.** \*\*\* D: Roman Polanski. Starring Peter Coyote, Emmanuelle Seigner, Hugh Grant, Kristin Scott Thomas, Victor Banerjee, Sophie Patel, Stockard Channing. Polanski's tale of an obsessive love with the frame plot taking place aboard a cruise ship heading towards India, where wheelchair-bound American writer Coyote tells stiff, conservative Brit Grant about his intensive affair with lascivious Frenchwoman Seigner. The story, an attempt to come to terms with their own life, shocks and transforms the Englishman, who finds himself drawn toward the sexy woman, despite being married to Thomas. Spell-binding, intelligent study of love and destruction is, unfortunately, also slowly paced and slightly pretentious. Wonderful, hypnotic score by Vangelis. Photography by Tonino delli Colli. Written by Polanski, and Gérard Brach, based on the novel *Lunes de Fiel* by Pascale Bruckner.

**Black and White** (1999, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: James Toback. Starring Scott Caan, Robert Downey Jr., Stacy Edwards, Allan Houston, Gaby Hoffmann, Jared Leto, Joe Pantoliani, Bijou Phillips, Claudia Schiffer, Brooke Shields, Ben Stiller, James Toback, Elijah Wood, Mike Tyson. Writer-director Toback (FINGERS) wanders Spike Lee territory in this episodic, well-cast drama about interaction of blacks and whites on several levels. Freelance filmmaker Shields wants to film a documentary about white kids who are fascinated by black (hip-hop) culture. Not terribly coherent or inspiring, but worthwhile, especially for those who enjoyed Spike Lee's CLOCKERS or JUNGLE FEVER.

**Blackaria** (2010, FRA) **C-71m.** \*\*\*½ D: Francois Gaillard, Christophe Robin. Starring Aurélie Godefroy, Clara Vallet, Anna Naigeon, Julie Baron. In her apartment house a young woman is lured in by her neighbour who seems to be playing sex games. When the lady turns up dead, the girl becomes stalked herself. With the use of a broken crystal sphere she can see into the future. Gory horror indie has a hazy plot, but the style – using elements iconized by genre greats Argento and Fulci – is astounding. Recommended to cult movie buffs, although film cannot quite escape its cheap budget, seeming like a student movie at times.

**Black Caesar** (1973, USA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Larry Cohen. Starring Fred Williamson, Gloria Hendry, Art Lund, D'Urville Martin, William Wellman Jr. Blaxploitation take on THE GODFATHER (1972) and LITTLE CAESAR (1930) pales(!) in comparison. Relatively ambitious film follows rise of shoeshine boy Williamson to crime kingpin Black Max. Some bloody shoot-outs, but far too talky and self-conscious to score better. Rick Baker did the special effects. Followed immediately by HELL UP IN HARLEM (1973).

**Black Cat, The** (1934, USA) **62m.** \*\*\* D: Edgar J. Ulmer. Starring Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, David Manners, Jacqueline Wells (Julie Bishop), Lucille Lund, John Carradine. Although officially "suggested by the story by Edgar Allan Poe", this classy chiller bears hardly any resemblance to it. After an accident on an Austrian road, an American couple on their honeymoon spend the night at sinister Karloff's mansion, along with a doctor (Lugosi), who has some personal feelings towards the landlord. It turns out he is the leader of a secret society of devil worshippers. Direction, plot not without flaws, but Karloff's excellent performance made this horror film a cult favorite. Uncut print, which runs 65m. or 70m. is said to be even better.

**Black Cauldron, The** (1985, USA) **C-80m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Ted Berman, Richard Rich. Starring the voices of Grant Bardsley, Susan Sheridan, Freddie Jones, Nigel Hawthorne, Arthur Malet, John Byner, narrated by John Huston. Interesting fantasy from Disney about young hero Taran, who finds himself in the middle of an adventure when the Horned King attempts to get the Black Cauldron, which would give him power over the world. Plot is familiar but well-told and effects, action animation are first-rate. A darker (PG-rated) Disney movie, with a rousing score by Elmer Bernstein. Based on the novel by Lloyd Alexander.

**Black Christmas** (1974, CDN) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Bob Clark. Starring Olivia Hussey, Keir Dullea, Margot Kidder, John Saxon, Marian Waldman, Andrea Martin, James Edmond, Doug McGrath. Horror movie with a reputation set in a sorority house around Christmas time, where a psychopath makes obscene phone calls and then starts dispatching the students. Not very suspenseful, devoid of highpoints, but still notable for being one of the first slasher movies. The ending is the best part. Interestingly, director Clark would later make the family classic A CHRISTMAS STORY (1983). Remade in 2006. Also known as SILENT NIGHT, EVIL NIGHT, and STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

**Black Crowes, The - Who Killed That Bird Out On Your Window Sill ... The Movie** (1992, USA) **C-87m.** \*\*\* A look at rock band 'The Black Crowes', who were at the peak of their stardom in 1992. Less a movie than an assortment of video clips, live performances and interviews, but sure to satisfy the Crowes' fans and also interesting as a look at some important protagonists of rock music in the early 1990s. Concert footage is from Moscow and Atlanta, including a cover version of John Lennon's *Jealous Guy*.

**Black Dahlia, The** (2006, USA/GER) **C-121m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Brian De Palma. Starring Josh Hartnett, Scarlett Johansson, Aaron Eckhart, Hilary Swank, Mia Kirshner, Mike Starr, Fiona Shaw, Patrick Fischler, James Otis, Angus McInnes, Rachel Miner, Gregg Henry, Rose McGowan, k. d. lang. Tour-de-force by director De Palma, his best film in a long time. Typical James Ellroy crime maelstrom about boxer-turned-cop Hartnett and his partner Eckhart, a former boxer himself, who investigate a murder case in 1940 L.A. Superbly directed, stylishly shot (by Vilmos Zsigmond) and well-scored by Mark Isham, movie scores in almost all departments. Great voice-over narration adds an inimitable 1940s crime feel. Inspired by a real murder case. Written by Josh Friedman.

**Black Hole, The** (1979, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Gary Nelson. Starring Maximilian Schell, Anthony Perkins, Robert Forster, Joseph Bottoms, Yvette Mimieux, Ernest Borgnine, voices of Roddy McDowall, Slim Pickens. Sci-fi adventure marks Disney's attempt at copying

George Lucas' success with the STAR WARS movies. Captain Forster and his crew are startled to find a long-missing space vessel near the event horizon of a black hole. It turns out that (traditional mad-scientist) Schell is preparing to go beyond the hole – where no man has gone before. Well-produced adventure aimed at kids (even more so than the STAR WARS movie) is quite exciting. Maybe a bit too simple plotwise, but definitely intriguing, recommended to sci-fi fans (and those fascinated by black holes). Main theme by John Barry is magnificent but used too seldom. Fine effects. The first PG-rated Disney movie.

**Blackjack** (1998, CDN/USA) **C-113m**. \*\*\* D: John Woo. Starring Dolph Lundgren, Kate Vernon, Phillip Mackenzie, Kam Heskin, Fred Williamson, Padraigin Murphy, Tony de Santis, Albert Schultz, Andrew Jackson, Janet Bailey, Saul Rubinek. Highly aesthetic action drama about bodyguard-on-demand Lundgren, whose latest job has him keeping an eye on beautiful fashion model Vernon, who is targeted by a deranged assassin. A little overlong perhaps, but some spectacular stunts and John Woo's expert direction make the difference. Woo also co-executive produced this film, made for television or video.

**Black Mama, White Mama** (1972, USA/FIL) **C-87m**. \*\* D: Eddie Romero. Starring Pam Grier, Margaret Markov, Sid Haig, Lynn Borden. OK, fairly exciting actioner about a black and a blonde inmate (Grier and Markov) who escape from a Filipino prison chained together at their wrists. Some nudity, enough shoot-outs. For prison/exploitation fans. This is actually a remake of THE DEFIANT ONES. Coscripted by Jonathan Demme.

**Black Mask** (1997, HGK) **C-86m**. \*\*\* D: Daniel Lee. Starring Jet Li, Lau Ching Wan, Karen Mok, Françoise C.J. Yip, Patrick Lung, Anthony Wong. Truly sensational action film, fast-paced, technically and artistically at the highest level: A former elite soldier (Li), now living a peaceful life, is shocked to hear that his ex-partners have formed a syndicate which wants to kill all crime bosses of Hong Kong. Li, compelled to help his policeman-friend, becomes 'Black Mask', a kind of Chinese BATMAN, swearing to stop his former brothers-in-arms. The gimmick: The soldiers' nervous systems were initially removed, which means that they can feel no pain and thus are the ultimate fighting machines. Stylish direction and editing keeps this crackerjack thriller at a lightning pace. A must for action fans. First-rate choreography by Yuen Wo-Ping. Tsui Hark produced the film and cowrote the screenplay.

**Black Moon** (1975, FRA/GER) **C-100m**. \*\* D: Louis Malle. Starring Cathryn Harrison, Therese Giehse, Alexandra Stewart, Joe Dallesandro. Grotesque, little-known experiment from French master director Malle about a girl (Rex's granddaughter Harrison, who was 15 when this was made), who drives through a ravaged countryside, where men and women seem to be at war. She ends up in a country mansion, which is inhabited by a strange old bed-ridden lady. A kind-of *Alice in Wonderland* drama for adults with lots of unexplained grotesqueries, which wears thin after about an hour. However, if a 15-year-old breastfeeding a 75-year-old is your cup of tea, then seek out this rare film. There is no score, and the photography (by Sven Nykvist) is rather bleak (although it did win the César). Fellow director Chabrol made a similar experiment a year later in ALICE OU LA DERNIERE FUGUE. Actress Giehse's last film.

**Blackout, The** (1997, USA/FRA) **C-98m**. \*\*½ D: Abel Ferrara. Starring Matthew Modine, Claudia Schiffer, Dennis Hopper, Béatrice Dalle, Sarah Lassez. Movie star Modine, a drug addict and alcoholic, is slowly destroying his life in this unrelenting drama by cult director Abel Ferrara. Technically first-rate and well-acted, but depressing and one-note in its message. Might have been brilliant if the plot had been extended to other characters beside Modine's. Hopper is fine in a strong role as a video artist who parties with Modine but doesn't really care about him. Super model Schiffer 'survives' her film debut.

**Black Rock** (2012, USA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Katie Aselton. Starring Katie Aselton, Lake Bell, Kate Bosworth, Will Bouvier. Three young women reunite for a camping trip on a nearby island. Once there they meet three hunters, who have just returned from the Iraq war. When one of them (director Aselton herself) flirts too much, things get out of hand. Absolutely uninteresting, uninspiring thriller.

**Black Sheep** (2006, NZL) **C-87m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Jonathan King. Starring Nathan Meister, Danielle Mason, Peter Feeney, Tammy Davis, Glenis Levestam, Tandi Wright, James Ashcroft. It took New Zealand 14 years to rip off their Peter Jackson cult hit BRAINDEAD (1992) and the result is quite lamb, ah, lame. The son of a sheep farmer comes back to his parents farm (with a sheep phobia!) only to discover that his elder brother has taken to genetic engineering, which turned the sheep into blood-thirsty monsters. And their bite is contagious... Derivative, self-conscious horror comedy that wants to be a lot of fun, but just isn't. After the umpteenth close-up of a supposedly aggressive 'killer sheep', you'll be ready to count them in order to fall asleep.

**Black Snake** (1973, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Russ Meyer. Starring Anouska Hempel, David Warbeck, Percy Herbert, Thomas Baptiste, Milton McCollin, Bernard Boston, Vikki Richards, David Prowse. Typically outrageous pulp melodrama from producer-director Meyer, this is one of his rarest films. It's set on an 19<sup>th</sup> century Caribbean plantation run by dominatrix Hempel, which thrives on slavery. Enter new bookkeeper Warbeck, who soon finds a rival in ultra-sadistic supervisor Herbert. Absolutely intense acting coupled with fast editing and a distinct comic-book directorial style makes this a powerful experience, even though this is B-movie fare and its plot negligible. A must for Meyer fans (although there is not much nudity). Also known as BLACK SNAKE: THE WHIP, DUTCHESS OF DOOM, SLAVES, and SWEET SUZY.

**Black Sunday** (1977, USA) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Frankenheimer. Starring Robert Shaw, Bruce Dern, Marthe Keller, Bekim Fehmiu, Fritz Weaver, Steven Keats, John Frankenheimer. Long but engrossing, very well-acted thriller about Israeli terrorists Keller and Dern, who painstakingly prepare a terror act during the Super Bowl. Shaw plays their adversary, who develops a personal grudge. Not very spectacular, but good storytelling, excellent cast make this a winner. Adapted from Thomas Harris' novel. Well-scored by John Williams. This is similar to (but better than) TWO MINUTE WARNING (1976).

**Blacula** (1972, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** William Crain. Starring William Marshall, Denise Nicholas, Vonetta McGee, Thalmus Rasulala, Ketty Lester, Elisha Cook, Jr. Blaxploitation cult about black vampire stalking the streets of Los Angeles. Stylish title design, good songs, plot is quite entertaining but not really original. The direction is also below average. Followed by a sequel (SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM).

**Blade, The** (1995, HGK) **C-110m. \*\* D:** Tsui Hark. Starring Chiu Man Cheuk, Xiong Xin Xin, Moses Chan, Valerie Chow, Austin Wai. Flawed martial arts epic from genre icon Hark. Chiu plays an orphan, who is offered to become boss of a sword factory but sets out to avenge the death of his father instead. When he loses one arm, he must learn the art of one-armed swordfighting. Violent, raw and yet aesthetic extravaganza is brought down by uneven plot and irritating, overdirected fight scenes. Reportedly, Hark changed the narrator's perspective completely after having shot half of the film already - never a good sign. Fans ought to give this one a look, though. Originally titled DAO. A remake of the Chang Cheh/Wang Yu classic ONE-ARMED SWORDSMAN (1968). Produced by Raymond Chow.

**Blade** (1998, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Stephen Norrington. Starring Wesley Snipes, Stephen Dorff, Kris Kristofferson, N'Bushe Wright, Donal Logue, Udo Kier, Traci Lords. Flashy, stylish action thriller with Snipes playing (comic-strip) superhero 'Blade', who

is half-man, half-vampire and battles a vampire syndicate, one member of which (Dorff) wants to initiate an ancient ritual that enables them to summon the 'blood god'. Not much plot, very little entertainment apart from the zippy action scenes, film remains bloodless until the final third, despite the tons of gore that are spilt in the proceedings. A mean-spirited movie, like Norrington's earlier DEATH MACHINE, and despite cast and big budget, not much better. Sequel in 2002.

**Blade II** (2002, USA) **C-117m. \*\*** D: Guillermo del Toro. Starring Wesley Snipes, Kris Kristofferson, Ron Perlman, Leonor Varela, Norman Reedus, Thomas Kretschmann, Donnie Yen. Sequel to the above is an even more visceral (and forgettable) blood feast as half-vampire, half-human Snipes joins his original enemies to battle an army of mutated bloodsuckers. Seems like a shoot'em-up videogame and has as much plot. Flashy and stylish, to be sure, which makes it attractive for its target audience. Difficult to believe that del Toro (CRONOS, MIMIC) agreed to direct this.

**Blade Runner** (1982, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Ridley Scott. Starring Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Sean Young, Edward James Olmos, M. Emmet Walsh, Daryl Hannah, William Sanderson, Brian James, Joe Turkel, Joanna Cassidy, James Hong. Los Angeles of 2019 is a dark, wet urban hell-hole. Police detective and 'Blade Runner' Rick Deckard (Ford) is called back to duty to retire (read: kill) six ultra-sophisticated androids (so-called replicants), who have hijacked a space ship and flown back to Earth from an off-world colony. During this quest, Deckard is faced with the question of his own troubled existence and falls in love with Rachael (Young), a replicant with an implanted memory. Astounding science-fiction noir, brilliantly designed, written and directed, a haunting parable on mankind's aspiration for greatness and ultimate downfall. Crammed with amazing ideas and never-to-be-forgotten shots, if not the greatest science-fiction movie ever made, this is certainly the best one of the 1980s, and generally up there with the best films of *all* time. An existential masterpiece that rivals Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968) and whose immaculate symbiosis of style and substance was unmatched except, perhaps, by Adrian Lyne's JACOB'S LADDER (1990). BLADE RUNNER was re-released in 1992 as a 'Director's Cut', which drops Deckard's original voice-over narration and the optimistic finale. That version is still missing some violence. Screenplay by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples, who adapted Philip K. Dick's brilliant novella *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. Unforgettable score by Vangelis, impressive cinematography by Jordan Cronenweth, stunning visual effects by Douglas Trumbull.

**Blade Runner 2049** (2017, USA) **C-163m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Denis Villeneuve. Starring Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford, Ana de Armas, Robin Wright, Sylvia Hoeks, Jared Leto, Edward James Olmos, Dave Bautista, Mackenzie Davis. Sequel to the immortal classic BLADE RUNNER (1982) tries to imitate the original's tone and style and succeeds quite well. 30 years after the original events, a Blade Runner (Gosling) finds the remains of a once pregnant replicant. As this discovery might lead to a revolt, he is assigned to find and kill the child that was born. During his quest he is confronted with his own replicant self and the implications of his (implanted?) memories. Impressively created sets, stunning photography (by Roger Deakins) and a bombastic score (by Hans Zimmer and Benjamin Wallfisch) immerse you and engross you, despite overly deliberate pacing. What it's lacking is the iconic scenes, characters and dialogues of the original, but the film still has time to grow on the viewers. Superb production design by Dennis Gassner.

**Blades** (1989, USA) **C-102m. \*\*½** D: Thomas R. Rondinella. Starring David Aldrich, Hank Berkheimer, Ron Butko, Kara Callahan, Peter Cosimano. Amusing JAWS spoof released through Troma Films is very much like their funny MONSTER IN THE CLOSET (1986).

Someone – something – is killing people on a golf course, it seems to be a lawnmower out of control. How can it be stopped? Film deliciously plays out its absurd premise (gleefully copying entire scenes from JAWS), although it remains a bit too self-conscious. Incredible how the actors could keep such straight faces. Stay tuned until after the closing credits.

**Blades of Glory** (2007, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Josh Gordon, Will Speck. Starring Will Ferrell, Jon Heder, Will Arnett, Amy Poehler, Jenna Fischer, William Fichtner, Craig T. Nelson, Rémy Girard, Luke Wilson. Raucously funny comedy about two figure skating stars (Ferrell and Heder), who are ousted from competition after using their fists on each other at an awards ceremony. Some years later, the former arch-enemies (who couldn't be more different from each other) hook up for the team competition. Sounds silly, and it is, but Ferrell is a hoot as a sex-addicted, rock'n'roll skating superstar. Similar in spirit to DODGEBALL (2004). That movie's star Ben Stiller was among the producers.

**Blair Witch Project, The** (1999, USA) **C/B&W-81m. \*\*½** D: Daniel Myrick, Eduardo Sanchez. Starring Heather Donahue, Michael Williams, Joshua Leonard. Made on a shoestring budget, this chiller became one of the biggest hits of the year because of a clever, internet-based marketing strategy. Three college students decide to make a documentary about the Blair Witch, a child murderer, who is supposed to be haunting the Maryland woods. When the kids get lost hiking through, they are scared out of their wits, especially when strange noises can be heard at night. Someone – *something* – is out there! Shaky camera-shots provide a feeling of authenticity (Dogma style), which makes the film really scary at times, but in this case the plotting is obviously and unfortunately neglected. Not bad and certainly recommended to those who like a good scare. Followed by a sequel.

**Blastfighter** (1984, ITA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Michael Sopkiw, Valentina Forte, George Eastman, Mike Miller, Ottaviano Dell'Acqua, Michele Soavi, Massimo Vanni, Hoyt Pollard, Lamberto Bava. B-actioner about ex-cop Sopkiw, who – after serving a 10-year sentence for killing the murderer of his wife – goes to the wilderness to forget. However, the local thugs don't like what he thinks about their slaughtering off deer. Quite ambitious film in the mold of DELIVERANCE (the banjo kid of that film has a cameo!) but shows its true face in unnecessary RAMBO-style finale. A handful of stylish shots – from the son of the great Mario Bava – but film treads far too familiar ground. Actor Soavi also functioned as an assistant director. Written by Dardano Sacchetti. Also known as FORCE OF VENGEANCE.

**Blast from the Past** (1999, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Hugh Wilson. Starring Brendan Fraser, Alicia Silverstone, Christopher Walken, Sissy Spacek, Dave Foley, Joey Slotnick. Quite cute if overlong comedy about Fraser's family, who entered a bunker when the Russians had missiles installed on Cuba in 1962 and has not left their shelter for more than 30 years. When they finally do, it's a shock for them. The 60s meet the 90s in this predictable but likable comedy. Coproduced by Renny Harlin. A 103m. version was prepared for the international market.

**Blast of Silence** (1961, USA) **77m. \*\*½** D: Allen Baron. Starring Allen Baron, Molly McCarthy, Larry Tucker, Peter Clume, Danny Mehan. Interesting B-movie about contract killer Baron, who comes to New York City to kill someone and must battle his own conscience and weaknesses apart from getting the job done. Typically brassy, jazzy score, unusual voice-over narration. Worth a look for those interested in independent films. Baron also scripted.

**Blind** (2014, NOR) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Eskil Vogt. Starring Ellen Dorrit Petersen, Henrik Rafaelsen, Vera Vitali, Marius Kolbenstvedt. Art house psycho drama about a blind woman, who spends her days at home waiting for her husband to come home from work. He has been thinking about leaving her and considers online dating. Their lives are mirrored by two lonely individuals, a man who is addicted to pornography and a single mother, who cannot find

friends. Worth watching, perhaps a bit too metaphysical at times. Finale is weakest part as the characters don't undergo a proper catharsis.

**Blind Date** (1959, GBR/GER) **94m**. \*\*½ D: Joseph Losey. Starring Hardy Krüger, Stanley Baker, Micheline Presle, Robert Flemyng, Gordon Jackson. Titled CHANCE MEETING for U.S. release, this murder mystery is well-plotted (based on a novel by Leigh Howard) but poorly paced. Painter Krüger becomes prime suspect in a murder case, and tries to prove his innocence to police inspector Baker. Starts OK, bogs down, but delivers a good conclusion. Jack MacGowran appears briefly as a seedy postman.

**Blind Fists of Bruce** (1981, HGK) **C-94m**. \*½ D: Kam Bo. Starring Bruce Li, Yuen Siu Tien, Tiger Yueng. Poorly plotted eastern about a fighter who gets his lessons from a blind master so that he can beat the bad guys in the neighborhood. Fight scenes are lame, skip this one. Also known as BLIND FIST OF BRUCE.

**Blindness** (2008, CDN/BRA/JAP) **C-121m**. \*\*½ D: Fernando Meirelles. Starring Julianne Moore, Mark Ruffalo, Alice Braga, Yusuke Iseya, Yoshino Kimura, Don McKellar, Danny Glover, Gael García Bernal, Sandra Oh. In contemporary America, people suddenly go blind. Nobody knows why and the people affected are quarantined, among them doctor Ruffalo and his wife Moore, who can still see and becomes a kind of guardian in their 'ward'. Downbeat but fascinating vision of apocalypse, hampered considerably by the ending. Good performances. Based on the novel by José Saramago, adapted by co-star Don McKellar.

**Blind Terror** (1971, GBR) **C-89m**. \*\*½ D: Richard Fleischer. Starring Mia Farrow, Dorothy Alison, Robin Bailey. Well-crafted thriller with Farrow a blind girl whose family has just been knocked off by a lunatic. Subsequently, the killer stalks her too. Your appreciation of this film will largely depend on whether you are easily manipulated by the going-ons, or whether you can identify with the hapless victim. Released in the U.S. as SEE NO EVIL.

**Bling Ring, The** (2013, USA) **C-90m**. \*\*\* D: Sofia Coppola. Starring Katie Chang, Israel Broussard, Emma Watson, Claire Julien, Taissa Farmiga, Georgie Rock, Leslie Mann, Gavin Rossdale. Captivating drama based on true events about a group of rich and bored L.A. teens, who get their thrills by stealing from unlocked cars, then move on to burglarizing villas of stars. Their empty lives are portrayed, their obsession with celebrities, fame and luxury goods. Well-made by Coppola, well-acted, a telling observation of adolescents growing up in a materialistic world without morale. Based on a Vanity Fair article. Previously filmed as a TV movie in 2011.

**Blob, The** (1988, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*½ D: Chuck Russell. Starring Shawnee Smith, Kevin Dillon, Donovan Leitch Jr., Jeffrey DeMunn, Bill Moseley, Erika Eleniak. Remake of the 1958 sci-fi horror classic about an organism from outer space, which attacks people and keeps growing and growing, until prom queen Smith and rebel Dillon can figure out a way to stop it. Quite gory and entertaining, a notch above the usual teen horror fare.

**Blonde Köder für den Mörder** (1969, GER/ITA) **C-94m**. \*½ D: Harald Philipp. Starring Dean Reed, Fabio Testi, Ini Assmann, Leon Askin, Werner Peters, Nadja Tiller, Anita Ekberg, Adolfo Celi, Riccardo Garrone, Mario Brega, Hélène Chanel, Femi Benussi, Tom Felleghy, Teodoro Corrà. In an Italian holiday resort young Testi is a real lady 'killer'. He is protected by his sister Tiller, but there's a witness to the latest crime. Pretty harmless mystery, closer in spirit to the KOMMISSAR X movies than the Italian giallo, it's too tame and rather uninteresting. Big-name cast given nothing to do, with static TV-style direction making things even worse. Score by Piero Umiliani. English titles: DEATH KNOCKS TWICE, THE BLONDE CONNECTION.

**Blondie's Number One** (1971, GER) **C-80m**. \*½ D: Robert van Ackeren. Starring Gabi Larifari (=Gabriele LaFari), Barny O'Brian, Tom Snigger, Dolores Makonda, Chris Little. A young woman is searching for someone who is willing to marry her because else the law will

require her to leave Germany. Aimless, slack and poorly acted portrait of the post-hippie generation. Director and cinematographer van Ackeren (DIE FLAMBIERTE FRAU/A WOMAN IN FLAMES) doesn't go beyond the premise. This was his first film as a director.

**Blood & Donuts** (1995, CDN) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Holly Dale. Starring Gordon Currie, Justine Louis, Helene Clarkson, Fiona Reid, Frank Moore, Hadley Care, David Cronenberg. Strangely appealing low-budget horror movie about grungy vampire Currie, who hide himself from the world after the moon landing in 1969 and reappears in contemporary Toronto. Good use of (littered) locations, but Currie looks a little too dull to make this work. Various subplots (including Cronenberg as a gangland boss) add up to very little. Several oldies on the soundtrack enhance film's mood.

**Blood & Wine** (1997, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Bob Rafelson. Starring Jack Nicholson, Michael Caine, Judy Davis, Stephen Dorff, Jennifer Lopez, Harold Perrineau, Jr. Standard crime movie with a first-rate cast. Dorff competes with his stepfather Nicholson, his slimy partner Caine and Cuban mistress Lopez for a necklace worth more than a million dollars. For fans of Rafelson/Nicholson collaborations.

**Blood Beast Terror, The** (1968, GBR) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Vernon Sewell. Starring Peter Cushing, Robert Flemying, Wanda Ventham, Vanessa Howard, David Griffin, Glynn Edwards. Cushing is good in fair horror film about an entymologist, who collects and experiments on insects from all over the world. His latest creation, a giant dead head's moth, is getting out of control, however. Score keeps things bubbling in this Tigon production.

**Blood Cult** (1985, USA) **C-89m. BOMB** D: Christopher Lewis. Starring Juli Andelman, Charles Ellis, James Vance, Bennie Lee McGowan. Ultra-low-budget stinker shot on video about the search for a slasher by detective Ellis. The first movie produced directly for the home video market... if that's not something. Repellent gore effects, amateurish acting throughout. Followed by a sequel (REVENGE). Also released as SLASHER.

**Blood Diner** (1987, USA) **C-88m.** \*½ D: Jackie Kong. Starring Rick Burks, Carl Crew, Roger Dauer, LaNette La France. Amateurish splatter comedy about two brothers who run a diner and slice up women in order to revive or summon an ancient goddess. Pretty crazy, but also dumb and cheaply made, from the (female) director of THE BEING (1983).

**Bloodeaters** (1980, USA) **C-88m. BOMB** D: Chuck McCrann. Starring Charles Austin (=Chuck McCrann), Beverly Shapiro, Dennis Helfend, Paul Haskin, John Amplas. When local authorities intend to wipe out illegal marihuana plantation, the hippie-like owners turn into zombies after inhaling the chemical sprayed on the field. Idiotic splatter-movie, much too reminiscent of Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (even the budget was not much higher). For masochists only. Director McCrann perished in the 2001 World Trade Center attack; this was his only production. Alternative titles: TOXIC ZOMBIES, BLOOD BUTCHERS, FOREST OF FEAR.

**Blood for Dracula** (1974, ITA/FRA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Paul Morrissey, Antonio Margheriti. Starring Joe Dallesandro, Udo Kier, Arno Juering, Maxime McKendry, Milena Vukotic, Stefania Casini, Vittorio De Sica, Roman Polanski. Companion piece to Andy Warhol's FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN is just as slow. Kier chews up the scenery as Count Dracula, who travels to Italy in search of virgins (and their blood). Again, the cinematography (by Luigi Kuveiller) is not bad, Claudio Gizzi's score is moody. For the curious. Director Roman Polanski has a funny cameo. Uncut print runs 106m. Also known as ANDY WARHOL'S DRACULA, YOUNG DRACULA, and simply DRACULA.

**Blood From the Mummy's Tomb** (1972, GBR) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Seth Holt, Michael Carreras. Starring Andrew Keir, Valerie Leon, James Villiers, Hugh Burden, Tamara Ustinov. Obscurely plotted but effective horror chiller about group of archaeologists who make plans to

resurrect ancient Egyptian mummy. Leon is young woman who looks like the mummy and tries to stop the scientists. Well-made, with the scene in the insane asylum the highlight. Director Holt died shortly before shooting was finished, Carreras took over. Based on Bram Stoker's story *Jewel of the Seven Stars*. Remade twice.

**Blood Legacy** (1971, USA) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Carl Monson. Starring Rodolfo Acosta, Merry Anders, Norman Bartold, Ivy Bethune, John Carradine. Poorly directed, cheap horror thriller about several people who gather for the reading of a will (Carradine's) and are forced to stay for a few days if they want to get their hands on the inheritance. Needless to say, people start to die one after the other. Amateurishly staged and boring despite interesting plot, with some feeble attempts to make this bizarre. Rightfully forgotten trash, whose director went on to make the sex horror comedy *PLEASE DON'T EAT MY MOTHER* (1973). Also known as *LEGACY OF BLOOD*.

**Bloodline** (1979, USA/GER) **C-117m.** \*\*½ D: Terence Young. Starring Audrey Hepburn, Ben Gazzara, James Mason, Claudia Mori, Irene Papas, Michelle Phillips, Maurice Ronet, Romy Schneider, Omar Sharif, Beatrice Straight, Gert Fröbe, Wolfgang Preiss, Marcel Bozzuffi, Pinkas Braun, Walter Kohut, Ivan Desny, Vadim Glowna, Hans von Borsody, Gabriele Ferzetti. Flawed international production by the James Bond director about Hepburn, hapless heir to a multi-million dollar pharmaceutical company, who finds herself targeted by her own family, who'd rather have her sell the stocks instead of continuing her father's work. Gazzara plays her love interest. Globe-trotting, glossy soap opera is pretty trivial but still fascinating to watch, thanks to a highly interesting cast. Seems a bit choppy, especially towards the end. 40 minutes of footage were later included in TV version. Based on the novel by Sidney Sheldon.

**Blood Link** (1982, USA/CDN/ITA/GER) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Michael Moriarty, Penelope Milford, Sarah Langenfeld, Martha Smith, Cameron Mitchell, Geraldine Fitzgerald. This concoction is a notch above the average psycho chiller: Moriarty brings conviction to his role as doctor, who has frightening visions of murder and discovers that this may be because of a psychic link to his (siamese!) twin brother, who is stalking women in Germany(!). He sets out to find the lost sibling and break free from him forever. Plot is reminiscent of Brian De Palma's *SISTERS* (1973) and quite trivial, but Moriarty's performances, Ennio Morricone's score make this worthwhile for cult movie buffs. From the director of *HORROR* (1963) and *ROMA COME CHICAGO* (1968). Aka *THE LINK* and *EXTRASENSORIAL*.

**Blood on Satan's Claw, The** (1971, GBR) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Piers Haggard. Starring Patrick Wymark, Linda Hayden, Barry Andrews, Michele Dotrice, Wendy Padbury. Quite good period horror set in the 18<sup>th</sup> century English countryside, where a farmer digs up the remains of a strange creature, which infects the local youth with superstitions. Judge Wymark is called to investigate devil worshipping and witchcraft. Plot lacks a tighter pace and structure, but film has its defenders. Best thing is good, eerie score (by Mark Wilkinson) and somewhat tense finale.

**Blood Relatives** (1977, CAN/FRA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Donald Sutherland, Aude Landry, Lisa Langlois, Laurent Malet, Micheline Lanctot, Stéphane Audran, Donald Pleasence, David Hemmings, Claude Chabrol. When a girl is murdered brutally in a dark alley, detective Sutherland sets out to find the killer and is aided in his search by the girl's cousin, who has witnessed the crime. In the proceedings he uncovers the murdered girl's incestuous relationship with her cousin. Chabrol creates another interesting and captivating mystery, that is not without flaws, however (the flashback sequence illustrating

the contents of the girl's diary is too long). Well-acted, well-directed, if typically low-key and distanced. Based on a novel by Ed McBain. French original title: LES LIEUX DE SANG.

**Blood Salvage** (1990, USA) **C-98m**. \*½ D: Tucker Johnston. Starring Danny Nelson, Lori Birdsong, Christian Hesler, Ralph Pruitt Vaughn, John Saxon, Laura Whyte, Ray Walston, Evander Holyfield. Poor horror film rips off TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE (1974) and MOTEL HELL (1980): Country hick Nelson sees himself as a bio-mechanic and operates on his abducted victims in his barn – all in the name of the Lord! Saxon's family are his latest victims. Gruesome, mean-spirited (but not very graphic) horror thriller that is boring to the bone (no pun intended). May have worked better without the humor. Other title: MAD JAKE.

**Blood Shed, The** (2007, USA) **C-73m**. \*½ D: Alan Rowe Kelly. Starring Alan Rowe Kelly, Terry M. West, Joshua Nelson, Mike Lane, Susan Adriansen. Demented indie-horror about an "average inbred, hillbilly, cannibal family" wants to be a spoof of the TCM movies, but becomes obnoxious before long. Plot only consist of vignettes about the weird characters. Better acted than other amateur efforts; director Kelly comes off best as a middle-aged pervert, who thinks he's a twelve-year-old girl. Some disgusting effects. Made for video.

**Blood Simple** (1984, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Joel Coen. Starring John Getz, Frances McDormand, Dan Hedaya, M. Emmet Walsh, Samm-Art Williams, Holly Hunter (voice). The Coen brothers' debut feature is a highly interesting exercise in film-noir atmosphere, about a pair of lovers, who try to escape the wrath of McDormand's cuckolded husband Hedaya. Well-directed thriller, stylishly shot by Barry Sonnenfeld, well-scored by Carter Burwell. Not entirely successful, perhaps, maybe even overrated, due to some pacing flaws and not entirely logical plot twists, but certainly original and generally well-wrought, a harbinger of things to come from the Coens (the subject matter was somewhat reworked later in their thriller FARGO). The Coens also coedited the picture (under their pseudonym Roderick Jaynes). Originally released at 97m., recut to present length in 2000.

**Blood Sucking Freaks** (1978, USA) **C-92m**. ½ D: Joel M. Reed. Starring Seamus O'Brien, Viju Krem, Niles McMaster. Absolutely sickening splatter movie about a side show hosted by O'Brien, who tortures his victims on stage. A disgusting and gross non-movie. Will make you feel ashamed of being a horror fan. Also known as HERITAGE OF CALIGULA, HOUSE OF THE SCREAMING VIRGINS, THE INCREDIBLE TORTURE SHOW and SARDU, MASTER OF THE SCREAMING VIRGINS.

**Blood Tide** (1982, GBR/GRE) **C-83m**. \*½ D: Richard Jefferies. Starring James Earl Jones, José Ferrer, Lila Kedrova, Mary Louise Weller, Martin Cove, Deborah Shelton. Boring horror film set on a Greek island, where young couple come in search of a missing sister, only to find under the thrall of sect-like community led by Ferrer. Will they sacrifice her to some kind of monster? Hardly any action or suspense, a downer. Only the cast is remotely interesting. Coproduced by Nico Mastorakis (also cowriter), Brian Trenchard-Smith. Original British version runs longer. Also known as DEMON ISLAND, THE RED TIDE.

**Blood Work** (2002, USA) **C-110m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Jeff Daniels, Anjelica Huston, Wanda de Jesus, Tina Lifford, Paul Rodriguez, Dylan Walsh. Good thriller featuring producer-director Eastwood as a retired police detective, who had a heart attack while chasing a serial killer. After a heart transplantation (and two years later) Eastwood is approached by a woman who claims to be the sister of one of the killer's victims... who incidentally also provided the heart for Eastwood's transplantation. The aging detective finally decides to take up the chase for the killer again. Suspenseful film has a crackling good story (lifted off Michael Connelly's novel), and only lets the viewer down in the final fifteen minutes. Good job by all involved.

**Bloody Birthday** (1981, USA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Ed Hunt. Starring Lori Lethin, Melinda Cordell, Julie Brown, Joe Penny, José Ferrer, Susan Strasberg, Michael Dudikoff. Illogical horror thriller whose only novelty is the premise: Three children are born at the exact same time, during a lunar eclipse. Just before their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday they embark on a killing spree. Dumbness takes away most of the edge of this cruel story. A feeble attempt at a slasher movie, (needlessly) elaborately scored by Arlon Ober (the guy who did the music for HOSPITAL MASSACRE). Also known as CREEPS, or CREEPERS.

**Bloody Mission** (1974, USA/TUR) **C-88m.** \*½ D: Peter Maris. Starring Gordon Mitchell, Frances Chandler, Bo Taras, Bee Anderson, Tony Carrell. Unintentionally funny C-movie about the wife of a rich sheik, who holds the key to a much sought-after gem called the “red butterfly”. When he is killed, the dumb blonde tries to find it in Istanbul. Amateurish, filled with violent action. Aims for James Bond flair and earns only a couple of chuckles. Also known as DER TODESTANZ DES ROTEN SCHMETTERLINGS.

**Bloody Murder** (2000, USA) **C-88m.** ½ D: Ralph E. Portillo. Starring Jessica Morris, Peter Guillemette, Patrick Cavanaugh, Cristelle Ford. Bottom-of-the-barrel horror movie tries to be FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup>, as several youngsters who work at a summer camp, which reopens after a murder series happened there years ago, are attacked by a psycho. Poorly acted, poorly made (for video). Even the blood looks fake. Followed by a sequel in 2003! Also known as SCREAM BLOODY MURDER.

**Bloody Wednesday** (1985, USA) **C-96m.** \*½ D: Mark G. Gilhuis. Starring Raymond Elmendorf, Pamela Baker, Navarre Perry, Teresa Mae Allen. Low-budget thriller about a psychopath, who gets prematurely released from a clinic. He takes up a job at a deserted hotel and soon meets characters that are not really there. All this ends in a massacre. Obviously inspired by the classic SHINING (1980), but not intended to be creepy. Some odd scenes may evoke your interest, though. Also known as THE GREAT AMERICAN MASSACRE.

**Blow Out** (1981, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Brian De Palma. Starring John Travolta, Nancy Allen, John Lithgow, Dennis Franz, Peter Boyden, Curt May. Another fine thriller by expert De Palma: Sound effects engineer Travolta happens to record a fatal car accident, which may have been an assassination. Along with naïve Allen, who he saved from the car, he investigates the case. Beginning is best part in this well-directed thriller, the contrivances begin to show only towards the end. Especially fun for film buffs, as references range from Antonioni (BLOWUP) to Hitchcock and Argento. Photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond, score by Pino Donaggio.

**Blowup** (1966, GBR/ITA/USA) **C-111m. \*\*\*\***½ D: Michelangelo Antonioni. Starring David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Miles, John Castle, Jane Birkin, Gillian Hills, Peter Bowles, Verushka. Fascinating landmark film set in London, where high-strung, impulsive fashion photographer Hemmings goes for a stroll in the park where he intends to escape his every day life. He snaps some pictures of a couple and is approached by the woman, who wants to have the photos at all costs. Then he realizes that he may have photographed a murder, and starts to investigate. More character and lifestyle drama than murder mystery, this film made Hemmings an international star. Antonioni deviates from plot occasionally and enters a stream-of-consciousness mode and just follows his protagonist around. Lack of score is also atypical. Nominated for two Oscars (Director, Screenplay), and winner of the Golden Palm at Cannes.

**Bluebeard** (1972, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-114m.** \*\*½ D: Edward Dmytryk. Starring Richard Burton, Raquel Welch, Virna Lisi, Joey Heatherton, Nathalie Delon, Karin Schubert, Sybill Danning, Jean Lefebvre, Matthieu Carrière. Famous ladykiller Bluebeard (Burton) tells his story to his American wife (Heatherton) in this trashy and sometimes hilarious horror melodrama.

Horror and trash elements are what make this international production recommendable - to tolerant viewers. It's too bad Mario Bava couldn't have directed this. The dead bodies in the freezer will remind you of his CINQUE BAMBOLE... movie. The sets are as colorful, the costumes inimitably 70s. Score by Ennio Morricone is nice, too. The women are sexy. Original version runs 125m., though Austrian TV version seemed uncut, since one gory sequence (bird picks adam's apple) was intact. Best/worst scene: Burton wants to make love to a woman who doesn't stop singing. His sweater is a scream. Who has an uncut print? French original title: BARBE BLEU.

**Blue Bird, The** (1976, USA/RUS) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** George Cukor. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Jane Fonda, Ava Gardner, Cicely Tyson, Robert Morley, Harry Andrews, Todd Lookinland, Patsy Kensit, Will Geer, Mona Washbourne, George Cole. Interesting (to say the least) Russian-American fairy tale about two children, who embark on a quest to find the Blue Bird. Along the way they are helped by fairy Liz, some humanimals and some inanimate objects that come to life. Lots of singing, little plot thrust, but philosophical touch makes up for lack of movie magic. This is no WIZARD OF OZ (1939), but has lots more stars in cameos. Photographed by Freddie Young.

**Blue Blood** (1973, GBR/CDN) **C-86m. BOMB D:** Andrew Sinclair. Starring Oliver Reed, Fiona Lewis, Anna Gael, Derek Jacobi, Meg Wynn Owen. Reed plays a diabolical butler, who might or might not want to overthrow his lord Jacobi. Some (laughably pretentious) horror elements and obvious parallels to Mario Bava's LISA AND THE DEVIL may lure buffs into this trap. An almost unbearable pseudo-drama, one of the films that helped destroy Reed's career. Based on Alexander Thynne's novel *The Carry-Cot*. Photographed by Harry Waxman.

**Blue in the Face** (1995, USA) **C-84m. \*\*½ D:** Wayne Wang, Paul Auster. Starring Harvey Keitel, Lou Reed, Michael J. Fox, Roseanne, Mel Gorham, Jim Jarmusch, Lily Tomlin, Jared Harris, Giancarlo Esposito, Jose Zuniga, Victor Argo, Madonna, Mira Sorvino, Keith David, RuPaul. Immediate follow-up to SMOKE isn't nearly as good. Like its predecessor it centers around Keitel's cigar shop, where amusing vignettes unfold. Rather incoherent, but those who liked SMOKE will find this a welcome return to its kind of humor. The situations were more or less improvised by Wang and Auster (the screenwriter of SMOKE).

**Blue Ruin** (2013, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jeremy Saulnier. Starring Macon Blair, Devin Ratray, Amy Hargreaves, Kevin Kolack, Eve Plumb. Unusual revenge drama with a defeatist tone about homeless drifter Blair who learns of the release of a murderer and hastens home - for the first time in years - to exact revenge and protect his sister. Low-key but mostly effective with some great shots, a promising second feature by writer-director Saulnier (MURDER PARTY, GREEN ROOM).

**Blue Sunshine** (1977, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Jeff Lieberman. Starring Zalman King, Deborah Winters, Mark Goddard, Robert Walden, Charles Siebert. Interesting horror thriller with an uneven plot. King (later director of erotic movies) narrowly escapes the attack of a raving lunatic, becomes a suspect in mass killings and takes it on the lam, trying to find out what drives people insane. Is it a drug? And why are they losing their hair? Watchable, with convincing performances, still, seems longer than it actually is. Has a kind of sci-fi DEAD ZONE feel to it, and some disturbing moments. From the director of SQUIRM (1976).

**Blue Velvet** (1986, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Lynch. Starring Isabella Rossellini, Kyle MacLachlan, Dennis Hopper, Laura Dern, Hope Lange, Dean Stockwell, George Dickerson, Brad Dourif, Jack Nance, Angelo Badalamenti. Upon discovering a human ear in a meadow, naïve villager MacLachlan is drawn into a tale of kidnap and sexual perversions involving a prostitute (Rossellini) and a perverted lunatic (Hopper). This follow-up to David Lynch's DUNE (1984) provides the first glimpse of a typical Lynchian universe of perverted

characters and lives, as he would later explore in his cult series 'Twin Peaks' and other projects. This cult film lives off jarringly intense situations and performances, its plot merely serves as a basis for powerful, fascinating sequences. Not for all tastes, to say the least, but a must for Lynch's fans and cult film lovers in general. Hopper gives a radical performance. Rough cut ran about 4 hours.

**Blutgletscher** (2013, AUT) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Marvin Kren. Starring Gerhard Liebmann, Edita Malovic, Brigitte Kren, Hille Beseler. Eco-horror film set high up in the Alps, where three scientists are doing research on glaciers. When they find one eerily discoloured (red), it turns out climate change has brought about terrible mutations. Too bad the minister is on her way to pay a visit... Semi-serious fare is an okay view for the most part, although some characters and actors are not convincing. The score and the special effects are quite good. English title: BLOOD GLACIER.

**B.Monkey** (1999, GBR) **C-94m. \*\* D:** Michael Radford. Starring Asia Argento, Jared Harris, Rupert Everett, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Tim Woodward, Ian Hart, Juliet Wallace, Bryan Pringle. Young, attractive girl B.Monkey (Argento) wants to break away from a world of crime and falls in love with conservative primary school teacher and jazz-fan (Harris) who can't believe his luck. The Italian-born girl finds it difficult, however, to free herself from the protective grasp of her friends (Everett and Meyers) who live in constant danger. Poorly timed drama uneasily combines two different worlds by making two contrastive personalities fall in love with each other. It's the credibility that suffers. A disappointment from the director of IL POSTINO. Some striking camerawork by Ashley Rowe cannot save this marginally interesting film. Based on the novel by Andrew Davies.

**Boat That Rocked, The** (2009, GBR/FRA/GER) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Richard Curtis. Starring Bill Nighy, Philipp Seymour Hoffman, Nick Frost, Tom Sturridge, Kenneth Branagh, Gemma Arterton, Jack Davenport, Rhys Ifans, January Jones, Emma Thompson. Nice period drama about a pirate radio station that would thrill millions in the mid-to-late 1960s and cause headaches to British authority. Told from the perspective of an 18-year-old, who is accepted into community of radio hosts aboard a run-down ship in the North Sea (where it was legal to broadcast). With little character depth, this is essentially made up of funny vignettes. The cast itself is top-notch, so is production design and – needless to say – the soundtrack. From the writer-director of LOVE ACTUALLY (2003) and ABOUT TIME (2013). Also known as RADIO ROCK REVOLUTION, and PIRATE RADIO.

**Bobby** (2006, USA) **C-117m. \*\*½ D:** Emilio Estevez. Starring Harry Belafonte, Joy Bryant, Nick Cannon, Emilio Estevez, Laurence Fishburne, Brian Geraghty, Heather Graham, Anthony Hopkins, Helen Hunt, Joshua Jackson, David Krumholtz, Ashotn Kutcher, Shia LaBeouf, Lindsay Lohan, William H. Macy, Svetlana Metkina, Demi Moore, Freddy Rodriguez, Martin Sheen, Christian Slater, Sharon Stone, Jacob Vargas, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Elijah Wood. Ambitious project for writer-director-actor Estevez, which took him seven years to complete: He follows the last day in the life of Robert F. Kennedy at the Ambassador Hotel in June 1968. Film introduces a slew of people who are all there in GRAND HOTEL style and succeeds in painting a vivid picture of the time and place (great costumes, decoration, even the outdoor lighting is superb, recreating the look of 60s TV), and gives us ample time to meet Kennedy through archive footage, but film loses its focus in the mid-section and not all of the stories are interesting. Great as an homage to the late Kennedy, less successful as a drama. Score by Mark Isham.

**Bob Roberts** (1992, USA/GBR) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Tim Robbins. Starring Tim Robbins, Giancarlo Esposito, Alan Rickman, Ray Wise, Brian Murray, Gore Vidal, Tom Atkins, David Strathairn, James Spader, Helen Hunt, Peter Gallagher, Jack Black, Susan Sarandon, Fred Ward, John

Cusack, Bill Balaban. Scathing political satire marked actor Robbins' directorial debut. He plays a folk singer- turned-politician, who uses his wits to deceive the American public into electing him Senator of Pennsylvania. Intelligent observation of the power of the media (and the dumbness of many people) never fully realizes its brilliant potential but remains intriguing throughout. Robbins cowrote the engaging songs with his brother David.

**Body Bags** (1993, USA) **C-91m**. \*\*\* D: John Carpenter, Tobe Hooper. Starring John Carpenter, Tom Arnold, Tobe Hooper, Robert Carradine, Wes Craven, Sam Raimi, David Naughton, George 'Buck' Flower, Stacy Keach, David Warner, Sheena Easton, Debbie Harry, Mark Hamill, Twiggy, John Agar, Roger Corman, Charles Napier. Horror anthology à la TALES FROM THE CRYPT, hosted by corpse Carpenter, who presents the tales in a morgue. The first one is a slash'n'stalk story, as a young student does her first night shift at a gas station and makes the acquaintance with a killer. The second one is wickedly funny, as Keach picks the wrong organization to help him get over his balding head. The third one (by Tobe Hooper) is a quite serious but standard horror drama about baseball crack Hamill, who has an eye implantation with predictable results. All three are watchable, the only thing the second one lacks is a good punchline. Surprisingly well-acted, this one ought to have made it to the big screen (it was produced for television). For horror fans, who will savor the cameos by big names in the business.

**Body Double** (1984, USA) **C-109m**. \*\*½ D: Brian De Palma. Starring Craig Wasson, Gregg Henry, Melanie Griffith, Deborah Shelton, Guy Boyd, Dennis Franz, Jeff Daniels. Jobless, luckless actor Wasson is put up by a friend (Henry) in an ultra-modern villa and watches a beautiful lady (Shelton) through a telescope every evening. He finds out she may be the subject of a murder plot and tries to protect her – to no avail. Stylish, suspenseful thriller with atmosphere to spare maintains interest for two thirds, then bogs down and even becomes ludicrous at the finale. Too bad, since Hitchcock disciple De Palma manages to transfix you at times. Watch for Jeff Daniels in a cameo (if you don't catch him, there's a second chance).

**Body Melt** (1993, AUS) **C-81m**. \*½ D: Philip Brophy. Starring Gerard Kennedy, Andrew Daddo, Ian Smith, Regina Gaigalas, Vincent Gil. Splatter comedy about a company which experiments with special vitamin ingredients and sends out some samples to unsuspecting people in suburbia. The physical reaction is explained in the movie's title. Rather inept, not very funny, with a nod to T.C.M. in a second, almost completely unrelated plot thread. Gore hounds should watch it for the grisly effects, but this is light years from BRAIN DEAD (1992).

**Body Puzzle** (1992, ITA) **C-99m**. \*\* D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Joanna Pacula, Hugh Quarshie. A mad killer is on the loose who takes several body parts of his victims, and it's detective Quarshie's job to track him down. Sound familiar? Well, it is. Though the screenplay is slightly more intelligent than others of this genre and Bava shows some style, this is a strictly-by-the-numbers thriller. Filmed in English.

**Body Shop, The** (1973, USA) **C-75m**. \*½ D: J.G. Patterson Jr.. Starring Don Brandon (=J.G. Patterson Jr.), Jenny Driggers, Roy Mehaffey, Linda Faile. Uproariously campy FRANKENSTEIN version, where doc Brandon puts his victims in aluminum foil and connects them to an electric current. There's hunchback Gregory, who hopes to get a mate in the doctor's ultimate creation, a sexy woman made of different body parts. This movie is actually a romance! Some gory scenes, but pretty ridiculous, for camp movie fanatics, although Patterson brings conviction to his role. Music and special effects by William Girdler. Alternative titles: DOCTOR GORE, SHRIEKS IN THE NIGHT.

**Body Snatchers, The** (1993, USA) **C-87m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Abel Ferrara. Starring Terry Kinney, Meg Tilly, Gabrielle Anwar, Reilly Murphy, Billy Wirth. Second(-rate) remake of the classic

INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956) is set on a military base, where teenager Anwar soon learns that soldiers are taken over by alien life forms. B-script (coauthored by Stuart Gordon) fails to involve, but film is slickly photographed and boasts some chillingly effective scenes. Larry Cohen is credited with the screen story.

**Boeing (707) Boeing (707)** (1965, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** John Rich. Starring Tony Curtis, Jerry Lewis, Dany Saval, Christiane Schmidtmer, Suzanna Leigh, Thelma Ritter. Funny comedy set in Paris about womanizer Curtis, who has affairs with three flight stewardesses – simultaneously. Then his calculated schedule doesn't work out anymore, and everything ends in chaos when his colleague Lewis shows up. Ritter is fun as overtaxed housekeeper. This marked Lewis' last film for Paramount Pictures, after 17 years. His character is decidedly more mature than in other films of his. Based on a stage play by Marc Camoletti. Photographed by Lucien Ballard. Score by Neal Hefti. Also known as BOEING BOEING.

**Bôkô Kirisaki Jakku** (1976, JAP) **C-72m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Yasuharu Hasebe. Starring Yôko Azusa, Yutaka Hayashi. Really indefensible pinku sleaze about a pastry maker and his waitress girlfriend who realize they get their kicks out of killing women and they proceed to go on a killing spree. Highpoint of the torture is stabbing the victims in the crotch. Completely pointless thriller with idiotic (not to mention ugly) main characters. English title: ASSAULT! JACK THE RIPPER.

**Boksuneun Nai Geot** (2002, KOR) **C-121m. \*\*\*½ D:** Park Chan-Wook. Starring Song Kang-ho, Shin Ha-kyun, Bae Du-na, Lim Ji-Eun, Han Bo-bae. Kim Se-dong. First part of the director's revenge trilogy is about a deaf-mute man and his dying sister, who is in desperate need of an organ transplant. When all attempts to get her an operation fail, they kidnap the daughter of the brother's employer, the owner of a large company. Then things get out of hand. Low-key, quiet, deliberately paced drama has many striking images, but overall effect is depressing. Followed by OLDBOY (2003). English title: SYMPATHY FOR MR VENGEANCE.

**Bolt** (2008, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Byron Howard, Chris Williams. Starring (the voices of) John Travolta, Miley Cyrus, Susie Essman, Mark Walton, Malcolm McDowell, James Lipton, Greg Germann, Randy Savage. Bolt, an American White Shepherd, is the star of an action TV series, only he doesn't know, and believes firmly in his superpowers. When he escapes into the real world, he soon realizes that life is much harder than he thought, especially when he has to trek across America to find his owner, a young girl, again. Some dazzling action sequences alternate with less thrilling character interaction, but overall, film is quite funny. Co-executive produced by John Lasseter.

**Bom Yeoreum Gaeul Gyeoul Geurigo Bom** (2003, KOR/GER) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Kim Ki-duk. Starring Oh Yeong-su, Kim Ki-duk, Kim Young-min, Seo Jae-kyeong, Ha Yeo-jin. Lyrical examination of a master-student relationship, done in various stages, from childhood of the student to adulthood. Although plot is minimal, images alone can arrest you, and underlying (buddhist) philosophy is well-worth discovering. As this is set on a lake and a woman is important to the story, this makes an interesting companion piece to the director's earlier SEOM (2000). English title: SPRING, SUMMER, FALL, WINTER... AND SPRING.

**Bone Collector, The** (1999, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Phillip Noyce. Starring Denzel Washington, Angelina Jolie, Queen Latifah, Michael Rooker, Mike McGlone, Luis Guzmán, Ed O'Neill, Phillip Noyce. Thriller about forensics expert Washington, who is paralyzed and confined to his bed after a near-fatal accident. He radios his instructions to agent Jolie, who is about to track down a serial killer who behaves like a butcher. Director Noyce makes the going-ons *extremely* suspenseful, but subtracting this asset leaves an illogical, shallow mess. Still, well-made and the suspense might be enough for undemanding viewers.

**Bone Daddy** (1998, USA) **C-91m**. \*\*½ D: Mario Azzopardi. Starring Rutger Hauer, Barbara Williams, R.H. Thomson. Formulaic but well-paced, fairly exciting thriller about pathologist-turned-writer Hauer, whose latest bestseller brings to life a serial killer who picks bones from his living (gulp!) victims. Hauer teams up with cop Williams to solve the crime. Few novelties in this one but quite suspenseful.

**Bone Tomahawk** (2015, USA) **C-132m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: S. Craig Zahler. Starring Kurt Russell, Patrick Wilson, Richard Jenkins, Matthew Fox, Lili Simmons, David Arquette, Sean Young, Sid Haig, Michael Paré. Slowly-paced, offbeat western about a group of four men, sheriff Russell, deputy Jenkins, injured Wilson and gentleman cowboy Fox, who set out to rescue Wilson's wife, who was kidnapped by a tribe of Indians. The trek soon turns into a fight for survival for the men, before they even know how evil their enemy is. Uneven tale of the Savage West is buoyed by some terrific performances, especially Russell's and Jenkins'. Your reception of the film may ultimately depend on how you judge the final 30 minutes, when the violence becomes extremely graphic (and probably unwatchable for some). Written by director Zahler.

**Bonfire of the Vanities, The** (1990, USA) **C-125m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brian De Palma. Starring Tom Hanks, Bruce Willis, Melanie Griffith, Kim Cattrall, Saul Rubinek, Morgan Freeman, John Hancock, Kevin Dunn, Clifton James, Donald Moffat, Rita Wilson, Kirsten Dunst, Emmanuel Xuereb, F. Murray Abraham. Adaptation of Tom Wolfe's satirical bestseller about Wall Street hotshot Hanks, whose sins come to the surface after a hit-and-run accident in the Bronx, which gives reporter Willis the story of his life. Quite amusing, but never hits bull's-eye. Excellent photography by Vilmos Zsigmond.

**Bonheur et dans le Pré, Le** (1995, FRA) **C-106m**. \*\*½ D: Etienne Chatiliez. Starring Michel Serrault, Eddy Mitchell, Sabine Azéma, Carmen Maura. Serrault plays a producer of toilet seats(!), who is having problems with his factory and his nagging wife Azéma. One day he sees by chance a family on TV, who are looking for their lost father and husband. Since the resemblance between him and the wanted man is more than striking, he decides to leave everything behind and move to the trio of women, who live in the idyllic countryside. There he learns to cherish life for the first time. Handsomely photographed comedy drama unfortunately takes too long to get where it's going. Similar in theme to LE RETOUR DE MARTIN GUERRE, but uneven and not very entertaining. Eric Cantona has a small role as a rugby player(!).

**Bonne Année, La** (1973, FRA/ITA) **C/B&W-115m**. \*\*½ D: Claude Lelouch. Starring Lino Ventura, Françoise Fabian, Charles Gérard, André Falcon, Mireille Mathieu. Light-handed romantic drama, a typical Lelouch, told in a flashback. The frame narrative, shot in black-and-white sees con artist Ventura released from prison on New Year's amnesty. He seeks out a former lover, who he met six years before in Cannes during the planning of a jewel heist. This encounter (and crime) is related in color. Often trivial but you can't blame writer-director Lelouch, as his characters and their dialogues produce enough texture to make this worthwhile. Some prints start with a prologue from Lelouch's breakthrough picture UN HOMME ET UNE FEMME (1966). Score by Francis Lai. English title: HAPPY NEW YEAR.

**Bonnie and Clyde** (1967, USA) **C-111m**. \*\*\*\* D: Arthur Penn. Starring Warren Beatty, Faye Dunaway, Michael J. Pollard, Gene Hackman, Estelle Parsons, Denver Pyle, Dub Taylor, Evans Evans, Gene Wilder. Complex, intelligent, influential, simply classic action drama about the famous lovers and criminals Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, who along with their gang robbed banks in Texas of the 1930s. A moving account of the pair's relationship, brilliantly acted, stylishly directed and shot. Violent, shocking and controversial for its time; it influenced such later filmmakers as Joel Coen and Quentin Tarantino. Morgan Fairchild (as

Dunaway's stunt double) and Gene Wilder's first film. Written by Robert Benton, David Newman and Robert Towne. Produced by Warren Beatty. Oscar winner for Best Cinematography (Burnett Guffey) and Best Supporting Actress (Parsons).

**Bons Vivants, Les** (1965, FRA/ITA) **B&W-100m.** \*\* D: Gilles Grangier, Georges Lautner. Starring Louis de Funès, Bernard Blier, Mireille Darc, Andréa Parisy, Jean Lefebvre, Bernadette Lafont, Darry Cowl, Jean Carmet, Albert Rémy, Michel Modo, Grosso, Jacques Marin. Three-part film related by an object, a lantern. In the first segment it is taken off the portal of a brothel run by Blier, who is forced to close his doors forever. In the second part, the lantern is stolen and the thief is tried at court. In the last and longest episode, a sports club is secretly transformed into a brothel by de Funès, who unknowingly takes in a prostitute and doesn't have a clue why his friends enjoy staying at his house so much. De Funès only appears in the last 40 minutes and single-handedly saves this otherwise boring, unfunny compilation of stories. Unavailable for many years. Also known as: UN GRAND SEIGNEUR, KEEP THE RED LIGHT BURNING.

**Boogeyman, The** (1980, USA) **C-82m.** \*\*½ D: Ulli Lommel. Starring Suzanna Love, Ron James, John Carradine, Nicholas Love. Interesting slasher movie from German Fassbinder disciple Lommel. Twenty years after James killed his mother's lover, he and his sister Love (witness to the original crime) have settled down on a farm. When someone starts killing local women, Love realizes that the past is still haunting them. Suspenseful, creepy horror film is too low-key for most of the time. Best part is the finale. Explanation for the murders is ludicrous, however, if not absurd. Still, horror buffs should definitely check this out. Followed by a sequel in 1983.

**Boogie Nights** (1997, USA) **C-154m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Paul Thomas Anderson. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Burt Reynolds, Julianne Moore, John C. Reilly, Don Cheadle, Heather Graham, Luis Guzman, Philip Seymour Hoffman, William H. Macy, Alfred Molina, Philip Baker Hall, Robert Ridgely, Ricky Jay, Jack Riley, Joanna Gleason. Well-made, realistic drama about young stud Wahlberg, who with a giant sex organ climbs up the ladder of success to porn film stardom in the late 1970s. He is supported by director Reynolds and drug-addicted porn-queen Moore. Daring subject matter, filmed as smoothly as Anderson's *HARD EIGHT*. Very well-acted, highly original drama. The soundtrack is priceless.

**Boondock Saints, The** (1999, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Troy Duffy. Starring Sean Patrick Flanery, Willem Dafoe, Norman Reedus, David Della Rocco, Billy Connolly, David Ferry, Brian Mahoney, Bob Marley, Richard Fitzpatrick, Troy Duffy. Two Irish-American brothers, deeply religious, decide to go on a warpath with the Boston mafia and eradicate crime with extreme violence. Neurotic, gay FBI detective Dafoe is on their trail. Ultra-violent action-thriller is the bastard son of Tarantino and Woo movies. It doesn't make much sense, but cult movie buffs should give this one a look. Written by the director. There's also a documentary on this film called *OVERNIGHT* (2003).

**Bordello of Blood** (1996, USA) **C-87m.** \*½ D: Gilbert Adler. Starring Dennis Miller, Erika Eleniak, Angie Everhart, Chris Sarandon, Corey Feldman, William Sadler, Aubrey Morris. Vampires have infested a bordello and young Feldman falls prey to them, so Miller is hired his sister Eleniak to find out what has happened to him. Lots of wisecracks, some gore scenes and pretty vampires in a poor story that was written by Bob Gale and Robert Zemeckis. Lame second feature of the *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* series.

**Borgman** (2013, NED/BEL/DEN) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Alex van Warmerdam. Starring Jan Bijvoet, Hadewych Minis, Jeroen Perceval, Alex van Warmerdam, Sara Hjort Ditlevsen. Pitch-black satire on modern family values: Tramp Bijvoet, who lives in the forest with several friends, is forced to move out of his hole in the ground (literally!) and tries to find

accommodation and a place to wash at a rich family's villa. When her husband beats him half to death, Minis, mother of three, temporarily takes him in, not knowing that he will have an irreversible effect on their lives. It seems he spreads his influence like a cancer. Dark psycho drama is difficult to stomach, depending on your perspective. If you endorse family values, you'll find the disintegration of the family hard to take. Some choices seem random or unlikely, some scenes entirely unexplained, still this film exudes a strange fascination and may become a cult item.

**Born Free** (1966, GBR/USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: James Hill, Tom McGowan. Starring Virginia McKenna, Bill Travers, Geoffrey Keen, Peter Lukoye, Omar Chambati. Wilderness classic about a married couple in Africa, who take in 3 lion cubs after their parents are shot down. Two of the cubs are later sent off to the Rotterdam zoo, one stays with them and becomes their pet. Plays like a semi-documentary, but story is compelling and John Barry's Oscar-winning score magnificent (Barry also took the award for Best Song). Based on the autobiographical book by Joy Adamson. Followed by the 1971 documentary *THE LION AT WORLD'S END*, a TV series in 1974 and three sequels, *LIVING FREE* (1972), *BORN FREE: A NEW ADVENTURE* (1996) and *TO WALK WITH LIONS* (1999).

**Born to Defend** (1987, HGK) **C-87m. \*\*\*** D: Jet Li, Tsui Siu-Ming (action sequences). Starring Jet Li, Zhao Er-Kang, Song Jia, Kurt Roland Petterson, Paulo Tocha. Li (in his directorial debut) plays an army soldier who returns to his homeland after the war and finds it occupied by the U.S. army. The marines treat the inhabitants with contempt, and Li has to fight for respect. Well above-average eastern with a typically likable performance by its young star. Further plus: There's an unusual amount of drama in the plot.

**Borrowers, The** (1997, GBR) **C-83m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Hewitt. Starring John Goodman, Jim Broadbent, Mark Williams, Hugh Laurie, Bradley Pierce, Flora Newbiggin, Ruby Wax. Amiable, stylish children's comedy, based on the novels by Mary Norton. The Borrowers are little humans, 5 inches tall, and live in a house, borrowing (*not* stealing!) all kinds of needful things. Here, they help their landlords to battle villain Goodman, who has stolen their house. Episodic script works only intermittently, but effects are superb and kids will certainly fall in love with the tiny family of Borrowers. Even adults will have a good time.

**Borsalino** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-124m. \*\*** D: Jacques Deray. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, André Bollet, Michel Bouquet, Nicole Calfan, Mireille Darc, Henri Attal, Daniel Ivernel. Two gentlemen gangsters in 1930s Marseille work their way up in the hierarchy of the underworld and go through all kinds of troubles together. Static, much too slowly paced film that resembles a (shallow) drama more than an actioner. Delon's low-key performance doesn't help. His teaming with Belmondo is the only reason to watch this one. Produced by Delon. Script cowritten by Claude Sautet (based on the novel *Bandits a Marseille*). Followed by a sequel in 1974.

**Bosco, Il** (1988, ITA) **C-85m. Ⓜ** D: Andreas Marfori. Starring Coralina C. Tassoni, Diego Ribon, Luciano Crovato, Elena Cantarone, Stefano Moliari. Amateurish horror movie about two young vacationers, who dispel all warnings and wander into woods. There they (almost) meet their demise by the hands of an ugly demon. Or something like that. Splatter movie draws its inspiration from Sam Raimi's *EVIL DEAD* (1983), but director Marfori shows his ineptitude early on. Surreal scenes don't work and the actors seem like non-professionals. Avoid this cheapo. Distributed by Troma Films. English titles: *EVIL CLUTCH* and *HORROR QUEEN*.

**Boss, Il** (1973, ITA) **C-105m. \*\*½** D: Fernando Di Leo. Starring Henry Silva, Richard Conte, Gianni Garko, Antonia Santilli, Corrado Gaipa, Marino Masé, Howard Ross, Pier Paolo Capponi, Fernando Di Leo. Gritty Italian crime film, from one of the genre's busiest directors,

about two rivaling crime syndicates and hitman Silva, who becomes a key figure in the kidnapping of the daughter of a mafia boss. Uneven plot hampers proceedings, but violent scenes provide a tough feel and progressive rock score by Luis Enríquez Bacalov is amazing. English titles: MURDER INFERNO, THE BOSS, and WIPEOUT!

**Boucher, Le** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Stéphane Audran, Jean Yanne, Antonio Passalia, Pascal Ferrone. The prototypical bourgeois crime drama by Chabrol, this is one of his most famous films. Set in a small village, film is about independent school teacher Audran and simple-minded butcher Yanne, who become friends. There's a serial killer on the loose and Audran is about to find out his identity. Chabrol also scripted this quiet observation of bourgeois manners and the face of crime. Some consider this his best film. Bizarre, disquieting score by Pierre Jansen.

**Bounce** (2000, USA) **C-106m. \*\*\*½** D: Don Roos. Starring Ben Affleck, Gwyneth Paltrow, Tony Goldwyn, Alex D. Linz, David Dorfman, Natasha Henstridge, Jennifer Grey. Affleck surrenders his plane ticket to Goldwyn, who wants to be with his family. When the plane crashes and Goldwyn dies, Affleck feels guilty and turns into an alcoholic. Months later he feels he must make up for it and visits his widow (Paltrow) and slowly falls in love. Contrivances and improbabilities aside, this is a touching story about an impossible love, well-acted by the leads. Written by the director.

**Bound** (1996, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*½** D: Larry and Andy Wachowski. Starring Jennifer Tilly, Gina Gershon, Joe Pantoliano, Richard Sarafian. Intricate story about a lesbian being seduced by a woman whose lover (Pantoliano, in a tour-de-force performance) is involved with the mafia. The two plan to cheat him out of the two million dollars he has to deliver to the mafia boss (Sarafian) of the city. Once things get started in this thriller (and it takes a while) it never lets up thanks to Pantoliano's flamboyant performance and an atmospheric, if sometimes overly melodramatic soundtrack. An impressive debut for the Wachowski brothers (THE MATRIX), who also wrote the screenplay and produced the picture.

**Bound to Vengeance** (2015, USA) **C-79m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: José Manuel Cravioto. Starring Richard Tyson, Tina Ivlev, Amy Okuda, Stephanie Charles, Scott Vance. Horror thriller about a young woman who manages to escape the guy who kidnapped her and abused her for six months. However, instead of going to the police she turns the tables on him and forces him to reveal where he is hiding his other victims. This bastard child of SAW and DAY OF THE WOMAN starts incredibly pretentious, with the main character's actions barely believable, but improves in the second half. Shaky camerawork doesn't help, but you can't deny the filmmakers' ambition.

**Bourne Identity, The** (2002, USA/GER) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Doug Liman. Starring Matt Damon, Franka Potente, Chris Cooper, Clive Owen, Brian Cox, Julia Stiles. Based on Robert Ludlum's novel, this spy thriller is well-made. After being pulled from the sea half-dead, amnesiac Damon finds himself to be a spy for the CIA. Before he can adjust, he is being pursued and attacked from all sides. On the run with chance acquaintance Potente, he must try to get his memory back and figure out his mission. Smoothly directed, well-edited thriller, with plot that is often all chase and little explanation. Filmed before in 1988 (as a TV mini-series).

**Bourse et la Vie, La** (1966, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-90m. \*½** D: Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Heinz Rühmann, Fernandel, Jean Poiret, Jean Carmet, Michel Galabru, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi, Marilú Toló, Michel Lonsdale, Darry Cowl. The cast provides only interest in this lame comedy about two bank clerks (Rühmann and Fernandel), who are to collect more than a million Francs from the bank, which their colleague Poiret is planning to keep for himself.

He chases after them seemingly through the whole of France. Unfunny complications, tired direction, the dust is inches high on this one. Shot by Jean Tournier.

**Bowling for Columbine** (2002, USA/CDN/GER) **C-120m.** \*\*\*\*½ D: Michael Moore. Featuring Michael Moore, Charlton Heston, Dick Clark. Eloquent, near-brilliant documentary (a deserving Oscar-winner) in which filmmaker Michael Moore takes the high school massacre at Columbine High in Littleton, Colorado, as a starting point to discuss the question why Americans are fascinated by guns and why more than 10,000 people are killed by firearms every year. At times shattering examination of a nation's sentiments, a must-see, even if Moore tends to see a conspiracy around every corner sometimes. Well-chosen climax leaves you with goosebumps. Also won awards in many other countries. Moore followed this with the even more controversial FAHRENHEIT 9/11 (2004).

**Box, The** (2009, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE** \*\*\*\*½ D: Richard Kelly. Starring Cameron Diaz, James Marsden, Frank Langella, James Rebhorn, Holmes Osborne. Fascinating science-fiction mystery, a bit along the lines of Kelly's cult hit DONNIE DARKO (2001), set in the wake of the Viking Mars landing in 1976. NASA employee Marsden has just been refused a career as an astronaut and his wife Diaz may lose her job as a teacher, when a mysterious present arrives on their doorstep, a box with a button on it. Disfigured gentleman Langella offers them \$1 million, if they press the button, but someone – no one they know – will die if they press it. Serpentine plot has several inconsistencies, but the mood of the film, great period flavour, and especially the score (by Arcade Fire), carry this a long way to a fascinating conclusion. Admittedly, a matter of taste. May require multiple viewings. Written by director Kelly, based on Richard Matheson's short story 'Button, Button', filmed before two times (as shorts).

**Boxcar Bertha** (1972, USA) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Martin Scorsese. Starring Barbara Hershey, David Carradine, Barry Primus, Bernie Casey, John Carradine, Victor Argo. Scorsese's second feature film (after WHO'S THAT KNOCKING ON MY DOOR?) is set in the Depression era and seems inspired by BONNIE & CLYDE (1967). Hershey plays the title character, a naïve country girl, who is seduced by angry worker Carradine and takes it on the lam with him. He wants to bring down the railroad company and stages demonstrations and other illegal things. Plot is second-rate, but some artistic touches may make it worthwhile if you are a Scorsese fan.

**Boxer, The** (1997, USA/EIR) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Jim Sheridan. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Emily Watson, Brian Cox, Ken Stott, Gerard McSorley, Eleanor Methven. Another thought-provoking drama from director Sheridan (IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER). Lewis plays a boxer whose release from prison and return to his community after 14 years carries strong implications, especially since he was an active IRA member. All he wants is peace and love, but his old sweetheart (Watson) has married and the country is still war-torn. Interesting, compelling throughout. Good cinematography by Chris Menges. Filmed in Dublin.

**Box of Moonlight** (1997, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*½ D : Tom DiCillo. Starring John Turturro, Sam Rockwell, Catherine Keener, Lisa Blount, Annie Corley, Dermot Mulroney. Charming but slight comedy about Mr. Clockwork Turturro, an married engineer who can feel the midlife crisis coming closer. One day he goes looking for a lake he once loved as a boy... and stumbles upon social drop-out Rockwell, who has set up his existence in the woods. Well-acted, especially by Turturro, but overlength emphasises lack of plot, despite several truly funny moments. Written by the director.

**Boxtrolls, The** (2014, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Graham Annable, Anthony Stacchi. Starring (the voices of) Ben Kingsley, Jared Harris, Nick Frost, Elle Fanning. Amusing, inventive animated feature about the title characters, who live below in the sewers of the town of Cheesebridge and are feared by the populace ever since they reportedly abducted and ate(!) a little baby.

A local exterminator has promised to get rid of them all in order to get respected by the mayor. If it wasn't for his cheese allergy! Well-made family fare, with some nicely dark elements.

**Boy, The** (2015, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Craig William Macneill. Starring David Morse, Jared Breeze, Rainn Wilson, Bill Sage, Mike Vogel. 9-year-old title character grows up in a derelict motel run by his father Morse. The boy lacks social contacts, so he grows more and more estranged from his surroundings and develops a fascination with death and dying. Essentially a valid psycho drama with bizarre sound effects that make this fascinating to watch. Unfortunately runs out of ideas towards the end. Solemn pace may also put off some viewers expecting a horror film. Based on a novel by Clay McLeod Chapman.

**Boy, The** (2016, USA/CHI/CDN) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** William Brent Bell. Starring Lauren Cohan, Rupert Evans, James Russell, Jim Norton, Diana Hardcastle. Chiller about American Cohan, who is hired by a British couple to babysit their son in their huge mansion. When the boy turns out to be a doll(!), she decides to play along, until inexplicable things start to happen. Is the doll alive? Fairly creepy horror thriller seems predictable at first – but offers some nice twists. Almost good.

**Boy and His Dog, A** (1978, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\* D:** L.Q. Jones. Starring Don Johnson, Susanne Benton, Jason Robards, voice of Tim McIntire. Terminally weird (and slow) post-apocalyptic cult movie about drifter Johnson who is looking for women in barren landscape ravaged by World War IV. His dog speaks to him telepathically – mostly cynical wisecracks. Then he discovers a secret society, who are in need of young men. The budget was too low to make this convincing, nevertheless this has a cult following.

**Boyhood** (2014, USA) **C-165m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Linklater. Starring Ellar Coltrane, Patricia Arquette, Ethan Hawke, Elijah Smith, Lorelei Linklater. Incredible experiment with mixed results was filmed over a period of 12 years, following the childhood and adolescence of Coltrane, who turns from 8 to 20 in a little less than three hours running time. The story is fictional: His mother Arquette has already separated from weekend-dad Hawke when we meet him for the first time. Then we follow him and his elder sister (the director's daughter) through life in every-day situations. It's always interesting, but some of the scenes are not fully convincing. Also, a little more depth to Arquette's character and what brought about the separation would have helped. Instead we are left with its consequences and find it hard to root for anyone.

**Boys Don't Cry** (1999, USA) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Kimberly Peirce. Starring Hilary Swank, Chloe Sevigny, Peter Sarsgaard, Brendan Sexton III, Alicia Goranson. Hilary Swank won an Oscar for her impressive performance as a 19-year-old girl who wants nothing more than being a boy but encounters barriers because of her social background and poor financial outlook. She finds temporary refuge at Sevigny's family trailer but is unable to camouflage her desires and needs. Compelling psycho drama, well-scripted by director Peirce. Slightly overlong perhaps, but fascinating all the way.

**Boys from Brazil, The** (1978, GBR/USA) **C-125m. \*\*\* D:** Franklin J. Schaffner. Starring Gregory Peck, Laurence Olivier, James Mason, Lilli Palmer, Uta Hagen, Steve Guttenberg, Denholm Elliott, Rosemary Harris, John Dehner, John Rubinstein, Anne Meara, Jeremy Black, Bruno Ganz, Walter Gotell, David Hurst, Wolfgang Preiss, Michael Gough, Joachim Hansen, Guy Dumont (=Sky Dumont), Georg Marischka, Günter Meisner, Prunella Scales, David Brandon. International thriller based on the novel by Ira Levin (ROSEMARY'S BABY). In Paraguay, infamous Nazi doctor Josef Mengele (Peck) is up to no good, as aging Nazi hunter Lieberman (Olivier) is informed in Vienna. Why is he plotting to kill 65-year-old family fathers around the world? Which evil scheme is behind all this? Some uneven stretches,

unbelievable development almost ruin film, whose greatest asset are the brilliant performances, especially Peck's frighteningly intense portrayal of one of the Nazis' most heinous criminals. Futuristic undertones make it further interesting for cult movie buffs. Script by Heywood Gould (ROLLING THUNDER). Solid score by Jerry Goldsmith. Photographed by Henri Decae.

**Brain Damage** (1988, USA) **C-86m.** **\*\*½ D:** Frank Henenlotter. Starring Rick Hearst, Gordon MacDonald, Jennifer Lowry, Theo Barnes, Kevin VanHentenryck. Ambitious horror comedy from the director of BASKET CASE (1982) about a phallus-like parasite that leaves its previous "owners" and enters the life (and brain) of neighbor Hearst. It turns out he provides a special drug for the young man in order to be fed his favorite dish – fresh human brain. Clever satire is prevented from soaring by low production values and self-conscious plotting that is sometimes merely grotesque. Still, an interesting addition to Henenlotter's oeuvre. Some even consider this his best film.

**Braindead** (1992, NZL) **C-102m.** **\*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Timothy Balme, Diana Penalver, Elizabeth Moody, Ian Watkin, Brenda Kendall. This is it: The best splatter movie ever made. When a rat monkey is imported to New Zealand and Balme's mother is bitten accidentally, she turns into a hungry zombie, ... and her son keeps her hidden in the cellar! Soon visitors fall prey to the undead lady. Climactic party scene is a blast. Well-plotted, well-directed film is extremely gory but also incredibly funny. Just when you think 'gross-out' is achieved, it adds an even bigger effect. Films like this just don't get better. Released in the U.S. as DEAD ALIVE (cut down to 85m./97m.).

**Brain Machine** (1977, USA) **C-84m.** **\*\* D:** Joy N. Houck Jr. Starring James Best, Barbara Burgess, Gil Peterson, Gerald McRaney. Tame science-fiction film where the producers asked the screenwriter to keep the budget low: A group of unrelated people (all without any relatives) are hired for several experiments with their minds in a government lab. Needless to say, they ultimately go wrong. Not uninteresting, with okay acting, but still unconvincing and rather boring. Also known as MIND WARP, TIME WARP, GREY MATTER, GRAY MATTER, and THE E-BOX.

**BrainWaves** (1982, USA) **C-77m.** **\*½ D:** Ulli Lommel. Starring Keir Dullea, Suzanna Love, Vera Miles, Ryan Seitz, Tony Curtis. Feeble horror thriller that is much too preoccupied with its plot. Love has a near-fatal accident and her only chance of recovery is through brain transplantation. However, the brain she receives is that of a murdered woman, and Love begins to have visions of the killing. You know something is wrong when the film is draggy even at this running time. Also known as MIND GAMES, SHADOW OF DEATH.

**Brave** (2012, USA) **C-100m.** **\*\*\* D:** Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman. Another winning Pixar feature set in the Scottish highlands, where headstrong Merida refuses to carry on the family tradition and marry someone from another clan. One day she runs away from home and buys a witch's curse to make her mother change her mind. However, it changes her into a bear! And her father is a famed bear slayer! Fantastic, moving, funny animated feature, a winner. Recommended family fare, especially good for mothers and their daughters.

**Braveheart** (1995, USA) **C-177m.** **SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Mel Gibson. Starring Mel Gibson, Sophie Marceau, Patrick McGoohan, Catherine McCormack, Brendan Gleeson, James Cosmo, David O'Hara, Ian Bannen. Epic drama about 13th century Scottish rebel leader William Wallace (Gibson), whose charisma and strategic skills help the united clans to drive the despotic English out of Scotland. Action scenes are very well-made and balanced by passionate drama that allows the viewer to feel and even identify with the national hero. Film's liabilities – overlength and the fact that Gibson can't quite shake off his ironic LETHAL WEAPON image – keep it from being in the same league as Michael Mann's THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS,

which it in many ways resembles. Winner of five Oscars, including Best Film, Best Director and Best Cinematography (John Toll).

**Brazil** (1985, GBR) **C-143m. \*\*\*½ D:** Terry Gilliam. Starring Jonathan Pryce, Robert De Niro, Katherine Helmond, Ian Holm, Bob Hoskins, Michael Palin, Ian Richardson, Peter Vaughan, Kim Greist, Jim Broadbent, Barbara Hicks, Charles McKeown, Terry Gilliam. Outstanding science-fiction satire about desk clerk Pryce, who is a mere number in an overly complicated system of totalitarian bureaucracy. However, he is different. He has dreams of himself being a superhero and a mysterious woman, who suddenly materializes in the form of Helmond, a possible rebel and threat to the system. The hapless clerk sets out to find her and goes on an odyssey through office-block mazes and bleak city alleys. Gilliam's own version of George Orwell's 1984 is a visually astounding film, whose substance is made up of countless small wonders, which hold the unreal plot together. Less a traditional science-fiction film a la *BLADE RUNNER* (1982) – which it ostensibly quotes – but social fiction. Not all of the grotesque, bizarre sequences can escape their 80s origin, but you can't help but marvel at them. Works best as a display of Gilliam's creative world. It brings his *MONTY PYTHON* roots to maturity. Scripted by Gilliam, Tom Stoppard and Charles McKeown. Photographed by Roger Pratt. Excellent score by Michael Kamen. Also shown in edited versions.

**Breakdown** (1997, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jonathan Mostow. Starring Kurt Russell, J. T. Walsh, Kathleen Quinlan, M. C. Gainey. When Russell's car breaks down in the middle of nowhere his wife Quinlan joins a trucker to get help – and never reappears. Russell's frantic search for her brings no results at first, but then it becomes clear that she is held hostage by some ruthless rednecks. Compact, suspenseful thriller is also manipulative and derivative. It all depends on whether you swallow that premise. If you don't you'll wince at every turn and shake your head at the exaggerated finale (like the writer of this review).

**Breakfast at Tiffany's** (1961, USA) **C-115m. \*\*\*½ D:** Blake Edwards. Starring Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Buddy Ebsen, Martni Balsam, José Luis de Villalonga, Mickey Rooney. Cult romance based on Truman Capote's novel about penniless writer Peppard and his growing infatuation with the girl next-door, extrovert but really unhappy playgirl Hepburn. Scores as comedy, drama and romance and delivers a memorable conclusion. Hepburn is exceptionally good. Oscar-winning score by Henry Mancini ('Moon River').

**Breakfast of Champions** (1999, USA) **C-110m. \*\* D:** Alan Rudolph. Starring Bruce Willis, Albert Finney, Nick Nolte, Barbara Hershey, Glenna Headley, Lukas Haas, Omar Epps, Buck Henry, Vicki Lewis, Ken Campbell, Jake Johannsen, Will Patton, Chip Zien, Owen Wilson, Alison Eastwood, Shawnee Smith, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Shapeless satirical comedy about car 'czar' Willis, who's losing his grip on reality and wants to kill himself, but is not the only crazy guy around his palace of a store. Sales manager Nolte and writer Finney are about to lose their marbles, too, and it seems a head-on collision at the finale is inevitable. There's not a single person in the picture who seems to be in their right mind. Creative, to be sure, but too few punchlines really work and film has no real point. Written by Rudolph.

**Breaking and Entering** (2006, GBR/USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Anthony Minghella. Starring Jude Law, Juliette Binoche, Robin Wright Penn, Martin Freeman, Ray Winstone, Vera Farmiga. Depressing drama about London architect Law, whose company's headquarters are constantly burglarized. He follows one of the (teenage) thieves home one day and makes the acquaintance of his mother, a Bosnian immigrant. His own daughter with Penn is in the early stages of autism. A drama with good intentions, but it's difficult (and pointless) to watch so much misery (there's not a single identifiable character). Deadening. Written by director Minghella (*THE ENGLISH PATIENT*).

**Breaking the Waves** (1996, DAN) **C-159m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lars von Trier. Starring Emily Watson, Stellan Skargard, Jean-Marc Barr, Udo Kier. Simple, yet totally extraordinary story of a young Scottish woman, whose marriage to an oil rig worker changes her life, especially after he is paralyzed in a tragic accident. Not easily accessible but completely winning drama is superbly acted by all, but Emily Watson clearly stands out as the God-fearing Bess, whose unconditional love for her husband eventually destroys her life. Sloppy, documentary-like style brings immediacy to the film, though you have to tune in to it at first. Writer-director von Trier (EUROPA, RIGET/THE KINGDOM) is proving himself to be one of the most important contemporary filmmakers.

**Break-Up, The** (2006, USA) **C-106m. \*\* D:** Peyton Reed. Starring Vince Vaughn, Jennifer Aniston, Joey Lauren Adams, Jon Favreau, Jason Bateman, Judy Davis, Justin Long, Ivan Sergei, Ann-Margret, Cole Hauser, Vincent D'Onofrio, Elaine Robinson, Jane Alderman, Peter Billingsley. Aniston and Vaughn have been a couple for two years, when an argument leads to a break-up, which, surprisingly for both, lasts longer than they would have expected. Is it the end of their relationship? Okay romantic comedy drama has a few truths to tell but peters out without a satisfactory conclusion. What is the point of it all? The alternate ending on the DVD is even weaker. Ironically, Vaughn and Aniston were real-life lovers when this was made and broke up mere months after film's release. Vaughn receives co-story credit and also produced.

**Bride of Chucky** (1998, USA) **C-89m. ½ D:** Ronny Yu. Starring Jennifer Tilly, Katherine Heigl, Nick Stabile, John Ritter, Alexis Arquette, Gordon Michael Woolvett, Kathy Najimy, Brad Dourif (voice). Stupid, needless – and endless – sequel to the CHILD'S PLAY series, made by renowned Hong Kong action director Yu, who should have stayed in Asia. The diabolical doll Chucky is revived by Tilly, who is transformed into a puppet herself. Together they try to get an amulet that would enable them to reclaim a human form. An innocent couple taking them along is soon suspected of being responsible for a gruesome killing spree. Plot is rock-bottom and ludicrously suggests another sequel – SON OF CHUCKY?

**Bride of Re-Animator** (1990, USA) **C-99m. \*\* D:** Brian Yuzna. Starring Jeffrey Combs, Bruce Abbott. Weak sequel to the 1985 horror hit RE-ANIMATOR has the doctors collect body parts in order to create new human life. Scenes of comic horror blend into scenes of serious horror, with superb make-up and splatter effects. After a nice start, however, film becomes slower and slower, until the finale, which is not for the squeamish (and missing in part from the R-rated version, which runs 3m. shorter).

**Brides of Dracula, The** (1960, GBR) **C-85m. \*\*\*½ D:** Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Martita Hunt, Yvonne Monlaur, Freda Jackson, David Peel. Some effective sequences highlight this otherwise tame continuation of the Dracula saga, as a young woman unknowingly sets free a vampire. Cushing as the vampire hunter van Helsing tries to stop him. Not really a sequel to the classic 1958 DRACULA, if also made by Hammer films. Recommended to horror fans.

**Brides of Fu Manchu, The** (1966, GBR) **C-85m. \*½ D:** Don Sharp. Starring Christopher Lee, Douglas Wilmer, Heinz Drache, Marie Versini, Howard Marion-Crawford, Tsai Chin, Roger Hanin, Harald Leipnitz, Burt Kwouk. Don Sharp's sequel to the successful (and still popular) FACE OF FU MANCHU (1965) is a big come-down. Lee hams it up as the title character, Wilmer seems as if he was giving an Inspector Clouseau interpretation. Despite swift pace, this is pretentious and unintentionally funny from start to finish. Followed by three more Fu Manchu sequels: VENGEANCE OF FU MANCHU (1967), BLOOD OF FU MANCHU (1968) and FOLTERKAMMER DES DR. FU MANCHU (1969). The latter two were directed by Jess Franco!

In 1980, another Fu Manchu film was produced: THE FIENDISH PLOT OF FU MANCHU, starring Peter Sellers. Original running time: 95m.

**Bride Wars** (2009, USA) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Gary Winick. Starring Kate Hudson, Anne Hathaway, Bryan Greenberg, Chris Pratt, Steve Ovey, Candice Bergen, Bruce Altman. Two childhood friends, who have always dreamed of white weddings happen to get proposed to at the same time, but there's only one available date for the ceremony at the Plaza Hotel. Friendship turns to hatred when they try to sabotage each other's wedding. Doesn't exactly sound great, and it isn't. Even the stars aren't especially likable.

**Bride With White Hair, The** (1993, HKG) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ronny Yu. Starring Brigitte Lin, Leslie Cheung, Francis Ng. Stunning blend of fantasy, horror and love story: A swordsman and a killer fall in love, must contend with their rivaling clans. Awe-inspiring cinematography by Peter Pau won't mean a thing on TV (at least in fullscreen). Popular Hong Kong actioner won several awards and was followed by a sequel that same year. Based on a Chinese myth.

**Bridget Jones's Diary** (2001, GBR/USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sharon Maguire. Starring Renée Zellweger, Colin Firth, Hugh Grant, Jim Broadbent, Gemma Jones, Honor Blackman. Bitter-sweet (with the emphasis on bitter) comedy drama about thirty-ish woman (Zellweger), who is frustrated about being alone and dating the wrong guys. The love affair with her boss Grant briefly gives her back the hope for a better future, but life isn't treating her gently. Helen Fielding cowrote this adaptation of her best-selling novel but film resorts too often to silliness and cannot seem to decide if Bridget's life will make a turn for the better or not (blaming it all on fate). Zellweger is likable in the lead role. Salman Rushdie appears as himself.

**Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason** (2004, GBR/USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Beeban Kidron. Starring Renée Zellweger, Colin Firth, Gemma Jones, Jim Broadbent, Hugh Grant. Sequel to the 2001 hit continues Bridget Jones' diary in a lighter tone, as the thirtysomething is head over in heels in love with Firth, then breaks up with him, only to be challenged by womanizer Grant. Some really funny scenes, but film is weighed down by some not-to-be-believed plot twists, like the Thai prison scenes and the lesbian revelation. Good fun for fans, though.

**Bridge to Terabithia** (2007, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: Gabor Csupo. Starring Josh Hutcherson, AnnaSophia Robb, Zooey Deschanel, Robert Patrick, Bailee Madison, Kate Butler, Devon Woods. Heart-warming adaptation of the Katherine Paterson best-seller about a young boy (Hutcherson) from a working-class background, who finds a first real friend in new neighbor Robb. Together they imagine a magical kingdom where they are prince and princess. An ode to childhood innocence and the power of imagination, this is flawed only by an occasional lack of continuity and the effects of a harsh (but important) plot twist, from which the movie doesn't fully recover.

**Brigade des Mœurs** (1985, FRA) **C-95m. \*\*** D: Max Pécas. Starring Thierry de Carbonnières, Jean-Marc Maurel, Lillemour Jonsson, Bernard Rosselli, Brigitte Lahaie. Extremely violent and profane action film, set in the Parisian underworld of prostitution and gangland warfare. A cop goes on a rampage when his sister is killed. Descends almost to a Lucio-Fulci-level of degradation and violence. For die-hard action addicts.

**Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia** (1974, USA) **C-112m. \*\*\*** D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring Warren Oates, Isela Vega, Gig Young, Robert Webber, Helmut Dantine, Emilio Fernandez, Kris Kristofferson. Fascinating action drama about head hunt for title character, initiated by rich Mexican patriarch, whose daughter is expecting a child from the man. Oates, whose lover knows Garcia's whereabouts, is hired by some killers and embarks on an odyssey through rural Mexico. Slowly paced but engrossing, unpleasant in tone but well-handled by

director Peckinpah. Oates delivers a stand-out performance. At its core, film deals with revenge and how it affects even people who have nothing to do with it. Peckinpah also coscripted.

**Brokedown Palace** (1999, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jonathan Kaplan. Starring Claire Danes, Kate Beckinsale, Bill Pullman, Jacqueline Kim, Lou Diamond Phillips, Paul Walker. Prison drama about two teenage tourists in Thailand, who are caught smuggling marihuana (unknowingly) and brought to a state penitentiary. Their families' desperate attempts to get the out are fruitless until Pullman tackles the case. Not bad, with cute leads, but overly reminiscent of MIDNIGHT EXPRESS (1978) and RETURN TO PARADISE (1998).

**Broken Arrow** (1996, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\* D:** John Woo. Starring John Travolta, Christian Slater, Samantha Mathis, Delroy Lindo, Bob Gunton, Frank Whaley, Howie Long, Vondie Curtis-Hall, Jack Thompson. Action film for action fans, typically energetic for director Woo, but this time with a stupid plot. Travolta plays a maniacal pilot who kidnaps two atomic bombs and threatens to blow them up if his demands are not met. His colleague Slater proves a tougher opponent than in the opening box fight. Pace is fast enough, explosions plenty, but do not think about the plot. Then you might enjoy the going-ons.

**Broken Flowers** (2005, USA/FRA) **C-106m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jim Jarmusch. Starring Bill Murray, Jeffrey Wright, Julie Delpy, Sharon Stone, Jessica Lange, Frances Conroy, Christopher McDonald, Chloe Sevigny, Chris Bauer, Tilda Swinton, Mark Webber. Typically laconic and slow Jim Jarmusch movie about a tired, middle-aged man (Murray) who receives an anonymous letter one day, telling him that he has an 18-year-old son. His neighbour then eggs him on to look for the possible mother and visit some old flames. Road movie with the inimitable Murray is typical Jarmusch fodder, slight, ponderous stuff that grows on you. That's Murray's real son Homer staring at him from the car at the end.

**Brood, The** (1979, CDN) **C-92m. \*\*\*½ D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Oliver Reed, Samantha Eggar, Art Hindle, Cindy Hinds, Nuala Fitzgerald, Susan Hogan. Typically sick Cronenberg stuff: In a remote clinic psychotherapist Reed is cloning child-like monsters who are telepathically linked to Eggar. It takes a lot of tolerance to accept this plot (many critics dumped on this horror film when it was released), but apart from that, it's another show of Cronenberg's talents. Direction creates good suspense, the acting is not bad, and Howard Shore's score is fine. The filmmaker's followers should enjoy this one (I did).

**Brother Bear** (2003, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Aaron Blaise, Bob (Robert) Walker. Starring (the voices of) Joaquin Phoenix, Jeremy Suarez, Jason Raize, Rick Moranis, Dave Thomas, D.B. Sweeney, Joan Copeland, Michael Clarke Duncan, Harold Gould. First-rate Disney animation takes an old legend from a different culture (much like MULAN) and fashions a terrific adventure story. Adolescent warrior Phoenix sees his brother killed by a bear, then kills it in revenge. He is then transformed into a bear and must learn to see life from a different perspective. Terrific animation (doing without CGI wizardry) and a storyline that thrills make this fine family fare. Unfortunately lost out to less thoughtful, more hip Pixar feature FINDING NEMO (2003) at the Oscars. Aspect ratio changes to widescreen after some 20 minutes.

**Brother Bear 2** (2006, USA) **C-74m. \*\*\* D:** Benjamin Gluck. Starring (the voices of) Patrick Dempsey, Mandy Moore, Benjamin Bryan, Michael Clarke Duncan, Catherine O'Hara, Rick Moranis, Jim Cummings, Wanda Sykes, Jake Weber. Remarkably good video sequel to the 2003 Disney hit has Kenai (Dempsey) and his bear brother (Bryan) travel to a waterfall place with a childhood friend so that she can burn the amulet that has tied them together as kids (in order to be able to marry). Warm-hearted tale of friendship and love, very well-animated, almost as good as the original. Nice songs by Melissa Etheridge.

**Brothers Grimm, The** (2005, GBR/USA/CZE) **C-118m.** \*½ D: Terry Gilliam. Starring Matt Damon, Heath Ledger, Lena Headey, Peter Stormare, Jonathan Pryce, Laura Greenwood, Monica Bellucci. Terry Gilliam's first film since the disastrous FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (1998) is almost as bad, with Damon and Ledger playing the title characters, who at first make a living as phony exorcists in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany, then get hired/forced by nobleman Pryce to find out what made 10 innocent children disappear in the nearby woods. Inexplicably, this fantasy/horror concoction (with elements from the Grimm fairy tales) is meshed with inane comedy, which almost makes this a spoof, but of what? Further downed by use of all-too-obvious digital effects. You never properly find your way into the story, only the atmosphere and settings intermittently catch your attention. The production was put on hold in 2004, so Gilliam made TIDELAND (2005) in between.

**Bruce Almighty** (2003, USA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Tom Shadyac. Starring Jim Carrey, Morgan Freeman, Jennifer Aniston, Philip Baker Hall, Catherine Bell, Lisa Ann Walter, Steven Carell, Nora Dunn, Sally Kirkland, Tony Bennett. Typical Carrey comedy features him as a newscaster whose life is going down the drain. Just when he is about to throw it all away, God (Freeman) approaches him and gives him the gift of changing and influencing everything apart from the human will. Will he use it for his own purposes or to help others? Preposterous in the first half, improves later, but is no more than a recycled Hollywood concoction. Carrey's fans should get what they expect.

**Bruce Lee Fights Back From The Grave** (1976, HGK) **C-84m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Lee Doo-Yong. Starring Bruce Lee, Deborah Chaplin (=Deborah Dutch), Hwang Jang Lee, Philip Kennedy. A young philosophical fighter (obviously modeled after the legendary Bruce Lee himself) arrives in the States to meet a friend but must learn that he has committed suicide. He befriends a woman who might know more. Another film exploiting the real Bruce Lee's image, starts okay but gets stuck in a love story. Some sources credit Umberto Lenzi with the direction. Alternative title: THE STRANGER.

**Bruiser** (2000, USA/FRA/CDN) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: George A. Romero. Starring Jason Flemyng, Peter Stormare, Leslie Hope, Nina Garbiras, Andrew Tarbet, Tom Atkins, Jonathan Higgins. Strange, unconventional, strangely unsettling thriller drama about thirty-something Flemyng, who's in an identity crisis. He works for a fashion magazine (called Bruiser), and when he finds out that his wife is cheating on him with his boss, ego-maniacal Stormare, he cracks and takes on the identity (and mask) of a killer, an avenging angel. Thoughtful script, moody direction by Romero, whole film is undermined in shrill punk-rock finale (that serves as an excuse to feature horror rock-band The Misfits) which stands in jarring contrast to the stoic, intelligent rest of the movie. Romero's first film in seven years shows that he's still able to capture the audience, but this is rather for his fans (but *not* those of his zombie horror movies).

**Brujas de Zugarramundi, Las** (2013, SPA/FRA) **C-114m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Alex de la Iglesia. Starring Hugo Silva, Mario Casas, Pepón Nieto, Carolina Bang, Terele Pavez, Carmen Maura. Fast-paced horror comedy along the lines of FROM DUSK TILL DAWN (1996). Two bank robbers take it on the lam (with a little boy, the taxi driver and another hostage in tow) and end up in a community on the French-Spanish border which is home to a witches coven. Filmed with gusto and a proper budget, this evolves into quite an extravaganza. Cult movie fans should love this. English title: WITCHING & BITCHING.

**Brutti, Sporchi e Cattivi** (1976, ITA) **C-115m.** \*\*½ D: Ettore Scola. Starring Nino Manfredi, Maria Luisa Santelli, Maria Bosco, Giselda Castrini. Acerbic satire on Italian society symbolized by a family living in a Roman slum. The patriarch Manfredi keeps hiding the insurance money he got after losing his left eye, the rest of his family (a big one) tries to

wrest it from him. Pretty crazy film on debauchery and corruption of morals, a very Italian film, which will not appeal to everyone. Won Best Director at Cannes. English titles: DOWN AND DIRTY, and UGLY, DIRTY AND BAD.

**Bubba Ho-Tep** (2002, USA) **C-92m**. \*\*½ D: Don Coscarelli. Starring Bruce Campbell, Ossie Davis, Ella Joyce, Heidi Marnhout, Bob Ivy, Edith Jefferson, Reggie Bannister. In a Texas retirement home, a guy who thinks he's Elvis Presley (Campbell) and a black (!) man who says he's JFK (Davis) are faced with an Egyptian mummy that prowls the hallways at night. They must gather their waning strengths and wits to battle the monster. Funny idea (from a short story by Joe Lansdale), good performances, but execution is heavy-handed and slow, like its main characters. Still, enjoyed acclaim with many fans and critics.

**Bucket of Blood, A** (1959, USA) **B&W-66m**. \*\*½ D: Roger Corman. Starring Dick Miller, Barboura Morris, Anotny Carbone, Julian Burton, Ed Nelson. Roger Corman classic about a nerdy busboy and would-be artist Miller, who accidentally kills a cat and makes a clay sculpture with it. When the local art scene finds his work excellent, he moves on to bigger things – humans. Interesting to watch at times, but as a horror film it is much too tame and unexciting. Captures the spirit of the Beat Generation, but that might mean nothing to you. Some people consider this a spoof of HOUSE OF WAX (1953).

**Bug** (1975, USA) **C-99m**. \*\* D: Jeannot Szwarc. Starring Bradford Dillman, Joanna Miles, Richard Gilliland, Jamie Smith-Jackson, Alan Fudge. Patty McCormack, William Castle. Eco-horror film about bugs which can set things (and people) on fire, threatening an entire village. Thanks heavens there's specialist Dillman around. Solidly made thriller moves – like its monsters – at a slow pace and is rather unpleasant. Worth a look for buffs, though. Based on the novel *The Hephaestus Plague* by Thomas Page. Producer, co-writer Castle's last movie.

**Bug's Life, A** (1998, USA) **C-97m**. \*\* D: John Lasseter. Computer-animated cartoon feature about the life of an ant colony dwelling on an island with the constant threat of evil grasshoppers, which ask for a sacrifice (food) every now and then. A brave ant sets out to find warriors in the city, who would take up the challenge of fighting the grasshoppers. He returns with some circus artists that have no idea what they are getting themselves into. Irritating, hectic, headache-inducing film features violent scenes that are sure to scare small kids to death. Quibbles aside, the direction is good and some of the animation is stunning. If you want your children to spend an endearing 90 minutes with some insects, make them watch ANTZ or JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH (or MICROCOSME, as a documentary alternative).

**Buio Omega** (1979, ITA) **C-93m**. ½ D: Joe D'Amato. Starring Kieran Canter, Cinzia Monreale, Franca Stoppi, Sam Modesto. Would-be horror drama about rich orphan Canter, who is devastated when his fiancée dies of a voodoo curse and goes on to stuff her. More murders are to follow. Slow, poor horror movie with some gross-out gore. Highly regarded among D'Amato's followers (mainly because of some softer tones in the film). Absolutely dreadful for others. Score by Goblin is okay. English titles: BLUE HOLOCAUST, BEYOND THE DARKNESS, BURIED ALIVE and THE FINAL DARKNESS.

**Bullet in the Head** (1990, HGK) **C-130m**. \*\*\*½ D: John Woo. Starring Tony Leung, Jacky Cheung, Waise Lee, Simon Yam, Fennie Yuen, Yolinda Yam, John Woo. Absolutely exhausting action melodrama, director Woo's follow-up to his masterpiece THE KILLER (1989). In 1967 Hong Kong, three friends are forced to flee to Vietnam and plan to make their fortune there. However, the country is war-torn and their friendship is soon put to a test. One of the most emotionally intense movies in film history, this marks a very personal film in Woo's oeuvre. The drama and the action (functioning as intensifier) remain at such a high pitch that the

plot is pushed into the background and it gets to be too much at times. Still, an outstanding achievement, a must for followers of the director, who compared the making of this to that of Francis Ford Coppola's APOCALYPSE NOW (1979). Woo also cowrote, edited and produced the picture. Watch out for edited prints. Original title: DIE XUE JIE TOU.

**Bullitt** (1968, USA) **C-114m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Yates. Starring Steve McQueen, Robert Vaughn, Jacqueline Bisset, Don Gordon, Simon Oakland, Norman Fell, Robert Duvall. Classic cop drama about straight-forward police lieutenant Bullitt (McQueen), who is assigned to protect a crucial witness. When things go wrong, big-shot Vaughn is trying to put pressure on him, but Bullitt has his own way of dealing with the situation. It's unfair and probably wrong to reduce this movie to its (good) San Francisco Ford Mustang car chase sequence and Lalo Schifrin's excellent score; it's much more than that. Detailed depiction of police procedures add a lot of realism and thought to the events. The movie is deliberately paced and carried all the way by the coolness and charisma of its star. A forerunner to early 70s cop thrillers like DIRTY HARRY and THE FRENCH CONNECTION. Oscar winner for Best Editing.

**Bulshinjok** (2009, KOR) **C-112m. \*\*½** D: Lee Yong-Joo. Starring Jang Young-nam, Kim Bo-yeon, Lee Chang-jik, Moon Hie-kyung. Partly successful horror chiller set in an apartment house. A young woman returns to her mother and her sister's apartment and finds that her sister has disappeared and her mother has turned into a religious fanatic. Then people start dying around them. In flashbacks we are (rather confusingly) told a story of possession, a shaman and a talisman. Some nice directorial touches provide some eeriness, although film is a bit too slow and depressing for my taste. English titles: POSSESSION, LIVING DEATH.

**Bunny Lake Is Missing** (1965, GBR) **B&W-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Otto Preminger. Starring Laurence Olivier, Carol Lynley, Keir Dullea, Martita Hunt, Anna Massey, Clive Revill, The Zombies, Adrienne Corri. Intriguing mystery about American Lynley, who has just moved to England when her young daughter goes missing. A search is initiated, but soon the detective on the case (Olivier) starts having doubts about the woman. Does the girl even exist? Slow pace, detached mood offset by good performances and chilling finale. Based on the novel by Marryam Modell. Referenced (if not remade) in FLIGHTPLAN (2005).

**Buona Notte, Avvocato!** (1955, ITA) **70m. \*\*\*** D: Giorgio Bianchi. Starring Alberto Sordi, Giulietta Masina, Mara Berni, Andrea Checchi, Tina Pica. Engagingly performed comedy about lawyer Sordi who is happy when wife Masina leaves the city for a few days, because he wants to enjoy himself (going out with other women). When a lascivious blonde steals into his appartement, claiming to be on the run from her jealous husband, he thinks his time has come. In the morning, however, she is gone, along with 200,000 Lire. Not always on target but funny and likeable. Screenplay by Ettore Scola, Alberto Sordi and three others. Nice black-and-white cinematography by Corrado Bartoloni and Mario Bava.

**Buon Funerale, Amigo ... Sartana Paga!** (1970, ITA/SPA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anthony Ascot (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring Gianni Garko, Daniela Giordano, Helga Liné, Franco Ressel, George Wang, Roberto Dell'Acqua. Sort-of sequel to SONO SARTANA, IL VOSTRO BECCHINO (1969) about Garko's title character, who witnesses the killing of a family just before he can buy their land. In the nearby town he seeks out those responsible. Director Carnimeo has some funny ideas, and plot is less of a drag this time. Above-average spaghetti western fare with a Morricone copycat score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: A PRESENT FOR YOU, AMIGO... A COFFIN FROM SARTANA, GUNSLINGER, STRANGER'S GOLD and HAVE A GOOD FUNERAL, MY FRIEND... SARTANA WILL PAY.

**Buono, il Brutto, il Cattivo, Il** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-178m. SCOPE\*\*\*½** D: Sergio Leone. Starring Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef, Eli Wallach, Aldo Giuffrè, Luigi Pistilli, Rada Rassimov, Aldo Sambrell, Mario Brega, Frank Brana, Romano Puppo. Conclusion of Leone's DOLLARI trilogy

is the ultimate cult western, if not cult movie: Lonesome cowboy Eastwood, Mexican bandit Wallach and cunning villain Van Cleef are contending for a gold loot, whose whereabouts are only partially known to them. Amid the confusions of Civil War, each of them tries to get the last laugh on the others. Probably the most influential western, cool, funny, with some rich historic flavor and unforgettable performances (especially Wallach's). Ennio Morricone's superbly orchestrated score also features moviedom's most often-quoted theme tune. Film's only fault is overlength. Superb cinematography by Tonino delli Colli. Director Leone perfected his style and storytelling in the haunting follow-up C'ERA UNA VOLTA IL WEST (1969). Cut to 161m. for foreign release, restored to 178m. for 2003 DVD re-release (with Eastwood and Wallach dubbing their lines). English title: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY.

**Buque Maldito, El** (1974, SPA) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Amando de Ossorio. Starring Maria Perschy, Jack Taylor, Carlos Lemos, Barbara Rey, Manuel de Blas, Blanca Estrada, Margarita Merino. Third entry into the horror film series (following EL ATAQUE DE LOS MUERTES SIN OJOS) is set on a ghost ship, where the Templar Knights are attacking a group of people looking for two lost models. Rich atmosphere makes this one acceptable for fans, although there is only one gore scene. English title: HORROR OF THE ZOMBIES. Followed by LA NOCHE DE LAS GAVIOTAS.

**Buried** (2010, USA/SPA/FRA) **C-95m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Rodrigo Cortes. Starring Ryan Reynolds, voices of Jose Luis Garcia Perez, Robert Paterson, Stephen Tobolowsky, Samantha Mathis. An American civilian in Iraq wakes up locked into a box, a wooden coffin it turns out. He has no memory of how he got there, but his convoy was attacked. His kidnapper has left him a phone and a few other things... is there a way out? Can he be found in time? Quite daring concept for a movie (almost exclusively plays inside the box), creates some suspense, but cannot fully maintain excitement.

**Buried Alive** (1990, USA/SAF) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Gérard Kikoine. Starring Robert Vaughn, Karen Witter, Donald Pleasence, John Carradine, Nia Long, Ginger Lynn Allen. Interesting horror thriller based on motifs of stories by Edgar Allen Poe. Vaughn runs a school for girls, and new teacher Witter soon starts to be suspicious when students disappear without a trace. It turns out they end up in the cellar – behind a wall. Well-directed, with some effective scenes of horror, but story is too uninvolved and lacks suspense. Not bad. John Carradine's last film appearance. Filmed in South Africa.

**Burn After Reading** (2008, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Joel and Ethan Coen. Starring George Clooney, Frances McDormand, Brad Pitt, John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Richard Jenkins, Elizabeth Marvel, David Rasche, J.K. Simmons, Dermot Mulroney. Fresh from their Oscar-winning triumph NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN (2007) the Coens deliver a quirky comedy about a retired CIA man (Malkovich), whose memoir draft is lost in a fitness studio, where two opportunists (unhappy McDormand and brainless Pitt) find it and intend to cash in on it. The lives of several other characters intertwine with theirs in this farcical, original take on the Coen's usual crook formula. Nothing great, but undeniably funny, with Pitt getting the best lines. Other stars are fun, too. Score by Carter Burwell, photography by Emmanuel Lubezki.

**Burning, The** (1981, USA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Tony Maylam. Starring Brian Matthews, Leah Ayres, Brian Backer, Larry Joshua, Jason Alexander, Fisher Stevens, Holly Hunter. Typical slasher movie, whose plot seems directly copied from FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup>. Summer campers are killed one by one by a mad janitor, who was burnt severely many years back. Endless stretches of teen camp life, and some quite effective scenes (with make-up effects by Tom Savini). Stupid flick, only for genre addicts. Hunter's film debut. Edited by Jack Sholder (THE HIDDEN).

**Burnt Offerings** (1976, USA) **C-116m.** \*½ D: Dan Curtis. Starring Karen Black, Oliver Reed, Burgess Meredith, Eileen Heckart, Lee Montgomery, Dub Taylor, Bette Davis, Joseph Riley. Endless haunted-house thriller about parents Reed and Black, their son Montgomery and aunt Davis, who move into a beautiful house in the countryside and are strangely affected by it (SHINING-like). Very slowly-paced, hardly suspenseful, strictly by-the-numbers chiller isn't chilling. Good cast wasted. Based on the novel by Robert Marasco.

**Burû Kurisumasu** (1978, JAP) **C-133m.** \*\* D: Kihachi Okamoto. Starring Hiroshi Katsuno, Keiko Takeshita, Elji Okada, Kaoru Yachigusa. Quite unique science-fiction drama must be seen to be believed. Story about a strange alien invasion that turns some people's blood blue is told in semi-documentary fashion, without actually showing aliens or their spaceships. Actually, this is more a soapy melodrama than sci-fi, as it focuses (endlessly) on a journalist investigating the phenomenon and a couple in love. Obscure, little-seen film has some unintentionally funny scenes. The late 70s flair and international locations make it interesting for cult movie buffs, others beware. It even has a catchy title tune! English titles: BLOOD TYPE: BLUE, BLUE CHRISTMAS, and UFO BLUE CHRISTMAS.

**Burying the Ex** (2014, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Joe Dante. Starring Anton Yelchin, Ashley Greene, Alexandra Daddario, Oliver Cooper. Minor horror comedy about Yelchin, whose possessive, eco-obsessed girlfriend is getting too much for him. Just when he wants to quit their relationship, she is run over by a bus and killed. Problem solved? Nope, she returns from the dead to haunt him. Can he keep his super-hot new love interest Daddario from meeting her? Nice references to horror classics and little-known gems, but script is second-rate.

**Busanhaeng** (2016, KOR) **C-118m.** \*\*\* D: Yeon Sang-ho. Starring Gong Yoo, Kim Soo-an, Jeong Yu-mi, Ma Dong-seok, Choi Woo-sik, Ahn So-hee. Kim Eui-sung. Zombie thriller about broker Gong, who picks up his nearly estranged daughter and intends to travel to Busan, not knowing that a zombie apocalypse is about to happen. With a group of travellers on board a train, he defends himself against the undead, but they are overrunning everything. Lacks conviction at the beginning and has some shoddy performances as well, but before half-way through film hits its stride and becomes exciting. Also notable for its rather pessimistic tone and an unusually emotional script. The director made the animated horror film SEOUL STATION that same year, which functions as a prequel to this one. English title: TRAIN TO BUSAN.

**Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** (1969, USA) **C-112m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: George Roy Hill. Starring Paul Newman, Robert Redford, Katharine Ross, Strother Martin, Henry Jones, Jeff Corey, George Furth, Cloris Leachman, Ted Cassidy, Kenneth Mars, Christopher Lloyd, Sam Elliott. Melancholy western drama about outlaws Newman and Redford, who are continually on the run from the law. Sensitively handled by director Hill (THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP), an ironic view of the decline of the Wild West. Oscar-winner for cinematography, score, song ('Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head') and screenplay. Followed by a prequel in 1979 (BUTCH AND SUNDANCE: THE EARLY YEARS).

**Butcher Boy, The** (1997, USA/EIR) **C-110m.** \*\*\* D: Neil Jordan. Starring Stephen Rea, Fiona Shaw, Eamonn Owens, Alan Boyle, Andrew Fullerton, Aisling O'Sullivan, Ian Hart, Sinéad O'Connor, Milo O'Shea, Patrick McCabe. Red-haired Owens grows up in a small idyllic Irish town in the 1960s, but his childhood is not a happy one. He is left alone by his parents, who are both unable to cope with life. The boy reacts with extroversion and plagues the population with mean pranks, some of which are not harmless at all. Original point-of-view makes drama seem less depressive than it is. Director Jordan and Patrick McCabe adapted McCabe's novel. Production design by Anthony Pratt and Adrian Biddle's photography are first-rate. Not for every taste, but definitely worth watching.

**Butterfly** (1981, USA/CDN) **C-108m.** \*\* D: Matt Cimber. Starring Stacy Keach, Pia Zadora, Orson Welles, Lois Nettleton, Edward Albert, James Franciscus, Stuart Whitman, June Lockhart, Ed McMahon, Paul Hampton, George 'Buck' Flower. Keach plays a loner, who guards an abandoned silver mine in the Nevada desert. One day Lolita Zadora arrives and tries to seduce him – even though she is supposed to be his daughter! Will their relationship go unnoticed? Trivial melodrama, based on the novel by James M. Cain. Zadora's looks, Welles' performance as a judge make forgettable film worthwhile. Inauspicious score by Ennio Morricone.

**Butterfly Effect, The** (2004, USA) **C-120m.** \*\*\* D: Eric Bress, J. Mackye Gruber. Starring Ashton Kutcher, Melora Walters, Amy Smart, Elden Henson, William Lee Scott, Eric Stoltz. As a child and teen Kutcher kept suffering from strange black-outs, and with a history of madness in his family, he and his mother fear for the worst. Later, as a psychology student he discovers that he can lapse back into the black-outs by reading his old journals – and thereby change the past and present! Not always credible and sometimes downright silly, but this stylish thriller with horror and sci-fi touches keeps you watching until the end. A definite cult candidate, like the sort-of similar *MEMENTO* (2000). Also shown at 113m. with a different ending.

**Butterfly Kiss** (1994, GBR) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Winterbottom. Starring Amanda Plummer, Saskia Reeves, Paul Bown, Freda Dowie, Fine Time Fontayne, Des McAleer, Ricky Tomlinson. Psycho drama about a mentally disturbed woman (Plummer) who moves from one gas station to the next looking for her imaginary girlfriend. Often her encounters end in murder. Naive, easily impressionable Reeves follows her around, and a strange relationship between the two develops. Well-acted (especially by Plummer, who turns in an impressive, brave performance), but there's not really enough plot to make this work. Plummer's past is not at all explored, which is dangerous in so far as it could be read as 'she's just crazy'. With a little more psychology, the film would have been compelling. Good soundtrack features The Cranberries with several songs from their hit album *No Need to Argue*.

**Butterfly Murders, The** (1979, HGK) **C-88m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Tsui Hark. Starring Lau Siu-Ming, Michelle Mee, Wong Shu Tong, Zhang Guozhu, Chen Qiqi. Hong Kong icon Tsui Hark's first film is a plodding thriller about hordes of butterflies who kill(!) everyone in the way. Several characters try to solve the mystery in a subterranean dungeon. Plot is so complicated that entire film is almost incomprehensible. Very, very strange. For Hark completists and horror movie buffs. Maybe Hark saw Hitchcock's *THE BIRDS* prior to filming this?

**Butterfly Room, The** (2012, USA/ITA) **C-87m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jonathan Zarantonello. Starring Barbara Steele, Ray Wise, Erica Leerhsen, Heather Langenkamp, Camille Keaton, P.J. Soles, Adrienne King, Joe Dante. An elderly lady (Steele) lives in apartment house with her butterfly collection and shows an uncanny interest in little girls. Single mother Leerhsen entrusts her with her daughter, and Steele's psychosis seems to surface. Interesting psycho horror film features a subdued, convincing Steele in one of only a handful of theatrical performances since her heyday in the 1960s (Bava's *LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO*) and 1970s. Film's plot (based on the director's own novel) is not always on target, might even be considered confusing. Still, an intriguing view for cult movie fans.

**Byôsoku 5 Senchimêtoru** (2007, JAP) **C-63m.** \*\*\*\* D: Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Kenji Mizuhashi, Yoshimi Kondou, Satomi Hanamura, Ayaka Onoue. Director Makoto Shinkai outdoes himself with this visual poem about unfulfilled love. In three short segments we are told the story of a boy and a girl, who fall in love as 13-year-olds but are transferred to different schools. In the first chapter they try to meet at a train station in a cold and snowy winter night. In the second chapter, set a few years later, another girl is infatuated with the

boy but too afraid to confess her love. In the last segment, as grown-ups, they still haven't forgotten each other... Makoto Shintai dubs this „A chain of short stories about their distance“, to the viewer it's pure bliss. Absolutely stunning animation will make you surrender to the heart-rending story, even at only 63m. running time, this stands as one of the best animated features of the decade. Beautiful score by Tenmon.

**Byzantium** (2012, GBR/USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Neil Jordan. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Gemma Arterton, Sam Riley, Caleb Landry Jones, Warren Brown, Daniel Mays, Uri Gavriel. Moody, stylish vampire drama about vampires Arterton and Ronan, mother and daughter posing as sisters in contemporary England. They are chased by their own kin, and manage to seek refuge in an old hotel in a British coastal town. Film focuses on Ronan's wish but inability to tell her story to others. Sensitively handled by the director of INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE (1994), this is very much like it, with fine performances and an excellent score (by Javier Navarrete). Some slow stretches, but still highly recommended. Based on the play by Moira Buffini.

**Cabin in the Woods, The** (2012, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Drew Goddard. Starring Kristen Connolly, Chris Hemsworth, Sigourney Weaver. The eponymous edifice makes a return to the horror movie genre, this time with a twist. Five vacationers are unaware that their weekend trip happens under surveillance. What seems like a rehash of FRIDAY THE 13TH (1980) and THE EVIL DEAD (1982) is clearly sci-fi: Somebody is watching - and betting on - the teens' every move and can manipulate everything. It turns out that their programmed demise is a sacrifice to something beyond evil. Highly touted horror shocker gives away its twist right at the beginning, then stays totally predictable. Lots of blood and shocks, but script is not clever at all. Overrated.

**Cacciatore 2** (1980, ITA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Anthony M. Dawson. Starring David Warbeck, Tisa Farrow, John Steiner. Warbeck takes up a secret mission in Vietnam and stumbles upon journalist Farrow in the jungle, who helps him accomplish it. Pretty trivial and exploitative (some typically Italian gore scenes), war action remains watchable nevertheless. English title: THE LAST HUNTER.

**Cadáver de Anna Fritz, El** (2015, SPA) **C-71m. \*\* D:** Hèctor Hernández Vicens. Starring Alba Ribas, Cristian Valencia, Alberto Carbó. Bernat Saumell. Horror thriller about two young men, who visit their friend, a morgue attendant, one night. When they learn that he is guarding the fresh corpse of a famous young actress, their curiosity leads them to sexually abuse the dead body... when suddenly she comes back to life. This premise might have been a good idea, but film goes nowhere from there. At points you wonder whether it's supposed to be a comedy. Even at this running time, it's quite tiring. English title: THE CORPSE OF ANNA FRITZ.

**Cadaveri Eccellenti** (1976, ITA/FRA) **C-120m. \*\*\* D:** Francesco Rosi. Starring Lino Ventura, Tino Carraro, Marcel Bozzuffi, Max von Sydow, Charles Vanel, Fernando Rey, Luigi Pistilli, Florestano Vancini. Intelligent political drama typecasts Ventura as a hardened cop, who investigates the killing of several judges, all set against the backdrop of a burgeoning political revolution. Slow-going but richly textured drama is superbly acted, especially by von Sydow. Similar to I... COMME ICARE, only not as technically perfect. Based on the novel by Leonardo Sciascia (A CIASCUNO IL SUO). Cowritten by director Rosi. English titles: THE CONTEXT and ILLUSTRIOUS CORPSES.

**Caged Heat** (1974, USA) **C-83m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jonathan Demme. Starring Erica Gavin, Donald Heitzer, Mike Shack, Gary Goetzman, Juanita Brown, Barbara Steele, George Armitage. Typical (apart from the setting) women-in-chains movie about a group of inmates, who decide to bust out – once and for all. Enough action, nudity to please fans. Steele is fun as a

wheelchair-bound warden. Upbeat ending makes the movie. Maverick director Demme's first film, produced by Roger Corman. That's director George Armitage (GROSSE POINT BLANK) and his family in the Volvo the gang steals. Second project (after BADLANDS) for renowned cinematographer Tak Fujimoto. Followed by an in-name-only sequel twenty years later!

**Cake** (2005, USA) **C-94m**. \*\* D: Nisha Ganatra. Starring Heather Graham, David Sutcliffe, Taye Diggs, Sandra Oh, Keram Malicki-Sánchez, Cheryl Hines, Nisha Ganatra. Light-weight comedy about thrill-seeking nymphomaniac Graham, whose life takes a turn when she must take over her ill father's wedding magazine. Predictable stuff, though Graham (also executive producer) is cute to watch.

**Caligola: La Storia Mai Raccontata** (1981, ITA) **C-91m**. \*\* D: David Hills (=Joe D'Amato). Starring David Brandon, Laura Gemser, Oliver Finch, Michele Soavi, Gabriele Tinti. Sex drama (if there is such a thing) about the exploits of notorious Roman emperor Caligola (or Caligula), whose debaucheries and slaughterings are depicted here in no-holds-barred fashion. Surprisingly watchable for a D'Amato movie... although there is a 109m. Italian version that is said to contain hardcore footage and even more violence. Review refers to the 91m. unrated version released in the U.S. Brandon is good in the title role, so is the score. D'Amato also photographed and scripted (with George Eastman). Alternative titles: EMPEROR CALIGULA (with various subtitles) and CALIGULA II: THE UNTOLD STORY.

**Call, The** (2013, USA) **C-94m**. \*\*\* D: Brad Anderson. Starring Halle Berry, Abigail Breslin, Morris Chestnut, Michael Eklund. Pulse-pounding thriller about 911 operator Berry, who fouls things up one day when she calls back a victim in hiding thus giving her away to the criminal. Then she gets a chance at redemption when young Breslin is abducted from a mall parking lot and the girl manages to call 911 on a non-traceable prepaid phone from the trunk of the kidnapper's car. Becomes unlikely and formulaic towards the end, but all in all mostly keeps you on the edge of your seat. From the director of THE MACHINIST.

**Callejón, El** (2011, SPA/COL) **C-76m**. \*\*\* D: Antonio Trashorras. Starring Ana de Armas, Diego Cadavid, Leonor Varela, Judith Diakhate, Alfonso Rojas. Unhappy hotel maid de Armas finally gets a chance to make it in a dance contest, when the night before the finale she meets attractive Cadavid, who unfortunately turns out to be a killer. A bit uneven horror film is somewhere between an episode for a horror anthology and a stand-alone feature, but direction, score and sexy de Armas (KNOCK KNOCK) make the difference. Finale is best part. Writer-director Trashorras cowrote Guillermo del Toro's EL ESPINAZO DEL DIABLO (2001). English title: BLIND ALLEY.

**Calling, The** (2000, USA/GER) **C-89m**. Ⓜ D: Richard Caesar. Starring Laura Harris, Richard Lintern, Alice Krige, Nick Brimble, Rachel Shelley. In a hospital Harris tells a priest how she married rich Lintern, became pregnant, bore his child and slowly realized that it was actually the anti-christ she was raising. Pretentious, derivative chiller with many absurd plot twists. Well-photographed but about as intelligent as Rosamunde Pilcher adaptations. The Germans were never meant to make horror films.

**Caltiki – il Mostro Immortale** (1959, ITA/USA) **B&W-75m**. \*\*½ D: Robert Hamton (=Riccardo Freda). Starring John Merivale, Didi Perego, Gérard Herter, Daniela Rocca, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Daniele Vargas, Arturo Dominici. Quite atmospheric horror set in Mexico, where an expedition team is repeatedly attacked by a monster identified as an old Mayan goddess. They bring home part of the monster's tissue – a terrible mistake. Direction succeeds in imitating U.S. monster horrors of the 1950s, but generally film can't escape its B-movie origins. For buffs. Cinematographer Mario Bava completed the film sans credit and

also created the good, gooey special effects, remarkably violent for the time. English title: CALTIKI, THE IMMORTAL MONSTER.

**Calvaire** (2004, BEL/FRA/LUX) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Fabrice Du Welz. Starring Lauren Lucas, Brigitte Lahaie, Jackie Berroyer, Philippe Nahon. Unrelenting, unpleasant horror drama about a traveling chansonnier, whose van breaks down in the middle of nowhere just days before Christmas. He is taken in by weird innkeeper Berroyer, who decides he has found a perfect stand-in for his runaway wife. Ugly thriller with surreal touches is unrelenting once it started the degradation and carnage. Sadly, there's also little suspense, so watching this becomes quite a chore, despite similarities to DELIVERANCE (1972). Director Du Welz followed this with VINYAN (2008).

**Cameraman: The Life and Work of Jack Cardiff** (2010, GBR) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Craig McCall. Featuring Jack Cardiff, Martin Scorsese, Richard Fleischer, Kirk Douglas, Lauren Bacall, Charlton Heston, Kim Hunter, John Mills, Freddie Francis, Thelma Schoonmaker. Documentary about one of the best cinematographers of the 20th century chronicles his career from 1918 (as an extra) to the mid-2000s. Ample time is dedicated to his stories, some admirers and collaborators contribute insights as well. Some important film clips are shown, most notably his work for Pressburger/Powell. An interesting portrait of a bold and innovative, yet modest man, who died in 2009, aged 94.

**Camorra** (1972, ITA) **C-88m. \*½** D: Pasquale Squitieri. Starring Fabio Testi, Jean Seberg, Raymond Pellegrin, Charles Vanel, Germana Canacina, Paul Müller. Mafia movie chronicling the rise of criminal Testi, who uses his wits and fists to become a respected mafioso. It's just a matter of time until he tries to overthrow his boss. Despite stars Testi and Seberg, this lumbering drama is a complete waste of time, with Squitieri's direction downright irritating at some points. See also CORLEONE (1977).

**Campagna del Inferno, La** (1973, SPA/FRA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Claudio Guerin. Starring Renaud Verley, Viveca Lindfors, Alfredo Mayo, Maribel Martín, Christina Betzner (=von Blanc). A young man is released from a psychiatric clinic on probation and returns to the country house of his aunt and her three daughters. Is he going there for revenge? If yes, why? Slowly-paced, vague but none too interesting, mystery drama suffers mostly from Verley's non-performance. Most intriguing fact is that director Guerin fell to his death from the featured bell tower on the last day of shooting. The film was completed by Juan Antonio Bardem. Also known as THE BELLS, and A BELL FROM HELL.

**Canal, The** (2014, EIR) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Ivan Kavanagh. Starring Antonia Campbell-Hughes, Rupert Evans, Steve Oram, Kelly Byrne. Unsettling horror mystery about a film archivist, whose life is falling apart. His wife is cheating on him, then is found dead in the nearby canal. He starts having frightening visions of a man haunting him, and finds out that the house they live in may have been a murder site. Rather difficult to watch due to creepy, even disturbing set-pieces. Not for every taste, often hard to watch, but quite an accomplishment. Written by the director.

**Candy** (1968, USA/ITA/FRA) **C-124m. \*\*½** D: Christian Marquand. Starring Ewa Aulin, John Astin, Richard Burton, Ringo Starr, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, John Huston, Charles Aznavour, Marlon Brando, Elsa Martinelli, Sugar Ray Robinson, Anita Pallenberg, Lea Padovani, Florinda Bolkan, Marilù Tolo, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Umberto Orsini, Enrico Maria Salerno, Buck Henry, Christian Marquand. Curio from the late 60s with a gargantuan cast about naïve, sexy blonde teenager Aulin, who finds herself in all kinds of crazy situations because all the men she meets want to have sex with her. Glossy satire has some great roles for stars (especially Burton as an iconoclastic, alcoholic poet), but that alone doesn't justify two-hour-plus running time. A must for late 60s adepts, though. Some of the editing is really

good. Introductory sequence by Douglas Trumbull is reminiscent of his work for 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Screenplay by Buck Henry, based on the novel by Terry Southern and Mason Hoffenberg. Beautiful Swedish starlet Aulin made this right after the pop-art giallo LA MORTE HA FATTO L'UOVO.

**Candyman** (1992, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Bernard Rose. Starring Virginia Madsen, Tony Todd, Xander Berkeley, Kasi Lemmons, Vanessa Williams, DeJuan Guy, Michael Culkin, Bernard Rose. Unusual horror film, adapted from writer Clive Barker's short story *The Forbidden*. University student Madsen, researching for her thesis on urban legends, comes across the legend of Candyman, a black painter whose hand was sawn off by his lover's father. They say he will appear if his name is uttered five times before a mirror. Does he really exist? Plot complications and great shock effects make this one of the best horror films of the 1990s. The ending is a beauty. A rare, intelligent, even melancholy story, well-executed by Rose (PAPERHOUSE, IMMORTAL BELOVED), who also wrote the screenplay. Followed by two sequels.

**Candyman: Farewell to the Flesh** (1995, USA) **C-94m**. \*\* D: Bill Condon. Starring Tony Todd, Kelly Rowan, Timothy Carhart, Veronica Cartwright, William O'Leary, Fay Hauser, Bill Nunn, Matt Clark. Sequel to the above is nothing special, as 'Candyman' Todd turns up in New Orleans to take revenge on a woman whose ancestors killed him years ago. Well-enough produced and filmed, but story fails to evoke much interest. Best things about this movie are Todd as the killer and the original score from the first part.

**Candyman: Day of the Dead** (1999, USA) **C-93m**. \*½ D: Turi Meyer. Starring Donna D'Errico, Tony Todd, Leonardo Guerra, Mike Moroff, Mark Adair-Rios. Tiring rehash of the original has dumb blonde D'Errico being menaced by her great-granddaddy Candyman (Todd), who is going on yet another killing spree. Starts nicely but suffers from an acute lack of new ideas. D'Errico looks embarrassed in her first starring feature. Let's hope this was the end of Candyman. Went directly to video.

**Cani Arrabbiati** (1974, ITA) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Riccardo Cucciolla, Lea Lander, Maurice Poli, Luigi Montefiori (=George Eastman), Aldo Caponi (=Don Backy), Erica Dario. Unexpected latter-day masterpiece from horror icon Mario Bava, long considered a "lost" film, but restored entirely in 1996 after remaining unreleased for more than 20 years. The plot: After a successful robbery three ruthless gangsters (Poli, Eastman, Backy) take three hostages (Cucciolla, Leander and a child) and race across the country in constant fear of being caught. Whose nerves will be the first to break? Violent, profane, intensely acted thriller is one of Bava's best films, despite being his only intentionally realistic – even nihilistic – movie. His involving, claustrophobic direction keeps things at a fever pitch from start to finish. The final twist will make your jaw drop. Excellent score by Stelvio Cipriani. Due to subject matter and crass presentation, film would certainly have been labeled a "video nasty" and banned in many countries in the 70s and 80s; today its reputation is that of a cult film. Definitely a challenge to all Mario Bava fans. (Note: The Maestro has a brief cameo as a man walking past the car, complaining about the prices). English title: RABID DOGS. Also known as SEMAFORO ROSSO. In 2002 Lamberto Bava and producer Alfredo Leone teamed up to recut the film yet again (Lamberto even re-filmed some scenes according to his late father's notes) and released it as KIDNAPPED.

**Canicule** (1983, FRA) **C-101m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Yves Boisset. Starring Lee Marvin, Miou-Miou, Jean Carmet, Victor Lanoux, David Bennent, Bernadette Lafont, Grace de Capitani, Tina Louise, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, Muni, Juliette Mills. Marvin is impressive as an American criminal on the run in France, who hides out at an isolated farm, whose inhabitants are primitive farmers. One of them, abused wife Miou-Miou wants to help him thinking she'll

also have a chance to get away. Stylish depiction of violence is somewhat reminiscent of Sam Peckinpah's action films. Script loses momentum after about an hour but delivers a satisfactory conclusion. Good performances by Carmet and Bennent, but it's Marvin as the prototype of the American gangster, who makes this thriller ultimately worth watching. Based on a novel by Jean Vautrin (alias Jean Herman). Screenplay by Jean Herman, Dominique Roulet, Serge Korber, Michel Audiard and director Boisset. Score by Francis Lai. English title: DOG DAY.

**Cannibal Ferox** (1980, ITA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring John Morghen, Lorraine DeSelle, Robert Kerman. Young anthropologist goes to the Amazon jungle trying to prove that there are no more cannibals in the world today. However, in a little village she and her friends find a tribe that feeds on human flesh. Standard cannibal exploitation is probably too gruesome for most to rate it higher than 2. It is watchable though, and there is slightly more plot than usual. The music score is not bad either.

**Cannibal Flesh Riot** (2007, USA) **B&W-33m. n/r** D: Gris Grimly. Starring David Backus, Vince Buckley, Bud Campbell, Erik Campbell, Shanna Fleischeiker. Horror comedy short about two ghouls who are on their way to a graveyard where they want to exhume (and possibly devour) a recently deceased billionaire. A few too many wisecracks in the lengthy dialogues, but film is surprisingly well-made and atmospheric. Grimly shows an eye for detail and makes great use of stop-motion elements. Black-and-white cinematography suggesting worn-out film material helps immensely. Recommended to horror fans.

**Cannibal Girls** (1973, CDN) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Ivan Reitman. Starring Eugene Levy, Andrea Martin, Ronald Ulrich, Randall Carpenter, Bonnie Neilson, Mira Pawluk. Infamous Canadian horror comedy from producer-director Reitman (his second feature) about a group of women who are part of a cult and draw innocent (or not so innocent) men in, in order to kill them and feast on them. Not without merit, contains some well-filmed and edited scenes, but overall rather off-putting and bleak. Of interest mainly to fans of Reitman or Levy.

**Cannibal Holocaust** (1979, ITA/COL) **C-95m.** \*½ D: Ruggero Deodato. Starring Robert Kerman, Francesca Ciardi, Perry Pirkanen, Luca Barbareschi. When a team of four documentary filmmakers go missing in the Amazon jungle, professor Kerman follows their trail to confirm suspicions that they were killed by cannibals. Genre "classic" has a semi-documentary-like script but reveals its true nature when it resorts to showing cruelties towards animals and ultimately gross special effects. Considered by many insiders to be the best, most harrowing of the cannibal films, especially because of its shockingly realistic effects and a (perversely) beautiful score by Riz Ortolani. As a matter of fact, this one is pseudo-critical and sensationalistic and should be rejected. Lamberto Bava was assistant director.

**Cannonball** (1976, USA/HGK) **C-77m.** \*\*½ D: Paul Bartel. Starring David Carradine, Bill McKinney, Veronica Hamel, Gerrit Graham, Robert Carradine, Belinda Balaski, Carl Gottlieb, John Herzfeld, James Keach, John Alderman, Roger Corman, Joe Dante, Jonathan Kaplan, Martin Scorsese, Paul Bartel, Sylvester Stallone, Allan Arkush, Don Simpson. Trashy but kinetic B-movie about an illegal coast-to-coast car race that involves many competitors. Violent, funny, for cult movie lovers, although film plods at times. Originally shown at 93m. Other films made in that vein: THE GUMBALL RALLYE, CANNONBALL RUN I + II. Photographed by Tak Fujimoto, Chuck (Charles) Russell (THE BLOB) did the art direction.

**Cannonball Run, The** (1981, USA/HGK) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Hal Needham. Starring Burt Reynolds, Roger Moore, Farrah Fawcett, Dom DeLuise, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Jack Elam, Adrienne Barbeau, Terry Bradshaw, Jackie Chan, Bert Convy, Jamie Farr, Peter Fonda, Michael Hui, Bianca Jagger, Hal Needham. Stellar cast is main interest in this over-the-top

comedy about a race across America, with competitors trying to win by all means. Not that funny, but there's a lot to see. Followed by a sequel, CANNONBALL RUN II, in 1984.

**Can't Hardly Wait** (1998, USA) **C-100m. \*\*½ D:** Harry Elfont, Deborah Kaplan. Starring Jennifer Love Hewitt, Ethan Embry, Charlie Korsmo, Lauren Ambrose, Seth Green, Michelle Brookhurst, Sean Patrick Thomas, Chris Owen, Clea DuVall, Selma Blair, Jenna Elfman, Melissa Joan Hart, Breckin Meyer, voice of Liv Tyler. Prototypical teen movie, made before the success of AMERICAN PIE, deals with Embry's plans to reveal himself before his high school flame Hewitt. Entire film is set during a party and film draws its energy from that. Not a world-beater but good fun for those in the mood. Hewitt does not look gorgeous here, however. Soundtrack is good. Written by the directors.

**Cape Fear** (1991, USA) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Martin Scorsese. Starring Robert De Niro, Nick Nolte, Jessica Lange, Juliette Lewis, Joe Don Baker, Robert Mitchum, Gregory Peck, Martin Balsam, Illeana Douglas. Chilling, well-made suspense thriller about lawyer Nolte, whose past comes to haunt him in the form of hard-hitting, intelligent – and ultra-mean ex-con De Niro, who intends to make him pay for sending him to prison 14 years earlier. Nolte's attempts to nail him fail miserably, as De Niro has not only exercised (and tattooed) his body but also his mind. Remake of the 1962 film has too many improbable twists and emphasises unrelenting degradation but it is technically excellent. De Niro's electrifying performance is among his best. Showdown at Cape Fear features one of the tensest finales of film history. A highly suspenseful and stylish thriller. Scorsese and his cinematographer Francis pay homage to Italian lens masters Bava and Argento in terms of style (and also plot, to some degree). Excellent use of the original Bernard Herrman score (rearranged by Elmer Bernstein). Mitchum and Peck starred in the 1962 original version, which was based on the novel *The Executioners* by John D. McDonald.

**Capitaine Fracasse** (1961, FRA/ITA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Pierre Gaspard-Huit. Starring Jean Marais, Geneviève Grad, Gérard Barry, Anna Maria Ferrero, Philippe Noiret, Louis de Funès, Jean Rochefort, Sacha Pitoëff. Marais plays a poor nobleman who joins a group of touring actors and falls in love with beautiful Grad. However, he is rivalled by an evil count. Weakly paced adaptation of Théophile Gautier's novel distributes action, adventure, comedy and romance in equal doses. Remains watchable thanks to an engaging cast and good production values. Previously filmed in 1942 by Abel Gance.

**Capote** (2005, CDN/USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Bennett Miller. Starring Philip Seyour Hoffman, Catherine Keener, Clifton Collins Jr., Bob Balaban, Bruce Greenwood, Mark Pellegrino. Hoffman's Oscar-winning performance as Truman Capote buoys this slow-moving drama about the genesis of the famous writer's true-crime classic *In Cold Blood*. Good work by first-time director Miller. There's great power in the quiet images and the score by Mychael Danna, though nothing can match Richard Brooks' brilliant 1967 adaptation of the book

**Caprice** (1967, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Frank Tashlin. Starring Doris Day, Richard Harris, Ray Walston, Jack Kruschen, Edward Mulhare, Michael J. Pollard. Latter-day Doris Day vehicle (one of her last films) in which she plays an agent for a cosmetics company, who need the latest formula from their competitor, and so Day has to go spying around. She gets involved with suave Harris, who works as a double agent. Great late-60s look and costumes, so-so James Bond-like story, only more harmless. For fans of this kind of fluff.

**Capricorn One** (1978, USA/GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Hyams. Starring Elliott Gould, James Brolin, Brenda Vaccaro, Sam Waterston, O.J. Simpson, Hal Holbrook, Karen Black, Telly Savalas, David Huddleston, James (B.) Sikking. Good science-fiction thriller about first, bally-hoed mission to Mars. Moments before take-off, the astronauts are led out of the

space ship and brought to a remote base in the desert. It turns out that the mission had to be cancelled – but the agency wants it broadcast, even if it means that the sequences of the Mars landing have to be filmed in a studio. Soon the astronauts realize that they are merely pawns in a sham that must remain a secret at all costs. Reporter Gould is the only one who starts being suspicious. Compelling stuff, written by director Hyams (2010). Fine score by Jerry Goldsmith, photography by Bill Butler. Another remarkable sci-fi film from the 1970s.

**Captain America** (2011, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Joe Johnston. Starring Chris Evans, Hugo Weaving, Samuel L. Jackson, Richard Armitage, Stanley Tucci, Toby Jones, Neal McDonough. Another Marvel superhero makes it to the big screen. The title character is an Average Joe, who fails to get enlisted in the army for WW2 action, but somehow makes it into a government program and is selected for being injected with something that gives him superpowers. He then goes on to become a superhero, battling an evil Nazi general (Weaving), who's a victim of experimentation himself. Some nice chases, explosive action set-pieces, but the story doesn't thrill. You're left with some nice production design at least.

**Captain Corelli's Mandolin** (2001, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Madden. Starring Nicolas Cage, Penélope Cruz, John Hurt, Christian Bale, Irene Papas, David Morrissey. Sumptuously filmed drama set on a Greek island shortly before the Greek's involvement in World War Two. Beauty Cruz is engaged to hotspur Bale, but when he leaves for the front in Albania, she sets her sights on Italian Captain Corelli (Cage), whose charm infatuates her. Intelligently written, beautifully photographed (by John Toll), but film is very similar to Best Foreign Film Oscar winner *MEDITERRANEO* (1991). John Hurt is wonderful as Cruz' wise father. Based on the book by Louis de Bernières.

**Captain Nemo and the Underwater City** (1969, GBR) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\* D:** James Hill. Starring Robert Ryan, Chuck Connors, Nanette Newman, Luciana Paluzzi, John Turner, Bill Fraser, Kenneth Connor. Disappointing adventure tries to continue or at least remake saga of Jules Verne's Captain Nemo (Ryan), who saves several people from drowning and brings them his underwater fortress. Slow, talky, lacks the spark of the original. Some fairly good editing, but this is lost in lackluster plot. Photographed by Alan Hume.

**Captain Phillips** (2013, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Paul Greengrass. Starring Tom Hanks, Barkhad Abdi, Barkhad Abdirahman, Faysal Ahmed, Catherine Keener. Intense drama based on the real incident off the African coast, where a U.S. container ship and its crew were taken hostage by four Somali pirates. Hanks as the title character is just okay this time, but Greengrass' stern direction and emotionally exhausting epilogue make this a stand-out. Nominated for six Oscars.

**Captive, The** (2014, CDN) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Atom Egoyan. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Scott Speedman, Rosario Dawson, Mireille Enos, Kevin Durand, Alexia Fast, Bruce Greenwood. Director Egoyan examines another parents-children tragedy, set in cold Canada. Reynolds leaves his 9-year-old daughter unattended for several minutes, during which she is kidnapped. Perpetrator Speedman is revelling in the parents' grief and frustration, watching them through hidden cameras. Eight years later, police detective Dawson finally starts to make some headway, but this ring of pedophiles is well-organised. Well-acted, absorbing psycho drama with a slightly confusing narrative structure, a good companion piece to the director's *DEVIL'S KNOT* (2013).

**Carambola, Filotto... Tutti in Buca** (1975, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ferdinando Baldi. Starring Paul L. Smith, Michael Coby (=Antonio Cantafora), Glauco Onorato, Gabriella Andreini, Piero Lulli. Silly but engaging spaghetti western comedy with Terence Hill/Bud Spencer lookalikes Smith and Coby always on the run from the sheriff, the army and other bandits. In the center of attention: a motorbike with an installed machine gun. Not much in

terms of plot, but quite funny. Title song by Bixio and Tempera is good. A sequel to CARAMBOLA (1974). English title: TRINITY AND CARAMBOLA, and CARAMBOLA'S PHILOSOPHY: IN THE RIGHT POCKET.

**Carambolages** (1963, FRA) **87m.** \*\*½ D: Marcel Bluwal. Starring Jean-Claude Brialy, Louis de Funès, Michel Serrault, Sophie Daumier, Anne Tonietti, Pierre Tchernia, Dominique Zardi, Alain Delon. Farcical comedy is a French imitation of Billy Wilder's ONE, TWO, THREE (1961). Simple employee Brialy indebts himself, hoping to get promoted in the near future. When his plans are thwarted, he finds himself contemplating murder. Meanwhile, his boss de Funès is trying to find a new slogan for their company called 321(!). Excellent performances by de Funès (in a less comic turn than usual) and Serrault (as an overanxious police inspector) make this recommendable to fans of French comedies, but plot is completely incredible and dramatically uneven. Based on a novel by Fred Kassak. English title: CAROM SHOTS.

**Cara Occulta, La** (2011, SPA/COL) **C-97m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Andrés Baiz. Starring Martina García, Quim Gutiérrez, Clara Lago, Alexandra Stewart. In Columbia, Spanish orchestra conductor Gutiérrez is devastated when his girlfriend dumps him in a video message... the police suspect him of having something to do with her disappearance. A few days later he dates a new girl, and she is scared by odd ripples in the bathtub water and the pipes seem to have a life of their own. Is the ex-girlfriend's ghost in the house? Cleverly scripted thriller has a pretty unique explanation for all this. Well-made, for thriller fans. English title: THE HIDDEN FACE.

**Caretaker, The** (2008, USA) **C-79m.** \*\*\* D: Bryce Olson. Starring Kira Verrastro, James Immekus, Jennifer Freeman, Andrew St. John, Diego J. Torres, Jennifer Tilly, Judd Nelson, Jonathon Breck. Slasher horror film is perfect teen fodder. Three guys want to give their dates a good scare in an old house near a grapefruit orchard, little knowing that the local legend (title character) has returned, and he ain't picking fruit. Not to be taken seriously, this teen horror movie is good fun, less offensive than most. Competently directed and scored, despite low-budget. Tilly provides comic relief as a teacher who wants to become a celebrity by any means.

**Carne Trémula** (1997, SPA/FRA) **C-101m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Pedro Almodóvar. Starring Javier Bardem, Francesca Neri, Liberto Rabal, Ángela Molina, José Sancho, Penélope Cruz, Pilar Bardem. Based loosely on the novel by Ruth Rendell, this typical Almodóvar concoction concerns a young convict (Bardem), who, upon release, enters the life of a cop and his lover, who brought him to prison in the first place. Bizarre complications ensue that are best not revealed here. Excellent production values complement fine dramatic work, stylish photography and moving score. One of Almodóvar's best films. English title: LIVE FLESH.

**Carnival of Souls** (1962, USA) **78m.** \*\* D: Herk Harvey. Starring Candace Hilligoss, Sidney Berger, Frances Feist, Herk Harvey, Stan Levitt, Art Ellison. After having barely survived a car accident, organist Hilligoss is haunted by a zombie-like figure. Is her imagination running wild? Poorly acted and directed horror movie isn't very scary, but has developed a cult reputation nevertheless due to unusual, intriguing plotline and its obvious influence on George A. Romero's THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. Original running time: 91m. Remade in 1997.

**Carrie** (1976, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Brian DePalma. Starring Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie, Amy Irving, William Katt, Betty Buckley, Nancy Allen, John Travolta, P.J. Soles. Unusual, now-classic horror drama about teenage girl Spacek, who is constantly picked at by her high school mates, and above all suffers under her fanatically religious mother. Slowly, telekinetic powers break loose inside her and pave the way for revenge... Bafflingly stylish, well-

directed horror was the first Stephen King adaptation and is rightfully regarded today as one of the best. Spacek is exceptional. Screenplay by Lawrence D. Cohen. Followed by a sequel in 1999 (THE RAGE: CARRIE 2).

**Carrington** (1995, GBR/FRA) **C-122m. \*\*\* D:** Christopher Hampton. Starring Emma Thompson, Jonathan Pryce, Steven Waddington, Rufus Sewell, Samuel West, Penelope Wilton. Interesting portrait of two historical British figures of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Biographer and writer Lytton Strachey, a homosexual, meets sexually repressed, boyish painter Dora Carrington (Thompson) and falls in love with her. Sensitively handled, well-scored drama explores their difficult relationship over twenty years. Overlong and not always on target, but very well-acted. Recommended to fans of British historical dramas.

**Carrie** (1978, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Brian DePalma. Starring Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie, Amy Irving, William Katt, Betty Buckley, Nancy Allen, John Travolta, P.J.Soles. Unusual, now-classic horror drama about teenage girl Spacek, who is constantly picked at by her high school mates, and above all suffers under her fanatically religious mother. Slowly, telekinetic powers break loose inside her and pave the way for revenge... Bafflingly stylish, well-directed horror was the first Stephen King adaptation and is rightfully regarded today as one of the best. Spacek is exceptional. Screenplay by Lawrence D. Cohen, score by Pino Donaggio. Followed by a sequel in 1999 (THE RAGE: CARRIE 2), and remade in 2013.

**Carrie** (2013, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Kimberly Peirce. Starring Chloe Grace Moretz, Julianne Moore, Gabriella Wilde, Portia Doubleday, Alex Russell, Judy Greer. Not-bad remake of the Brian De Palma / Stephen King horror classic simply updates the story to a modern-day setting, adding the aspect of cyber-mobbing, but it is still quite compelling and well-acted out. Moretz, enforcing her status as cult movie actress, plays the title character, a shy teenager with the gift of telekinesis, who is awfully suppressed by her psychotic mother Moore. Quite stylish photography, some good bits make it worthwhile.

**Cars** (2006, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Lasseter, Joe Ranft. Starring (the voices of) Owen Wilson, Paul Newman, Bonnie Hunt, Larry the Cable Guy, Cheech Marin, Tony Shalhoub, Guido Quaroni, Jenifer Lewis, John Ratzenberger, Michael Keaton, Jeremy Piven, Michael Schumacher, Jay Leno, Mario Andretti. Another funny, entertaining movie from Pixar, where all the characters are cars. Up-and-coming racing star Lightning McQueen (Wilson) must travel to California for a big showdown with his rivals, after a nightly incident ends up in a town that has more or less has been forgotten, where he is not famous. He is about to learn a lesson in his life. Needless to say, this is very well-animated, with funny characters (loved the Italian mechanics) and situations to make up for the predictable script. Co-director Ranft's final film; he died in a car crash months before it was released.

**Cars That Ate Paris, The** (1974, AUS) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Peter Weir. Starring Terry Camilleri, John Meillon, Melissa Jaffa, Kevin Miles, Bruce Spence. Odd initial feature by vintage director Peter Weir. The survivor of a car crash near small Australian town of Paris is integrated into their community and learns that they deliberately create car crashes so they can sell the spare parts. Low-key, uninvolved, with an unappealing lead actor. Assets of this film are nice photography and unusual story idea, which was turned into a screenplay by director Weir. Social criticism, a theme that pervades all of Weir's films, is mild at best. Also known as THE CARS THAT EAT PEOPLE. Chris Noonan (BABE) was assistant director.

**Cartaio, Il** (2004, ITA) **C-103m. \*\* D:** Dario Argento. Starring Stefania Rocca, Liam Cunningham, Claudio Santamaria, Fiore Argento. A serial killer is challenging the police to play online poker games with him. If he wins, he will kill his victims, if not, he will let them go. Policewoman Rocca is out to investigate with boozing Irishman Cunningham. Obvious, hardly convincing thriller from Argento, an unfortunately botched attempt at modernizing

his giallo formula. Rocca is appealing, though. Her character was played by Asia Argento in the 1996 LA SINDROME DI STENDHAL. Good score by Claudio Simonetti. Fabrizio Bava (Mario's grandson) was assistant director. English titles: THE CARD PLAYER, THE CARD DEALER.

**Casablanca** (1942, USA) **102m.** \*\*\*\* D: Michael Curtiz. Starring Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Paul Henreid, Claude Rains, Conrad Veidt, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre. Classic masterpiece of filmmaking, probably the best black-and-white film ever made. In an atmosphere of unrest and warfare, two lovers (Bogart and Bergman) meet again and must discover that their love cannot be relived. Timeless, simply beautiful melodrama with an excellent Max Steiner score. Written by Philip, Julius Epstein, Howard Koch and Casey Robinson, based on an unproduced play by Murray Burnett and Joan Alison. Oscar-winner for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Screenplay.

**Casablanca Express** (1988, ITA) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Sergio Martino. Starring Jason Connery, Francesco Quinn, Donald Pleasence, Luisa Maneri, Jean Sorel, David Brandon, Glenn Ford, Manfred Lehmann. Low-grade actioner based on historical fact: When Winston Churchill must be brought to secret gathering in World War Two Morocco, the Germans will do anything to stop him, even if it means blowing up the Casablanca Express. Some of the action is not bad, but Ford and Pleasence appear in cardboard roles, script is poorly written. Filmed on location.

**Casa Con la Scala Nel Buio, La** (1983, ITA) **C-96m.** \*\* D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Andrea Occhipinti, Anny Papa, Fabiola Toledo, Michele Soavi, Giovanni Frezza. Minor horror thriller by the son of Mario Bava. Film composer Occhipinti rents a villa in order to complete his latest score but soon realizes that the house is inhabited (haunted?) by a maniac. Interest comes and goes, a step down for Lamberto, whose *MACABRO* (1980) was not bad. His direction and handling of actors is too often dull. One violent murder scene (in the bathroom) will make this worthwhile for buffs. Michele Soavi was also assistant director. English titles: A BLADE IN THE DARK, HOUSE OF THE DARK STAIRWAY.

**Casa dalle Finestre Che Ridono, La** (1976, ITA) **C-110m.** \*\* D: Pupi Avati. Starring Lino Capolicchio, Francesca Marciano, Gianni Cavina, Giulio Pizzirani, Vanna Busoni. Latter-day giallo, made some years after the genre's heyday. Capolicchio plays a restaurator, who is called to a small village to restore a fresco by a mad artist, who committed suicide. The population doesn't offer a warm welcome, and Capolicchio soon learns that there's a mystery behind all this. Early effort by Avati (*ZEDER*) is unfortunately a disappointment from start to finish. Timing and pace are poor, and film never creates the sense of mystery needed for such a movie. Capolicchio sleepwalks through his role. Bizarre denouement doesn't make this more interesting. A cult film in Italy, where this was graced with a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Deluxe DVD edition. Co-scripted by Pupi and Antonio Avati (*MACABRO*). English title: HOUSE WITH THE WINDOWS THAT LAUGH.

**Casa d'Appuntamento, La** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-87m.** \*\*½ D: F.L. Morris (= Ferdinando Merighi). Starring Anita Ekberg, Rosalba Neri, Evelyn Kraft, Howard Vernon, Peter Martell, Barbara Bouchet, Roberto Sacchi, Eva Astor, Rolf Eden, Gordon Mitchell, Goffredo Unger, Dick Randall. When a prostitute is found murdered, the police soon have a culprit in seemingly deranged Martell. However, during his flight he is accidentally decapitated, and hookers are still bumped off by a black-gloved assassin. Will inspector Sacchi solve the case? Uneven, convoluted plotting does not iradicate one's interest in this mystery thriller. Some delightfully off-beat scenes make it worthwhile for giallo lovers. Sacchi's likeness to Humphrey Bogart is sometimes astounding. Quite gory effects by Carlo Rambaldi. Score by

Bruno Nicolai, edited by Bruno Mattei. English titles: THE BOGEYMAN AND THE FRENCH MURDERS, MURDER IN PARIS, and THE PARIS SEX MURDERS.

**Casa de las Muertas Vivientes, La** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Alfonso Balcazar. Starring Juan Antonio Amor, Daniela Giordano, Gioia Desideri, Osvaldo Genazzani, Carlo Gentili, Teresa Gimpera. Spanish-Italian giallo variation set in and around a castle-like estate. Alcoholic Amor brings home his new wife Giordano, who is met with distain by his sister and his sexually starved stepmother. Soon weird things start to happen, and the main question is if Amor's ex-wife really died by accident. Watchable throughout if not suspenseful. Good score by Piero Piccioni. English title: AN OPEN TOMB... AN EMPTY COFFIN.

**Casa del Sortilegio, La** (1989, ITA) **C-90m. \*½ D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Andy J. Forest, Sonia Petrovna, Susanna Matinoková, Paul Muller, Maria Cumani Quasimodo. One of several TV horror movies produced in Italy in the late 1980s, this one is often laughably bad, with poor acting, scripting and only some atmospheric bits. Forest has dreams of a country house with a witch inside, then his girlfriend persuades him to take a break in the country. Guess where she takes him. Only the score by Claudio Simonetti (credited as Claude King) has some value. English title: THE HOUSE OF WITCHCRAFT.

**Casa del Tapetto Giallo, La** (1983, ITA) **C-86m. \*\*\*½ D:** Carlo Lizzani. Starring Erland Josephson, Béatrice Romand, Vittorio Mezzogiorno, Milena Vukotic. Unique, completely baffling psycho thriller about a young couple who put an ad into a newspaper trying to sell a yellow carpet. One morning the woman is visited by a very strange man, who claims to be interested in the rug but seems to... - well, figure it out for yourself. This clever, well-acted film comes up with so many twists you'll hunger for the ending.

**Casa del Tempo, La** (1989, ITA) **C-84m. \*\*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Kieth Van Hoven, Karina Huff, Paolo Paoloni, Bettina Milne, Peter Hintz, Al Cliver. One of Fulci's better latter-day movies is gory chiller about three juvenile delinquents, who decide to break into mansion of elderly couple. Little do they know that the couple have just slaughtered their maid. And watch out for the clocks going backwards! Some interesting ideas keep this afloat, but it cannot really escape its B-movie origins. Actually seems like a Poe adaptation. Nice photography by Nino Celeste. Made for theaters, but premiered on TV. English title: THE HOUSE OF CLOCKS.

**Casanova** (2005, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Lasse Hallström. Starring Heath Ledger, Sienna Miller, Jeremy Irons, Oliver Platt, Lena Olin, Omid Djalili, Stephen Greif. Biographical dramedy about the life of Giacomo Casanova, the world-famous adulterer, who roamed the channels of Venice, Italy, in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Here, he is forced to become chaste and marry, or else he must leave the city. Fine production design, but plot is predictable and there is too little action or laughs. A tame movie, which does not live up to the title character's wild bio. Good cinematography by Oliver Stapleton. From the director of CHOCOLAT (2000).

**Casa Sperduta nel Parco, La** (1980, ITA) **C-92m. 2 D:** Ruggero Deodato. Starring David Hess, Annie Bell, Christian Borromeo, Giovanni Lombardo Radice. Detestable thriller about two thugs, one of them retarded, who take people at a house hostage – and torture and degrade them in ultra-sadistic fashion. No comment is made by the filmmakers, this is merely one long torture show. Absolutely sick and sickening, rightfully banned in many countries. Probably inspired by Wes Craven's LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972), which also starred Hess. By the director of CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (1979). English title: HOUSE BY THE EDGE OF THE PARK.

**Casa 3 – Ghosthouse, La** (1987, ITA/USA) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Humphrey Humbert (=Umberto Lenzi). Starring Lara Wendel, Greg Scott, Mary Sellers, Ron Houck, Martin Jay, Kate Silver, Donald O'Brien. Surprisingly watchable horror movie about a group of travelling youngsters,

who pick up a weird radio signal and find it is emitted from an empty house. The story behind it is bloodcurdling, as the group are about to find out. Too many unconvincing scenes hamper proceedings, but score by Simon Boswell (reused from AQUARIUS) makes it quite eerie. Produced by an uncredited Joe D'Amato. Photographed by Franco Delli Colli. Probably planned as an unofficial sequel to HOUSE (1986) and HOUSE II (1987) (which were followed by THE HORROR SHOW in 1989), and followed by two sequels itself, WITCHERY (1988) and LA CASA 5 (1990). English title: GHOSTHOUSE.

**Casino Royale** (1967, GBR/USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Huston, Val Guest, Ken Hughes, Joseph McGrath, Robert Parrish, Richard Talmadge. Starring Peter Sellers, Ursula Andress, David Niven, Orson Welles, Joanna Pettet, Daliah Lavi, Woody Allen, Deborah Kerr, William Holden, Charles Boyer, John Huston, Kurt Kaszner, George Raft, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Terence Cooper, Barbara Bouchet, Jacqueline Bisset, Anjelica Huston, Burt Kwouk, David Lodge, Caroline Munro, Peter O'Toole, David Prowse, Vladek Sheybal. Swinging Sixties extravaganza is a James Bond spoof of epic proportions, as the united Secret Services of the world are trying to revive retired agent 007 (Niven) for an important mission to stop criminal Le Chiffre (Welles). First 30 minutes are disastrous, and entire film has very few laughs, but this incredible tomfoolery has to be seen to be believed. Sellers plays the role of Bond in climactic game of Baccara, Andress is his sexy Bondgirl. Allen is Dr. Noah(!) and there are lots of cameos. A time capsule, which is said to have been coscripted by Allen, Sellers and even Billy Wilder! Nice score by Burt Bacharach.

**Casino Royale** (2006, USA/GBR/GER/CZE) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Martin Campbell. Starring Daniel Craig, Eva Green, Mads Mikkelsen, Judi Dench, Jeffrey Wright, Giancarlo Giannini, Caterina Murino, Jesper Christensen, Ivana Milicevic, Veruschka (von Lehndorf), Urbano Barberini, Richard Branson, Martin Campbell. Valiant attempt at renewing the James Bond franchise with a new face (Craig). Title is lifted off Ian Fleming's first novel, with which this has fairly little in common, though. James Bond, at the outset of his career as a secret agent, goes after evil guy Mikkelsen, who is taking care of financial business for terrorists worldwide. It all climaxes in a game of poker with millions at stake, including Bond's new girlfriend Green. 21<sup>st</sup> Bond film features the 6<sup>th</sup> Bond actor in Craig, who is a tense and determined agent. The movie is long and the script unusually talky, even sentimental, but highlighted by several big action set-pieces (kudos to editor Stuart Baird). Good title song by Chris Cornell (Soundgarden). Followed by QUANTUM OF SOLACE (2008).

**Cassadaga** (2011, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anthony DiBlasi. Starring Kelen Coleman, Avis-Marie Barnes, Kevin Alejandro, Louise Fletcher, Rus Blackwell. Quite good horror film about a deaf young woman, who, mourning the death of her little sister, seeks refuge in Fletcher's Cassadaga community. However, she is soon haunted by a ghost and must deal with the fact that there's a serial killer loose. Offers a little bit of everything, even some references to Argento (childhood trauma, maggots, disfigured kids), a good-looking lead actress and SAW-like gore. If this is your cup, tune in. The many elements don't quite gel and the pace could have been tighter.

**Cassandra** (1987, AUS) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Colin Eggleston. Starring Tessa Humphries, Shane Briant, Briony Behets, Tim Burns. Australian horror film about a young woman who is plagued by frightening visions which may be from her own childhood. It turns out her family is harboring a secret. Slowly-paced mystery is watchable but barely interesting.

**Cassandra Crossing, The** (1976, GBR/ITA/GER) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: George P. Cosmatos. Starring Sophia Loren, Richard Harris, Martin Sheen, O.J. Simpson, Lionel Stander, Ann Turkel, Ingrid Thulin, Lee Strasberg, Ava Gardner, Burt Lancaster, Lou Castel, John Phillip Law, Ray Lovelock, Alida Valli. Sensational cast in so-so disaster thriller about a virus-

infected man aboard a train holding 1,000 passengers. Occasionally exciting, with unfinished plot threads – at least in truncated German version. Loren seems misplaced. Scripted by director Cosmatos, Tom Mankiewicz and Robert Katz. Score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**Case, Le** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Omar Sharif, Dyan Cannon, Robert Hossein, Nicole Calfan, José Luis de Villalonga. Largely disappointing action drama about burglar Belmondo, who manages to steal emeralds worth a million and clever cop Sharif, who tracks him down. Some incredible stunt work by Belmondo himself, but otherwise this is strictly standard despite cast, photography by Claude Renoir, score by Ennio Morricone. Based on a novel by David Goodis, which was filmed before with Jayne Mansfield in 1957. English title: THE BURGLARS.

**Cast a Dark Shadow** (1957, GBR) **76m. \*\*\* D:** Lewis Gilbert. Starring Dirk Bogarde, Margaret Lockwood, Kay Walsh, Kathleen Harrison, Robert Flemyng. Snappy little psycho drama focuses on Bogarde's character, a wife-killer who is saddled without inheritance and must marry – and kill? – again. Fine performances, notably Bogarde's, make this very watchable, though sometimes it's too stagey (it is based on the play 'Murder Mistaken' by Janet Green). Gilbert would later direct three Bond movies. Also known as ANGEL.

**Cast Away** (2000, USA) **C-143m. \*\*½ D:** Robert Zemeckis. Starring Tom Hanks, Helen Hunt, Nick Searcy, Chris Noth, Lari White. Hanks, working for a big mail company, finds little time for his fiancée Hunt (they even have to celebrate Christmas at the airport), but gets more than he likes when his plane crashlands in the Pacific Ocean and he is washed ashore on a tiny unpopulated island. Adventure drama begins to be interesting when he returns to civilization, but then the movie ends and leaves you wanting. The simulated plane crash is breathtaking, and so is actor Hanks' discipline in gaining and losing a lot of weight, but otherwise this is a film of missed opportunities. A slight disappointment.

**Castle Freak** (1995, USA) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Stuart Gordon. Starring Jeffrey Combs, Barbara Crampton, Jonathan Fuller, Jessica Dollarhide, Massimo Sarchielli, Elisabeth Kaza, Luca Zingaretti. Follow-up to Full Moon production's THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM, also shot in Italy. Combs inherits an Italian castle and travels there with his estranged wife and blind daughter. It turns out the recently deceased Duchess has kept her son locked in the cellar for more than forty years, and he is now out on a killing spree. Pretty dumb, quite ugly splatter horror can't hold a candle to THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM but is an okay view for horror fans. Story by director Gordon, he also cowrote the poor screenplay.

**Catacombs** (1988, USA/ITA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** David Schmoeller. Starring Timothy Van Patten, Ian Abercrombie, Jeremy West, Laura Schaefer, Feodor Chaliapin Jr., Ted Rusoff. Atmospheric horror filmed in Italy by Full Moon. American teacher visiting old monastery is soon threatened by an old demon trapped beyond the catacombs. Its evil powers kill one monk after the other. Plot is too redundant, but most horror fans should like this film; it's quite good. Score by Pino Donaggio. Also known as CURSE IV: THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE.

**Cat and the Canary, The** (1927, USA) **B&W-82m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Leni. Starring Laura La Plante, Creighton Hale, Forrest Stanley, Tully Marshall, Gertrude Astor. Silent horror classic about several people who gather for the reading of the will in an eerie mansion. Amid the tension the news reaches them that a maniac is on the loose. Enjoyable fare, a prototype for its genre, with stunning expressionistic images and a good score. Based on the play by John Willard, which was filmed five more times, most notably in 1939 (with Bob Hope) and 1979 (with Edward Fox).

**Catch Me If You Can** (2002, USA) **C-141m. \*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks, Christopher Walken, Martin Sheen, Nathalie Baye, Amy Adams, James Brolin, Jennifer Garner, Frank Abagnale Jr. Another comedy misfire by Spielberg tries to

recreate real-life story of impostor Frank Abagnale, who forged checks to make a fortune in 1960s America. Hot on his trail is bumbling police detective Hanks, a man without humor, who soon has a personal grudge against the cunning young criminal. Production values are first-rate (production and set designers did a great job), but story or characters never acquire the depth needed to compensate for lack of humor, action or suspense. And why make this so long? Some good performances (notably Walken's) make it watchable. The usual Spielberg collaborators were involved.

**Catch-22** (1970, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Mike Nichols. Starring Alan Arkin, Martin Balsam, Richard Benjamin, Art Garfunkel, Jack Gilford, Buck Henry, Bob Newhart, Anthony Perkins, Paula Prentiss, Martin Sheen, Jon Voight, Orson Welles, Bob Balaban, Susanne Benton, Norman Fell, Charles Grodin, Peter Bonerz, Bruce Kirby, Jack Riley, Gina Rovere. Gargantuan cast in attempted blockbuster based on the famous novel by Joseph Heller. Basic story concerns WW2 fighter pilot Arkin, who'd do anything to get a certificate of insanity to be able to return home. The problem of the film is that it doesn't go anywhere from there. Lack of development makes the film difficult to enjoy, even sit through, although there are some amusing scenes. Good cinematography by David Watkin.

**Catch Us If You Can** (1965, GBR) **B&W-91m. \*\* D:** John Boorman. Starring Dave Clark, Barbara Ferris, Lenny Davidson, Rick Huxley, Mike Smith. Attempt to cash in on success of the Beatles' *A HARD DAY'S NIGHT* (1964) is only notable for being director Boorman's first movie. Pop group The Dave Clark Five is forgotten by now, and story (Clark and Ferris run away to find an island) is too episodic. Lightweight, none too entertaining. Boorman followed this with the terrific *POINT BLANK* (1967). Released in the U.S. as *HAVING A WILD WEEKEND*.

**Cathérine Cherie** (1982, GER/SPA) **C-94m. \*½ D:** Hubert Frank. Starring Berta Cabre, Ajita Wilson. Boring sex film about young starlet Cabre, who enjoys an affair with a journalist, while her 'protector' is in Rome with Wilson. The handsome setting of Gran Canaria is the only asset of this film. It's fairly erotic and slightly better than the rest (which, of course, isn't saying much).

**Cat Murkil and the Silks** (1976, USA) **C-102m. \*\* D:** John A. Bushelman. Starring David Kyle, Steve Bond, Kelly Yaegermann, Rhodes Reason, Meegan King, Don Carter. Standard action fare about a youth gang, whose new leader works only for himself, cheating even his gang members. Quite violent. Re-issued as *CRUISIN HIGH*.

**Cat on a Hot Tin Roof** (1958, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*\* D:** Richard Brooks. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, Burl Ives, Jack Carson, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood, Larry Gates. Powerful drama, based on the classic Tennessee Williams play, about southern family and inner conflicts which surface on the 65th birthday of their patriarchal 'Big Daddy' Ives. Great cast in exquisitely looking film, with Ives and Newman especially superb. A bit stagey but compelling adaptation (by Brooks and James Poe) makes more than up for it. A classic.

**Cauchemares** (1977, CDN/FRA) **C-82m. \*½ D:** Eddy Matalon. Starring Alan Scarfe, Randi Allen, Beverly Murray, Sylvie Lenoir. Cheap, unconvincing variation of the Haunted House theme. Years after having been taken out of their house by his mother (which resulted in a fatal car crash of his father and sister), Scarfe returns to his home with his own family. His daughter Allen soon starts behaving strangely – is she influenced by the ghost of her dead aunt? Two or three chilling scenes, the rest is often annoyingly bad. English title: *CATHY'S CURSE*.

**Cav. Costante Nicosia Demoniaco, Ovvero: Dracula in Brianza, II** (1975, ITA) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Lando Buzzanca, Rossano Brazzi, Sylva Koscina, Moira Orfei, Christa Linder, John Steiner. Ciccio Ingrassia, Valentina Cortese, Ilona Staller. *Very* superstitious

businessman Buzzanca is cursed by an old woman and just then travels to Romania to make a deal with a sinister count. If that's not something to be scared! Fast-talking, fast-paced horror spoof is a minor entry in filmmaker Fulci's filmography. Its low-brow humor won't appeal to everyone, some gags are simply tasteless. Script cowritten by Mario Amendola, Pupi Avati and Bruno Corbucci. Contains a reference to Mel Brooks' YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (1974), hence the English title: YOUNG DRACULA. Also known as DRACULA IN THE PROVINCES.

**Cazadores, Los** (1974, SPA/USA) **C-104m. SCOPE** □ D : Peter Collinson. Starring Peter Fonda, Cornelia Sharpe, John Phillip Law, Richard Lynch, Alberto de Mendoza, William Holden, Helga Liné. Extremely unappealing and unpleasant thriller about three Vietnam vets who kidnap a pair of lovers and hunt them across the country. Nice photography aside, this film probably does more to endorse than condemn violence. Only for 70s film buffs that watch everything. English title: OPEN SEASON.

**Céline et Julie Vont en Bateau** (1974, FRA) **C-193m. \*\*½ D:** Jacques Rivette. Starring Juliet Berto, Dominique Labourier, Bulle Ogier, Marie-France Pisier, Barbet Schroeder. Art film experiment loosely follows a plot line: Two young women, a librarian and a magician, meet and join forces in finding out the mystery behind a strange place, whose inhabitants behave the same way every day. By means of a drug the girls can enter their world and perhaps change it. Sounds much more interesting than it plays, this overlong experiment has no stylistic appeal and becomes much more pretentious than it can take. A curio, some critics loved this film; judge for yourself. Obvious similarities to Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland stories exist. Produced by Barbet Schroeder. English titles: CELINE AND JULIE GO BOATING, and PHANTOM LADIES OVER PARIS.

**Cementerio del Terror** (1985, MEX) **C-90m. \*½ D:** Rubén Galindo. Starring Hugo Stiglitz, Usi Velasco, Erika Buenfil, Edna Bolkan, René Cardona III. Straight-forward, one-dimensional horror movie about a group of oversexed teens, who spend the night in a mansion near an old cemetery. Inadvertently, they will resurrect the body of recently deceased witch doctor, who could conjure up an army of zombies. Some atmosphere, but script is very dull (it even puts a group of kids in danger towards the end). Zombie fans might want to give this stinker a look, because the undead look quite nice. English title: CEMETERY OF TERROR.

**Cell, The** (2000, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE** □ D: Tarsem Singh. Starring Jennifer Lopez, Vince Vaughn, Vincent D'Onofrio, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Jake Weber, Dylan Baker. Horrible cyber-trash movie about a brain research team, who are able to enter a person's unconscious and find out about his dreams and fears. They try this new method on serial killer D'Onofrio, whose latest victim will die in 40 hours, if they don't find out where he has hidden her. Pointless, ultimately unpleasant movie with terribly kitschy (and meaningless) cyber-scenes. Only for masochists. Latino-queen Lopez drew masses to see this film – she should have remained in lipstick commercials.

**Cent Mille Dollars au Soleil** (1963, FRA/ITA) **121m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Lino Ventura, Reginald Kerner, Bernard Blier, Andréa Parisy, Gert Fröbe. French crime drama set in Africa: Truck driver Belmondo steals one of tycoon Fröbe's lorries and goes on the lam with his girlfriend. Fröbe sends out Belmondo's best friend Ventura to bring back the truck – whose cargo seems to be of great value. Great photography, laid-back performances in drama that has little to say and is still padded out to two hours. Georges Delerue's score is much too dramatic (and too good) for this rather trivial piece of work. The stars are appealing. Claude Pinoteau was assistant director. Director Verneuil coscripted. Sometimes shown in a computer-colored version. English title: GREED IN THE SUN.

**Cento Giorni a Palermo** (1984, ITA/FRA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Giuseppe Ferrara. Starring Lino Ventura, Giuliana de Sio, Lino Troisi, Stefano Satta Flores. Typical Italian thriller drama dealing with the powerful grasp of the Mafia. An aged Ventura is fine as police commissioner in Palermo, Sicily, who tries to break the mobsters' rule. Filmed in semi-documentary style, but also without any dramatic peaks. For those interested. Cowritten by Giuseppe Tornatore (NUOVO CINEMA PARADISO), who also directed the second unit. English title: 100 DAYS IN PALERMO.

**C'era una Volta il West** (1968, ITA/USA) **C-177m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Sergio Leone. Starring Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, Jason Robards, Charles Bronson, Gabriele Ferzetti, Paolo Stoppa, Woody Strode, Jack Elam, Keenan Wynn, Frank Wolff, Lionel Stander, Frank Brana, Aldo Sambrell, Fabio Testi. Legendary western masterpiece is the follow-up to Leone's DOLLAR-trilogy and marks the highpoint in the director's oeuvre. Elegiac and melancholic in tone, this portrait of a dying West creates a languid mood that remains unmatched – in any genre. The arrival of a mysterious stranger with a harmonica (Bronson) coincides with that of beautiful Cardinale, who must learn that the man who married her in New Orleans was just killed in a ruthless assault. It turns out he bought land soon to be crossed by the railroad, much to tycoon Ferzetti and his henchman Fonda's displeasure. What will Cardinale do with the land, and why is the man with the harmonica looking for Fonda? Story (concocted by none other than Dario Argento, Bernardo Bertolucci and director Leone) takes second chair to incredibly beautiful staging, brilliant color widescreen cinematography by Tonino delli Colli, and a haunting, unforgettable score by Ennio Morricone, probably his best. An awe-inspiring achievement, not to be missed. The best spaghetti western, and generally one of the best westerns of all time. Fonda is an especially brilliant villain. Shot in Spain and the U.S. (Monument Valley). Leone followed this with GIU LA TESTA (1971). Released in the U.S. at 140m. Regular print runs 165m., though several longer versions are in existence (extending scenes rather than adding new ones). English title: ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST.

**Cercle Rouge, Le** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-140m.** \*\*\*½ D: Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Alain Delon, André Bourvil, Yves Montand, François Périer, Gian Maria Volonté. Brilliant crime drama with superb cast, depressing and sober but masterfully directed. Commissaire Bourvil is after escaped criminal Périer, who is teaming up with recently released convict Delon and former police inspector Montand to perform a daring heist. Score and sound disappear at times but suspense is maintained by superlative mise-en-scène. Fine photography by Henri Decaë. Director Melville also wrote the screenplay and co-edited the picture. One of the best films of its time. Bourvil's last film. Original running time is (allegedly) 150m.

**Cerebral Print: The Secret Files** (2005, USA) **C-83m.** ½ D: Ford Austin. Starring Jed Rowen, Felissa Rose, Richard Grove, Ethan Phillips, J.A. Steel, John Payne. Practically unwatchable comedy about a secret government branch that was founded in 1967 and deals with alien life forms. They have become specialists in obtaining cerebral prints, which feature memories of the aliens before their deaths. Totally obnoxious, inept. For masochists only.

**Cerveau, Le** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Gérard Oury. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Bourvil, David Niven, Eli Wallach, Silvia Monti, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Classic crime comedy about 'superbrain' Niven, who disguises as a NATO general to steal 14 bags of money – with the help of mafioso Wallach. But they are not the only ones after the money. Belmondo breaks out of prison (four days before his release!) to steal the money himself, with his bumbling sidekick Bourvil. Mad-cap comedy with great performances, funny complications. The quintessential crime/heist comedy of its time. Score by Georges

Delerue. Simultaneously shot in English. Co-written by director Oury (LE CORNIAUD, LA GRANDE VADROUILLE) English title: THE BRAIN.

**C'è Sartana... Vendi la Pistola e Comprati la Bara!** (1970, ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Anthony Ascot (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring George Hilton, Charles Southwood, Piero Lulli, Erika Blanc. Gunslinger Hilton is so clever and fast, no one can stop him as he intends to solve mystery of recurring robberies of a gold transport. Stylishly directed, amusing and inventive, this is an above-average example of the spaghetti western genre, only weighed down by uneven plot. Good photography by Stelvio Massi, fine score by Francesco De Masi. English titles: FISTFUL OF LEAD, I AM SARTANA, TRADE YOUR GUNS FOR A COFFIN, SARTANA'S COMING, GET YOUR COFFINS READY.

**C'est Arrivé Près de Chez Vous** (1992, BEL) **99m. \*\*\* D:** Rémy Belvaux, André Bonzel, Benoît Poelvoorde. Starring Benoît Poelvoorde, Jenny Drye. A camera team (played by co-directors Belvaux and Bonzel) follows around brutal serial killer Poelvoorde. He spends his time slaughtering people just for the fun of it. Controversial portrait of a sick mind doesn't bother with a plot, the realism of its black-and-white images and the hand-held camera convince the viewers right away of its intention. Film blatantly shows that violence happens right before our eyes - only we tend to look away. Darkly funny and shockingly violent, film is not for the faint at heart, though by „looking away“ from the screen one does exactly what the makers of the film want to show up: that it is difficult but necessary to break taboos. Watch out for cut versions. English title: MAN BITES DOG.

**C'Est Pas Parce Qu'On A Rien A Dire Qu'Il Faut Fermer Sa Gueule** (1975, FRA) **C-93m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jacques Besnard. Starring Bernard Blier, Michel Serrault, Jean Lefebvre, Tsilla Chelton, Maurice Travail. Thierry Lhermitte, Christian Clavier, Gérard Jugnot. Bumbling thieves Serrault and Lefebvre are hired by Blier, who has discovered an easy way to dig through to the Bank of France – the safes are located next to the subway toilets! By means of disguising themselves in many different ways they want to fool the toilet attendant (Chelton). Mad-cap comedy has some hilarious moments, especially for fans of the stars. It would have needed a firmer directorial hand (Besnard did direct Louis de Funès in LE GRAND RESTAURANT). Based on an idea by Christian Clavier, Thierry Lhermitte and Gérard Jugnot. Title translates as WE HAVE TO SHUT UP, BUT NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE NOTHING TO SAY.

**Chacun Cherche Son Chat** (1996, FRA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Cédric Klapisch. Starring Garance Clavel, Zinedine Soualem, Renée Le Calm, Olivier Py, and Arapimou as Gris-Gris the cat. Charming slice-of-life about young make-up artist Clavel, who learns that her cat has disappeared while she was away on holiday. During her search she meets all kinds of disparate characters, who all try to support her. She slowly discovers that the cat is not the only thing missing in her life. Perceptive, funny character study, a quite different approach to the problems of the Generation X. The characters are living, breathing persons and at the end you'll feel sorry that they are not your friends, too. A young, spirited film for a young audience.

**Chained Heat** (1983, USA/GER) **C-99m. \*½ D:** Paul Nicholas. Starring Linda Blair, John Vernon, Sybil Danning, Tamara Dobson, Stella Stevens, Henry Silva, Sharon Hughes. Sleazy 'chicks in chains' movie with an interesting cast about new inmate Blair and her problems with lesbianism, brutal gangs and sadistic personnel. Takes itself much too seriously. Stupid and violent – just what genre fans are looking for. Followed by a sequel or two (who cares?). If you must, check out RED HEAT (1985), which is also starring Blair.

**Chain Gang** (1984, USA) **C-93m. \*½ D:** Worth Keeter. Starring Earl Owensby, Barry Bell, Robert Bloodworth, Terry Loughlin. After helping a hooker escape from crooks, she still gets killed and Owensby is framed for her murder. He is sent to prison for fifteen years, but

somehow he gets involved with the killers again. Bleak, uninteresting something that is rotting in video stores by now. Some fast-paced, tense chase sequences save it from total disaster.

**Chain of Fools** (2000, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Traktor. Starring Steve Zahn, Salma Hayek, Jeff Goldblum, Elijah Wood, David Cross, Tom Wilkinson, Orlando Jones, Kevin Corrigan, David Hyde Pierce, Lara Flynn Boyle, John Cassini, Michael Rapaport. An exercise in PULP FICTION-like screenwriting, made by a team of five directors. Luckless hairdresser Zahn accidentally gets involved in robbery of three precious Chinese coins and spends the entire film trying to keep them, get them back, sell them. Policewoman Hayek is on the case. Some hilarious moments, but all too deliberately constructed.

**Chain Reaction** (1980, AUS) **C-87m.** \*\*\* D: Ian Barry. Starring Steve Bisley, Arna-Maria Winchester, Ross Thompson, Ralph Cotterill, Patrick Ward. Stylish thriller about an accident in a nuclear power plant and organisation's attempts at covering it up by chasing a contaminated employee and a couple he meets during his flight across the wilderness. Script is very uneven but still thought-provoking, film is worth seeing for striking direction, camerawork and score. Director Barry creates some terrific car chase sequences, inspired obviously by George - MAD MAX - Miller, who coproduced the film. Mel Gibson appears briefly as a car mechanic. Alternative title: NUCLEAR RUN.

**Chair de la Orchidée, La** (1975, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D : Patrice Chéreau. Starring Charlotte Rampling, Bruno Cremer, Edwige Fenech, Simone Signoret, Alida Valli, Hans Christian Blech, Günter Meisner. Unusual, unconventional psycho drama about Rampling, an obviously disturbed woman who is picked up by two men after having witnessed a fatal accident. She refuses to explain herself, and only slowly does the viewer learn her story. Often confusing plot, deliberate pacing, film nevertheless manages to draw you in. A minor cult following takes to this. Based on the novel by James Hadley Chase. Director Chéreau's first film. English titles: THE FLESH AND THE ORCHID, THE FLESH OF THE ORCHID.

**Chakushin Ari** (2003, JAP) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D: Takashi Miike. Starring Kou Shibasaki, Shin'ichi Tsutsumi, Kazue Fukiishi, Anna Nagata, Atsushi Ida, Mariko Tsutsui. Interesting horror chiller from the maker of ODISHON / AUDITION (1999). A clique of teenagers is terrified when members are found dead after receiving messages from themselves at the moment of their future deaths. Often tacky, typically Japanese, and uneven, but when it resorts to the chills, it's scary as hell. Cleverly uses elements from RINGU and JU-ON, even Lars von Trier's RIGET (1994). Recommended to buffs. English titles: ONE MISSED CALL, and YOU'VE GOT A CALL.

**Challenge for Robin Hood, A** (1967, GBR) **C-96m.** \*½ D: C.M. Pennington-Richards. Starring Barrie Ingham, Peter Blythe, John Arnatt, Gay Hamilton, John Gugolka, James Hayter, Alfie Bass. Low-rent version of the popular, oft-filmed of the valiant rebel from Sherwood Forest. Ingham is an unlikely hero, most of the fight scenes are laughably staged, and film's production value is low. Produced by Hammer Films.

**Champagne Murders, The** (1967, FRA) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Anthony Perkins, Maurice Ronet, Stéphane Audran. Two playboys who enjoy a decadent lifestyle in Europe find themselves in trouble when murders happen which one of them might have committed. Unusual thriller/psycho drama-mix is fascinating to watch; the surprise twist at the end doesn't work, however. Alternate French language version, titled LE SCANDALE, runs 111m.

**Changeling** (2008, USA) **C-141m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Angelina Jolie, Gattlin Griffith, Michelle Gunn, Jan Devereaux, Erica Grant, John Malkovich. Period drama set in the late 1920s and early 30s about single mother Jolie, who is devastated when her 9-year-old son disappears from home. After five months the controversial LAPD present her

with a boy, who is clearly not her son, but they keep insisting he is. Her resistance comes at a terrible price. Carefully made drama with great set design and pristine photography, though one wonders why this is padded out to over two hours and why Eastwood is subjecting us to such an ordeal. The imperfections of a true story ultimately make for an uneven movie. The performances are peerless.

**Changing Lanes** (2002, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Roger Michell. Starring Ben Affleck, Samuel L. Jackson, Kim Staunton, Toni Collette, Sydney Pollack, Amanda Peet, William Hurt, Dylan Baker. Typically contrived Hollywood drama about Wall Street lawyer Affleck and struggling alcoholic Jackson, whose lives intersect when they crash into each other's cars. Affleck treats Jackson with disrespect, but leaves an important file behind. A painful psycho-battle ensues where both men could lose everything. Some fine performances aside, this is mean-spirited and manipulative and makes both men fear for the worst, before attaching a Hollywood ending.

**Chappie** (2015, USA/MEX) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Neill Bloomkamp. Starring Charlto Copley, Dev Patel, Ninja and Yo-Landi Visser, Hugh Jackman, Sigourney Weaver. Refreshingly different science-fiction thriller from the director of *DISTRICT 9* (2009). Brilliant engineer Patel has been working on creating an artificial intelligence, but his company (run by Weaver) concentrates on supplying an all-robot police force to stop pillaging gangs in Johannesburg. When he succeeds in (illegally) uploading a 'conscience' to a robot intended to be scrapped, this 'Chappie' is kidnapped and raised by outlaws. Former soldier Jackman might use Patel's mishap for his own sake. Uneven but intelligent, well-made and quite violent. Great score by Hans Zimmer, using songs by real-life artists Visser, who play the outlaws. Filmed in director Bloomkamp's native South Africa.

**Charley Varrick** (1973, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\* D:** Don Siegel. Starring Walter Matthau, Joe Don Baker, Andrew Robinson, John Vernon, Felicia Farr. After robbing \$750,000 from a New Mexico bank, Matthau realizes it's the Mafia's money and they will want it back. Soon, hitman Baker is hot on his trails. Clever script, cool star performances and a fine score by Lalo Schifrin are the assets of this thriller that is not always exciting but never boring. And an extra plus for that ending.

**Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** (2005, USA) **C-115m. \*\*\* D:** Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Freddie Highmore, David Kelly, Helena Bonham Carter, Noah Taylor, Missi Pyle, James Fox, Deep Roy, Christopher Lee, narrated by Geoffrey Holder. Typically outré Burton outing, this adaptation of Roald Dahl's satirical fantasy story is good, not great. Poor Charlie Bucket would love nothing more than to find a Golden Ticket, which would take him to eccentric hermite Willy Wonka and his amazing chocolate factory that five children are allowed to visit. Visually impressive, with indelible designs and ideas, though some of the set-pieces (and especially the songs) push the story too much into the background sometimes. Photographed by Philippe Rousselot, score and songs by Danny Elfman. Filmed before in 1971 as *WILLY WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY*.

**Charlie's Angels** (2000, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** McG (Joseph McGinty Nichols). Starring Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, Lucy Liu, Bill Murray, Sam Rockwell, Kelly Lynch, Tim Curry, Crispin Glover, John Forsythe, Matt LeBlanc, LL Cool J, Tom Green, Chad Wilson. Hyperkinetic update of the popular 70s television series has almost nothing to do with the original (apart from the characters), becoming a furious action comedy instead. Plot is completely unimportant, action scenes (including some stunning martial arts sequences) take first chair. Music-video clip style becomes tiring after a while, especially because of the dumb plot. Still, not bad, an eye-popping, fast-paced fun-film, with a most enjoyable trio of stars (not to forget the hilarious Bill Murray).

**Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle** (2003, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*** D: McG. Starring Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, Lucy Liu, Bernie Mac, Crispin Glover, Justin Theroux, Robert Patrick, Demi Moore, Matt LeBlanc, Luke Wilson, John Cleese, Robert Forster, Eric Bogosian, Pink, Carrie Fisher, Bruce Willis, voice of John Forsythe. Sequel to CHARLIE'S ANGELS (2000) bears little resemblance to the hit TV series. The Angels are after two rings which contain information from the witness protection programme, sought after by all syndicates imaginable. This stylized, music video clip-like action movie could be called a fantasy action film with all its unbelievable stunts. Some fun is to be had, if you don't get a headache. Almost on a par with the first movie. Hard to believe this was cowritten by John August (BIG FISH).

**Charlotte's Web** (1973, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Charles A. Nichols, Iwao Takamoto. Starring the voices of Debbie Reynolds, Paul Lynde, Henry Gibson, Agnes Moorehead, narrated by Rex Allen. Sweet-natured animated feature from the Hanna-Barbera studios, about the life of piglet Wilbur, who is saved from certain death by a little girl, but is later sold to another farm. He befriends spider Charlotte (voiced by Debbie Reynolds), who teaches him a lot about life and death. Good for kids and adults, as movie is simply animated but also tackles philosophical issues. Based on the book by E.B. White.

**Charlotte's Web** (2006, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\*** D: Gary Winick. Starring Dakota Fanning, Kevin Anderson, Essie Davis, Louis Corbett, Beau Bridges, (and the voices of) Julia Roberts, Steve Buscemi, John Cleese, Oprah Winfrey, Cedric the Entertainer, Kathy Bates, Reba McEntire, Robert Redford, Thomas Haden Church, narrated by Sam Shepard. Heart-warming, good-looking remake of the 1973 Hanna-Barbera cartoon about a spring pig and its unusual friendship with a spider, who teaches him a few lessons on life. Good score by Danny Elfman contributes to a fine family-viewing experience.

**Chasing Amy** (1997, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½** D: Kevin Smith. Starring Ben Affleck, Joey Lauren Adams, Jason Lee, Dwight Ewell, Jason Mewes, Kevin Smith, Matt Damon, Casey Affleck. Unpretentious, touching slice-of-life about a comicbook-artist (Affleck) who falls in love with a beautiful but gay young woman (Adams). All the complications that ensue are completely convincing because of the filmmaker's natural approach. Well-acted, immensely appealing film, written and coedited by the director of CLERKS.

**Chasing Ice** (2012, USA) **C-75m. \*\*\*½** D: Jeff Orlowski. Starring James Balog, Jeff Orlowski. Documentary about acclaimed photographer James Balog, who took up the project to install photo cameras near glaciers all over the world with the intention to record their recession caused by climate change. Some breathtaking photography, an important warning against global warming, but film is not very compelling and does not do the main character justice. AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH (2006) was much better.

**Chasseurs des Dragons** (2008, FRA/GER/LUX) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Guillaume Ivanel, Arthur Qwak. Starring (the voices of) Vincent Lindon, Patrick Timsit, Philippe Nahon, Amanda Lear, Jeremy Prevost. Big-screen adaptation of the animated TV series about a warrior, his companion and their pet dragon, who live in a kind of sky world, where entire buildings on huge rocks float in the air. They are joined by a little girl, whose uncle is hiring warriors to defeat a mythical monster, the so-called world-eater. A bit unconventional, eccentric, with some storytelling flaws, this adventure is well-animated and exciting in its action sequences, but the characters never really come to life. The English version, titled DRAGON HUNTERS, stars Forest Whitaker.

**Chat, Le** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Pierre Granier-Deferre. Starring Jean Gabin, Simone Signoret, Annie Cordy, Jacques Rispal, Nicole Desailly. Somber drama, based on the Georges Simenon novel, about frustrated Signoret and embittered Gabin, who have only hatred for

each other, after being married for 20 years. Gabin's beloved cat paves the way for the ultimate tragedy. Well-acted chronicle of things coming to an end is especially notable for its use of symbolism. An often minimalist, ponderous but ultimately rewarding drama. Score by Philippe Sarde. English title: THE CAT.

**Che?** (1972, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roman Polanski. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Sydne Rome, Hugh Griffith, Guido Alberti, Romolo Valli, Roman Polanski, Dieter Hallervorden. One of master director Polanski's least known films is a satire on the morals and perversions of the upper-class (and their hangers-on). Ravishing 22-year-old American hitchhiker Rome narrowly escapes some Italian thugs and stumbles into a strange mansion. It is populated by the weirdest characters imaginable, one of them being the masochistic, self-professed pimp Mastroianni. Well-directed, amusing and quirky, but also goes on too long at times. Not at all in the league of THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS, but still a must for Polanski scholars. The great setting is producer Carlo Ponti's own villa. Also shown at 94m. (as DIARY OF FORBIDDEN DREAMS). English title: WHAT?

**Cheap Detective, The** (1978, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Robert Moore. Starring Peter Falk, Ann-Margret, Eileen Brennan, Sid Caesar, Stockard Channing, James Coco, Dom DeLuise, Louise Fletcher, John Houseman, Madeline Kahn, Fernando Lamas. Disappointing follow-up to the delightful MURDER BY DEATH is a parody of Humphrey Bogart movies, with Falk playing a detective who gets caught in a confusing case. Quite funny but idle spoof fails to engross the viewer. Written by Neil Simon.

**Cheaper by the Dozen** (2003, USA) **C-98m. \*\*** D: Shawn Levy. Starring Steve Martin, Bonnie Hunt, Piper Perabo, Tom Welling, Hilary Duff, Kevin Schmidt, Richard Jenkins, Shawn Levy, Ashton Kutcher. Harmless, hardly funny family comedy, not at all a remake of the 1950 classic. Martin and Hunt have twelve children, and when new job opportunities force them to leave their hometown, all kinds of problems come up. Film tries to find humor in making messes and wrecking houses, but the laughs are limited. Followed by a sequel in 2005.

**Cheap Thrills** (2013, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: E.L. Katz. Starring Pat Healy, Sara Paxton, Ethan Embry, David Koechner, Amanda Fuller. Dark comedy based on a contrivance. Broke Healy is about to be evicted from his apartment, when he meets an old friend. At the bar they are hanging out they make the acquaintance of Koechner, an obviously rich guy, who subjects them to crazy dares, offering them real money. Things then really get out of hand. Fairly good thriller has excellent acting to recommend it, the subject matter is a question of taste (literally!).

**Checkmate** (1973, USA) **C-83m. \*\*½** D: Lem Amero. Starring Diana Wilson, An Tsan Hu, Don Draper, J.J. Coyle, Caren Kaye. Hilariously inept James Bond spoof featuring buxom Wilson as secret agent Pepper Burns, who goes against Asian villainess Hu, who threatens the world with a nuclear bomb. Cheap, trashy but corny, randy film with lots of nudity and some genuine laughs. Might be on Tarantino's cult movie list if he had seen it. Long live the 70s. Video title: PEPPER SECRET AGENT 00X.

**Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers** (1984, USA) **C-88m. \*½**D: Tommy Chong. Starring Tommy Chong, Cheech Marin, Roy Dotrice, Shelby Chong, Rikki Marin, Rae Dawn Chong, Jean-Claude Dreyfus. Rather obnoxious, weak C&C comedy (a drugless one!) where the buddies play French twins (!) who get separated when Cheech takes the wrong way home and meet again after 10 years. Chong only has revolution on his mind, whereas Cheech only wants some food. Quite well-produced but mostly devoid of laughs. The main joke is that Cheech only feels Chong's pains and vice versa. Only for die-hard fans, this was Cheech and Chong's sixth and last major film project together. Filmed in France, with many French crewmembers. Same story filmed several times before.

**Cheech & Chong's Next Movie** (1980, USA) **C-99m**. \*\* D: Tommy Chong. Starring Cheech Marin, Tommy Chong, Evelyn Guerrero, Betty Kennedy, Sy Kramer, Bob Goldthwait, Leslie Nielsen, Michael Winslow. Cheech & Chong's follow-up to the hit comedy UP IN SMOKE features more of the same low-brow jokes, but is somehow less funny and engaging, as the duo go through some really outrageous adventures. Plotless comedy has some hilarious bits, but should only be viewed in company after a few beers (or joints). For fans. Followed by CHEECH & CHONG'S NICE DREAMS.

**Cheech & Chong's Nice Dreams** (1981, USA) **C-88m**. \*\* D: Thomas Chong. Starring Cheech Marin, Thomas Chong, Evelyn Guerrero, Stacy Keach, Paul Rubens, Linnea Quigley, Sandra Bernhard, Dr Timothy Leary. Tired continuation of C&C's exploits. The boys have struck it rich in the marihuana business, using an ice cream truck for trading in weeds. Sergeant Stedanko (Keach) returns, but he is more intent on getting good dope than nailing the boys. Some funny bits, but offers more than its share of silliness. C&C's next movie, THING ARE TOUGH ALL OVER (1982), was better.

**Chello Hongmijoo Ilga Salinsagan** (2005, KOR) **C-94m**. \*\* D: Lee Woo-cheol. Starring Seong Hyeon-a, Park Da-an, Jeong Ho-bin, Woo Jin, Kim Na-woon. Korean horror drama about a Cello player, who gave up her career and lives now with her family. Then eerie things start happening around her. It turns out that an event in her past (a car accident) is coming back to haunt her. Tentative, slow-moving film isn't bad, but loses out with final twist that negates the entire film. Written by the director. International title: CELLO.

**Chelovek-Amfibiya** (1961, RUS) **C-96m**. \*\*½ D: Vladimir Chebotaryov, Gennadi Kazansky. Starring Vladimir Korenev, Anastasiya Vertinskaya, Mikhail Kozakov. The Russian answer to Jack Arnold's CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON (1954) is lightweight tale of an amphibian man, who goes ashore (as a handsome man) to woo the woman he has fallen in love with. However, she has promised to marry a brute. Good camerawork is main attraction in this romantic movie, but pace and plotting are just second-rate. Still worth a look, based on a novel by Aleksandr Belyayev. English title: THE AMPHIBIAN MAN.

**Chernobyl Diaries** (2012, USA) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Bradley Parker. Starring Jesse McCartney, Jonathan Sadowski, Olivia Dudley. A group of Europe-hungry American tourists go on an adventure trip to Pripyat, the Ukrainian town that was abandoned overnight after the nuclear fall-out in Chernobyl. Needless to say, not everyone - or everything - left back in 1986... and the tourists live to regret their visit. Impressive sets with abandoned apartment complexes (although this was filmed in Serbia and Hungary), but plot is garbage. The acting is also not very convincing.

**Cherry Falls** (2000, USA) **C-91m**. \*½ D: Geoffrey Wright. Starring Brittany Murphy, Michael Biehn, Gabriel Mann, Jesse Bradford, Jay Mohr. Odd mix of horror and comedy about a slasher stalking virgins(!) in a small town. Soon, everyone thinks that losing one's virginity means being safe from the serial killer. Starts okay but becomes more and more improbable - and finally idiotic. Some suspenseful parts save this from the bomb-rating. It's neither a horror film, nor a comedy, nor a horror comedy, but (almost) a total wash-out. From the director of the acclaimed ROMPER STOMPER!

**Cherry, Harry & Raquel!** (1969, USA) **C-75m**. \*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Larissa Ely, Linda Ashton, Charles Napier, Bert Santos, Franklin H. Bolger. 'A wild soul inhabits this place.... inspiring all manner of bizarre and abandoned excess....' Typically bizarre Russ Meyer film, but this time with a plot that is almost incomprehensible. It seems to be about the effects Marihuana can have on people. Napier plays a sheriff who gets the order to kill a drug-runner. Lots of nudity and sex will satisfy Meyer's fans, others will be bored or even

offended. Script by Meyer and novelist Tom Wolfe(!), based on an original story by Meyer. The director also produced, photographed and co-edited the picture.

**Chicken and Duck Talk** (1988, HGK) **C-99m**. \*\*\* D: Clifton Ko. Starring Michael Hui, Ricky Hui, Sylvia Chang, Lowell Lo. Occasionally hilarious comedy about greedy restaurant owner Hui, who is faced with tough competition when a fast-food restaurant opens across the street. A little slight plotwise, but funny and likeable. Scripted by the director and Hui, who is very popular in his native country. Original Cantonese title: JI TONG YA JIANG.

**Chicken Little** (2005, USA) **C-81m**. \*\*½ D: Mark Dindal. Starring Zach Braff, Garry Marshall, Don Knotts, Patrick Stewart, Amy Sedaris, Steve Zahn, Joan Cusack, Wallace Shawn, Harry Shearer, Fred Willard, Catherine O'Hara, Adam West, Mark Dindal. Big-budgeted, well-advertised Disney release about the title character, a constant underdog, who once caused chaos, when he believed the sky to be falling (when it was only an acorn). Will people believe him when he tells them of real aliens who are attacking the planet? Fast and enteratining enough to make it a nice view, but plot has some drawbacks. The title character – as small as he may be – seems to be a teenager with teenage problems and as such difficult to identify with for the target audience. And the problems are also rather depressing and sad. Don Knotts' last movie.

**Chicken Run** (2000, GBR/USA) **C-84m**. \*\*½ D: Peter Lord, Nick Park. Starring the voices of Mel Gibson, Julie Swahalja, Miranda Richardson. Animated feature from the makers of Wallace & Gromit, about the chicken herd on a farm, which shudders at the prospect of being turned into chicken pie. Enter a hot-shot rooster (voiced by Mel Gibson), who promises to bring them to freedom. Well-made, with some interesting references to old P.O.W. movies like THE GREAT ESCAPE (1963), but characters and story are too conventional. After the exciting climax you'll wonder why the rest of the film wasn't as good.

**Chien Andalou, Un** (1929, FRA) **B&W-16m**. n/r D: Luis Buñuel. Starring Simone Mareuil, Pierre Batcheff, Luis Bunuel, Salvador Dalí, Robert Hommet. Groundbreaking surrealist masterpiece by cinematic grandmaster Buñuel (his first film), which he made in collaboration with Salvador Dalí. A fantasy, impossible to describe, most notable for its very fluid style and arresting images. No film school can do without discussing this one. English title: AN ANDALUSIAN DOG.

**Chiesa, La** (1989, ITA) **C-102m**. \*\*\* D: Michele Soavi. Starring Hugh Quarshie, Tomas Arana, Fedor Chaliapin, Barbara Cupisti, Antonella Vitale, Asia Argento. Soavi's follow-up to AQUARIUS is a well-mounted supernatural horror film that draws some of its inspiration from Gothic fiction. In a Roman church, which was built on a giant graveyard dating back to the medieval crusades, evil is lurking underground, waiting to be unleashed. American restaurator Quarshie slowly becomes aware of the church's gruesome history and is consummated by its evil powers. Well-scripted, stylish and suspenseful, with surreal touches, produced and cowritten by none other that Dario Argento. Slightly uneven but consistently interesting, a must for horror fans. Trivia note: Film makes use of Philip Glass's brilliant theme from KOYAANISQATSI. English title: THE CHURCH.

**Child, The** (1977, USA) **C-82m**. \*\* D: Robert Voskonian. Starring Laurel Barnett, Rosalie Cole, Frank Janson, Rochard Hanners. Pretty stupid, derivative horror film about maid Barnett, who goes to work for spoilt brat Cole, a girl with the powers to summon the dead. Quite atmospheric horror shocker has a bizarre (and at times annoying) score. The final twenty minutes are quite good, with zombie attacks à la George Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. Also known as KILL AND GO HIDE and ZOMBIE CHILD.

**Children, The** (1980, USA) **C-91m**. \*½ D: Max Kalmanowicz. Starring Martin Shakar, Gil Rogers, Gale Garnett, Shannon Bolin, Tracy Griswold. A leak in the local nuke plant, a yellow,

radioactive mist, an eerily deserted school bus... it all adds up to zombie kids giving their parents the hug of death. All of this is done in dead serious manner, unfortunately. Technically adequate, but scenes involving the contaminated children just don't work, which kills the movie eventually. Probably inspired by George Romero's classics NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) and DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978). Also known as THE CHILDREN OF RAVENSBACK.

**Children of Men** (2006, GBR/USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alfonso Cuarón. Starring Clive Owen, Julianne Moore, Michael Caine, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Charlie Hunnam, Claire-Hope Ashitey, Pam Ferris, Danny Huston, Peter Mullan. Interesting interpretation of the science-fiction / social-fiction novel by P.D. James about our society in the near future (2027), which has not seen a childbirth for more than 18 years. In a crumbling Britain, with riots everywhere, a situation increasingly reminiscent of Fascist Germany, the main character (Owen), a former activist, is asked by his ex-wife (Moore) to help the cause of her underground organization, to bring a black refugee to safety. Together they embark on an odyssey, not knowing who they can trust. Cuarón's strong direction makes this sci-fi drama worth watching. It plunges the audience in the middle of the action, grips you and doesn't let you go. Not without flaws, but recommended to genre fans. Oscar-nominated cinematography by Emmanuel Lubezki.

**Children of the Living Dead** (2001, USA) **C-90m. \*½** D: Tor Ramsey. Starring Tom Savini, Marty Schiff, Damien Luvara, Jamie McCoy, Sam Nicotero, Heidi Hinzman. What starts out as an action-filled homage (or redo) of George Romero's zombie epic, loses its footing when it tries to introduce plot about a zombie leader, who even turns the dead into undead. After nice intro with Savini as the cool zombie killer, film disintegrates, suffering most from inept acting. The zombie effects are first-rate, though. Interestingly, executive producer John A. Russo cowrote the original NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968), and cinematographer Bill Hinzman also photographed that classic.

**Children on their Birthdays** (2002, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Mark Medoff. Starring Sheryl Lee, Christopher McDonald, Tom Arnold. Warm-hearted period drama set in the summer of 1947, where the friendship of two boys is put to a test when a new, unusual girl arrives on the block. Adds a few nice subplots to make for engrossing fare. Score is fine. Based on a short story by Truman Capote.

**Child's Play** (1988, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Tom Holland. Starring Catherine Hicks, Chris Sarandon, Alex Vincent, Brad Dourif, Dinah Manoff. Quite well-made horror film from the director of FRIGHT NIGHT (1985). A boy's new birthday present (barely afforded by his single mother) turns out to be inhabited by the spirit of a murderer. The doll goes on a rampage – will cop Sarandon believe the boy's stories of the talking and walking doll? Pretty mean-spirited movie puts a child in almost constant danger. The effects are good and so is the editing – though one could have shortened the finale a bit. Its success led to several sequels.

**Chi L'Ha Vista Morire?** (1972, ITA) **C-94m. \*\*½** D: Aldo Lado. Starring George Lazenby, Anita Strindberg, Peter Chatel, Adolfo Celi, Dominique Boschero, Nicoletta Elmi. Above-average giallo about a child murderer who may be targeting young Elmi, whose father Lazenby is a famous sculptor. Standard plot is enriched by stylish touches and a good Ennio Morricone score, but otherwise this is not scary or thrilling enough. Has more psychological depth than other films in this genre. Lazenby's quick descent to B-pictures after the Bond movie ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE is surprising (he even *looks* Italian here). Incidentally, Celi played the Bond villain in THUNDERBALL. English titles: WHO SAW HER DIE? and THE CHILD.

**China Syndrome, The** (1979, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\*½** D: James Bridges. Starring Jane Fonda, Jack Lemmon, Michael Douglas, Scott Brady, James Hampton, Peter Donat, Lewis Arquette.

Terrific factual drama topicalizes the threat posed by nuclear power plants. On a guided tour through such a plant, TV reporter Fonda and cameraman Douglas witness (and secretly film) an incident that looks like an emergency situation. While they are trying to find out what exactly did happen, plant exec Lemmon is trying to find out *why*... and soon finds himself in hot water. Not really a disaster thriller as some might think, drama draws its suspense from fine script and utterly believable, really excellent performance by Lemmon (he was nominated for an Academy Award, as was Fonda). Film hits bull's-eye in breathtaking finale. Only flaw is uneven treatment of the main characters; otherwise, this is tops. Douglas also produced.

**Chinese Boxer, The** (1970, HGK) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Wang Yu. Starring Wang Yu, Lo Lieh, Wang Ping, Chiao Hsiung, Fang Mien, Yuen Woo-Ping. Wang Yu's directorial debut is an ambitious Shaw Brothers eastern about an ex-student of a kung fu school, who returns to kill his master. Young student Wang Yu is almost killed and swears revenge when he learns that his master has died and the school has been turned into a casino. While the plot and the action don't really stand out, film is well-directed, with a charismatic performance by an ambitious Wang Yu. Also known as HAMMER OF THE GODS, and THE HAMMER OF GOD.

**Chinese Dragon** (1973, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Wu Yu Wei. Starring Wei Tze Wan, Sun Yet, Lui Ming. Young Kung Fu expert takes up job as bodyguard of a casino owner and has to contend with inner conflicts whenever he's told to give someone a beating. However, this is not the end of the story. Further plot elements include kidnapping, revenge and love. This is what a martial arts film should be like: outrageously stylish direction, exciting fight scenes and just enough drama in the plot to keep you involved.

**Chinese Ghost Story, A** (1987, HGK) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Leslie Cheung, Joey Wang, Lau Siu-Ming, Ling Bo, Wong Tsu Hsien, Wu Ma. In the mid-Eighties a new type of eastern emerged, combining the classical martial-arts tradition with other genres such as horror and fantasy. Aided by modern filmmaking techniques (mostly special effects) these movies produced fireworks for the senses and received much critical acclaim. A CHINESE GHOST STORY was among the first films of this new era, and despite its shortcomings remains one of the most effective films of its kind. The story: A naive hayseed, working as an assistant to a creditor, comes to a city where he is supposed to collect money from several people. After a disappointing day he decides to spend the night in a temple which is said to be haunted. The young man meets and falls in love with a beautiful ghost (Cheung). He learns that she is to be wed to a demon, and when he tries to help her, he gets involved in a fight between good and evil. Eye-popping, furiously directed action fantasy with horror elements suffers from unwelcome comic relief and a somewhat muddled story-line which lacks continuity. Still, it became a model for many supernatural easterns to follow and its success prompted two sequels. Produced by Tsui Hark.

**Chinese Ghost Story II, A** (1990, HGK) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Leslie Cheung, Joey Wong, Michelle Reis, Jacky Cheung, Wu Ma. Riveting sequel to the above features the same wild plotting and exciting action scenes. This time, the tax collector is mistaken for a wise man who is able to help to free the father of Cheung, who just happens to be his re-born love of the first film! Amusing vignettes, cheesy monsters, an atmospheric and well-directed horror fantasy. Especially for fans of the series. Produced by Tsui Hark.

**Chinese Ghost Story III, A** (1991, HGK) **C-104m. \*\*½** D: Ching Siu-Tung, Tsui Hark. Starring Jacky Cheung, Lau Shun, Lau Siu-Ming, Tony Leung, Joey Wong. Final part in Ching's GHOST trilogy gives the viewer just what he expects, this is more or less a remake of the first two films. A young monk and his master get involved in a good-vs.-evil fight involving the mighty Tree Sprit and his fiancée, a beautiful ghost who the young monk falls in love with. Episodic

horror fantasy starts mild but improves in the second half. Leung's performance is appealing. Cowritten by codirector Tsui Hark.

**Chinese Zodiac** (2012, HGK) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Shu Qi, Oliver Platt, Daniel Wu, Laura Weissbecker, Caitlin Dechelle. Typical Jackie Chan action comedy, made with a big budget and a considerable amount of CGI. Jackie more or less plays himself, as a specialist for impossible missions, who is hired to retrieve missing bronze heads, Chinese artifacts, which are worth millions. Plot is sometimes confusing, just like the mixture of three languages (English, Chinese and French), but the action scenes, both fights and stunts are excellent and thrilling. Echoes of PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN in the jungle scenes. Incredible what Chan can still do at almost 60.

**Chinjeolhan Geumjassi** (2005, KOR) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Park Chan-Wook. Starring Lee Yeong-ae, Choi Min-sik, Tony Barry, Anne Cordiner. Go Su-hee. Conclusion of director Park's Vengeance trilogy (following BOKSUNEUN NAUI GEOT and OLDBOY) is the strongest, most consistently plotted part. A woman, imprisoned for a crime she didn't commit, is released after 13 years and plans her revenge against the man who was responsible for the death of several children. She also seeks out her daughter who she had to give up for adoption. Strikingly directed, superbly scored revenge drama, a must-see for fans of the New Korean Cinema. Actress Lee gives a brilliant performance. Winner of a Little Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival. English titles: LADY VENGEANCE, SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE.

**Chinos y Minifaldas** (1967, SPA/ITA/GER) **C-83m. \*\*½** D: Ramón Comas. Starring Adrian Hoven, Barth Warren, Gérard Landry, Teresa del Río, Lilia Neyung, Karin Feddersen, Wolfgang Preiss. Another attempt at cashing in on the James Bond mania that swept across the world in the mid-60s. Hoven plays a womanizing special agent, who tries to protect the world from a Chinese Fu Manchu-type villain and thwart his plans to use a special drug on a foreign minister. Quite amusing how Hoven kisses girls at the craziest of moments (he calls himself 'globetrotting Samaritan for lonely women'). Otherwise pretty shoddy and nowhere near the real James Bond. For devotees of this stuff. Score by Piero Umiliani. English title: DEATH ON A RAINY DAY.

**Chitty Chitty Bang Bang** (1968, GBR) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ken Hughes. Starring Dick Van Dyke, Sally Ann Howes, Lionel Jeffries, Gert Fröbe, Anny Quayle, Benny Hill, James Robertson Justice, Desmond Llewelyn. Marvelous children's fantasy musical about crackpot inventor Van Dyke and his two kids who live through many adventures with their wondrous car. Good songs, colorful sets, a fine example of a film children will love. Wonderful production design by Ken Adam. Scripted by the director and Roald Dahl, based on the novel by Ian Fleming (of James Bond fame).

**Chloe** (2009, USA/CDN/FRA) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Atom Egoyan. Starring Julianne Moore, Liam Neeson, Amanda Seyfried, Max Thieriot. Gynaecologist Moore suspects that her husband Neeson is cheating on her and asks chance acquaintance Seyfried, a callgirl, to find out if he is prone to flirting with other women. Of course, things get out of hand pretty soon. Drama plays like a pretentious remake of a French film, and at the end you realize, it is one. The actors are adequate, but generally this film lacks believability. Egoyan handles partly kinky subject matter well. Based on the film NATHALIE (2003).

**Chocolat** (2000, GBR/USA) **C-121m. \*\*½** D: Lasse Hallström. Starring Juliette Binoche, Alfred Molina, Carrie-Anne Moss, Aurelien Parent-Koenig, Johnny Depp, Peter Stormare, Lena Olin, Leslie Caron, Hugh O'Connor, Judi Dench. A single mother moves with her daughter into a sleepy French village in 1959, unaware that her profession (chocolatier) will cause an uproar, especially with ultra-conservative mayor Molina. Fairy-tale like drama is well-made and

good-looking, but story is simplistic and forgettable. Especially slight and disappointing when compared to Hallström's earlier THE CIDER HOUSE RULES (1999). Based on the novel by Joanne Harris.

**Chocolate Strawberry Vanilla** (2014, AUS) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Stuart Simpson. Starring Glenn Maynard, Kyrie Capri, Kristen Condon. Slight psycho drama about a psychopathic ice-cream salesman who is in love with a soap opera actress, which ultimately makes him go crazy. An okay idea for a 10m. short, at this running time it seems unnecessarily padded out. Filmed on a shoestring budget.

**Chopper** (2000, AUS) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Andrew Dominik. Starring Eric Bana, Simon Lydon, David Field, Dan Wyllie, Bill Young. Bana is convincing as notorious criminal nicknamed Chopper, who became a celebrity in his native Australia. Portrait is sometimes effective (violently so), the plot is not very coherent and may have your attention wandering sometimes. Still, an interesting cross between HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER (1986) and NATURAL BORN KILLERS (1994).

**Christine** (1983, USA) **C-110m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: John Carpenter. Starring Keith Gordon, John Stockwell, Alexandra Paul, Robert Prosky, Harry Dean Stanton, Kelly Preston. Stephen King adaptation about nerdish teen Gordon, who buys oldtimer 'Christine', which boosts his self-esteem. The car, however, seems strangely alive with an evil spirit... Flashy, well-made horror thriller never rises above its really stupid premise, though Carpenter deserves credit for his fine direction and score. Good effects.

**Christmas Story, A** (1983, CDN/USA) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Bob Clark. Starring Melinda Dillon, Darren McGavin, Peter Billingsley, Ian Petrella, Scott Schwartz, narrated by Jean Shepherd. Amiable children's film about 9-year-old Billingsley and the traumatic Christmas, when he wanted nothing more than a Red Ryder Air Gun. Absolutely hilarious in parts, but violence, profanity and glorification of guns leave a bad aftertaste. A genuine American Christmas classic, based on autobiographical writings by Jean Shepherd.

**Christmas with the Kranks** (2004, USA) **C-99m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Joe Roth. Starring Tim Allen, Jamie Lee Curtis, Dan Aykroyd, M. Emmet Walsh, Elizabeth Franz, Erik Per Sullivan, Cheech Marin, Jake Busey, Austin Pendleton, Felicity Huffman. Christmas comedy misfire that still has some laughs. Allen and Curtis, with their daughter gone for Christmas this year, decide to ignore the holidays completely and plan to go on a cruise, much to the chagrin of their neighbors, who can't understand them at all – and will do what it takes to put them into the Christmas mood. Based on a novel by John Grisham(!), this should have been better with the talents involved.

**Christopher Roth** (2010, ITA/BEL) **C-88m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Maxime Alexandre. Starring Joaquim de Almeida, Anna Galiena, Jessica Bonanni, Ben Gazzara. Solidly made Euro thriller set in Italy, where American(?) author Almeida (with a Portuguese accent) has withdrawn with his wife Galiena, in order to escape bad reviews and public pressure. Soon, a grisly murder series starts and reality and imagination become indistinguishable. Quite violent and dark, but not entirely convincing, also because of the silly voice-over narration by the main character. They should have cast an American. Written and photographed by the director.

**Chronicle** (2012, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Josh Trank. Starring Dane DeHaan, Alex Russell, Michael B. Jordan, Michael Kelly, Ashley Hinshaw. Fantasy action movie along the lines of CLOVERFIELD (2008) about three friends who stumble upon a hole in the ground and make contact with something utterly strange, perhaps even alien. One the next day they discover that each of them has superpowers, telekinetic, like the force in STAR WARS. At the beginning they use it to have fun, but later one of them uses it to solve his problems, and things get out of control. Interesting, to say the least, but HANCOCK-style humor and

CLOVERFIELD-like horror don't gel well, and after the spectacular ending it seems like a stunt, as it does not offer any explanation. Written by Max Landis.

**Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, The** (2005, USA) **C-143m SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Andrew Adamson. Starring Tilda Swinton, James McAvoy, Jim Broadbent, Kiran Shah, James Cosmo, Georgie Henley, Skandar Keynes, William Moseley, Anna Popplewell, voices of Liam Neeson, Ray Winstone, Rupert Everett, Michael Madsen. Superlative filmization of the C.S. Lewis book about four children, who, fleeing air raids in WW2 London, go to live in a country estate and find a secret passage to Narnia, a magical country that is under the spell of the White Witch (Swinton). Before they know it, they are plunged into the adventure of their lives. Extremely well-made, exciting, superbly paced adventure is perfect for kids, no less thrilling for adults. Creates a wondrous fantasy world very much in the vein of the LORD OF THE RINGS movies, only less dark and brooding (it was also shot in New Zealand). From the director of the SHREK movies. Fine score by Harry Gregson-Williams. Filmed before as a TV series in 1967, and in animated form in 1979 and 1988 (all as THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE). Followed by its first sequel in 2008.

**Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian** (2008, GBR/USA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Andrew Adamson. Starring Ben Barnes, Georgie Henley, Skandar Keynes, William Moseley, Anna Popplewell, Sergio Castellitto, Peter Dinklage, Warwick Davis, Vincent Grass, Simón Andreu, Tilda Swinton, voices of Liam Neeson, Eddie Izzard. First NARNIA sequel has the four children return to the fantastical land, because the title character, an ousted prince, has blown the magical horn. It turns out Narnia has lost much of its magic, but the Prince may be able to reunite the Narnians with his people, the power-hungry Telmarines. Filmed with the same gusto as the first film, but script is talky and much less compelling. It seems the film would have needed a bit more fantasy a la the White Witch (Swinton, who has a cameo). There are also too many parallels to LORD OF THE RINGS. Followed by THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER (2010).

**Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader** (2010, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Apted. Starring Ben Barnes, Skandar Keynes, Georgie Henley, Will Poulter, Bruce Spence, Tilda Swinton, Anna Popplewell, William Moseley. Third NARNIA film is step up from last time, as this adventure has the children venture to dangerous islands a la SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD (1958) or JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS (1963). They have to retrieve seven magical swords and align them to defeat evil force that seems to swallow up boats and people. Slightly episodic plot thankfully doesn't try to rival PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN, it can stand well on its own - also compared to the previous NARNIA films. Excellent special effects, astounding camerawork in this fantasy thrillride. The sweeping score is also outstanding.

**Chugyeogja** (2008, KOR) **C-125m. \*\*\* D:** No Hang-jin. Starring Kim Yun-seok, Ha Jung-Woo, Seo Yeong-hie. Gritty Korean thriller about an ex-detective who is now a pimp and starts to suspect foul play when two of his prostitutes disappear after an appointment. In fact, they have fallen prey to a sick serial killer that operates with hammer and chisel. Has pacing issues, film's mid-section is almost grotesque, depicting the police as a bunch of complete idiots, but delivers a shocking, harrowing finale. Aka THE CHASER.

**Chung King Express** (1994, HGC) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Wong Kar-Wai. Starring Brigitte Lin, Takeshi Kaneshiro, Tony Leung, Faye Wang, Valerie Chow, 'Piggy' Chan. In the huge shopping center of the Chung King building in Hong Kong two stories unfold, each about lovesickness and obsession. Filmmaker Wong Kar-Wai nicely captures the cold and sterile neon-atmosphere of the city, but his narrative is uneven; there seems to be no system behind the voice-overs or the structuring of the plot. Shot in a fluid video-clip style; might have been

more compelling as a short film. Still, a cult favorite, also with Quentin Tarantino, who had the film released in the U.S. after 'discovering' it for himself.

**Cider House Rules, The** (1999, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lasse Hallström. Starring Tobey Maguire, Charlize Theron, Michael Caine, Delroy Lindo, Paul Rudd, Kathy Baker, Jane Alexander, Kieran Culkin, Kate Nelligan. Beautiful, gentle coming-of-age drama about orphan Maguire, who grows up in a private hospital and children's home run by doctor Caine. At the age of twenty he decides to leave his home and friends to find happiness at former patient Theron's farm. Tops in all compartments, except perhaps in the characterization of the main figure, who seems superficial. Won Oscars for Best Supporting Actor (Caine) and Best Screenplay (John Irving, who adapted his own novel). Not quite in the realm of *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP*, but warm-hearted and endearing nevertheless.

**Ciel sur la Tête, Le** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Yves Ciampi. Starring Marcel Bozzuffi, Bernard Fresson, Guy Tréjan, Jacques Monod, Henry Piégay. Aboard a French aircraft carrier, the crew have to adjust to sudden emergency situation. It turns out that a mysterious (extra-terrestrial?) satellite is orbiting the Earth, and Russians and Americans are accusing each other of controlling it. Intelligent handling of Cold War thematic, deliberately paced but highly interesting. Factual, almost documentary-like approach adds to film's unique atmosphere. Good aerial photography. Watch this one! English titles: *HEAVEN ON ONE'S HEAD*, *SKIES ABOVE*, *SKY ABOVE HEAVEN*.

**Cifrato Speciale** (1966, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-93m. \*\* D:** Herbert J. Sherman (=Pino Mercanti). Starring Lang Jeffries, José Greci, Helga Liné, George Rigaud, Umberto Raho. Standard Italian Bond imitation follows the exploits of sort-of agent Jeffries, who knows the whereabouts of a secret code or formula used by the Nazis. Many different organizations try to buy him, which leads to some action and an underwater showdown. Trivial, disjointed fare tries hard to be dramatic, comes off as pretentious. Good Riz Ortolani score. Aka *SPECIAL CODE: ASSIGNMENT LOST FORMULA*.

**Cinderella** (1950, USA) **C-72m. \*\*\*½ D:** Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske. Starring (the voices of) Ilene Woods, Eleanor Audley, Verna Felton. Lovely Disney classic about poor, abused girl, whose stepmother refuses to take her to the grand ball, and how her fairy godmother makes it all happen. Charming, exquisitely animated, a must for any child's (or parent's) movie collection.

**Cinderfella** (1960, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Frank Tashlin. Starring Jerry Lewis, Ed Wynn, Judith Anderson, Anna Maria Alberghetti, Henry Silva, Count Basie, Robert Hutton. Farcical take on *CINDERELLA* with Lewis playing a poor idiot, who must serve his stepmother and her two sons until male fairy Wynn decides to put an end to his misery. Likeable Lewis vehicle, quite glamorous and colorful. Children should like this.

**Cinema of Vengeance** (1993, HGK) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Toby Russel. Interesting documentary about the Hong Kong action cinema, covering the past fifty years. Filmmakers and actors talk about their experiences in the movie business. Among the interviewees are Bruce Lee, Sammo Hung and John Woo. Highlighted are clips from films starring Jackie Chan, Sammo Hung, Chow Yun-Fat, Cynthia Rothrock et al. Lee's short statements are the best part of this documentary, which only scratches the surface of an incredibly rich repertoire of films. King Hu or Tsui Hark are, for example, not even mentioned. Still, martial arts fans should give this one a look. Several clips are in widescreen.

**Cinque Bambole per la Luna d'Agosto** (1970, ITA) **C-81m. \*\*\*½ D:** Mario Bava. Starring William Berger, Edwige Fenech, Ira Fürstenberg, Howard Ross, Helena Ronée, Teodoro Corrà, Justine Gall (=Ely Galleani), Edith Meloni, Mauro Bosco, Maurice Poli. One of maestro Bava's least known films may actually be his best: A scientist invites several of his friends

and business associates to his villa somewhere on a remote island. Once there they try to buy an important formula from him; when they are killed off one by one, everyone suspects everyone else of being the killer. Superbly stylish sets, photography and direction in Bava's quint-essential interpretation of Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*; he turns it into a corny slasher movie. Bava also edited the picture. Wonderful 70s soundtrack by Piero Umiliani. Cinematography by Antonio Rinaldi, who did more films with Bava. English titles: FIVE DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON, ISLAND OF TERROR. Bava followed this with the more violent, similarly plotted ANTEFATTO.

**Cinque del Condor, I** (1985, ITA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Antonio Sabato, Ivan Rassimov, Andrea Aureli, Sal Borgese, Geoffrey Copleston, Werner Pochath. Typically cheap but okay action film, shot in the Dominican Republic, about a group of mercenaries who try to free kidnapped 10-year-old son of a rebel leader. Trivial, for rabid action fans. Score by Stelvio Cipriani. English title: WILD TEAM.

**5 Donne per l'Assassino** (1974, ITA/FRA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Stelvio Massi. Starring Giorgio Albertazzi, Francis Matthews, Howard Ross, Pascal Rivault. Medium giallo, made after the prime of the genre. Reporter Matthews is shocked to find his wife dead after giving birth to his son. When he learns that he could not possibly have fathered the child, he is devastated. Could he be the killer that's bumping off pregnant women? Inspector Ross investigates. Direction is quite creative, with extensive use of zooms, but thrills are almost non-existent, and Ross simply does not register at all. Some gore in this thriller, which makes obvious reference to a giallo classic, Mario Bava's SEI (6) DONNE PER L'ASSASSINO (1964). Score by Giorgio Gaslini. English title: FIVE WOMEN FOR THE KILLER.

**Cinque Giornate, Le** (1973, ITA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Dario Argento. Starring Adriano Celentano, Enzo Cerasico, Marilù Tolo, Luisa de Santis, Glauco Onorato. Italian cult director Dario Argento's only deviation from the horror/thriller genre (and rarest film) is an occasionally funny but unfortunately overlong comedy drama about an escaped convict (Celentano) who gets mixed up in a revolution in 1848 Milan. Episodic adventure is more serious than it is funny, and some scenes really have depth, but otherwise this is a rather careless venture, which made Argento turn back to horror and deliver his masterpiece, PROFONDO ROSSO. Good use of classical music, arranged by Giorgio Gaslini. Photographed by Luigi Kuveiller. Story by Argento, Luigi Cozzi, Nanni Balestrini and Enzo Ungari. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Very hard to find and most prints are severely damaged. Also known as FIVE DAYS OF MILAN and DIE HALUNKEN (in Germany).

**5150 Rue des Ormes** (2009, CDN) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Eric Tessier. Starring Marc-André Grondin, Normand D'Amour, Sonia Vachon, Mylène St-Sauveur. French-Canadian horror thriller about a film student, who - during a location hunt - falls prey to a suburban psychopath and his family. The unforgiving, self-righteous father locks him up in a windowless room for days and weeks, the other members of the family either join this sadistic 'game' (like the teen daughter) or just follow instructions (the submissive housewife). He ultimately offers his victim the chance for freedom by beating him in a game of chess. Unrelentingly dark picture of Canadian suburbia, not always on target, but turns into a neat psycho drama. English title: 5150 ELM'S WAY.

**5 per l'Inferno** (1969, ITA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Frank Kramer (=Gianfranco Parolini). Starring John Garko, Klaus Kinski, Aldo Canti, Margaret Lee, Sal Borgese, Luciano Rossi, Samson Burke. Bill Vandars. Above average war actioner about five American soldiers taking up assignment to infiltrate mansion occupied by Germans to steal secret attack plan. Sexy Lee may be on both sides. Well-directed by Parolini, who showcases the comic-book

likenesses of his stars, plot is more thoughtful than usual, though still uneven and draggy. Engaging score by Vasco-Mancuso. Aka FIVE FOR HELL, FIVE INTO HELL.

**Circle, The** (2017, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Ponsoldt. Starring Emma Watson, Tom Hanks, Glenn Headly, Bill Paxton, Ellar Coltrane, Karen Gillan. Interesting sci-fi drama that spins today's techworld a little further. Call-center agent Watson starts working for huge (Google-like) company that is working on controlling everybody's lives. When they introduce a new see-all camera, Watson becomes their guinea pig, with tragic consequences. Well-made, but a little too obvious and undramatic. Still, a valid reminder of critically questioning every new invention.

**Circus** (2000, GBR/USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Rob Walker. Starring John Hannah, Famke Janssen, Peter Stormare, Eddie Izzard, Fred Ward, Brian Conley, Tiny Lister, Amanda Donohue, Rob Walker. Lumbering, anemic crime drama (no thriller) about a pair of con artists (Hannah and Janssen) who dream of a care-free existence in Mexico but have to deal with all kinds of underworld characters. Interesting characterizations make this watchable. Score by Simon Boswell. Shot in England.

**Circus of Fear** (1966, GBR/GER) **C-87m. \*\*½ D:** John (Llewellyn) Moxey. Starring Christopher Lee, Leo Genn, Anthony Newlands, Heinz Drache, Eddi Arent, Klaus Kinski, Margaret Lee, Suzy Kendall, Cecil Parker, Victor Maddern. After a robbery, the money ends up in a circus. The police soon know where to investigate, but a murderer is complicating things. Solidly made thriller, mostly without highlights. Lee wears a mask for most of the movie. This was part of the German Edgar Wallace series, German release was black-and-white. Written and produced by Harry Alan Towers. Version titled PSYCHO-CIRCUS runs 68m.

**Circus of Horrors** (1960, GBR) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Sidney Hayers. Starring Anton Diffring, Erika Remberg, Yvonne Monlaur, Donald Pleasence, Jane Hylton, Kenneth J. Warren. Horror drama that uses themes from earlier, better films. Diffring plays a surgeon, who flees from a disfigured customer to mainland Europe. In France, he gains dominance over a small circus and keeps practicing his facial surgery. Several deaths attract the attention of the police. Not very believable, though earnestly performed. Good color photography by the great Douglas Slocombe is main reason to watch this film. Also known as PHANTOM OF THE CIRCUS.

**Citadel** (2012, GBR/EIR) **C-84m. \*\*\* D:** Ciaran Foy. Starring Aneurin Barnard, James Cosmo, Ian Hanmore, Wunmi Mosaku, Ingrid Craigie, Chris Hegarty. Unusual, well-made horror thriller set in and around bleak skyscrapers, so-called condemned buildings, which are peopled by zombie-like children. When they kill Barnard's wife, the agoraphobic father of a toddler must face his fears, but leaving the cold, derelict town is not so easy. The local priest Cosmo suggests killing the kids and has an eerie story to tell about them. Atmospheric chiller, quite bleak at the beginning, but becomes better and better. Has cult possibilities. Good score by Tomandandy. Written by the director.

**Cité des Enfants Perdus, La** (1995, FRA/SPA/GER) **C-112m. \*\*\* D:** Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Marc Caro. Starring Ron Perlman, Joseph Lucien, Daniel Emilfork, Mireille Mosse, Judith Vittet, Dominique Pinon, Rufus, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, voice of Jean-Louis Trintignant. In a utopian, presumably post-apocalyptic society, which lives in a city built like an oil rig in the middle of the sea, a mad professor sends his cloned sons out to kidnap children. They are supposed to give him the ability to dream, but it turns out they only have nightmares. Circus performer Perlman, whose little brother has been abducted, stumbles with a small girl (Vittet) into a strange adventure. Spellbinding fantasy film with superb production design and some truly amazing effects is marred by a plot that lacks momentum and a little straightforwardness. Still, another brilliantly creative film by directors Jeunet and Caro, whose follow-up to the

acclaimed DELICATESSEN is just as oddly touching and original. This is perhaps a film that needs multiple viewing. Not for small children, though. The directors also cowrote the screenplay. Score by Angelo Badalamenti, costumes by Jean-Paul Gaultier. English title: THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN.

**Citizen Kane** (1941, USA) **B&W-118m. \*\*\*½ D:** Orson Welles. Starring Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, Ruth Warrick, Ray Collins. Classic film of the first half of the 20th century features Welles in all his genius, playing a young man, who as a child is whisked away to a life in the city, where he buys a newspaper and uses his power to exert influence in politics, business and private life. An epic biography, utilizing then-modern cinematic techniques, still an impressive achievement. Score by Bernard Herrmann.

**Città Sconvolta: Caccia Spietata ai Rapitori, La** (1975, ITA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Fernando Di Leo. Starring Luc Merenda, James Mason, Irina Maleeva, Marino Masé, Daniele Dublino, Valentina Cortese, Salvatore Billa, Tom Felleghy. Industrialist Mason's son is kidnapped along with Merenda's. The poor car mechanic trusts Mason to work things out. When his son is killed, Merenda takes justice into his own hands. Typical Italian crime meller suffers from second-rate, under-developed script. Some intense performances and Luis Bacalov's score (ranging from classical to synthesizer rock) make this slightly recommendable to fans. Watch out for edited versions. English title: THE KIDNAP SYNDICATE.

**Città Violenta** (1970, ITA/FRA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Sergio Sollima. Starring Charles Bronson, Jill Ireland, Michel Constantin, Telly Savalas, Umberto Orsini, George Savalas, Ray Saunders. Bronson plays a hitman – one of his lone wolf roles – whose girlfriend is kidnapped. He gets involved with mafia syndicate headed by Savalas. Standard B-actioner, perhaps a little moodier than others. Begins well, loses momentum before second half. For Bronson fans. Pulsating score by Ennio Morricone. Lina Wertmüller was among the writers. George Savalas is Telly's brother. English titles: THE FAMILY, VIOLENT CITY.

**City Beneath the Sea** (1971, USA) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Irwin Allen. Starring Stuart Whitman, Robert Wagner, Rosemary Forsyth, Robert Colbert, Susana Miranda, Richard Basehart, Joseph Cotten, Sugar Ray Robinson. In the year 2053, mankind has built Pacifica, a large underwater city, seeking refuge from climatic changes on the planet's surface. Commander Whitman is sent to Pacifica to supervise the transfer of gold from Fort Knox. Incidentally, there's also a huge planetoid that's racing towards the Earth, threatening to destroy it within hours. Cowriter-producer-director Allen's last movie before his disaster movie run is juvenile science-fiction that might thrill 10-year-old kids. Earnest dramatics make this watchable for adults, but it takes itself far too seriously. Made for television.

**City Hall** (1996, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\*½ D:** Harold Becker. Starring Al Pacino, John Cusack, Bridget Fonda, Danny Aiello, Martin Landau, David Paymer, Anthony Franciosa. Well-acted but only moderately interesting political drama about deputy mayor of N.Y.C. (Cusack), who serves his boss, a brilliant politician (Pacino), very well. After a shootout involving a drug dealer, a police man and an innocent child, the deputy mayor has to discover that the city hall may be a pool of corruption. Pacino is charismatic as always, but overall film is pretty bland.

**City of Angels** (1998, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Brad Silberling. Starring Nicholas Cage, Meg Ryan, Dennis Franz. Hollywood remake of Wim Wenders' DER HIMMEL ÜBER BERLIN about guardian angel Cage, who falls in love with surgeon Ryan and decides to become human. Not nearly as poetic or philosophical as the German film, but romantic by-play (kudos to Ryan) will satisfy the stars' fans. Surprisingly well-directed and photographed (by John Seale), the script is much too simple, however. What's more, Cage seems to be reprising his dumb role from IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU.

**City of Ember** (2008, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Gil Kenan. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Toby Jones, Bill Murray, Tim Robbins, Martin Landau, Liz Smith. Interesting (to say the least) science-fiction mystery set underground, where human civilization has found refuge after a cataclysmic event on the surface. Now, after 200 years, the systems are failing and it has become time to try to go back up. However, the knowledge how to do that has been lost, and it's up to two children to retrieve it. Good settings, vivid performances, but odd pacing flaws entire film. Scenes seem rushed, even incoherent, evidence of post-production tampering? Too bad. Based on a book by Jeane Duprau. Coproduced by Tom Hanks.

**City of the Dead** (1960, GBR) **77m. \*\*\* D:** John Llewellyn Moxey. Starring Dennis Lotis, Christopher Lee, Betta St. John, Patricia Jessel, Venetia Stevenson. Horror mini-classic about witches' coven in small rural village, which preys on young women, sacrificing them to the devil. Brilliant photography (by Desmond Dickinson) makes the film reminiscent of Mario Bava's *LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO*, which was made the same year. Strangely enough, plot structure resembles Hitchcock's *PSYCHO* as well as Argento's *SUSPIRIA*, which makes it an interesting curio for horror fans. Relatively undramatic though, until the final five minutes.

**City on Fire** (1979, CDN) **C-104m. \*\* D:** Alvin Rakoff. Starring Barry Newman, Susan Clark, Shelley Winters, Leslie Nielsen, James Franciscus, Ava Gardner, Henry Fonda. Not-bad disaster thriller, modelled after the many genre films of the 1970s, about sabotage which leads to a fire that threatens to wipe out a city. Doctor Newman, nurse Winters try to evacuate a hospital, and Fonda, chief of the fire brigade, tries to work out a way to extinguish the flames. Trivial but gripping in the second half. Still, a cut below the average Hollywood disaster epic (although lots of stars turn up here, too).

**City on Fire** (1987, H GK) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Ringo Lam. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Danny Lee, Sun Yueh, Carrie Ng, Roy Cheung. After John Woo's *A BETTER TOMORROW*, another milestone in Hong Kong cinema. Chow Yun-Fat plays a weary cop, who goes undercover to bust a crime syndicate and is torn between the loyalty to his boss and his love for Carrie Ng. A well-acted (especially by Chow) and richly textured action drama that was a major inspiration for Quentin Tarantino's debut hit *RESERVOIR DOGS*.

**Clan des Siciliens, Le** (1969, FRA) **C-120m. \*\*\*½ D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean Gabin, Alain Delon, Lino Ventura, Irina Demick, Amedeo Nazzari, Philippe Baronnet, Karen Blanguernon. Solidly made but uninspired crime thriller about escaped convict Delon and his plans to steal expensive jewelry with mafia boss Gabin. Ventura is perfect as world-weary cop, who must catch the criminals. Nice score by Ennio Morricone, photography by Henri Decae. Based on the novel by Auguste Le Breton. English title: *THE SICILIAN CLAN*.

**Clash of the Titans** (1981, USA) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Desmond Davis. Starring Harry Hamlin, Laurence Olivier, Claire Bloom, Maggie Smith, Ursula Andress, Jack Gwillim, Susan Fleetwood, Burgess Meredith, Tim Pigott-Smith. Well-produced mythology mix about half-god Perseus (Hamlin), who must contend with goddess Thetis' anger against his father Zeus. On his quest he must defeat several monsters like Medusa or Cerberus to be reunited with Princess Andromeda. Not to be taken too seriously, but entertaining – when it's not talky. Some nice effects and the Medusa showdown make it worthwhile. Produced by special effects genius Ray Harryhausen, who retired after this. Remade in 2010.

**Clash of the Titans** (2010, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*½ D:** Louis Leterrier. Starring Liam Neeson, Ralph Fiennes. Big, loud remake of the 1981 fantasy film thrives on special effects. Perseus finds himself at odds with his father Zeus and intends to help the people of Argos to stop unleashing of giant monster that will destroy their city. Lots of talk in the first half hour, film

gets going in well-directed action scenes, but plot is generally second-rate, with characters that mean nothing.

**Classe de Nieve, La** (1998, FRA) **C-97m.** \*\*\*½ D: Claude Miller. Starring Clément van den Bergh, Lokman Nalcakan, Francois Roy, Yves Verhoeven. Emmanuelle Bercot. A deeply troubled 12-year-old (van den Bergh) goes on a skiing trip with his school class. Once away from home, his mental imbalance is expressed increasingly in daydreams and nightmares. Technically not as savvy, not as subtly written as perhaps its literary source (by Emmanuel Carrère), film nevertheless manages to flesh out the incompetence of the adults in dealing with psychological problems of children. Winner of the jury prize in Cannes. From the director of DITES-LUI QUE JE L'AI ME (1977) and MORTELLE RANDONNEE (1983). Also known as CLASS TRIP.

**Class of 1984** (1982, CDN) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Mark L. Lester. Starring Perry King, Merrie Lynn Ross, Timothy Van Patten, Roddy McDowall, Stefan Arnglim, Michael (J.) Fox. Weak but watchable thriller set at a high school, where the new music teacher King is faced with a violent gang led by Van Patten. Predictable exploiter aims high (references range from BLACKBOARD JUNGLE (1955) and UNMAN, WITTERING AND ZIGO (1971) to A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (1971)), but it's nothing to get excited about. Michael J. Fox is cute in one of his first movies, Lalo Schifrin composed the score, Tom Holland cowrote the script. Followed by two sequels, CLASS OF 1999 and CLASS OF 1999 II: THE SUBSTITUTE.

**Class of Nuke 'Em High** (1986, USA) **C-82m.** \*\*\*½ D: Richard W. Haines, Samuel Weil (=Lloyd Kaufman). Starring Janelle Brady, Gil Brenton, Robert Prichard, Pat Ryan, James Nugent Vernon, Brad Dunker. Deliriously demented splatter movie comedy set in Tromaville, where the local high school is bustling with the weirdest characters. Just around the corner is a nuclear power plant, which is leaking and transforming the students into freaks. Incoherent but funny and tremendously paced cult movie with an attitude. The finale is a stunner. One of Troma Film's best movies. Followed by at least three sequels.

**Class of Nuke 'Em High Part II: Subhumanoid Meltdown** (1991, USA) **C-100m.** \*½ D: Eric Louzil. Starring Brick Bronsky, Lisa Gaye, Leesa Rowland, Michael Kurtz. Sequel to the above is less offensive but also less entertaining. Blond hunk Bronsky finds out that a scientist is breeding subhumanoids (zombies with a mouth on their bellies) in the basement of Tromaville High. Toxie and Tromie (the giant mutant squirrel) have cameos, but film is clearly inferior to the 1986 original. Troma fans might like it anyway. And yes, film features another typically corny love story. Cowritten and produced by Lloyd Kaufman. Followed by CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH 3: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE SUBHUMANOID (1994) and CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH IV (2000).

**Claude Chabrol – Mon Premier Film** (2003, FRA) **C-53m.** n/r D: Francis Girod. Featuring interviews with Claude Chabrol, Jean-Claude Brialy, Philippe de Broca, Bernadette Lafont. Documentary about filmmaker Claude Chabrol's first film, the acclaimed LE BEAU SERGE (1958), which stands as the first film of the influential *Nouvelle Vague*. Brialy revisits the town where the film was shot and links to Chabrol's own family are examined. Interesting, if not terribly enlightening. Still, recommended viewing for lovers of French cinema.

**Clay Pigeons** (1998, USA) **C-104m.** \*½ D: David Dobkin. Starring Joaquin Phoenix, Vince Vaughn, Janeane Garofalo. Set in a small rural town, this would-be thriller pits a luckless hot-shot (Phoenix) against a chauvinistic serial killer (Vaughn), until FBI-agent Garofalo pops up after half of the movie. Film moves at a deadly pace and Vaughn, or at least his character, is terrible. Don't waste your time, tune in to TRUE ROMANCE instead (Garofalo is watching this movie at a point). Coproduced by Tony and Ridley Scott.

**Clear and Present Danger** (1994, USA) **C-141m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Phillip Noyce. Starring Harrison Ford, Willem Dafoe, Anne Archer, Joaquim de Almeida, James Earl Jones, Henry Czerny, Harris Yulin, Donald Moffat, Thora Birch, Hope Lange. Sequel to PATRIOT GAMES has secret agent Jack Ryan (Ford) go against a Colombian drug lord, uncovering some secret government operations involving guerrilla fighter Dafoe along the way. Uninvolving plot line keeps this film from scoring a higher rating, it is most recommended to fans of the extremely likable Ford, however. In the last third, the pace picks up a little.

**Clearwater** (2003, USA) **B&W-58m. \*\* D:** Andy Koontz. Starring Randy Bonden, Julie Wand, Chris Koontz, Andy Koontz. Not-bad horror movie debut shot on digital video about a serial killer, who kidnaps a young woman and tortures her nearly to death. At the same time he is terrorizing a stranger by sending shocking pictures of her. Will the man come to her rescue? Tries hard to be atmospheric, but comes off as odd, and film's blunt storytelling neglects characterization completely. Little dialogue, okay score by the filmmaker (Koontz also scripted, produced and shot the picture). Alternative spelling: CLEAR WATER.

**Cleopatra Jones** (1973, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Jack Starrett. Starring Tamara Dobson, Bernie Casey, Brenda Sykes, Antonio Fargas, Dan Frazer, John Alderman, Shelley Winters. Mindless blaxploitation actioner about wildcat Cleopatra Jones, who battles crime syndicate run by Winters. Some lively action scenes, but plot is a bore and Winters' BLOODY MAMA-type role simply ridiculous. Time has not been kind to this one. Followed by a sequel in 1975.

**Clerks** (1994, USA) **91m. \*\*\* D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Brian O'Halloran, Jeff Anderson, Marilyn Ghigliotti, Lisa Spoonauer, Jason Mewes, Kevin Smith. A day in the life of two clerks, one minding a convenience store, the other looking after a video store (whenever he feels like it). Funny, foul-mouthed, abrasive comedy produced for \$27,000 shines like a small gem thanks to sharp script, stylish black-and-white visuals. Writer-director Smith's first film; he states Richard Linklater, Spike Lee, Hal Hartley and Jim Jarmusch as his sources of inspiration. Soundtrack includes songs by Bad Religion and Soul Asylum.

**Clerks II** (2006, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Brian O'Halloran, Jeff Anderson, Jason Mewes, Kevin Smith, Jennifer Schwalbach, Rosario Dawson, Trevor Fehrman, Ben Affleck, Jason Lee, Wanda Sykes. Director Smith pays homage to his own breakthrough film in this sequel that puts the two losers from the first film into a fast food place when their quickstop mart burns down. Their problems are pretty much the same, and Jay and Silent Bob are there, too! Indefensible for anyone not familiar with Smith's universe, but quite a lot of fun for his fans. Edited by the director.

**Click** (2006, USA) **C-107m. \*\*\* D:** Frank Coraci. Starring Adam Sandler, Kate Beckinsale, Christopher Walken, David Hasselhoff, Henry Winkler, Julie Kavner, Sean Astin, Rob Schneider, voice of James Earl Jones. Sandler plays a workaholic who gets a strange remote control by mysterious electrician/inventor(?) Walken. He finds he can use it everywhere with anyone in his own life, and he finds great comfort in pausing, fast forwarding or even skipping events in his life. Until he starts regretting his choices. Modern-day version of A CHRISTMAS CAROL, interesting, well-acted throughout.

**Cliffhanger** (1993, USA/FRA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Renny Harlin. Starring Sylvester Stallone, John Lithgow, Michael Rooker, Janine Turner, Paul Winfield, Ralph Waite, Rex Linn, Caroline Goodall, Leon, Craig Fairbrass. Dynamite action yarn starring Stallone as a mountaineer who's pitted against criminal Lithgow, who's searching for 100 million dollars lost somewhere in the Rocky Mountains. Well-paced, well-directed action film. Stallone cowrote the (admittedly simple) screenplay. And that's the Dolomites, not the Rockies. Originally runs 118m., but German TV version seemed pretty uncut.

**Clockers** (1995, USA) **C-128m. \*\*\*** D: Spike Lee. Starring Harvey Keitel, John Turturro, Delroy Lindo, Mekhi Phifer, Isaiah Washington, Keith David, Pee Wee Love, Regina Taylor, Tom Byrd, Sticky Fingaz. Acclaimed writer-director Spike Lee serves a bitter pill with this harrowing, realistic drama about drug-dealing young Phifer, who may be guilty of a murder. His brother confesses to the crime, but police inspectors Keitel and Turturro don't readily believe his story. Not enjoyable or entertaining, this adaptation of Richard Price's novel shows what life on the streets is like for young Afro-Americans. Quite long and not easy-to-take, drama will make you ask yourself if life is really that bad. Spike Lee has a brief bit.

**Clockwork Orange, A** (1971, GBR) **C-137m. \*\*\*½** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, Adrienne Corri, Aubrey Morris, James Marcus, Steven Berkoff, David Prowse. The world of Anthony Burgess' masterful novel is meticulously recreated in this brilliantly directed satire about violence and its effect on our culture. Malcolm McDowell is perfect as Alex, who brutally beats people to death just for the fun of it. How will society get its revenge? Shocking when it was released, the film remains potent today in the age of NATURAL BORN KILLERS.

**Closer** (2004, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Mike Nichols. Starring Julia Roberts, Jude Law, Clive Owen, Natalie Portman, Nick Hobbs, Colin Stinton. Character drama set in London examines the lives of four people. Journalist Law chats up American tourist Portman but then falls in love with photographer Roberts. Doctor Owen meets Law in a sex chat and is set up to meet Roberts. Complications ensue, with unexpected fast forwards in the story. Interesting drama, with refreshingly experimental writing, adapted by Patrick Marber (from his own play). A telling comment on modern relationships, male fantasies and female frustrations, well-acted, too.

**Cloud Atlas** (2012, USA/GER/SGP/HGK) **C-172m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tom Tykwer, Lana and Andy Wachowski. Starring Tom Hanks, Halle Berry, Jim Broadbent, Hugo Weaving, Jim Sturgess, Doona Bae, Ben Whishaw, Keith David, James D'Arcy, Zhou Xun, David Gyasi, Susan Sarandon, Hugh Grant. Sprawling science-fiction epic offers up several extravagant storylines that are initially only linked by actors playing multiple roles, but later clearly echo each other and become studies of humanity in extreme situations. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a lawyer is making an ocean voyage and encounters a stowaway slave; in 1930s England an aspiring composer is taking an apprenticeship hoping to become famous; in the 1970s reporter Berry becomes a target of oil industry lobbyists, in present-day London publisher Broadbent must run from the mob, and two futuristic stories deal with a Korean service clone and a tribe in Hawaii. Off-putting at first (the contemporary storylines are more accessible), and switches too fast between the segments at times, but it's engrossing and never boring. Technically it's a triumph, with excellent performances, stunning make-up and special effects and good direction. Broadbent leads a flawless cast, he is brilliant in all his roles. Cult movie fans will savor the sci-fi references to LOGAN'S RUN and BLADE RUNNER. Based on the novel by David Mitchell, screenplay by the directors, who filmed this in two completely separate units.

**Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs** (2009, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Phil Lord, Chris Miller. Starring (the voices of) Bill Hader, Anna Faris, James Caan, Andy Samberg, Bruce Campbell, Mr. T, Benjamin Bratt, Neil Patrick Harris, Lauren Graham. On an isolated island in the Atlantic young inventor Flint builds a machine that can turn water into food through microwaves. On the grand opening day of the island's amusement park the machine explodes and is shot into the stratosphere. Hours later it starts raining food, and Flint gets to make the menu from now on. Well-animated, funny movie with a message is also a triumph of creativity. Love the Dad character.

**Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2** (2013, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Cody Cameron, Kris Pearn. Starring (the voices of) Bill Hader, Anna Faris, James Caan, Will Forte, Andy Samberg, Benjamin Bratt, Neil Patrick Harris. Rather disappointing sequel has the ambitious inventor return to his island because his original invention is producing monstrous animal/food hybrids. Has some good, creative ideas, but remains kind of lackluster and predictable. You know you're in trouble when all the funny scenes are about one character (Steve the monkey).

**Cloverfield** (2008, USA) **C-85m. \*\*\*** D: Matt Reeves. Starring Lizzy Caplan, Jessica Lucas, T.J. Miller, Michael Stahl-David, Mike Vogel. Big-budget monster movie about an unidentifiable creature the size of Godzilla attacking New York City, causing havoc and destruction. The movie is shown as filmed with a handheld camera used at a good-bye party among friends, and subsequently on their frantic flight through the streets of a burning New York. Exciting, with astounding effects, film doesn't hold up storywise, but disaster movie formula from the 1970s still packs a punch. Produced by J.J. Abrams.

**Clown** (2014, USA/CDN) **C-99m. BOMB** D: Jon Watts. Starring Andy Powers, Laura Allen, Elizabeth Whitmere, Peter Stormare, Eli Roth. Family father Powers finds a clown costume and dons it for his son's birthday party, but strangely it won't come off anymore, which leads to chaos and horror. Strange premise, almost outlandish, especially in a realistic suburban setting. It's depressing rather than scary and exploits children in disgusting situations.

**ClownTown** (2016, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Tom Nagel. Starring Brian Nagel, Lauren Elise (=Compton), Andrew Staton, Tom Nagel. Solidly filmed horror movie about a group of people who stumble into obviously abandoned village only to be harassed and tortured by some resident sadists dressed as clowns. Looks quite good, but plot is almost a total washout, performances are sub-par.

**Clueless** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\*** D: Amy Heckerling. Starring Alicia Silverstone, Stacey Dash, Brittany Murphy, Paul Rudd, Donald Faison, Breckin Meyer, Jeremy Sisto, Justin Walker, Dan Hedaya. Silverstone is Cher, a hip fifteen-year old who goes to a high school in Beverly Hills and spends most of her free time going shopping. Swift pace does not give you time to think about the admittedly meagre plot. This lifestyle satire is extremely likeable and has become a cult film for the teen generation. Allegedly based on the novel *Emma* by Jane Austen.

**Cobra** (1981, USA/HGK) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Joseph Velasco. Starring Bruce Le, Peter Chen Lau, Leong Wong Ko. Pretty violent actioner about Bruce Le (some sources state Bruce Lei), whose teacher is killed by a villain calling himself the Cobra. Le then teams up with his teacher's daughter to start a new life, if it wasn't for the bad guys. Plot is almost worthless, sometimes pure exploitation, and still, this has become a minor cult item in some countries, mostly due to some over-the-top violence in the final thirty minutes.

**Cockneys Vs Zombies** (2012, GBR) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Matthias Hoene. Starring Michelle Ryan, Georgia King, Alan Ford, Honor Blackman, Richard Briers. Some lame-brained Londoners come up with the idea to rob a bank, and then a zombie epidemic breaks out. By-the-numbers zombie comedy inexplicably features some veteran actors instead of shocks and laughs. It's not badly made, but plot is far from innovative and barely entertaining.

**Cocktail** (1988, USA) **C-104m. \*\*½** D: Roger Donaldson. Starring Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, Elisabeth Shue, Lisa Banes, Laurence Luckinbill, Kelly Lynch, Gina Gershon. Typical Cruise starring vehicle where he plays an ambitious young man who wants to strike it rich in N.Y.C., but fails to get a satisfying job. Then he tries his hands at barkeeping and strikes gold. Average drama now works best as a late 80s time capsule.

**Coda dello Scorpione, La** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Martino. Starring George Hilton, Anita Strindberg, Luigi Pistilli. After the plane with her husband aboard crashes into the sea, a woman cashes in \$1 million insurance money. Detective Hilton tries to find out if there is something foul and soon finds the woman dead, with the money missing. Boring thriller turns into an interesting mystery in the second half when the identity of the killer is gradually uncovered. Too bad they messed up the first half of this typical giallo. English title: SCORPION'S TAIL.

**Code 46** (2003, GBR) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Michael Winterbottom. Starring Tim Robbins, Samantha Morton, Om Puri, David Fahm, Nina Sosanya. Only partly successful science-fiction drama about investigator Robbins, who – with an implanted empathy chip that lets him read minds – sets out to find the person who has been smuggling travel permits which allow people to travel freely in an otherwise controlled environment. He falls in love with the culprit, boyish Morton, and risks a Code 46 violation (i.e. conceiving a child despite having matching genes). At times hypnotic, but generally unconvincing drama, the future feeling just doesn't come across, and the love affair isn't very believable (although the acting is fine). Worth a look for fans of serious science-fiction.

**Coeur en Hiver, Un** (1992, FRA) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Sautet. Starring Daniel Auteuil, Emmanuelle Béart, André Dussollier. Well-observed, typical Sautet film about violin maker Auteuil who becomes infatuated with beautiful violinist Béart but is afraid of showing it. His friendship with Dussollier, Béart's lover, is also put to the test. There's more beneath the surface of this fascinating drama on love and music. Well-acted and sensitively directed film is not for all tastes but those who can connect with it will undoubtedly love it.

**Coffy** (1973, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Jack Hill. Starring Pam Grier, Booker Bradshaw, Robert DoQui, William Elliott, Allan Arbus, Sid Haig. Minor blaxploitation classic starring Grier as a hard-hitting nurse who single-handedly battles drug lords, pimps and corrupt politicians. Not as much action as wished for perhaps, rather heavy-handed direction, but acceptable on the whole. Followed by FOXEY BROWN in 1974. Remade as LOVELY BUT DEADLY in 1981 (sans Grier).

**Coherence** (2013, USA/GBR) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: James Ward Byrkit. Starring Emily Baldoni, Maury Sterling, Nicholas Brendon. Chamber-piece set in a house where several friends meet for a dinner party. A comet is passing by the Earth at close range, and this leads to electrical phenomena and even a rift in dimensions. All of a sudden, the dinner party finds their equivalents in a house across the street. WTF? Rather cheap 'sci-fi' feels like a filmed play, with actors more or less playing themselves (most of the scenes were ad-libbed). They come across as a bunch of unappealing, self-indulgent characters in an artificial 'story'. Maybe it played better in the other dimension.

**Col Cuore in Gola** (1967, ITA/FRA) **C/B&W-100m. \*\*\*** D: Tinto Brass. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Ewa Aulin, Roberto Bisacco, Charles Kohler, Luigi Bellini. Time capsule set in London of the Swinging 60s, where Trintignant investigates a murder which involves a rich family, including beautiful daughter Aulin. They soon fall in love and almost lose track of the case. Plot is unimportant, it's Brass' creative direction and the stars' chemistry that takes first chair here. Wonderful period flavour, catchy score by Armando Trovajoli, pure cult. Aulin (at 17) looks ravishing, she would immediately reteam with Trintignant for the cult mystery LA MORE HA FATTO L'UOVO / DEATH LAID AN EGG (1968). Based on a novel by Sergio Donati. English title: I AM WHAT I AM, DEADLY SWEET, DEAD STOP, HEART BEAT and WITH HEART IN MOUTH.

**Coldblooded** (1995, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: M. Wallace Wolodarsky. Starring Jason Priestley, Peter Riegert, Kimberly Williams, Janeane Garofalo, Robert Loggia, Josh Charles, Michael J.

Fox. Low-key, barely interesting comedy thriller about phlegmatic, indifferent bookie Priestley who gets promoted to 'hit man', and manages to do his job quite well. Love soon complicates matters. DEAD PAN would have been a better title. Priestley doesn't change his expression, and humor is pseudo-hip and poorly timed. Watchable but terribly undramatic. Produced by Michael J. Fox, who has a small role as one of Priestley's victims.

**Cold Light of Day, The** (1995, GBR/NED) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Rudolf van den Berg. Starring Richard E. Grant, Lynsey Baxter, Perdita Weeks, Simon Cadell. Children are found murdered in a small wood and the police soon come up with a suspect, who commits suicide after confessing to the crime. Police inspector Grant, however, believes the true murderer is still at large and quits his job, trying to find the killer on his own. He befriends a woman who lives alone with her small child, whom he uses as a lure. Good adaptation of the Friedrich Dürrenmatt novel was filmed before in 1958 (with Gert Fröbe as the killer) and is not as tense or frightening as that version, but Rudolf van den Berg's clever direction and the actors (particularly Grant) compensate for any dramatic shortcomings. Another good film from director van den Berg (XANGADIX/DE JOHNSONS). Also known as IN THE COLD LIGHT OF DAY.

**Cold Mountain** (2003, USA) **C-152m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Anthony Minghella. Starring Jude Law, Nicole Kidman, Renée Zellweger, Eileen Atkins, Brendan Gleeson, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Natalie Portman, Giovanni Ribisi, Donald Sutherland, Ray Winstone, Kathy Baker, James Gammon, James Rebhorn, Cillian Murphy. Well-produced drama set at the time of the Civil War. A romance is budding between minister's daughter Kidman and simple workman Law, when the man is whisked away to the battlefield and may or may not return to his home turf at Cold Mountain. Kidman, after her father's death, is also faced with the problem of how to handle their farm. Sort-of episodic, predictable, but well-made, always worthwhile. Zellweger won Oscar as Kidman's helping hand. Law seems miscast, though. Fine cinematography by John Seale, production design by Dante Ferretti. Based on a book by Charles Frazier.

**Cold Turkey** (1971, USA) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** Norman Lear. Starring Dick Van Dyke, Pippa Scott, Tom Poston, Edward Everett Horton, Bob Elliott, Ray Goulding, Vincent Gardenia. M. Emmet Walsh. Dated satire on smoking and the American way of life. Big tobacco company will award \$25,000,000 to any city whose inhabitants can do without smoking for 30 days, but they haven't reckoned with Reverend Van Dyke and his community, who could do with a little financial help. Passable entertainment, with some funny scenes. Music by Randy Newman. Filmed in 1969.

**Colin** (2008, GBR) **C-97m. ½ D:** Marc Price. Starring Alastair Kirton, Daisy Aitkens, Kate Alderman, Leanne Pammen, Tat Whalley. Ultra-low-budget, amateurish zombie movie from the perspective of the title character, who has just been infected by a zombie virus and will spend the movie wandering through the zombie-infested streets of some British town. It may be an original idea, but it's poorly executed (forgive the pun), poorly acted and goes on forever.

**Collateral** (2004, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Michael Mann. Starring Tom Cruise, Jamie Foxx, Jada Pinkett Smith, Mark Ruffalo, Peter Berg, Bruce McGill, Javier Bardem, Jason Statham. Urban thriller about professional hit man Cruise (with grey hair), whose latest job brings him to L.A. to kill five people. He hires thoughtful taxi driver Foxx to drive him through the night, and naturally the hapless man gets involved in the action. Starts out slowly and never fully involves, though finale is thrilling. Foxx outshines Cruise in every scene. Most of the footage shot on digital video.

**Collateral Damage** (2002, USA) **C-108m.** \*½ D: Andrew Davis. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Francesca Neri, Elias Koteas, Cliff Curtis, John Leguizamo, John Turturro. Arnie plays a fire fighter who swears for revenge when his wife and son die in a terrorist attack. He follows the attacker to the jungles of Colombia – not an easy place to get around. This action thriller's release was postponed after some real terrorist attacks in September 2001. It's a complete misfire due to stupid, clichéd plotting and Arnie's labored casting as a super hero – this a (similarly violent) step back to his COMMANDO and RAW DEAL days.

**Collector, The** (1965, GBR/USA) **C-119m.** \*\*\*½ D: William Wyler. Starring Terence Stamp, Samantha Eggar, Mona Washbourne, Maurice Dallimore, Kenneth More. Quietly disturbing psycho drama about self-conscious butterfly collector Stamp, who falls in love with art student Eggar, and being too afraid to approach her, he kidnaps her hoping she will fall in love with him, too. Fine adaptation of John Fowles' brilliant novel obviously simplifies proceedings, but director Wyler creates a unique mood, telling his story through images and score (by Maurice Jarre) rather than dialogue. Highly recommended. Predates the serial killer / psychopath movies by years. Story officially remade once as PRISONER OF THE DARK (1986), clearly influenced THE DEFILERS (1965), BILBAO (1978) and even MISERY (1990). Also released as THE BUTTERFLY COLLECTOR.

**Collina degli Stivali, La** (1969, ITA) **C-87m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Giuseppe Colizzi. Starring Terence Hill, Bud Spencer, Lionel Stander, Woody Strode, George Eastman, Victor Buono, Glauco Onorato. Nearly incomprehensible spaghetti western follows the exploits of a group of gunslingers and circus artists. Gold claims figure in there somewhere. Unusual film for Hill and Spencer, lacks continuity, only for die-hard fans. Film buffs may savor star appearances and Carlo Rustichelli's score. Otherwise, this is a mess. Supposedly a sequel to DIO PERDONA... IO NO! (1967). English titles: BOOT HILL, TRINITY RIDES AGAIN.

**Colombiana** (2011, USA) **C-108m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Olivier Megaton. Starring Zoe Saldana, Michael Vartan, Callum Blue. Luc Besson produced and co-wrote this quasi-remake of his hit movie LEON (1994). Here, a nine-year-old manages to escape the assassination of her entire family in Columbia and runs off to her uncle in Chicago. She tells him right off the bat that she wants to become a killer. And fifteen years later she spends her time taking revenge. Pretty exciting thriller that is unfortunately too predictable.

**Colonnello Buttiglione Diventa Generale, Il** (1974, ITA/FRA) **C-97m.** \*\* D: Mino Guerrini. Starring Jacques Dufilho, Aldo Maccione, Franco Diogene, Vincenzo Crocitti, Giacomo Rizzo. Slapstick comedy set in the army centering around escapades of more or less idiotic trainees and superiors. Episodic, fairly entertaining, second in a series of BUTTIGLIONE films. Photographed by Aristide Massaccesi (Joe D'Amato), second unit directed by Tonino Ricci.

**Color Me Blood Red** (1965, USA) **C-79m.** BOMB D: Herschell Gordon Lewis. Starring Don Josephs (=Gordon Oas-Heim), Candi Conder, Elyn Warner. Bottom-of-the-barrel psycho thriller about a vain artist who is reprimanded for his poor style, then discovers that painting with blood will put him in high regard. Deadening, totally amateurish film goes on forever. Director Lewis – sometimes dubbed the 'Godfather of Gore' – can be compared to Ed Wood rather than Russ Meyer. There's simply no cinematic value to be found here. Third in a trilogy, following BLOOD FEAST (1963) and TWO THOUSAND MANIACS! (1964). Also known as MODEL MASSACRE.

**Colossal** (2016, USA/CDN/SPA/KOR) **C-109m.** SCOPE \*\* D: Nacho Vigalondo. Starring Anne Hathaway, Jason Sudeikis, Austin Stowell, Tim Blake Nelson, Dan Stevens. Party girl Hathaway gets dumped by her boyfriend, because she isn't taking her life seriously. She moves into an old country house of her parents', meets some teenage friends, among them bar owner Sudeikis, who hires her as a waitress. Her life goes even more into turmoil, when

she realizes that she has a strange connection to a monster that is attacking South Korea. Much too silly fantasy comedy is full of stereotypes. If you buy into the absurd storyline, you may have a good time. Written by director Vigalondo.

**Colosso di Rodi, Il** (1961, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Leone. Starring Rory Calhoun, Lea Massari, Georges Marchal, Conrado San Martin, Angel Aranda, Georges Rigaud, Alfio Caltabiano. Big spectacle is actually just a big bore as Calhoun tries to protect Rhodes and its giant colossus from usurpers. Production values are good and Leone shows a feeling for epic scenes, but script (by no less than 8 people) is terribly overlong. Second of three spectacles Leone directed before turning to the western. Italian original version is said to be even longer. English title: THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES.

**Colossus: The Forbin Project** (1970, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Joseph Sargent. Starring Eric Braeden, Susan Clark, Gordon Pinsent, William Schallert, Leonid Rostoff, James Hong. Mature science-fiction, based on the novel by D.F. Jones. Braeden is a brilliant scientist, who has just finished working on a supercomputer, which will control all of the country's defense facilities. Immediately after introducing it to the public, the computer notices 'another system' (the Russians) and begins to get out of control. Chilling cold war relic, with fine widescreen photography and good score by Michel Colombier. Written by James Bridges, who wrote and directed THE CHINA SYNDROME (1979). Also known as THE FORBIN PROJECT, and THE DAY THE WORLD CHANGED HANDS.

**Colpo da Mille Miliardi, Un** (1966, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Paolo Heusch. Starring Rik Van Nutter, Marilù Tolo, Eduardo Fajardo, Philippe Hersent, Alberto Dalbés, Tom Felleggy. Quite serious spy film starring Van Nutter, who played James Bond's colleague Felix Leiter in THUNDERBALL (1965). Secret agent CD7 is assigned to investigate strange occurrences in radioactive research lab, follows leads to Istanbul, Turkey, where villain Fajardo is using drugs on the people in his organization. One of the better spin-offs. Good Bond imitation score by Piero Umilliani makes it fun for buffs. English title: THE SUEZ INTRIGUE.

**Colpo Maestro al Servizio di Sua Maestà Britannica** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michele Lupo. Starring Richard Harrison, Adolfo Celi, Margaret Lee, Gérard Tichy, Andrea Bosis, George Eastman, Roberto Dell'acqua. Typical heist film of that era: Spaghetti western actor Harrison is persuaded by Celi to take part in a diamond robbery. The actor is supposed to stand in for a look-a-like employee of the Diamond company. But this is just the beginning of a serpentine story. Ambitious project lacks fire to make this work, characters are meaningless. Film's watchable, though, thanks to some interesting twists. English title: MASTER STROKE.

**Colt 45** (2014, FRA/BEL) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Fabrice Du Welz. Starring Gérard Lanvin, Joey Starr, Alice Taglioni, Ymanol Perset, Simon Abkarian. Crime drama about master shootist Perset, who refuses to be recruited by special forces. When he kills in self-defense, he is forced to work for them, as they clean up the crime scene. He becomes a pawn in bringing down a crime boss. It took Du Welz six years to make ALLELUIA (2014) and then only several months to direct this flashy but plot-heavy film. Unfortunately, It's not interesting at all.

**Coltelli del Vendicatore, I** (1965, ITA/FRA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Elissa Pichelli, Luciano Pollentin, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Fausto Tozzi. Bava's second Viking picture isn't much better than GLI INVASORI. Mitchell comes to protect the wife of dead king from evil usurper Tozzi, unaware that she has reason to exact vengeance on him. Complicated, almost Shakespearean storyline told in undistinguished fashion. Slow pace does much to obliterate nice photography (by Antonio Rinaldi and Bava) and good, if familiar score. Lesser effort by Bava, who was called in late and saved the

production (as he did many times before and after). Could be called a western, if it wasn't for the setting. Alternative titles: KNIVES OF THE AVENGER and VIKING MASSACRE.

**Combat Shock** (1986, USA) **C-100m.** \*½ D: Buddy Giovinazzo. Starring Rick Giovinazzo, Veronica Stork, Mitch Maglio, Asaph Livni. Cheap and amateurishly filmed horror movie about shell-shocked vietnam vet Giovinazzo, who lives in a run-down suburban home with his nagging wife and deformed baby boy. Film follows his attempts to get a job and his slow descent into madness. Not without substance, but film is extremely sluggish and depressing. Actors and crew try hard but this is not much better than the stinker STREET TRASH (1987). Executive produced by – you guessed it – Troma's Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz. Also known as AMERICAN NIGHTMARE.

**Come and Find Me** (2016, CDN/USA/GBR) **C-112m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Zack Whedon. Starring Annabelle Wallis, Aaron Paul, Garret Dillahunt, Terry Chen, Zachary Knighton. Mystery thriller about the mysterious disappearance of Paul's girlfriend. A year later he is still trying to find her and stumbles across some strange photos, which hint at her having observed someone. Quite ambitious but overlong and plodding in the flashback scenes. Redeemed somewhat by the finale. Written by the director.

**Comedy of Terrors, The** (1964, USA) **C-84m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jacques Tourneur. Starring Vincent Price, Peter Lorre, Boris Karloff, Joyce Jameson, Joe E. Brown, Basil Rathbone. Fine cast in so-so horror comedy with Shakespearean overtones. Price is in great form as fraudulent undertaker, who runs a funeral business with his bumbling assistant Lorre. They have been using the same coffin for 13 years! Not much in terms of plot, but Tourneur (in his next-to-last film) shows his widescreen and color mastery. Fun for buffs. Written by Richard Matheson. Price, Lorre and Karloff had previously teamed up in the Matheson-scripted Poe adaptation THE RAVEN (1963). Aka THE GRAVESIDE STORY.

**Come Rubare la Corona d'Inghilterra** (1967, ITA) **C-83m.** **SCOPE\*\*\*½** D: Terence Hathaway (=Serge Grieco). Starring Roger Browne, Dominique Boschero, Nadia Marlowa, Andrea Bosis. Super-hero Argoman, who's a kind of Bruce Wayne in real life, is called to stop beautiful criminal Boschero, who is replacing politicians with robots (like DR. GOLDFOOT) to achieve world domination. A stylish mix between Superman and James Bond, this is a hilariously absurd action adventure. Argoman's costume is a scream! The real stars are the sets (Italian sci-fi style of the 60s!) and Piero Umiliani's main theme. A real curio, interesting for buffs. Also known as HOW TO STEAL THE CROWN OF ENGLAND and INCREDIBLE PARIS INCIDENT.

**Coming to America** (1988, USA) **C-116m.** **\*\*\*** D: John Landis. Starring Eddie Murphy, Arsenio Hall, James Earl Jones, John Amos, Madge Sinclair, Eriq La Salle, Calvin Lockhart, Samuel L. Jackson, Vondie Curtis-Hall, Don Ameche, Ralph Bellamy, Cuba Gooding Jr., Jim Abrahams. Typical Landis lunacy about African prince Murphy, who, about to be married, wants to see the world and ends up in Queens, New York. He finally gets a job in a fast-food restaurant and falls in love. Amusing comedy with some hilarious bits. Longish but worthwhile. Gooding Jr.'s first film. Also known as PRINCE IN NEW YORK.

**Commando** (1985, USA) **C-88m.** **\*\*** D: Mark L. Lester. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Rae Dawn Chong, Dan Hedaya, Vernon Wells, David Patrick Kelly, Alyssa Milano, James Olson, Bill Duke, Bill Paxton. One of Schwarzenegger's first action vehicles following the success of THE TERMINATOR is hardly worth talking about. OK direction and editing save stupid, violent actioner about Schwarzenegger's vengeance after a gang of criminals have abducted his daughter (Milano). Some funny lines but subject matter is truly offensive. Score by James Horner.

**Commitments, The** (1991, GBR/EIR) **C-117m. \*\*\* D:** Alan Parker. Starring Robert Arkins, Michael Aherne, Angeline Ball, Maria Doyle, Dave Finnegan, Bronagh Gallagher, Félim Gormley, Glen Hansard, Dick Massey, Johnny Murphy, Colm Meaney. The music is the real star in this well-made drama about several Dubliner musicians, all from a working-class background, who form a soul-band and become quite successful. Pretty harmless on a dramatic level, but well-paced and entertaining thanks to a wonderful soundtrack. The cast (real-life musicians) pull it off with ease. Roddy Doyle coscripted from his own novel, which is the first part of the Barrytown-trilogy. Followed by **THE SNAPPER**, and **THE VAN**.

**Common-Law Cabin** (1967, USA) **C-72m. \*\* D:** Russ Meyer. Starring Jack Moran, Babette Bardot, Adele Rein, Franklin Bolger, Alaina Capri, John Furlong. Adult melodrama about several characters who meet at a fisherman's cabin. Among them are a ladykiller, a sex-starved woman and her husband, as well as the owner of the cabin and his family. Complications that ensue are at pulp-level at best, and film becomes tedious after a while. Nothing outstanding here (unless you count the women's physiques). Edited and produced by the director. Also known as **HOW MUCH LOVING DOES A NORMAL COUPLE NEED?**

**Communion** (1976, USA) **C-107m. \*\*\* D:** Alfred Sole. Starring Linda Miller, Mildred Clinton, Paula E. Sheppard, Niles McMaster, Brooke Shields. Tom Signorelli. Delightfully sordid murder mystery, set in a pious community, where cute but mischievous twelve-year-old Alice might just be responsible for the death of her sister (Brooke Shields, in her first film) during the ceremony of first communion. Slightly uneven chiller gets more and more intriguing as it gets along, with stylish direction and a creepy score (a Bernard Herrmann/Lalo Schiffrin imitation by Stephen Lawrence). Especially interesting to film buffs, who will find elements of Hitchcock, De Palma and even Argento. Quite possibly the American thriller that comes closest to the Italian giallo. Written by Rosemary Ritvo and director Sole. Re-released as **ALICE, SWEET ALICE** in 1978, and **HOLY TERROR** (at 98m.) in 1981.

**Compañeros, Los** (1970, SPA/ITA/GER) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Sergio Corbucci. Starring Franco Nero, Tomas Milian, Fernando Rey, Jack Palance, Iris Berben. The exploits of two „compañeros“ in war-torn Mexico is basis for typical spaghetti western. Good cast and likeable characters almost make it work but film is overlong and too obviously inspired by Sergio Leone's superior **THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY**.

**Company of Wolves, The** (1984, GBR) **C-95m. \*\*\*½ D:** Neil Jordan. Starring Sarah Patterson, Angela Lansbury, David Warner, Stephen Rea, Tusse Silberg, Graham Crowden, Brian Glover. Fascinating, allegorical adult fantasy about young girl on the verge of puberty, who dreams herself into a fantasy world, where her grandmother (Lansbury) tells her strange stories of dangerous wolves. The innocent girl keeps wandering through the misty forest like Little Red Riding Hood... Stunningly filmed, with many striking images and rampant symbolism (colors, objects, animals), this psychological study of sexual awakening requires multiple viewing. Based on a story by Angela Carter, who also wrote the screenplay with director Jordan. George Fenton (**THE FISHER KING**) composed the score.

**Compartment Tueurs** (1965, FRA) **92m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** (Constantin) Costa-Gavras. Starring Cathérine Allégret, Jacques Perrin, Simone Signoret, Yves Montand, Michel Piccoli, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Charles Denner, Marcel Bozzuffi, Georges Géret, Jean Lefebvre, Claude Mann. Director Costa-Gavras' first film is fast-paced, well-directed murder mystery about inspector Montand trying to catch the strangler who killed a woman in a sleeping car of a train to Paris. Anyone in the compartment could have been the murderer. Top French cast shines in entertaining, exciting sleeper. Photographed by Jean Tournier. Film is based on a novel by Sébastien Japrisot, who cowrote the screenplay with director Costa-Gavras.

Question: Is that a young Daria Nicolodi being interrogated at the police station? English title: SLEEPING CAR MURDERS.

**Comptes à Rebours** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Roger Pigaut. Starring Serge Reggiani, Charles Vanel, Michel Bouquet, Jeanne Moreau, Simone Signoret, Marcel Bozzuffi, Jean Desailly. After his release from prison a crime boss (Reggiani) exacts revenge on those who betrayed him ten years ago. Aloof, strangely unmoving gangster thriller, a disappointment considering the talents involved. Reggiani is miscast, which may actually be the reason why the film is not as good as expected. Vanel comes off best, though he doesn't say a word. Score by Georges Delerue, cinematography by Jean Tournier.

**Comunidad, La** (2000, SPA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Alex de la Iglesia. Starring Carmen Maura, Eduardo Antuna, María Asquerino, Jesús Bonilla, Marta Fernández Muro. Strange, grotesque thriller will just not stand the admittedly obvious comparison to *THE TENANT* (1976) and *DELICATESSEN* (1991): Real estate agent Maura decides to spend the night in an extravagant apartment she is supposed to sell. That night she finds out that the upstairs neighbor has died and discovers the money he has been hiding from the neighbors. It seems the 'comunidad' will do anything to get the money, and Maura may not leave the house alive. Plot is so wild and grotesque, almost every single cliffhanger scene seems artificial. Still, Maura gives her all, and film boasts sharp editing and a full-blown, almost Bernard-Hermann-like suspense score. Worth a look. English title: COMMON WEALTH.

**Conan the Barbarian** (1982, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Milius. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, James Earl Jones, Max von Sydow, Sandahl Bergman, John Milius. Camp classic of epic proportions about orphan Schwarzenegger (in the role that made him a star), who grows up in a barren, savage land, with only one goal in mind: To avenge the murder of his parents by high priest Jones. Excellent production values, great score outweigh lumbering plot and unintentional humor. Easily the best of many sword-and-sandal pictures that were made at that time. Cowritten by Oliver Stone and John Milius, based on the stories by Robert E. Howard. Shown in many different versions, the longest running 129m. Followed by *CONAN THE DESTROYER* in 1984.

**Concerto per Pistola Solista** (1970, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Michele Lupo. Starring Anna Moffo, Eveline Stewart (=Ida Galli), Gastone Moschin, Peter Baldwin, Lance Percival, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. Italian-produced movie set in England about several relatives, who gather at a castle for the reading of a will, but soon they are murdered one by one. Sounds much more interesting than it plays, this rather silly giallo mystery is tongue-in-cheek and supposed to be a satire of British whodunits. The close-ups and weird camera angles get tiresome after a while. A curio at best. Score by Francesco De Masi is quite good. English titles: *THE WEEKEND MURDERS*, *STORY OF A CRIME*.

**Concorde Affaire '79** (1979, ITA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ruggero Deodato. Starring James Franciscus, Mimsy Farmer, Van Johnson, Joseph Cotton, Edmund Purdom, Meg Fleming, Venantino Venantini, Robert Kerman. Agreeable thriller about an airplane sabotage masterminded by business mogule Cotten. The famed Concorde crashes into the ocean, and journalist Franciscus gets a tip-off from his ex-wife, who happens to know about mysterious going-ons near the wreck. OK adventure throws in everything but the kitchen sink, though production values are not very high. It ends like some *AIRPORT* disaster thriller. Especially for B-movie fans. Director Deodato made *CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST* that same year. Score by Stelvio Cipriani.

**Concorde – Airport '79, The** (1979, USA) **C-123m. \*½ D:** David Lowell Rich. Starring Alain Delon, Susan Blakely, Robert Wagner, Sylvia Kristel, George Kennedy, Eddie Albert, Bibi Andersson, Charo, John Davidson, David Warner, Mercedes McCambridge, Sybil Danning,

Ed Begley Jr., Robert Kerman. Ludicrous last movie of the AIRPORT disaster films puts cardboard characters in danger aboard a transatlantic flight with the Concorde. Wagner is the saboteur, who'd rather see the plane crash. All the thrills, the cliffhanger stunts and the larger-than-life drama are gone. This was one of the last gasps of the disaster film. Score by Lalo Schifrin, photography by Philip H. Lathrop. Also known as AIRPORT '80 – THE CONCORDE and S.O.S. CONCORDE.

**Conde Drácula, El** (1970, SPA/ITA/GER) **C-82m.** \*\*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring Christopher Lee, Herbert Lom, Klaus Kinski, Frederick Williams, Maria Röhm, Paul Müller, Jack Taylor, Soledad Miranda. Cheap, ineptly directed but faithful version of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* with a most interesting cast: Lee is okay as the Count, Lom vigorous as Prof. Van Helsing and Kinski himself as the demented Renfield. Bruno Nicolai's score is good and there's some atmosphere to spare, but slow pace ruins most of the film's effect. Still, this is one of sleaze director Franco's best films. He has his usual cameo as Van Helsing's assistant. Uncut version runs 98m. English title: COUNT DRACULA.

**Condenados a Vivir** (1972, SPA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent. Starring Robert Hundar (=Claudio Undari), Emma Cohen, Alberto Dalbés, Antonio Iranzo, Manuel Tejada. Violent, vile western about a chain gang lost somewhere in the wilderness, with only sergeant Hundar and his daughter to guard them. Needless to say, the men start looking for ways to provoke the sergeant to finally escape. Manipulative, primitive, off-putting fare is pure exploitation. Stay away unless this is your cup of tea. English titles: BRONSON'S REVENGE, and CUT-THROATS NINE.

**Conformista, Il** (1970, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-113m.** \*\*\*½ D: Bernardo Bertolucci. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, Gastone Moschin, Enzo Tarascio, Dominique Sanda, Pierre Clémenti. Remarkably mature, demanding psycho drama about title character Trintignant, who in 1930s Italy strives for a career in the Fascist secret service. Then he is assigned to spy on his former professor and mentor Tarascio. Top-notch character study and historical drama, with an astounding combination of direction and camerawork (by Vittorio Storaro), excellent score by Georges Delerue. Trintignant gives one of the coldest – and best – performances of his career. Bertolucci also wrote the screenplay, an adaptation of the novel by Alberto Moravia. Aldo Lado was assistant director. Bertolucci followed this with the even more fascinating STRATEGIA DEL RAGNO. English title: THE CONFORMIST.

**Conjuring, The** (2013, USA) **C-112m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: James Wan. Starring Vera Farmiga, Patrick Wilson, Lili Taylor, Ron Livingston, Joey King. Scary but otherwise bland horror movie set in 1971 and purportedly based on a real story. A family of seven move into a dilapidated house and soon are spooked by noises and inexplicable events at night. Enter parapsychic Taylor and her husband, a self-proclaimed exorcist, to shed light on the mystery. Offers countless jump scares and suspense build-ups, but there's barely a story behind it all. You keep waiting for a revelation, or a twist, as you would expect from the director of such excellent movies as DEAD SILENCE (2007) and SAW (2004), but it never happens. AMITYVILLE HORROR and THE EXORCIST meet PARANORMAL ACTIVITY is the best way to describe it.

**Conjuring 2, The** (2016, USA/CDN) **C-134m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: James Wan. Starring Patrick Wilson, Vera Farmiga, Madison Wolfe, Frances O'Connor, Lauren Esposito, Franka Potente. More of the same haunted house fare: In the 1970s ghost hunting couple Wilson and Farmiga are called to England to investigate a supposed haunting in the derelict home of single mother O'Connor and her four children. Obviously a previous tenant's ghost is refusing to leave and starts possessing daughter Wolfe. Barely innovative story thrives on

jump scares. It's slickly made and improves somewhat towards the end. Okay, even at this preposterous running time. Based on the 'real' 1977 Enfield haunting.

**Con la Rabbia agli Occhi** (1976, ITA) **C-76m. \*\*** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Yul Brynner, Barbara Bouchet, Martin Balsam, Massimo Ranieri, Giancarlo Sbragia, Sal Borgese. Brynner (in his last theatrical film) is as charismatic as ever in this Italian potboiler about an assassin, who comes to avenge the killing of his brother by the Mafia. Plot sparks hardly any interest, but direction, editing makes this fast enough. Umberto Lenzi produced. Also shown at 90m. and 98m. English titles: ANGER IN HIS EYES, DEATH RAGE.

**Conquest of the Planet of the Apes** (1972, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: J. Lee Thompson. Starring Roddy McDowall, Don Murray, Natalie Trundy, Hari Rhodes, Severn Darden, Lou Wagner, Ricardo Montalban. Generally sloppy sequel to ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES chronicles rise of intelligent ape Caesar, son of Zira and Cornelius, in a totalitarian state circa 1991. Not as fascinating or bizarre as the predecessors but still interesting in that it represents an important part in the cycle. Followed by the conclusion BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES.

**Conspiracy Theory** (1998, USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Richard Donner. Starring Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts, Patrick Stewart, Cylk Cozart, Stephen Kahan, Terry Alexander. Exciting thriller about a paranoid cab driver (Gibson in great form) who has developed countless conspiracy theories, much to the chagrin of Judicial Department worker Roberts, whom he plagues with his wild ideas ... and has fallen in love with. When one day one of his seemingly absurd theories hits bull's-eye, he (and soon Roberts, too) becomes the subject of a heart-pounding manhunt. Explosively filmed by the director of the LETHAL WEAPON series, set at a breathless pace, although film loses credibility in the last half hour.

**Constant Gardener, The** (2005, GBR/GER) **C-129m. \*\*** D: Fernando Meirelles. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Rachel Weisz, Hubert Koundé, Danny Huston, Daniele Harford, Bill Nighy, Pete Postlethwaite. Plodding adaptation of a John le Carré novel with Fiennes a self-conscious diplomat, whose wife gets killed in Africa. In flashbac's we get to know about their lives, their humanitarian work and her criticism of the pharmaceutical industry. Did she fall prey to a conspiracy? Long, mostly filmed with an irritating hand-held camera, and just as undecided as the main character. The actors cannot be blamed (Weisz won Best Supporting Actress and the Golden Globe). From the director of the acclaimed CIUADADE DE DEUS (CITY OF GOD).

**Constellation Jodorowsky, La** (1994, FRA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Louis Mouchet. Featuring Alejandro Jodorowsky, Marcel Marceau, Fernando Arrabal, Peter Gabriel, Jean Giraud. Interesting documentary about filmmaker/artist/guru Jodorowsky, who is interviewed by Louis Mouchet and filmed while giving one of his lectures in Paris. Jodorowsky discusses his work for the cinema, his collaboration with pantomime artist Marcel Marceau, comic strip artist Moebius and writer Arrabal, and talks about his heritage and his philosophy. Mouchet's approach is naïve and simple, but Jodorowsky and his statements are fascinating and even enlightening, especially for his followers. Also features brief clips from Jodorowsky's FANDO Y LIS, EL TOPO and MONTAGNA SACRA, as well as scenes from a 1965 stage performance.

**Contact** (1997, USA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Robert Zemeckis. Starring Jodie Foster, Matthew McConaughey, James Woods, John Hurt, Tom Skerrit, Angela Bassett, Rob Lowe. Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY gets the Hollywood treatment in this absorbing, fascinating science-fiction drama. Foster plays an astronomer obsessed with making contact with extra-terrestrial intelligence, who one day picks up a radio signal from the distant star system Vega. The signal is soon discovered to be a message which the whole world is eager

to hear. First-rate movie-making; Foster is perfect in the lead, the digital effects are stunning, some scenes will push you to the edge of your seat. Only liability: Film enforces typical American clichés. Based on the novel by Carl Sagan, who also coproduced the picture. A must-see for anyone interested in the topic. Lots of celebrities appear as themselves (including Bill Clinton!).

**Contamination – Alien Arriva Sulla Terra** (1980, ITA/GER) **C-88m.** D: Lewis Coates (=Luigi Cozzi). Starring Ian McCulloch, Louise Marleau, Marino Masé, Siegfried Rauch, Al Cliver. Laughable attempt at imitating Ridley Scott's ALIEN (1979): A deadly organism from Mars is brought to Earth, lays eggs and breeds in humans, causing their stomachs to explode. It turns out that madman Rauch is hatching thousands of eggs on his plantation! Gory bottom-of-the-barrel stinker from a Dario Argento disciple. Stay away unless you get your kicks out of lines such as "Help! There's an egg in my room!" Score is by the famous Goblin. Also known as ALIEN CONTAMINATORS, CONTAMINAZIONE, ASTARON, TOXIC SPAWN.

**Contender, The** (2000, USA/FRA) **C-126m.** D: Rod Lurie. Starring Gary Oldman, Joan Allen, Jeff Bridges, Christian Slater, Sam Elliott, William L. Petersen, Saul Rubinek, Philip Baker Hall, Mariel Hemingway. The U.S. President (Bridges) must appoint a new vice-president, and when he chooses a woman (Allen), his opponents are quickly searching for weak spots – and discover that she was leading a sexually liberal life at college. Oldman, as chief investigator, pulls all stops in trying to make her appear unsuitable for the job. Powerhouse cast, swift pace make film watchable, but it is not as compelling as it would like to be, and tacked-on Hollywood ending leaves a bitter aftertaste. Written by the director.

**Contes Immoraux, Les** (1974, FRA) **C-103m.** D: Walerian Borowczyk. Starring Charlotte Alexandra, Florence Bellamy, Lorenzo Berinzi, Jacopo Berinzini, G. Lorenzo Bernini, Paloma Picasso. Four-part film, based on writing by several French authors. In the first a twenty year-old forces his sixteen year-old cousin to perform fellatio while he relates to her the principles of the tides. In the second, a girl is locked up and discovers lust through the use of cucumbers. The last two stories are about Elizabeth Bathory (Picasso), the famous Hungarian who used to bathe in the blood of virgins, and Lucrezia Borgia, who had affairs with members of the clergy. Not stimulating, just immoral. The inflation of nudity does not make this one erotic. Written by director Borowczyk (LA BÊTE). Aka IMMORAL TALES.

**Contracted** (2013, USA) **C-78m. SCOPE** D: Eric England. Starring Najarra Townsend, Caroline Williams, Alice Macdonald, Katie Stegeman. Horror film about a self-proclaimed lesbian, who has sex with a (male) stranger at a party and contracts a mysterious disease that makes her health worse by the hour. Watchable for the most part, but the girl makes some bad improbable choices, and the ending is a disaster. All in all, a waste of time.

**Contratiempo** (2016, SPA) **C-106m. SCOPE** D: Oriol Paulo. Starring Mario Casas, Ana Wagener, Jose Coronado, Bárbara Lennie, Francesc Orella. Suspenseful mystery from the director of EL CUERPO (2012). Businessman Casas, accused of killing his lover, only has a few hours to relate the events that led up to the crime to lawyer Wagener, who is an expert in making yourself look innocent. Somebody may pin the crime on him, but how did he make it out of the locked hotel room? Solid puzzler has a serpentine story that is well-told, well-acted and superbly scored by Fernando Velasquez. A modern-day Hitchcock with a great twist at the end, which boosts the experience by half a star. English title: THE INVISIBLE GUEST.

**Contronatura** (1969, ITA/GER) **C-87m. SCOPE** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Joachim Fuchsberger, Dominique Boschero, Marianne Koch, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi), Giuliano Raffaelli, Marianne Leibl, Helga Anders, Claudio Camaso. Atmospheric gothic horror / giallo-mix about rich Raffaelli and his lawyer Fuchsberger, who

leave a party but then get stranded at a hunting lodge during heavy rainfall. The residents have prepared a séance which might shed some light on the businessmen's evil doings. Plot set-up is too complicated, and the flashbacks don't seem to stop... but setting, lighting, even direction all make up for it. The score by Carlo Savina is fine. This was actually released first in Germany, as SCHREIE IN DER NACHT (SCREAMS IN THE NIGHT). Also known as THE UNNATURALS and CONTRANATURA.

**Conversation, The** (1974, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Gene Hackman, John Cazale, Allen Garfield, Frederic Forrest, Cindy Williams, Michael Higgins, Elizabeth MacRae, Teri Garr, Harrison Ford, Mark Wheeler, Robert Duvall. Interesting, unusual drama, which Coppola made between his first two GODFATHER films. Hackman plays a self-conscious surveillance specialist, who records a dialogue which may include a reference to a murder. Soon he finds himself faced with the question whether to take actions or keep up his passive role. Regarded a classic by some, film takes too long to elaborate where it's going and is stylistically unexceptional, but becomes fascinating towards the end. Valid statement on privacy and personal commitment must have been especially telling in the light of the Watergate scandal. Coppola also scripted and produced.

**Convoy** (1978, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring Kris Kristofferson, Ali MacGraw, Ernest Borgnine, Burt Young, Seymour Cassel. Unsuccessful action drama could be retitled GETAWAY OF A WILD BUNCH: After a brawl with policeman Borgnine, trucker Kristofferson flees from the law and soon finds himself leading a convoy of unhappy truckers. Their flight (and plight) becomes a media spectacle with politician Cassel helping them in order to get some votes. Film is based on a country song of the same title, and it shows. Peckinpah offers little in terms of characterization or motivation of his main characters, even his famous action scenes are rare. This is possibly his weakest film.

**Cool and the Crazy, The** (1958, USA) **73m.** \*\*½ D: William Witney. Starring Scott Marlowe, Gigi Perreau, Dick Bakalyan, Dick Jones. Rebellious student (and drug addict) Marlowe introduces a group of classmates to marihuana, which is the downfall for some. Film was intended as an educational feature, but is unacceptable in its message, suggesting that marihuana causes physical addiction, which is simply not true. Storytelling - apart from some loose threads, especially regarding the development of several characters - and acting is good, however. Uncut print runs 78m. The German version is minus some violence, though none of it is graphic. If no film is outdated after 40 years, this one is.

**Cool Runnings** (1993, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Jon Turteltaub. Starring John Candy, Leon, Doug E. Doug, Rawle D. Lewis, Malik Yoba. Likable sports comedy about a Jamaican sprinter, who fails in the qualification race for the Olympics and keeps his dream alive by forming a bob team. Candy plays the former champion and trainer, who should make their dream come true. Based on a true story! Not always on-target, but sweet-natured, a real family movie (it was produced by Disney Pictures). One of Candy's last performances. Score by Hans Zimmer.

**Coonskin** (1975, USA) **C-83m.** \*\*½ D: Ralph Bakshi. Starring Barry White, Charles Gordone, Scatman Crothers, Philip Michael Thomas. Blaxploitation satire done in the inimitable style of Ralph Bakshi (FRITZ THE CAT, HEAVY TRAFFIC). Three animated characters go downtown and gets mixed up with the mafia. Not much plot, but quite energetic. Also known as BUSTIN' OUT.

**Cooties** (2014, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jonathan Millot, Cary Murnion. Starring Elijah Wood, Rainn Wilson, Alison Pill, Jack McBrayer, Leigh Whannell. Wood is the new substitute teacher in an elementary school full of weirdo colleagues. When a virus turns the children into bloodthirsty zombies, a group of survivors hole up in the school building and wait for help – if any is to come. Wacky horror comedy is borderline tasteless, but the (gruesome)

zombie kids actually work thanks to clever editing. Wilson steals the show as a tough PE teacher, but otherwise this is too self-conscious and episodic, and the gags often backfire. Had a respectable festival run. Cowritten by costar Whannell (SAW).

**Copkiller** (1983, ITA) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Roberto Faenza. Starring Harvey Keitel, John Lydon, Nicole Garcia. Remarkable psycho drama about the most unusual relationship between corrupt cop Keitel and equally psychotic, alleged cop killer Lydon. Psycho thriller is fascinating to watch and extremely tense because it never shows its true face. Ennio Morricone's superb score provides it with the right atmosphere. John Lydon is the Sex Pistols singer Johnny Rotten. He and Keitel give stand-out performances. Film exists in several versions that run as long as 113m. Alternate titles: ORDER OF DEATH and CORRUPT.

**Cop Land** (1997, USA) **C-100m.** \*½ D: James Mangold. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Harvey Keitel, Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro, Janeane Garofalo, Robert Patrick, Michael Rapaport, Annabella Sciorra, Noah Emmerich, Cathy Moriarty, Frank Vincent. Pointless cop drama wastes good performances as sheriff Stallone tries to make a stand against the corrupt local police (Keitel, Liotta et al). In the end he shoots everybody. A trip to „Hol Land“ is way more inspiring.

**Coplan, Agent Secret FX 18** (1964, FRA/ITA/SPA) **C-97m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Maurice Cloche. Starring Ken Clark, Jany Clair, Jacques Dacqmine, Claude Cerval. First in a series of spy movies about secret agent Coplan (also called Jack Clifton in some versions), who must find out who is transmitting important information to the Russians from the Mediterranean. Pretty empty, trivial actioner with some brawls and shoot-outs is hard to dislike, though, as the locations are beautiful and so is the period flavor. Based on the novel *Coplan Tente Sa Chance* by Paul Kenny. Followed by four sequels. English titles: FX 18, SECRET AGENT, and THE EXTERMINATORS.

**Coplan FX 18 Casse Tout** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-89m.** □ D: Riccardo Freda. Starring Richard Wyler, Robert Manuel, Robert Favart, Jany Clair. European James Bond imitation is like dozens of others, possibly worse. Agent Wyler joins forces with the Israeli secret service to stop society of neo-Nazis, who want to blow up an atom bomb. Plot is almost incomprehensible, film is like a sleeping pill. Based on the novel *Stoppez Coplan* by Paul Kenny. Third in a series of five COPLAN movies, all made in the mid-sixties. Only notable for the involvement of director Freda (I VAMPIRI). English title: FX-18 SUPERSPY.

**Coraline** (2009, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Henry Selick. Starring (the voices of) Dakota Fanning, Teri Hatcher, Jennifer Saunders, Dawn French, Keith David, Ian McShane, Henry Selick. Adaptation of the Neil Gaiman novel by Tim Burton associate Henry Selick is no disappointment. Coraline (*not* Caroline) Jones moves into a sinister old house with her busy parents and discovers a secret door that leads to a parallel world, where she is welcomed by her 'other' mother and father – only they have button eyes and show her much more affection. At first she doesn't realize the danger that lies in wait for her. Meticulously animated fantasy that might scare small kids, like the director's similar NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1993). In the wondrous, incredibly detailed world of Coraline they forgot one thing, however: character development. The first stop-motion feature to be shot entirely in 3-D.

**Corbeau, Le** (1943, FRA) **91m.** \*\*\* D: Henri-Georges Clouzot. Starring Pierre Fresnay, Ginette Leclerc, Helena Manson, Noel Roquevert, Sylvie, Louis Seigner. Fine suspense-drama about anonymous letters that terrorize an entire village with their revelations about the respected citizens. Who is the writer and what is his motivation? Doctor Fresnay, who is vehemently attacked in the letters, tries to clear up the matter. Intelligent, if a little dated

crime drama, cowritten by director Clouzot (LE SALAIRE DE LA PEUR). English title: THE RAVEN. Remade in 1951 as THE THIRTEENTH LETTER by Otto Preminger.

**Corde, un Colt, Une** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-84m. \*\*½ D:** Robert Hossein. Starring Michèle Mercier, Robert Hossein, Lee Borton, Daniel Vargas, Serge Marquand, Pierre Hatet. Above-average Euro western, one of only two(!) made by a French crew. Widow Mercier hires gunslinger Hossein to revenge the murder of her husband. Story is weak but plot is straightforward and quite dramatic. In fact, operatic music score and plot development make this film resemble an ancient tragedy! Interesting, stylish western was cowritten by Robert Hossein, Claude Desailly and Dario Argento. Hossein and Argento collaborated again almost thirty years later in THE WAX MASK. Italian title: CIMITERO SENZA CROCI.

**Core, The** (2003, USA/GBR) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jon Amiel. Starring Aaron Eckhart, Hilary Swank, Tchékya Karyo, Bruce Greenwood, Alfre Woodard, Stanley Tucci, Delroy Lindo. Big, booming sci-fi disaster thriller (too much) along the lines of ARMAGEDDON (1998). Gifted scientists discover certain phenomena on the Earth to be caused by a change in the planet's electromagnetic field. When they realize that this happens because the Earth's core has stopped spinning, a mission is out together to drill there and blow up some nuclear warheads. Surprisingly watchable and fast paced but based on an utterly unbelievable contrivance. Concept wears thin halfway through.

**Corleone** (1977, ITA) **C-112m. \*\* D:** Pasquale Squitieri. Starring Giuliano Gemma, Claudia Cardinale, Francisco Rabal, Stefano Satta Flores, Michele Placido, Tony Kendall, Orazio Orlando. Undistinguished mafia movie chronicles the rise and fall of crime kingpin Don Vito Gargano (Gemma). This Italian carbon copy of THE GODFATHER (1972) comes too late and can't hold a candle to the classic, although Gemma is excellent. Score by Ennio Morricone is used too infrequently. English title: FATHER OF THE GODFATHERS.

**Corniaud, Le** (1964, FRA/ITA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D :** Gérard Oury. Starring Bourvil, Louis de Funès, Venantino Venantini, Henri Génès, Saro Urzì, Beba Loncar, Michel Modo, Guy Grosso. Criminal mastermind de Funès talks naive tourist Bourvil into bringing a Cadillac from Italy to France, hoping that he won't find out that there's cocaine, gold and diamonds hidden in the car. A rival criminal, stuttering Venantini, is also after the loot. Episodic adventure comedy is way overlong, which de Funès and Bourvil's talents can't compensate. Some classic bits include a hilarious pantomime by de Funès in a garage and a chase at the waterfall place. Nice score by Georges Delerue, photographed by Henri Decae. English title: THE SUCKER.

**Corpi Presentano Tracce di Violenza Carnale, I** (1973, ITA) **C-92m. \*\*\* D:** Sergio Martino. Starring Suzy Kendall, Tina Aumont, Luc Merenda, John Richardson, Roberto Bisacco, Ernesto Colli. Cool mystery horror thriller works beyond logic or cleverness: A group of female students is panic-stricken when they realize (do they ever?) that a maniac is killing them one by one. Is it lovesick student Bisacco? Art professor Colli? Or, indeed, one of their clique? Psycho thriller contains enough nudity, gore, period flavor and style to delight genre fans. Poor plot and character set-up is all part of it! Screenplay by director Martino and Ernesto Gastaldi, produced by Carlo Ponti. Michele Massimo Tarantini was assistant director. Also known as TORSO, and CARNAL VIOLENCE. Title translates as BODIES BEAR TRACES OF CARNAL VIOLENCE.

**Corps à Corps** (2003, FRA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Francois Hanss. Starring Emmanuelle Seigner, Philippe Torreton, Clément Brilland, Vittoria Scognamiglio, Yolande Moreau. Seigner (Mrs Polanski) plays an ex-stripper and prostitute, who is saved from her world by rich architect Torreton. After a terrible accident, which leaves her scarred and nearly deaf, Seigner starts having a happy family life with Torreton and their young son.

After six years, however, she begins to investigate and learns that her husband is not the man he claims to be. Psycho thriller is competently made and very watchable in the first hour, then becomes more and more improbable and mean-spirited. Finally, it becomes outright absurd and unbearable to watch, as it puts a little child through hell. Judge for yourself. English title: BODY TO BODY.

**Corps de Mon Ennemi, Le** (1976, FRA) **C-120m. \*\*\*\*½ D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Marie-France Pisier, Bernard Blier, Daniel Ivernel, René Lefèvre, Francois Perrot. After serving a seven-year sentence in prison, former playboy Belmondo returns to his native town and ponders about his past, the people who brought him to prison and the time he has lost. He remembers his rise in society, his involvement with the workers' 'enemy' and his eventual downfall. Typically sober for a French film, but also brilliantly scripted and directed, this is one of the great examples of a non-linear narrative. Excellent use of flashbacks makes this thoroughly fascinating. A highly philosophical, even poetic masterpiece. This film, like its director, deserves to be known better. Verneuil followed this with the even more absorbing I... COMME ICARE. Written by Henri Verneuil, Michel Audiard and Félicien Marceau, based on Marceau's novel. Good score by Francis Lai. English title: THE BODY OF MY ENEMY.

**Corpse Bride** (2005, USA/GBR) **C-76m. \*\*\*\* D:** Mike Johnson, Tim Burton. Starring (the voices of) Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Emily Watson, Tracey Ullman, Paul Whitehouse, Joanna Lumley, Albert Finney, Richard E. Grant, Christopher Lee, Michael Gough, Deep Roy, Danny Elfman. Delightful stop-motion animation, a dazzling follow-up to Burton's NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1993). Depp lends his voice to Victor Van Dort, who is about to be married to Victoria Everglot (Watson), who he has never met. On the day before the wedding, however, Victor accidentally enters the world of the dead, where corpse bride Carter thinks he has just chosen her as his wife. Ingeniously designed dark fantasy by mastermind Burton (with co-director Johnson), whose work is more focused and mature than ever before. Irresistible, especially to buffs. Written by John August, Caroline Thompson and Pamela Pettler. Incredible how this failed to win the Best Animated Feature Oscar, should even have qualified for Best Film, Best Direction and Best Score. On-scren title is TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE.

**Corri, Uomo, Corri** (1968, ITA/FRA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sergio Sollima. Starring Tomas Milian, John Ireland, Donald O'Brien, Linda Veras, Marco Guglielmi, José Torres, Nello Pazzafini, Edward Ross. Fairly entertaining western about cunning Mexican Cuchillo (Milian), who hears by chance of a treasure worth \$3 million. However, he is not the only man after the gold. An American gunfighter (Ireland), two French bounty hunters and a group of Mexican revolutionaries are among his opponents. Like so many European western at that time, this one also tries to copy Sergio Leone's 'Dollar-trilogy'. Milian is fine, but film is hardly exciting. A sequel to Sollima's LA RESA DEI CONTI (1966), with Milian reprising his role as Cuchillo. Score by Bruno Nicolai and Ennio Morricone. Uncut print runs 120m. English title: BIG GUNDOWN 2, and RUN, MAN, RUN.

**Corrupción de Chris Miller, La** (1973, SPA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Juan Antonio Bardem. Starring Jean Seberg, Marisol, Barry Stokes, Perla Cristal, Gérard Tichy, Juan Antonio Bardem. Interesting, well-plotted psycho horror thriller about two women (Seberg and Marisol, both ravishing) who live in a secluded villa in rural Spain. Marisol is Seberg's traumatized, homicidal step daughter, who is waiting for her father to return. Just then they are visited by drifter Stokes, a possible killer, as the prologue shows. Interesting story, good photography (using film stock that looks like glossiest 60s) and an excellent suspense score

(Waldo de los Ríos) make this a must for genre aficionados. English titles: BEHIND THE SHUTTERS, SISTERS OF CORRUPTION, and THE CORRUPTION OF CHRIS MILLER.

**Corruptor, The** (1999, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: James Foley. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Mark Wahlberg, Ric Young, Paul Ben-Victor, Jon Kit Lee, Andrew Pang, Brian Cox. Ambitious thriller about Chinatown cop Chow Yun-Fat and his new partner Wahlberg, who is in danger of becoming corrupt. Good performances, serious dramatics, but unrealistic action scenes and shoot-outs destroy any credibility. Not quite as stylish as Chow's films with John Woo, but better than THE REPLACEMENT KILLERS.

**Corsa dell'Innocente, La** (1992, ITA/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*\*** D: Carlo Carlei. Starring Manuel Colao, Federico Pacifici, Sal Borgese, Lucio Zagaria, Giusi Cataldo, Francesca Neri, Jacques Perrin. Moody thriller about a little boy (Colao) who witnesses the brutal murder of his entire family by a rival clan and then goes on the run from the assassins. Soft-spoken, even pensive film is less heart-pounding than advertised but manages to convince through good score, assured direction and camerawork. Dreamlike, stylized debut feature of Carlei (FLUKE). Beginning and end best parts. English title: FLIGHT OF THE INNOCENT.

**Cortigiana di Babilonia, La** (1955, ITA/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*** D: Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia. Starring Rhonda Fleming, Ricardo Montalban, Roldano Lupi, Carlo Ninchi, Anna Maria Mori. Incredibly corny dialogue and scenes "highlight" this costumer about rebel Montalban, who barely escapes an evil ruler's wrath and finds refuge (and love) at goatherd Fleming's hut. Colorful but tacky, slowly paced. English titles: THE QUEEN OF BABYLON, THE SLAVE WOMAN.

**Cosa Avete Fatto a Solange?** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Massimo Dallamano. Starring Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Baal, Fabio Testi, Günther Stoll, Camille Keaton. The final Edgar Wallace adaptation produced by German hands has almost completely morphed into a giallo. Inspector Fuchsberger goes after a sex killer who is stalking victims at a girls' school. Teacher Testi, having an affair with one of the students, is among the suspects. Plot is not bad but thriller lacks momentum and atmosphere. Score by Ennio Morricone, photographed by Aristide Massaccesi (Joe D'Amato). Also known as WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO SOLANGE? and DAS GEHEIMNIS DER GRÜNEN STECKNADEL.

**Così Dolce... Così Perversa** (1969, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Carroll Baker, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Erika Blanc, Horst Frank, Helga Liné, Ermelinda De Felice, Dario Michaelis. Typical late 1960s Euro mystery (originally released on Halloween '69) by one of the giallo's most frequent writers, Ernesto Gastaldi. Bored businessman Trintignant finds himself intrigued by new upstairs neighbor Baker and they start an affair. Baker's brutish former lover Frank and cuckolded wife Blanc might have something against this. If you think you've figured it out, think again! A bit too low-key to really work, but worthwhile for fans. Good period score by Riz Ortolani. Sergio Martino was executive producer. English title: SO SWEET... SO PERVERSE.

**Così Sia** (1972, ITA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alfio Caltabiano. Starring Luc Merenda, Sydne Rome, Alfio Caltabiano, Tano Cimarosa, Míla Beran, Renato Cestiè. Confusing but quite enjoyable spaghetti western about a group of friends who reunite to rob a bank... or something like that. Nice score by Daniele Patucci, attractive (and funny) cast (notably gorgeous Rome, who has a semi-nude scene) and some TRINITY-style action almost outweigh incomprehensible script. The climactic saloon fight is fun to watch. Some sources credit horror director Dario Argento with the screenplay. English title: THEY CALLED HIM AMEN.

**Cottage, The** (2008, GBR) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Paul Andrew Williams. Starring Andy Serkis, Reece Shearsmith, Steven O'Donnell, Jennifer Ellison, Dave Legeno. Self-professed horror

comedy about two first-time criminals who have kidnapped a young woman and hope for a big ransom. However, their plan goes awry, especially when they meet the Leatherface-farmer next door. Starts out extremely weak, and never really recovers, although horror fans might find some value in final thirty minutes. O'Donnell really must be going through the worst day of his life! Uneven script by the director makes rather pointless reference to the TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE series.

**Counselor, The** (2013, USA/GBR) **C-138m. SCOPE \*½** D: Ridley Scott. Starring Michael Fassbender, Penélope Cruz, Cameron Diaz, Javier Bardem, Brad Pitt, Bruno Ganz, Rosie Perez, Rubén Blades, Goran Visnjic, John Leguizamo. Crime drama from an original script by Cormac McCarthy serves up unbelievably stilted and pretentious dialogues which kill any interest early on. Fassbender plays the title character, a kind of legal advisor, who becomes a target in a drug war. Good cast, but all for naught. Also shown at 117m.

**Countdown** (1968, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Altman. Starring James Caan, Joanna (Cook) Moore, Robert Duvall, Barbara Baxley, Charles Aidman, Mike Farrell, voice of William Conrad. Precise study of male rivalry, based on Hank Searls' novel. Duvall plays an air force officer determined to be the first man travelling to the moon. However, when the Russians are reported to send a civilian – within four weeks – the board decides to send young Caan (a civilian himself), and Duvall must function as his instructor. Interesting time-capsule must have been especially intriguing when it originally came out (one year before the famous Apollo mission to the moon). Well-worth watching. Fine score by Leonard Rosenman. Producer William Conrad (whose voice is that of the TV announcer) is also said to have directed parts of this movie.

**Countess Dracula** (1971, GBR) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Peter Sasdy. Starring Ingrid Pitt, Nigel Green, Sandor Elès, Patience Collier, Maurice Denham, Lesley-Anne Down. Minor Hammer production, a retelling of the Elizabeth Bathory legend: In 17th century Hungary, Countess Pitt realizes that the blood of a virgin can make her young again - temporarily. She romanticizes a young Hungarian, posing as her own daughter, whom she thinks she has killed. Feeble chiller. Don't wait for Dracula to appear. Same story better told in LE ROUGE AUX LEVRES (DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS).

**Countess from Hong Kong, A** (1967, GBR) **C-108m. \*\*** D: Charles Chaplin. Starring Marlon Brando, Sophia Loren, Sydney Chaplin, Tippi Hedren, Patrick Cargill, Margaret Rutherford, Geraldine Chaplin. Charlie Chaplin's last film is also his first in color: Brando plays a designated ambassador on his way from Hong Kong to the United States, when stowaway Loren, a self-proclaimed countess, complicates the trip considerably. Mild, stagey romantic comedy was considered a failure at the time, and indeed it's surprisingly trivial stuff for a master filmmaker like Chaplin. The 60s charm and star appeal are there to make it watchable as a time capsule today, although it appears dated for the late 60s. Chaplin has a cameo as a steward.

**Count of Monte Cristo, The** (2002, USA/GBR) **C-131m. \*\*½** D: Kevin Reynolds. Starring James Caviezel, Guy Pearce, Richard Harris, James Frain, Dagmara Dominczyk, Michael Wincott, Luis Guzmán. Umpteenth retelling of the famous Alexandre Dumas novel about innocent seafarer Edmond Dantes (Caviezel), who swears revenge after one of his adversaries (Pearce) makes him go to prison – for years. Attractive scenery, good cinematography undermined by rushed plot development that is based on a few too many circumstances.

**Count Yorga, Vampire** (1970, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Bob Kelljan. Starring Robert Quarry, Roger Perry, Michael Murphy, Michael Macready, Donna Anders, narrated by George Macready. Tame horror film about Quarry, who's a vampire in contemporary America. With his

superior intelligence, he manages to keep adversaries at bay... for some time. Quarry is good, but film lacks style or thrills. Loses out clearly to any European vampire movies. Followed by a sequel: THE RETURN OF COUNT YORGA (1971). Also known as THE LOVES OF COUNT IORGA, VAMPIRE.

**Couples Retreat** (2009, USA) **C-113m.** \*½ D: Peter Billingsley. Starring Vince Vaughn, Jason Bateman, Faizon Love, Jon Favreau, Malin Akerman, Kristen Bell, Kristin Davis, Jean Reno. Silly comedy about three diverse but befriended couples, who make a trip to Bora Bora for a partnership therapy. Once there, they are subjected to all kinds of idiotic therapies. Some laughs, but script (co-authored by Vaughn and Favreau) is overlong and dull.

**Course du Lièvre a Travers les Champs, La** (1972, FRA) **C-130m.** \*\*½ D: René Clément. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Robert Ryan, Tisa Farrow, Lea Massari, Aldo Ray. Trintignant is on the run in America because he once caused the death of several children when his plane crashed into a group of people. He joins a group of crooks led by Ryan, who want to commit a carefully planned robbery. So slowly paced, the plot at times disappears completely. Cut by half an hour for the film's U.S. release (titled: AND HOPE TO DIE), a version which may actually be an improvement. Not to be dismissed easily, but, to reiterate, awfully slow.

**Couteau dans la Plaie, Le** (1963, FRA/ITA) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D : Anatole Litvak. Starring Sophia Loren, Anthony Perkins, Gig Young, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jacques Marin. Potentially intriguing psycho thriller/drama about married couple Loren and Perkins, who are about to split when Perkins is suddenly presumed dead after an airplane crash. Needless to say, Perkins returns and wants Loren to cash in his life insurance. Will she do it? Or will she try to get rid of him? Despite being well-acted, this sounds more interesting than it plays. Overlength does its share to lessen effect of this film, which could have been great. Director Litvak seems to rely completely on Mikis Theodorakis' full-blown dramatic score to create suspense. Also known as FIVE MILES TO MIDNIGHT and LA TROISIEME DIMENSION.

**Cowboy Bebop: Tengoku no Tobira** (2001, JAP/USA) **C-116m.** \*\*½ D: Shinichirô Watanabe. Starring (the voices of) Kôichi Yamadera, Unshô Ishizuka, Megumi Hayashibara, Aoi Tada, Ai Kobayashi. Big-screen adaptation of the popular 1998 TV series about the title character, a bounty hunter, who must track down a villain who intends to unleash a dangerous virus on the world come Halloween. Poorly paced, with little character depth, but stylish fight scenes and action sequences. For fans. This doesn't beat the LUPIN franchise, however. English title: COWBOY BEBOP: THE MOVIE.

**Cowboys & Aliens** (2011, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jon Favreau. Starring Daniel Craig, Harrison Ford, Abigail Spencer, Paul Dano, Chris Browning, Sam Rockwell, Olivia Wilde, Keith Carradine. Cowboy Daniel Craig wakes up an amnesiac in the Old West, and soon learns that his town of Absolution is under attack, not Indians, but Aliens! He then teams up with rancher Harrison Ford and a group of other cowboys to find the extra-terrestrial monsters' lair and destroy them. Premise is so outlandish that it takes at least 30-40 minutes to get you accustomed, then it still doesn't fully deliver, despite some good action scenes. Pretty crazy stuff. Extended cut runs 135m.

**Coyote Ugly** (2000, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: David McNally. Starring Piper Perabo, Adam Garcia, John Goodman, Maria Bello, Izabella Miko, Tyra Banks, LeAnn Rimes, Bud Cort, Victor Argo, Johnny Knoxville, Michael Bay. Song-writing country lass Perabo goes to New York City to make it to stardom *despite* suffering from terminal stage fright. She first starts working in the insider bar Coyote Ugly, where she learns how tough it is to get by. Little does she know, however, that this will prove to be her stepping stone to love and success. Perabo

is stunningly beautiful and film really manages to be nice – but somehow something is missing from it... a point? Undiscriminating entertainment.

**CQ** (2001, USA/FRA/ITA/LUX) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roman Coppola. Starring Jeremy Davies, Angela Lindvall, Elodie Bouchez, Gérard Depardieu, Giancarlo Giannini, Jason Schwartzman, Billy Zane, John Philip Law, Dean Stockwell, Sofia Coppola. Paris, 1969: Film editor Davies records every boring detail of his life with a camera, all the while working for a cheesy sci-fi movie. He has to deal with irate producer Giannini, ousted director Depardieu, ravishing lead lady Lindvall and his angry girlfriend Bouchez. Quite uneven but likable comedy drama is a nice homage to the late 60s, especially the Mario Bava fantasy *DIABOLIK* (1968). As such it's irresistible to cult movie fans, especially with such a cast (the original *DIABOLIK* John Philip Law appears in a minor role). Write-director Coppola's debut, although he didn't make another feature until 2012 (*A GLIMPSE INSIDE THE MIND OF CHARLES SWAN III*).

**Crackers** (1998, AUS) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: David Swann. Starring Warren Mitchell, Peter Rowsthorn, Susan Lyons, Daniel Kellie, Terry Gill, Maggie King, Valerie Bader, Christopher Chapman, Ross Williams. Mad-cap comedy about young Kellie, who is forced to spend Christmas with his grandparents and great-grandpa Mitchell in their idyllic suburban home. His father has died unexpectedly and his mother's new lover provides a lot of chagrin for the 11 year-old. Lots of chaos ensues, most of it predictable, not all terribly funny, but there *are* some hilarious scenes to make this slapstick comedy a winner in some parts. Written by the director. Old-timer Mitchell has most of the funniest lines.

**Crack in the World** (1965, USA) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Andrew Marton. Starring Dana Andrews, Janette Scott, Kieron Moore, Alexander Knox. Earnest science-fiction drama about scientist Andrews, who intends to punctuate the Earth's crust in order to gain access to an unlimited energy source. The nuclear warhead used, however, creates the title fissure, which threatens to destroy the planet. Quite talky at the beginning, but fairly good.

**Cracks, Les** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alex Joffé. Starring Bourvil, Robert Hirsch, Monique Tarbès, Michel de Ré, Anne Jolivet, Bernard Verley. Bourvil plays an inventor in turn-of-the-century Paris, who takes part in the bicycle race to San Remo with his latest invention, an ultra-modern bicycle. He is chased by bailiff Hirsch. Nostalgic comedy has all the good looks of a 60s slapstick movie, but plot is not funny enough and disappointingly one-note. Nice score by Georges Delerue. Original version runs longer. English title: *THE HOTSHOTS*.

**Craft, The** (1996, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Andrew Fleming. Starring Robin Tunney, Neve Campbell, Fairuza Balk, Cliff De Young. Surprisingly well-written teenie horror about newcomer Tunney and her developing friendship with self-professed witches Balk, Campbell and N.N., who eventually form a witches' circle and are more successful in bewitching their foes than they have ever dreamed. However, as things get out of hand, their friendship is put to a hard endurance test. Refreshing, exciting, well-made, another winner by Fleming, director of *THREESOME*. Campbell became a major star when *SCREAM* was released later that year.

**Crash** (1978, USA) **C-97m. \*½** D: Barry Shear. Starring William Shatner, Adrienne Barbeau, Brooke Bundy, Christopher Connelly, Lorraine Gray, George Maharis, Eddie Albert, Brett Halsey. Typical TV disaster drama about the real-life crash of an aeroplane into the Everglades in Florida. Tries to be matter-of-fact but scenes about the passengers are completely uninteresting. The disaster and consequences are not worth watching either. Based on a book by Rob and Sarah Elder. Also known as *CRASH OF FLIGHT 401*. Story further trivialized in *THE GHOST OF FLIGHT 401*.

**Crash** (1996, CDN) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring James Spader, Holly Hunter, Rosanna Arquette, Elias Koteas, Deborah Kara Unger. Provocative drama, based on J. G. Ballard's novel, about a film producer (Spader), whose entire life changes after he crashes into the car of a couple, of whom only the woman (Hunter) survives. They start an affair and live out their freshly-discovered fascination with cars. Cronenberg delves deep into the human psyche as he ventures to explore the sexual magnetism of automobiles. Erotic, well-acted drama is as fascinating as the director's *DEAD RINGERS*, with a fine score by Howard Shore. Cronenberg also wrote the screenplay.

**Cravate, La** (1957, FRA) **C-21m. n/r D:** Alexandre (=Alejandro) Jodorowsky. Starring Alejandro Jodorowsky, Denise Brossot, Rolande Polya, Saul Gilbert. First venture into cinema by cult figure Jodorowsky. He plays a slightly foolish suitor, who, due to unrequited love, goes to a street urchin who can exchange heads. Interesting experiment made without dialogue, in bright color. Even if it may only be a footnote in the artist's career, it is a must for his followers. Regarded as lost for decades, rediscovered in 2006 and remastered for DVD release. Based on a novel by Thoman Mann. English titles: *THE TRANSPOSED HEADS*, *THE SEVERED HEADS*.

**Crawlspace** (1986, USA) **C-80m. \*½ D:** David Schmoeller. Starring Klaus Kinski, Talia Balsam, Barbara Whinnery, Carole Francis, Tane (McClure), David Schmoeller. Dull, unconvincing thriller about self-absorbed ex-doctor Kinski, who rents out apartments to young women, watches them from the crawlspace, then proceeds to kill them. Seems endless despite short running time. Only for Kinski enthusiasts (he really goes off-the-wall in the finale). Score by Pino Donaggio is not bad. Produced by Charles Band.

**Crazies, The** (1973, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*½ D:** George A. Romero. Starring Lane Carroll, W.G. McMillan, Harold Wayne Jones, Lloyd Hollar, Lynn Lowry. When an army plane crashes somewhere near a small Pennsylvanian town and bacterial gas is released, the inhabitants all go crazy and the army has enough to do to cordon off the place. One-note in its plot and criticism of a powerless military force but fast-paced and well-edited (by the director himself). Similar in plot and structure to Romero's debut feature *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* but not as successful. The director also wrote the screenplay. Retitled *CODE NAME: TRIXIE in the U.S.*

**crazy** (2000, GER) **C-97m. \*\*\*½ D:** Hans-Christian Schmid. Starring Robert Stadlober, Tom Schilling, Oona-Devi Liebich, Julia Hummer, Can Taylanlar. Coming-of-age comedy drama about the pains of puberty, focusing on 16-year-old student Stadlober, who comes to a new school and must face problems with girls and teachers. He is self-conscious and calls himself a cripple due to a paralyzed arm and leg. Sensitively handled by director Schmid but overly simplistic, because it follows only one plot thread consequently. Young actors aren't faultless, and the situations aren't thoroughly credible, but it's far from being silly; quite nice actually for a German comedy drama. Based on an autobiographical novel by Benjamin Lebert, who was 17 when the book was released! From the director of *23 (DREIUNDZWANZIG)*.

**Crazy/Beautiful** (2001, USA) **C-99m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Stockwell. Starring Kirsten Dunst, Jay Hernandez, Bruce Davison, Herman Osorio. Kind-of beautiful, hardly crazy romantic drama about two high school teenagers (Dunst and Hernandez) who fall in love but have to cope with different social backgrounds. Dunst is charming and sexy, and Stockwell's free direction is stunning sometimes, but film resorts to kitsch and cliché in the final third without being able to tackle an issue seriously (and realistically).

**Crazy Couples** (1979, HGK) **C-77m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Ricky Lau. Starring Sek Tin Lau, Lau Kar-Yung, Wang Ha, Peter Bruce. Not-bad eastern comedy about a young fighter, who wants to

become the apprentice of a doctor and ends up defending him against ruthless villains. Direction tries to be inventive, which makes up for some story deficiencies.

**Creature** (1985, USA) **C-97m.** \*\* D: William Malone. Starring Stan Ivar, Wendy Schaal, Lyman Ward, Robert Jaffe, Klaus Kinski. On the Saturn moon Titan, an alien life form that looks a little like the monster in ALIEN (1979) is killing the crew of a science expedition one by one. Kinski, as a German rival scientist, provides the only novelty in this derivative, gory but not bad sci-fi horror film. The rest is 'B' through and through, so fans may like it. Also known as TITAN FIND.

**Creature from the Black Lagoon** (1954, USA) **79m.** \*\*\* D: Jack Arnold. Starring Richard Carlson, Julie Adams, Richard Denning, Antonio Moreno, Nestor Paiva. Classic B-movie by Jack Arnold about expedition to the Amazon, which reveals traces of a prehistoric monster. The creature turns out to be alive and quite aggressive, but not without feelings itself. Hampered by some redundant plotting, but underwater sequences are surprisingly good. One of Arnold's most popular films. Rousing score (Henry Mancini contributed sans credit). Followed by two sequels: RETURN OF THE CREATURE (1955) and THE CREATURE WALKS AMONG US (1956).

**Creatures the World Forgot** (1971, GBR) **C-92m.** \*½ D: Don Chaffey. Starring Julie Ege, Brian O'Shaughnessy, Tony Bonner, Robin John, Marcia Fox. Prehistoric Hammer misfire, absolutely dialogue-free. Two warring cavemen tribes go at it in barren landscape. Pure exploitation, with needless and tasteless violence. Definitely not enjoyable. Written and produced by Michael Carreras.

**Creep** (2014, USA) **C-82m. BOMB** D: Patrick Brice. Starring Patrick Brice, Mark Duplass. Umpteenth found footage film defying any kind of genre. Filmmaker / documentarian Brice is hired by Duplass to film him for a day. The man will die of cancer soon and wants his unborn son to have this video. Things start to get strange, as Duplass turns out to be quite a weirdo. Simply annoying, pointless scenes that go on forever. A total waster of time. Avoid like the plague.

**Creepozoids** (1987, USA) **C-72m.** \*\* D: David DeCoteau. Starring Linnea Quigley, Ken Abraham, Michael Aranda, Richard L. Hawkins. A group of people stumble into a laboratory in the post-apocalyptic world and find themselves under attack by alien organism. Pretty dumb ALIEN-ripoff copies entire scenes from the classic. Tries hard to escape its C-movie origins but only manages to do so in grim finale, which has some good effects.

**Creepshow** (1982, USA) **C-120m.** \*\*\*½ D: George A. Romero. Starring Hal Holbrook, Adrienne Barbeau, Fritz Weaver, Leslie Nielsen, Carrie Nye, E.G. Marshall, Ed Harris, Ted Danson, Stephen King, John Amplas, Christine Forrest, Tom Savini, Tom Atkins. Quite enjoyable horror anthology, modeled after the American E.C. Comics that were popular in the 1950s. Five stories, each scripted by Stephen King, about zombies who return to haunt their murderers, a farmer that is infected by a virus from outer space, an old crate that may harbor a monster and a man who has an insect phobia. All of the stories are quite well-made, with a nice comic-book look and good make-up effects (by Tom Savini), but also rather pointless. Fourth episode, 'The Crate', is the longest and best. Second episode benefits from casting of Stephen King, whose performance is fun to watch. For horror fans. Some prints omit one of the stories. Followed by a sequel in 1987.

**Creepshow 2** (1987, USA) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Michael Gornick. Starring Lois Chiles, George Kennedy, Tom Savini, Dorothy Lamour, David Holbrook, Stephen King. Barely okay sequel to the 1982 movie features more of the same, three horror tales, framed by story of a young boy who has bought a Creepshow comic book. In the first tale, elderly shop owner Kennedy gets help from a wooden Indian come-to-life, in the second, four young vacationers are

under attack by a strange water creature/amoeba, and in the last, a hit-and-run accident turns a hitchhiker into a zombie. First and last stories are labored but okay, the second one is outright stupid. The special effects are the only reason to watch this film – so it's strictly for genre fans. Scripted by George A. Romero (director Gornick was his cinematographer for DAWN OF THE DEAD) and Stephen King.

**Cri du Hibou, Le** (1987, FRA/ITA) **C-108m.** \*\*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Christophe Malavoy, Mathilda May, Jacques Penot, Virgine Thevenet, Jean-Pierre Kalfon, Jean-Claude Lecas, Patrick Kerbrat, Jacques Brunet, Gilles Dreu. Director Chabrol once more examines the dark side of the French bourgeoisie in this fascinating psycho drama. A harmless attraction turns into a lethal obsession when a naive, beautiful woman (May) is attracted to her secret admirer, a mentally unstable man (Malavoy). Her husband-to-be sees his life destroyed, as the woman refuses to marry him. Typically fine direction in one of the director's most subtle works. Adapted from a Patricia Highsmith novel. Note: THE CRY OF THE OWL, which is the English title of the film, is said to signify the death of a person.

**Crime d'Ovide Plouffe, Le** (1984, CDN/FRA) **C-107m.** \*\*\* D: Denys Arcand. Starring Gabriel Arcand, Anne Létourneau, Jean Carmet, Véronique Jannot, Donald Pilon, Rémy Girard, Yves Jacques, Pierre Curzi. Good drama about jeweller Arcand, who learns that his wife has been unfaithful to him and begins a romantic affair with a waitress. His business-partner Carmet, however, has the hots for Arcand's wife, too, and plans to get rid of them. Interesting, well-made throughout, if slightly overlong and never quite on-target. Corwritten by director Arcand, who based his film on a novel of Roger Lemelin. English titles: THE CRIME OF OVIDE PLOUFFE and MURDER IN THE FAMILY

**Crimes of Passion** (1984, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*\*½ D: Ken Russell. Starring Kathleen Turner, Anthony Perkins, John Laughlin, Christina Lange, Bruce Davison. Stylish psycho thriller about business woman Turner, who leads a double life, becoming hooker and sex slave China Blue by night. Laughlin, a suburban husband becomes intrigued by and ultimately involved with her. However, there are other low-lives who have set their sights on her. Strong visuals leave an impression, though story is pushed into the background a bit too much. Perkins (reportedly on drugs) delivers an outstanding performance as a bible-wielding psychopath. For cult movie fans. Beware of edited prints.

**Crime Story** (1993, HGK) **C-107m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Kirk Wong, Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Cheng Kent, Chung Fat, Hang Kang Law. Hard-hitting Hong Kong actioner about cop Chan, who gets involved in a kidnapping case and must learn that one of the criminals is also on the police force. Lots of action throughout. Welcome change of pace for Chan (he is utterly believable in one of his few serious roles) further benefits from explosive editing, breathless direction (Wong later went to Hollywood for THE BIG HIT). Produced by Leonard Ho. Alternative titles: NEW POLICE STORY, POLICE STORY IV, POLICE DRAGON, SERIOUS CRIMES SQUAD.

**Crime Time** (1996, USA/GBR/GER) **C-118m.** \*\* D: George Sluizer. Starring Stephen Baldwin, Sadie Frost, Pete Postlethwaite, Geraldine Chaplin, Marianne Faithfull, George Sluizer. Method actor Baldwin impersonates serial killer and eyeball-gouger Postlethwaite in a TV series on recently committed crimes and identifies too closely with the psychopath, whose wife Chaplin is slowly losing her sight. Interesting, well-made thriller that's not thrilling. It's overlong and becomes more and more improbable, especially in the second half.

**Crimewave** (1985, USA) **C-86m.** \*\*\*½ D: Sam Raimi. Starring Louise Lasser, Paul L. Smith, Brion James, Sheree J. Wilson, Edward R. Pressman, Bruce Campbell, Frances McDormand, Ted Raimi, Joel Coen. Sam Raimi's second feature (following the horror film EVIL DEAD) offers same style and comic book humor. Plot concerns security guard Smith's infatuation

with cool lady Wilson and their involvement in crazy murder scheme concocted by Pressman and carried out by seedy exterminator James. This slapstick comedy is full of cartoon-like characters, over-the-top action and gags. Script, cowritten by Raimi's pals Joel & Ethan Coen, could have been a little moderated. Not all gags work, and some viewers might even find them idiotic. Most interesting as an early array of typical Coen ideas, which you will find in their later films such as RAISING ARIZONA (chases), BARTON FINK (hotel-setting) or FARGO (crime-gone-awry), to name but a few. Originally released at 83m.

**Criminal** (2004, USA) **C-87m**. \*\*½ D: Gregory Jacobs. Starring John C. Reilly, Diego Luna, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Peter Mullan, Zitto Kazann, Jonathan Tucker, Ellen Geer, Brandon Keener. Remake of the acclaimed NINE QUEENS / NUEVE REINAS (2000) about professional con artist Reilly, who takes a young Mexican under his wing, offering to take part in a lucrative deal. Is there a double-cross involved? Gyllenhaal is wasted as Reilly's sister. Interesting to watch, but apart from the fine performances, there is little to defend this film. Its conclusion seems half-baked. Photographed by Chris Menges. Produced by George Clooney and Steven Soderbergh.

**Criminal, The** (1960, GBR) **B&W-97m**. \*\*\* D: Joseph Losey. Starring Stanley Baker, Sam Wanamaker, Grégoire Aslan, Margit Saad, Jill Bennett, Rupert Davies, Laurence Naismith, Kenneth J. Warren, Patrick Magee, Patrick Wymark, Brian Phelan, Nigel Green, Charles Lamb. Interesting cast in early Joseph Losey drama about cunning prison inmate Baker, who upon release immediately plans the next robbery. Interesting characterizations, nice directorial touches, although plotting is a bit idle. Jimmy Sangster allegedly cowrote the script. Released in the U.S. as THE CONCRETE JUNGLE (in edited form).

**Crimson Peak** (2015, USA/CDN) **C-119m**. \*\*\* D: Guillermo del Toro. Starring Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain, Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Hunnam, Jim Beaver, Burn Gorman, Leslie Hope. Beautifully atmospheric gothic chiller set in the 19<sup>th</sup> century about American Wasikowska and her infatuation with British inventor Hiddleston, who she ultimately goes to live with at his drafty old mansion in the countryside. His sister Chastain, however, is using him for an evil plan. This gothic horror marks a welcome return to the roots of horror, doing without jump scares or excessive violence. It is deliberately paced but the story is solidly told and film has marvellous sets and great costumes. The performances are good, with Chastain a particular stand-out. Cowritten by director del Toro.

**Crisis** (1950, USA) **96m**. \*\*½ D: Richard Brooks. Starring Cary Grant, Jose Ferrer, Paula Raymond, Signe Hasso, Ramon Novarro, Antonio Moreno, Leon Ames, Gilbert Roland. Quite good drama about American doctor Grant, who, on vacation in Mexico with his wife, is forced to treat ill dictator Ferrer. Revolutionaries are rioting in the country, and Grant finds himself in hot water. Never exciting or particularly dramatic, but interesting throughout. Well-acted, though the absence of a continuous music score hampers effect a bit. Brooks' directorial debut, based on a story by George Tabori.

**Critters** (1986, USA) **C-85m**. \*\*\* D: Stephen Herek. Starring Dee Wallace Stone, M. Emmet Walsh, Billy Green Bush, Scott Grimes, Don Opper, Billy Zane. Horror comedy, perfect for the PG-13 crowd. Little furry monsters with teeth like sharks land on Earth near a little boy and his family's farm. A night of horror awaits them. Two shapeshifting bounty hunters from space are after them. Quite suspenseful and exciting, it spawned three sequels.

**Crocodile** (2000, USA) **C-94m**. **BOMB** D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Rhett Jordan, Sommer Knight, Caitlin Martin, Mark McLaughlin, Julie Mintz, D.W. Reiser. Terrible monster movie about a group of teenagers whose boating trip turns into a nightmare when they meet (and are eaten by) a giant crocodile. Ridiculous, pointless, not at all entertaining. Some shock

effects work, but the stretches between the attack scenes are unbearable. Another bomb from Hooper (THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE). Followed by a sequel!

**Cronos** (1993, MEX) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Guillermo del Toro. Starring Federico Luppi, Ron Perlman, Claudio Brook, Margarita Isabel, Tamara Shanath, Daniel Cacho. Unconventional horror drama about elderly antique dealer Luppi, who one day finds the Cronos hidden in one of his statues. This golden, bug-shaped device enables its user to gain immortality but also turns the person into a vampire. Dying billionaire Brook and his nephew are desperately trying to find the object that is considered lost since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Stylish, well-photographed chiller that scores most points in depicting the relationship between Luppi and his little deaf-and-dumb grandchild Shanath. Plotting not dramatic enough, but a still a must-see, if only to compare it to director del Toro's next film MIMIC.

**Crooks and Coronets** (1969, GBR) **C-106m. \*\*** D: Jim O'Connolly. Starring Telly Savalas, Edith Evans, Warren Oates, Cesar Romero, Harry H. Corbett. Standard, rather cheap crime comedy about Savalas and Oates' plan to rob Evans' estate. However, they soon start to like her and the plans are jeopardized. Evans is fun in the best LADYKILLERS-tradition but rest of film is not very funny. Wacky climax comes off best. Also known as SOPHIE'S PLACE.

**Cropsey** (2009, USA) **C-84m. \*\*\*** D: Joshua Zeman. Featuring Joshua Zeman, Barbara Brancaccio, Andre Rand. Documentary about the Staten Island legend of Cropsey, a kind of Boogeyman, which the filmmakers think have identified – or a human impersonation of the urban legend – as Andre Rand, a drifter, who may or may not be responsible for the disappearance of five children between 1972 and 1987, but has been convicted for these crimes twice. Often inept, as it completely veers from the original Cropsey premise, but a fascinating examination of a largely unsolved series of disappearances around a former mental institution with a lot of interesting interviews and television clips from the time. True crime, not horror.

**Crossclub – The Legend of the Living Dead** (1999, GER) **C-124m.** D: Oliver Krekel. Starring Zachy Noy, Sibylle Rauch, Oliver Krekel, Sylvie Rauch, Kai Borchardt. Tasteless, style-less non-movie by German film freak and video distributor Krekel about a secret brotherhood, who want to resurrect their master. Amateurish horror crap that does not even qualify as trash. Stay away as far as you can.

**Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon** (2000, CHI/HGK/TIW/USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ang Lee. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Michelle Yeoh, Zhang Ziyi, Chang Chen, Lung Sihung, Cheng Pei-Pei. Beautiful, sweeping drama, based on the book by Wang Du Lu. Chow Yun-Fat plays a martial arts master, who surrenders his most prized possession, a legendary sword, to a governor, but helps to retrieve it when it is stolen. Yeoh, a close friend, meanwhile befriends lovely Zhang, a young girl who is about to be married. Arch-enemy Jade-Fox (Pei-Pei) eventually turns out to be responsible for the theft. Stunning martial-arts extravaganza and love drama has eye-popping action sequences (directed by old master Yuen Woo-Ping), marvelous photography and striking direction. Unfortunately, the plot makes some unnecessary detours (Zhang's encounter with a rebel warrior who becomes her lover is told in twenty minutes and seems like a needless plot addition). Still, an extraordinary achievement by Lee. Exceptionally beautiful Zhang is a real find. Oscar winner for Best Cinematography, Best Music Score (it is brilliant), Art Direction-Set Decoration and Best Foreign Language Film.

**Crow, The** (1994, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Alex Proyas. Starring Brandon Lee, Ernie Hudson, Michael Wincott, David Patrick Kelly, Angel David, Rochelle Davis, Bai Ling, Tony Todd, Jon Polito. From James O'Barr's comic book trilogy comes this dark, violent, stylish nightmare about resurrected musician Lee and his plan to avenge the death of his wife. Set in a derelict city, where it is always night and raining, music video director Proyas' second feature film is

a feast for the senses. Plot is nothing exceptional, but style overcomes it easily. Lee (Bruce's son) died shortly before the production was finished in a tragic accident. The film is dedicated to his memory. Followed by a sequel in 1996 and a TV series in 1999.

**Crucible, The** (1996, USA) **C-123m. \*\*\*½ D:** Nicholas Hytner. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Winona Ryder, Joan Allen, Paul Scofield, Bruce Davison, Rob Campbell, Jeffrey Jones, George Gaynes. Based on Arthur Miller's famous 1953 play, this drama stars Ryder as a mischievous teenager in 17<sup>th</sup> century America. After performing a devilish rite, she and her friends accuse several people in the town of witchcraft and the web of lies soon reaches farmer Day-Lewis, who has rejected Ryder's love. A judge (Scofield) is supposed to clear up matters. Dramatic, superbly acted, with a near-perfect direction. An emotional powerhouse from the director of *THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE* and *THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION*. Screenplay by Miller himself. Filmed before in France in 1956.

**Cruel Intentions** (1999, USA) **C-100m. \*½ D:** Roger Kumble. Starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, Ryan Phillippe, Reese Witherspoon, Selma Blair, Louise Fletcher, Joshua Jackson, Sean Patrick Thomas, Eric Mabius, Tara Reid. Fourth film version of Choderlos de Laclos's novel *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, this time updated to the late 1990s, where ladykiller Phillippe takes on his half-sister's challenge to seduce young Witherspoon, who has sworn to chastity until she meets Mr. Right. Completely pointless, slowly paced teenager drama that somehow got to be advertised as a thriller à la *WILD THINGS*. Phillippe has some charisma, but film becomes more and more improbable as it approaches its (stupid) finale. Watch Stephen Frears' *DANGEROUS LIAISONS* instead.

**Cry-Baby** (1990, USA) **C-85m. \*\*\* D:** John Waters. Starring Johnny Depp, Amy Locane, Susan Tyrrell, Polly Bergen, Iggy Pop, Ricki Lake, Traci Lords, Kim McGuire, Troy Donahue, Mink Stole, Joe Dallesandro, Joey Heatherton, Patricia Hearst, Willem Dafoe. Cult director Waters' follow-up to *HAIRSPRAY* (1988) is equally demented, perhaps even more engaging satire of the 1950s with 'Cry-Baby' Depp, an up-and-coming rock star, who is in love with bourgeois Locane but becomes a juvenile delinquent and has to fight for his love. A pretty unique collection of gags with the usual oddball characters. Written by the director. Also shown in 91m. Director's Cut.

**Crying Freeman** (1995, CDN/FRA/JAP/USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Christophe Gans. Starring Mark Dacascos, Julie Condra, Rae Dawn Chong, Byron Mann, Masaya Kato, Yôko Shimada, Mako, Tchéry Karyo. Super-stylish action fantasy based on the *Crying Freeman* comic book series by Kazuo Koike and Ryoichi Ikegami. Dacascos plays a professional killer for the secret 'Dragon' society. Condra becomes a chance witness to one of his crimes and falls in love with the mysterious stranger. However, their love is impossible according to the rules of his clan. Breathtaking, aesthetic choreography and direction in a film that rivals the best movies of Sam Peckinpah and John Woo. Plot is often redundant and similar to Alex Proyas' *THE CROW* (Dacascos assumed that title role in the 1998 TV Series), but fight scenes are so stunning that most viewers won't mind. Director Gans (*LE PACTE DES LOUPS*) wrote the screenplay together with Thierry Casals and Roger Avary. Brian Yuzna was among the producers. Atmospheric score by Patrick O'Hearn. Interestingly, this was never released in the U.S.

**Cry in the Dark, A** (1988, AUS/USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Fred Schepisi. Starring Meryl Streep, Sam Neill, Dale Reeves, David Hoflin, Jason Reason, Michael Wetter, Kane Barton, Trent Roberts. Dramatization of a real-life case that happened in Australia in 1980. The daughter of highly religious adventists Streep and Neill is carried away by a dingo (wild dog) while vacationing near Ayers Rock. The media fuels doubts that their baby daughter was really sacrificed in a religious rite. Soon they have to stand trial. Schepisi works quietly but

effectively in the background, and scores most effectively with the intercutting of the public opinion about the case. An excellent, ultimately shattering drama, based on John Bryson's novel *Evil Angels*. Beware plot synopses which give away the ending.

**Cry of the Banshee** (1969, GBR) **C-87m.** \*\*\*½ D: Gordon Hessler. Starring Vincent Price, Elisabeth Bergner, Essy Persson, Hugh Griffith, Hilary Dwyer, Sally Geeson, Patrick Mower. Quite gruesome horror about witch hunter Price and curse inflicted on his family by witch Oona (Bergner). Competent direction keeps this afloat most of the way. First (minor) screen credit for Terry Gilliam.

**Crypt of the Living Dead** (1973, USA/SPA) **C-86m.** \*\*\*½ D: Julio Salvador, Ray Danton. Starring Andrew Prine, Mark Damon, Patty Shepard, Frank Brana, Ihsan Gedik, John Alderman. Not-bad horror concoction based on a vampire story written around 1900. Prine comes to Spanish seaside community to investigate his father's death, finds that he was crushed to death underneath the tomb of an alleged vampiress. The townspeople are afraid that she might be resurrected. Earnest acting, good score (by Phillip Lambro) enliven this gothic yarn. For fans. Reportedly, this was edited from the Spanish original version titled LA TUMBA DE LA ISLA MALDITA, with director Danton adding several scenes. Alternative titles: HANNAH: QUEEN OF THE VAMPIRES, VAMPIRE WOMAN, VAMPIRE WOMEN, and YOUNG HANNAH: QUEEN OF THE VAMPIRES.

**CSI: Crime Scene Investigation: Grave Danger (Part 1+2)** (2005, USA) **C/B&W-60+60m.** n/r D: Quentin Tarantino. Starring William Petersen, Marg Helgenberger, Gary Dourdan, George Eads, Jorja Fox, Lois Chiles, Tony Curtis, Frank Gorshin, Andrew Prine, John Saxon. Finale of season 5 of the popular TV series features none other than Quentin Tarantino as a director, and he also receives story credit. CSI expert Eads is abducted and placed inside a glass coffin with oxygen for about 24 hours. His colleagues are desperately trying to find out why he was abducted and where he is. The kidnapper is demanding \$1,000,000. Appropriately spectacular and exciting for a series final, with some typical Tarantino touches to satisfy curious cult movie buffs, but episodes remain too integrated in the whole series and - even if combined - could not stand alone as a feature film. Still, pretty good stuff for TV standards.

**Cube** (1997, CDN) **C-90m.** \*\*\*½ D: Vincenzo Natali. Starring Nicole de Boer, Nicky Guadagni, David Hewlett, Andrew Miller, Julian Richings, Wayne Robson, Maurice Dean Wint. Several people find themselves inexplicably locked into a maze-like cube, which consists of thousands of rooms, most of which are booby-trapped. Why are they in there, and is there a way out? Science-fiction thriller forgets about story setup, starting in medias res, and doesn't become any more logical. However, there *is* some suspense to go with the thrills, just don't think about it. A slight premise, quite well-executed by first-time director Natali.

**Cuerpo, El** (2012, SPA) **C-111m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Oriol Paulo. Starring José Coronado, Hugo Silva, Belén Rueda, Aura Garrido, Miquel Gelabert. Well-made mystery: Several hours after Silva's wife died of a heart attack, her body goes missing from the local morgue. Either it was stolen or she wasn't really dead. Police detective Coronado is baffled, but even more worried is the dead woman's adulterous husband Silva, who administered a certain drug that killed her. Is she getting the last laugh on him? Often fabricated but immensely engrossing thanks to solid performances, smooth direction and a fine score. The ending is dazzling... if you saw it coming or find it too far-fetched deduct half a star from the rating. Director Oriol followed this with the similar puzzler CONTRATIEMPO (2016). English title: THE BODY.

**Cujo** (1983, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*\* D: Lewis Teague. Starring Dee Wallace, Danny Pintauro, Daniel Hugh-Kelly, Christopher Stone, Ed Lauter, Mills Watson. A cute Saint Bernard's dog is bitten

by a dog and goes rabid. What sounds like a formula movie turns out to be a real chiller, as the no-longer-cute dog terrorizes mother and son, whose car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. The dog looks uglier and uglier as the movie goes along and the atmosphere is as intense as it gets. Starting out slowly, the movie builds to a riveting climax that pushes the viewers to the edge of their seats. One of the best Stephen King adaptations. Good suspense score, nice cinematography by Jan de Bont (director of *SPEED* and *TWISTER*).

**Cul-de-Sac** (1966, GBR) **104m.** \*\*\* D: Roman Polanski. Starring Donald Pleasence, Françoise Dorléac, Lionel Stander, Jack Mac-Gowran, Jacqueline Bisset. Odd, unique drama with ironic elements about the effect two wounded gangsters have on a most unlikely couple (Pleasence and Dorléac), when they arrive at their home, a castle on a remote island. Similar theme explored in director's debut *NOZ W WODZIE* (*KNIFE IN THE WATER*). Not for all tastes, but Polanski's direction shows ingenuity. Original running time: 111m.

**Curdled** (1996, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Reb Braddock. Starring William Baldwin, Angela Jones, Bruce Ramsay, Lois Chiles, Barry Corbin, Mel Gorham, Daisy Fuentes, Kelly Preston, Carmen Lopez. Jones takes up a job at the Post Forensic Cleaning Service, cleaning up bloody crime scenes. Her interest in serial killers is spurred on by the 'Blueblood Killer' (Baldwin), who stabs his victims and cuts off their heads. Amusing thriller (executive produced by Quentin Tarantino) has good lighting and a fine soundtrack (olé!), but when the two main characters of the plot finally meet (which is inevitable really), credibility is abandoned. Sure to please those who liked *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN*, which is referred to in the movie.

**Cure** (1997, JAP) **C-111m.** \*\*\*½ D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Koji Yakusho, Masato Hagiwara, Tsuyoshi Ujiki, Anna Nakagawa. Outstanding mystery horror thriller about shockingly gruesome, ritualistic murders in Tokyo that all seem to be unrelated. Police inspector Yakusho ultimately winds up with suspect Hagiwara: an amnesiac wandering the streets of Tokyo with the gift of hypnosis. Minimalistic in direction, dialogue but uses this to great effect. Brilliant script always leaves a few questions open to the viewer, thus forcing him to watch on. Terrific. Written by director Kurosawa (no relation to Akira), based on his own novel! Original Japanese title: *KYUA*.

**Cure for Wellness, A** (2016, USA/GER) **C-143m.** \*\*\* D: Gore Verbinski. Starring Dane DeHaan, Jason Isaacs, Mia Goth, Ivo Nandi, Adrian Schiller, Celia Imrie. Engrossing mystery, slightly along the lines of *SHUTTER ISLAND* (2010). Young Wall Street banker DeHaan is sent to a remote clinic in Switzerland to bring back his ailing company's CEO, then realizes the rich elderly people there are subjected to a strange cure that doesn't make them want to leave. In fact, no one ever leaves... Visually arresting, a story well-told, acted and scored. Great location work, with eerie sets and some chilling effects. References Thomas Mann's seminal novel *Der Zauberberg*, with which this film shares some motifs.

**Curious Case of Benjamin Button, The** (2008, USA) **C-166m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: David Fincher. Starring Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, Julia Ormond, Elias Koteas, Jason Flemyng, Jared Harris, Tom Everett, Tilda Swinton. In a New Orleans hospital room, shortly before Hurricane Katrina will hit the city, a woman dying of cancer asks her daughter to read a story from a journal. It is the tale of a man who was born just after WW1 in New Orleans. His mother died giving birth and his father, thinking him to be disfigured, places him on the doorstep of an old people's home. It turns out Benjamin is living his life backwards, starting out as an old man and dying as an infant. Can his romantic involvement with dancer Blanchett last? Evocative story based on a F. Scott Fitzgerald story is well-told, although there are some unlikely coincidences. Fine score by Alexandre Desplat carries the film to a satisfactory conclusion. A winner, like Fincher's *ZODIAC* (2007). Winner of three minor Oscars, nominated for 13.

**Curious George** (2006, USA) **C-87m**. \*\*½ D: Matthew O'Callaghan. Starring (the voices of) Will Ferrell, Frank Welker, Drew Barrymore, David Cross, Eugene Levy, Joan Plowright, Dick Van Dyke. Based on the books by Margret and H.A. Rey, this sweet-natured cartoon is good for small kids. Museum guide Ferrell, hoping to avert the closure of his place of work, agrees to go on an expedition to Africa to bring back a great attraction for the museum. He comes back with a miniature and a monkey, who causes all kinds of chaos. Totally inoffensive, and also not very inspired, but colorfully animated.

**Curious George 2: Follow That Monkey** (2009, USA) **C-80m**. \*\* D: Norton Virgien. Starring (the voices of) Jeff Bennett, Jamie Kennedy, Tim Curry, Jeff McNeal, Fred Tatasciore, Jerry Lewis, Clint Howard. Sequel to the sweet CURIOUS GEORGE (2006) suffers from silly, unmotivated plot. The mischievous monkey causes an elephant to escape from a magician's show and takes him across the country, hoping to reunite him with his family. For small children, like the first film, but a notch below that.

**Curse, The** (1987, USA) **C-92m**. SCOPE \*½ D: David Keith. Starring Wil Wheaton, Claude Akins, Malcolm Danare, Cooper Huckabee, John Schneider, Amy Wheaton, Steve Carlisle. A meteorite crashes into ultra-religious farmer Akins yard and soon changes start to appear. First the fruits, then the animals, and ultimately everything that has come in touch with the contaminated water. Tired horror film looks more expensive than others, but story is a yawn and fails to create interest. Ovidio G. Assonitis produced, with Lucio Fulci (also effects designer) in tow. Based on an H.P. Lovecraft story. Followed by two sequels. Also known as THE FARM, THE WELL.

**Curse of Chucky** (2013, USA) **C-97m**. \*\*½ D: Don Mancini. Starring Fiona Dourif, Chantal Quesnelle, Danielle Bisutti, A Martinezm Brad Dourif, Jennifer Tilly. Polished, good-looking horror sequel set in a mansion in the country, where wheelchair-bound Dourif and her mother live. One day, a parcel arrives with a doll inside. Of course, it's Chucky and he starts going on a killing spree. Plot is only so-so, rather drawn out – for reasons of style one supposes – and it has a few unnecessary, tacked-on endings. Watch if you are a fan. This sixth CHUCKY movie was released directly to video.

**Curse of Frankenstein, The** (1957, GBR) **C-83m**. \*\*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Hazel Court, Robert Urquhart, Christopher Lee. One of Hammer Films' first chillers, this also initiated the long-running FRANKENSTEIN series. Cushing plays Victor Frankenstein with great conviction, who starts experimenting with human body parts. Urquhart is his friend and conscience, Court his love interest. A bit slow and simplified from Mary Shelley's classic novel, but teaming of Cushing and Lee is one of their most impressive (especially Lee's zombie-like monster). Written by Jimmy Sangster. Followed by six sequels, starting with THE REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1958).

**Curse of the Crimson Altar, The** (1968, GBR) **C-87m**. \*½ D: Vernon Sewell. Starring Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee, Mark Eden, Barbara Steele, Michael Gough, Virginia Wetherell, Rosemary Reede, Rupert Davis. Horror humbug about man looking for his lost brother and finding Karloff and Lee, who worship a 300 year-old witch (Steele). Very colorful, but also boring and pointless, despite the presence of several legendary horror stars. Aka THE CRIMSON ALTAR, and THE CRIMSON CULT in the U.S..

**Curse of the Mummy's Tomb, The** (1964, GBR) **C-80m**. SCOPE \*\* D: Michael Carreras. Starring Jeanne Roland, Ronald Howard, Jack Gwillim, George Pastell, Fred Clark, Terence Morgan. A mummified pharaoh wreaks havoc in London of 1900. OK Hammer horror with a plot that is more complex than others of the genre but also quite unexciting. Mummy attacks only after 50 minutes into the film.

**Curse of the Werewolf, The** (1961, GBR) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Terence Fisher. Starring Clifford Evans, Oliver Reed, Yvonne Romain, Catherine Feller, Anthony Dawson, Michael Ripper, Peter Sallis, Desmond Llewelyn, Charles Lamb. Agreeable but barely thrilling Hammer chiller has one of the longest plot setups in horror history. Reed (who appears only in the second half) is the son of a mute jailor's daughter, who got raped by an evil count's prisoner. The word werewolf is spoken in the last 5 minutes. Watch it for the colorful cinematography and sets. Set in Spain.

**Curtains** (1983, CDN) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Richard Ciupka. Starring John Vernon, Samantha Eggar, Linda Thorson, Anne Ditchburn, Lynne Griffin, Michael Wincott. Terribly uneven thriller about movie director Vernon, whose muse Eggar acts insane in order to get method-acting experience in an asylum. He takes this chance to get rid of her and invites six younger actresses to his villa for a casting weekend. There they are knocked off one by one by a killer with a hag mask. Slow and not very thrilling, some horror aspects make it okay for fans of the genre.

**Cyclone** (1978, USA/MEX/ITA) **C-118m.** \*\* D: René Cardona Jr. Starring Arthur Kennedy, Carroll Baker, Lionel Stander, Andrés García, Hugo Stiglitz, Mário Almada, René Cardona III, René Cardona. Forgettable ripoff of disaster movies and JAWS (1975), about a group of people who survive a cyclone aboard a small boat and must share their drinking water etc. Poorly acted with thankless roles for its international stars. Score by Riz Ortolani is a bit reminiscent of his work for CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (1980). Also shown at 100m. Alternative titles: TERROR STORM, and TORNADO.

**Dabide no Hoshi: Bishoujo-Gari** (1979, JAP) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Norifumi Suzuki. Starring Shun Domon, Hiromi Namino, Asami Ogawa, Natsuko Yagi. Following a brutal rape by a sex maniac (before her husband's eyes), a woman gives birth to a son. The boy must witness the horrible degradation of his mother by his father and later becomes a maniac himself; he lures women into his sophisticated torture chamber in the basement of his mansion. Controversial shocker about obsession and the burden of heritage (typically Japanese issues) is remarkable in many ways. Although it is repeatedly voyeuristic and obviously takes joy in depicting the women's suffering, film is competently made and offers a thoughtful characterization of the main character. Bogs down a little in the second half, but worth watching for people who are not easily offended. Based on an Anime film series and a Manga by Masaaki Soto. English titles: BEAUTIFUL GIRL HUNTER, STAR OF DAVID: BEAUTY HUNTING.

**Daddy Day Care** (2003, USA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Steve Carr. Starring Eddie Murphy, Jeff Garlin, Steve Zahn, Regina King, Kevin Nealon, Jonathan Katz, Lacey Chabert, Angelica Huston. Contrived comedy about Murphy and Garlin, who have both lost their jobs and now decide to open a kindergarten / pre-school, with the only acceptable one around being Huston's elite pre-school. Strictly-by-the-numbers fare, with my son asking half-way through when the funny scenes would come. Even Murphy is surprisingly one-note.

**Dagon** (2001, SPA/USA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Ezra Godden, Francisco Rabal, Raquel Merono, Macarena Gomez, Brendan Price. Weak horror movie marks Gordon's return to his roots, H.P. Lovecraft material, that is. This adaptation takes vacationer Godden to a Spanish coastal town, which the evil cult of the Dagon is ruling. Their specialty is scalping their victims, and Godden is about to learn more about his family history. Pace picks up in the second half of the movie, which saves it eventually. Still, quite cheap (apart from the sometimes quite startling make-up effects), and Godden is no Bruce Campbell or Bruce Abbott (who he was made to resemble, or who he tries to copy). Dedicated to actor Rabal, whose last film this was. Coproduced by Brian Yuzna.

**Daikaijû Gamera** (1965, JAP) **B&W-78m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Noriaki Yuasa. Starring Eiji Funakoshi, Harumi Kiritachi, Junichirô Yamashiko, Yoshiro Uchida, Michiko Sugata, Yoshiro Kitahara. Barely convincing monster movie from Japan about a giant, fire-spitting turtle, which is awakened during a plane crash in the Arctic ice and goes on a rampage in Tokyo. Basically a GOJIRA / GODZILLA rip-off with okay special effects. The concept of an angry turtle isn't very believable, however. Also known as GAMERA, and THE GIANT MONSTER GAMERA. Edited into GAMMERA THE INVINCIBLE (1966) for the American market. Followed by nine or ten sequels until 1999.

... **Dai Nemici Mi Guardo Io!** (1968, ITA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Irving Jacobs (=Mario Amendola). Starring Charles Southwood, Julian Mateos, Alida Chelli, Pietro Ceccarelli, Dada Gallotti, Marco Rual, Mirko Ellis, John Heston. OK spaghetti western, competently filmed, but also unfortunately without style, suspense or plot cleverness. Loner Southwood is after three coins which lead to a hidden treasure. He gets the first one from a dying general, then the chase for the other two coins is on. Cowritten by Bruno Corbucci. Nice score by Carlo Rustichelli. Filmed in Spain. English title: THREE SILVERDOLLARS.

**Daisy Town** (1971, FRA/BEL) **C-71m. \*\*** D: René Goscinny, Morris. Starring (the voices of) Marcel Bozzuffi, Pierre Trabaud, Jacques Balutin. Time has not been kind to the lonesome cartoon cowboy Lucky Luke's first feature film adventure. Story about western community of Daisy Town, which is ruled by outlaws is told in non-chalant fashion, with only sight gags seeming to count. You read the exact same story in the comic book in 15-20 minutes, so why slow down the experience? For fans. Followed by a Turkish LUCKY LUKE adaptation in 1974, two sequels (1978 and 1983), a 1983 animated TV series, an Italian 1991 remake and TV series with Terence Hill, a French TV series in 2001 and a new feature film in 2004 (LES DALTONS).

**Dallas Buyers Club** (2013, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jean-Marc Vallée. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Garner, Jared Leto, Denis O'Hare, Steve Zahn, Michael O'Neill, Dallas Roberts, Griffin Dunne. AIDS drama based on a true story. Heterosexual rodeo man McConaughey cannot believe it when he is diagnosed with HIV in the mid-1980s. He tries to fight the illness, buying illegal drugs, then turning to selling them in a type of club. He becomes a successful businessman in the proceedings. Good storytelling, fine performances, but lacks the bitterness and drama of other films of its kind. Nominated for 6 Oscars, winner for McConaughey and Leto.

**Dalle Ardenne all'Inferno** (1967, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Frederick Stafford, Daniela Bianchi, Curd Jürgens, John Ireland, Michel Constantin, Helmuth Schneider, Howard Ross, Adolfo Celi, Anthony Dawson, Tom Felleghy. Quite good war adventure about a group of resistance fighters and mercenaries, who plot to steal diamonds from Nazi headquarters in Holland. Some uneven plotting hampers proceedings, but generally not bad. Jürgens is good as a reasonable(!) German general. Music by Ennio Morricone and Bruno Nicolai. English title: DIRTY HEROES.

**Dama Rossa Uccide Sette Volte, La** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Emilio P. Miraglia. Starring Barbara Bouchet, Ugo Pagliani, Marina Malfatti, Marino Masé, Pia Giancaro, Sybil Danning, Nino Korda, Rudolf Schündler, Carla Mancini. Okay mystery with gothic elements, though a typical giallo. A large family is called to the reading of a will after the patriarch dies and from then on, the notorious Red Queen stalks and kills the relatives – seven of them according to the legend. Confusing at times, with very little continuity, so enjoying this is difficult, but some set-pieces are quite good, as is score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: BLOOD FEAST, CRY OF A PROSTITUTE: LOVE KILLS, FEAST OF FLESH, THE RED QUEEN KILLS 7 TIMES, THE CORPSE WHICH DIDN'T WANT TO DIE.

**Dance of the Dwarfs** (1983, USA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Gus Trikonis. Starring Deborah Raffin, Peter Fonda, John Amos, Carlos Palomino, Arthur 'Turko' Cervantes. Laughable horror adventure set in the South American jungles, but filmed quite obviously somewhere in North American woodland. Anthropologist Raffin hires boozing pilot Fonda to look for missing colleague, finds tribe of blood-thirsty dwarf-like creatures instead. Highly pretentious, although atmospheric finale compensates a little. Based on a novel by Geoffrey Household. Alternatively spelt DANCE OF THE DWARVES, and also known as JUNGLE HEAT.

**Dancer in the Dark** (2000, DAN/SWE/FRA/NOR/GER) **C-140m.SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Lars von Trier. Starring Björk, Cathérine Deneuve, DavidMorse, Peter Stormare, Udo Kier, Joel Grey, Vincent Paterson, Cara Seymour, Jean-Marc Barr, Vladan Kostic, Zeljko Ivanek, Stellan Skarsgard. Lars von Trier's biggest eccentricity yet is a musical melodrama about a Czechoslovakian immigrant (Björk), who lives with her twelve-year-old son in a run-down trailer next to policeman/friend Morse's house. She works in a tool factory under terrible conditions and has been saving money for an operation that will save her son's gift of sight... at the price of her own. What keeps her alive is the hope for a better future for her son – and her love for Hollywood musicals, which she can only enjoy with her best friend Deneuve, who'll explain to her the scenes on the big screen. She flees herself more and more into an increasingly dark dream world, which ultimately ends in a tragedy. Von Trier's uses the same cinematic style that he began to develop in his 1994 TV miniseries RIGET and tells a story with such overblown melodramatics that the plot is sometimes very hard to take (to say nothing about the songs!). The film is almost impossible to rate and certainly will not appeal to most viewers, but von Trier's deserves credit for constantly trying to reinvent himself and cinema in general, which he is clearly dissatisfied with. A difficult, oddly touching, brilliantly acted film that you will either hate or love. Winner of the Palme D'Or in Cannes. Björk also won the Best Actor prize.

**Dancing at Lughnasa** (1998, GBR/EIR/USA) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Pat O'Connor. Starring Meryl Streep, Michael Gambon, Catherine McCormack, Kathy Burke, Sophie Thompson, Brid Brennan, Rhys Ifans. Set in the year 1936, this drama is an Irish childhood reminiscence narrated by a now-grown-up, who was brought up by five sisters (and occasionally by his estranged father Ifans). His chaotic life is given another spin, when his uncle, confused preacher Gambon, arrives from Africa. Beautifully photographed, well-directed, but misses the mark dramatically. The main character (the boy) becomes a marginal one, and the sisters' relationship moves to the center – not the most interesting aspect of the story. Based on Brian Friel's play.

**Dangan Runner** (1996, JAP) **C-83m.** \*\*\* D: Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Starring Tomorrowo Taguchi, Diamond Yukai, Shinichi Tsutsumi, Sabu. Three men are chasing each other in the streets of Tokyo. A would-be thief, a drug-pushing rock star/shop assistant and a Yakuza killer. Subplot concerns the violent conflict between two clans. An ambitious, intelligent examination of a life where you have to run to survive. Production values are not high, but talent behind the camera compensates. A cult film in Japan.

**Dangerous Game** (1988, AUS) **C-102m.** \*\*½ D: Stephen Hopkins. Starring Steven Grives, Marcus Graham, Miles Buchanan, Kathryn Walker. Grives is good as psychopathic cop who is terrorizing a group of college kids in a supermarket at night. Flashy, well-directed horror thriller actually makes something of its second-rate plot, though it could have been twenty minutes shorter. An impressive feature debut for director Hopkins (PREDATOR 2, NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 5).

**Dangerous Liaisons** (1988, USA/GBR) **C-119m.** \*\*\* D : Stephen Frears. Starring Glenn Close, John Malkovich, Michelle Pfeiffer, Swoosie Kurtz, Keanu Reeves, Mildred Natwick, Uma

Thurman. Second film version of Choderlos de Laclos' novel about two scheming aristocrats (Close and Malkovich) who enjoy manipulating people while duelling themselves. Subtle script by Christopher Hampton (who used his own stage version as a blueprint) comes up with marvelous dialogues but remains stagey nonetheless. The actors, especially Pfeiffer and Close, are excellent. Also notable for a rare Uma Thurman nude scene. Oscar winner for Best Screenplay, Best Art Direction and Costumes. Previously filmed as LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES. Later versions: VALMONT (1989) by Milos Forman and CRUEL INTENTIONS (1999) by Roger Kumble.

**Dangerous Method, A** (2011, GBR/GER/CDN/SUI) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Keira Knightley, Michael Fassbender, Viggo Mortensen, Vincent Cassel, Sarah Gadon. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, psychoanalyst Fassbender, a disciple of Freud (Mortensen), treats patient Knightley, a Russian, who suffers from hysteria. A love affair develops. Psycho drama is good-looking and well-acted (especially by searing Knightley), but it's mostly heavy-going without needing to be, and talky.

**Dans Ma Peau** (2002, FRA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Marina de Van. Starring Marina de Van, Laurent Lucas, Léa Drucker. Deeply disturbing journey of self-destruction about a young office worker, who injures herself accidentally at a construction site, then becomes obsessed with her body and starts mutilating herself. Difficult to watch but fascinating, a tour-de-force by writer/director de Van, who also plays the lead role. English title: IN MY SKIN.

**Dans Ton Sommeil** (2010, FRA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Caroline & Eric du Potet. Starring Anne Parillaud, Arthur Dupont, Thierry Frémont, Jean-Hugues Anglade. Horror thriller about troubled nurse Parillaud, who drives home from work one night and almost runs over a young man, who is running away from someone. She takes him in but is soon plunged into a nightmare. Mean-spirited, cruel thriller thrives on negativity. Tune in if you are into that kind of stuff. English title: IN YOUR DREAMS.

**Dante 01** (2008, FRA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Marc Caro. Starring Lambert Wilson, Linh Dan Pham, Dominique Pinon. Somewhere in space, a new inmate arrives at a prison ship, which is on the brink of a rebellion. It turns out has special healing powers. Caro's first feature since the Jeunet/Caro project LA CITE DES ENFANTS PERDUES (1995), but this science-fiction film has a depressing set and characters. Worth a look for cult movie fans, but rather off-putting.

**Dante's Peak** (1997, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Roger Donaldson. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Linda Hamilton, Jamie Renée Smith, Jeremy Foley, Elizabeth Hoffman, Charles Hallahan. Exciting, explosive disaster movie about scientist Brosnan who is the only one who foresees that the local volcano Dante's Peak might erupt soon. Mayor Hamilton falls in love with him. Very formulaic and quite incredible, but offers high-octane action entertainment.

**Danza de la Realidad, La** (2013, CHL/FRA) **C-132m. \*\*\* D:** Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Brontis Jodorowsky, Pamela Flores, Jeremias Herskovitz, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Adan Jodorowsky, Cristobal (=Axel) Jodorowsky. Artist/guru Jodorowsky's return to directing after a hiatus of 23 years is an autobiographical drama set during his childhood in 1930s Tocopilla, Chile. A son of Jewish/Russian immigrants, his parents run a shop on main street. His overly strict Stalinist father and his deeply religious mother, who sings everything she says, are portrayed in detail. Focus of the film shifts away to his father in second half, who leaves the family, intending to assassinate the Chilean dictator Ibanez. Surreal and metaphorical, it is deeply fascinating for Jodo's fans, although the budgetary limitations can be felt at times. Brontis (who played the child in EL TOPO) delivers a brilliant performance, Alejandro's other son Adan composed the beautiful score. English title: THE DANCE OF REALITY.

**Danza Macabra** (1964, ITA/FRA) **B&W-89m**. \*\*½ D: Antonio Margheriti, Sergio Corbucci. Starring Barbara Steele, Georges Rivière, Margarete Robsahm, Arturo Dominici, Silvano Tranquilli, Umberto Raho. One of the best known Italian gothic chillers, this one features Rivière, who accepts a wager from none other than Edgar Allan Poe, who dares him to spend a night in his family's haunted castle. Slowly paced, underplotted but fairly atmospheric, for fans of the genre. Good score by Riz Ortolani. Ruggero Deodato was assistant director. Remade by Margheriti in 1971 (as *NELLA STRETTO MORSA DEL RAGNO*). English titles: *CASTLE OF BLOOD*, *COFFIN OF TERROR*, *DIMENSIONS IN DEATH*, *THE CASTLE OF TERROR*, *THE LONG NIGHT OF TERROR*, *TOMBS OF HORROR*, and *TOMBS OF TERROR*.

**Daredevil** (2003, USA) **C-103m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Mark Steven Johnson. Starring Ben Affleck, Jennifer Garner, Colin Farrell, Michael Clarke Duncan, Jon Favreau, Scott Terra, Ellen Pompeo, Joe Pantoliano, David Keith, Kevin Smith, Stan Lee, Kane Hodder, Mark Margolis. Slick comic-book adaptation features the title hero (Affleck), who is a lawyer by day and a vicious fighter for justice by night. After an accident as a child, which blinded him, his other senses are heightened. Well-directed, flashy fantasy thriller loses its verve in the mid-section and never recovers, also because of rather dull story about bad guys Farrell and Duncan. Good cast can't be faulted. Written by the director and executive produced by the comic's creator Stan Lee, who has a cameo.

**Dario Argento – Master of Horror** (1991, ITA) **C-80m**. \*\*½ D: Lewis Coates (=Luigi Cozzi). Featuring Dario Argento, Michele Soavi, Luigi Cozzi. Documentary about leading horror director Argento covers his oeuvre between the years 1987 and 1990, discussing the films *OPERA*, *LA CHIESA*, *LA SETTA* and *TWO EVIL EYES*. Dario speaks about his obsession with making horror films, though major part of this documentary is taken by (long) video clips from these films. The special effects are also explained. Interesting for Argento devotees (all horror fans should be), others needn't bother. The second in a line of documentaries, following *LA MONDO DELL'ORRORE DI DARIO ARGENTO*, directed by Michele Soavi in 1985. Third part, filmed by Cozzi in 1997, is titled *MONDO DI DARIO ARGENTO 3*.

**Dark, The** (1979, USA) **C-90m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Tobe Hooper, John 'Bud' Cardos. Starring William Devane, Cathy Lee Crosby, Richard Jaeckel, Biff Elliot, Keenan Wynn, Philip Michael Thomas. Poor sci-fi horror film about a human-like monster who roams L.A. streets at night, beheading his victims. Attack scenes are well-filmed but shoddy effects ruin everything. Original director Tobe Hooper was replaced by John Cardos during the production. Alternative title: *THE MUTILATOR*.

**Dark Age** (1987, AUS) **C-91m**. \*\*½ D: Arch Nicholson. Starring John Jarratt, Nikki Coghill, Max Phipps, David Gulpilil. Agreeable eco-thriller along the lines of *JAWS* (1975). Crocodile expert Jarratt is confronted with a giant crocodile, which the local poachers want dead. For the indigenous people, however, it is a mystical creature. Fairly well-filmed, but the monster isn't convincing.

**Dark City** (1998, USA) **C-100m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Alex Proyas. Starring Rufus Sewell, Kiefer Sutherland, Jennifer Connelly, Richard O'Brien, Ian Richardson, Colin Friels, Bruce Spence, William Hurt. Dark, brooding science-fiction film, from the director of *THE CROW*. Sewell plays an amnesiac who, stumbling through a dark city, is suspected of being a serial killer. Aliens have invaded the planet and are conducting experiments with humans, to find out about our soul. They have the gift of 'tuning', altering physical reality by their own will. Brilliantly designed urban-hell production moves at such a quick pace that it seems altogether outlandish. Story (and especially the plot) should have been more edged out. The viewer doesn't get time to ponder the going-ons. This *BRAZIL*-like nightmare will excite genre fans and others alike.

**Dark Crystal** (1982, GBR) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jim Henson, Frank Oz. Good children's fantasy from the creators of the television series *The Muppet Show*. The evil Skeksis are in possession of a valuable crystal, which gives them power over the stars. If someone is able to find a missing splinter and reinsert it into the crystal, the world will become a peaceful place again. Well-produced and filmed with an eye for detail. Children will be delighted, though film is not for the very small ones. Adults may object about the slim plot. Performed by Jim Henson, Kathryn Mullen, Frank Oz, Dave Goelz, many others.

**Dark Echo** (1977, USA/YUG) **C-90m. \*½** D: George Robotham. Starring Karin Dor, Joel Fabiani, Wolfgang Brook, Hanna Hertelendy, John Robotham. In the historical Austrian town of Hallstatt there is the legend of a sunken ship and its captain, who is rumoured to have returned from his watery grave as a monster, killing people at random. American Fabiani comes to investigate. Cheap, poorly made chiller doesn't ring true. It does have some trash appeal, though. Dor married the director in 1988. Also known as DARK ECHOES.

**Darkest Sword, The** (1972, HGK) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Chien Lung. Starring Chang Ching-Ching, Chiang Ping, Ie Yuen. An evil warrior wielding a magical black sword is threatening to wipe out a village in this well-directed and stylishly photographed eastern. Unfortunately the plot never really catches fire, but still, there are many astounding sequences to hold your attention (sword-fighters defying gravity), ...and a simply lovely heroine.

**Dark Half, The** (1993, USA) **C-122m. \*\*½** D: George A. Romero. Starring Timothy Hutton, Amy Madigan, Michael Rooker, Julie Harris, Robert Joy. Horror novelist Hutton decides to announce that he has been writing under a pseudonym, but soon he has to realize that his alter ego has come to life and is killing all the people he knows. Or is Hutton just insane? Film decides too late what it wants to be, a horror movie or a thriller, and when it does, the explanation for everything is vague and unbelievable. What remains is director Romero's feel for the genre, and this carries the film a long way. While there are some good scenes, there are also several moments where the proceedings border on ridiculousness. Romero also wrote the screenplay, based on the novel by Stephen King. This was at least King's third novel about a troubled horror writer (after SHINING and MISERY). Incidentally, King also used a pseudonym for a long time.

**Dark Knight, The** (2008, USA) **C-152m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Christopher Nolan. Starring Christian Bale, Heath Ledger, Aaron Eckhart, Michael Caine, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman, Monique Curnen, Cillian Murphy, Eric Roberts, Anthony Michael Hall, Nathan Gamble. Sequel to Nolan's BATMAN BEGINS (2005) follows the Caped Crusader's continuing fight against crime in Gotham City. District attorney Harvey Dent (Eckhart) is so successful he rivals Batman (also in dating Gyllenhaal), and the Joker (Ledger), a lunatic, will do anything to make crime prevail. Big-budgeted fantasy(?) action, with large-scale action set-pieces is even more brooding than the first film, and plot is uneven. It's also not very entertaining. Ledger died of an accidental(?) overdose well before film's premiere, he posthumously won an Oscar (and 31 other awards!) for his unhinged work. Score by Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard.

**Dark Knight Rises, The** (2012, USA) **C-165m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Christopher Nolan. Starring Christian Bale, Anne Hathaway, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Michael Caine, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman, Marion Cotillard, Cillian Murphy. Conclusion of Christopher Nolan's DARK NIGHT trilogy may be best of the lot, although there's enough to complain about. After THE DARK KNIGHT (2008), Batman and Bruce Wayne have withdrawn from the public completely. Then another super-villain (Bane) rises and Catwoman Hathaway forces the caped crusader out of retirement. However, Bane is threatening Gotham City with a stolen fusion reactor and thus total destruction. Is an older, more weary Batman still up to the challenge? Its uneasy

combination of juvenile fantasy and greek tragedy makes film suffer hardest in the stale mid-section, but showdown is excellent. Fine character work, especially by Oldman. Fans of THE DARK KNIGHT (not me) may love this sequel even more.

**Darkman** (1990, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Sam Raimi. Starring Liam Neeson, Frances McDormand, Colin Friels, Larry Drake, Dan Hicks, Ted Raimi, John Landis, William Lustig, Scott Spiegel, Bruce Campbell, Jenny Agutter, Sam Raimi, Joel and Ethan Coen. Raimi's follow-up to EVIL DEAD II (1987) is rip-roaring mix of RE-ANIMATOR and BATMAN. Scientist Neeson is almost killed by thugs working for crook Drake and now seeks revenge as Darkman, with scorched skin and super-powers. B-movie extravaganza makes you forget plot holes with terrific score by (BATMAN-composer) Danny Elfman, a forceful performance by Neeson and Raimi's stylish direction. Movie references range from PHANTOM OF THE OPERA and INVISIBLE MAN to Hitchcock's VERTIGO. Bruce Campbell was originally cast for the starring role, he appears in a cameo instead (like many of Raimi's friends). Followed by two inferior sequels.

**Dark Night of the Scarecrow** (1981, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Frank De Felitta. Starring Charles Durning, Robert F. Lyons, Claude Earl Jones, Lane Smith, Tonya Crowe, Larry Drake. Fairly good made-for-TV chiller about retarded, harmless Drake, who's best friends with girl Crowe. When a dog attacks her, everyone thinks he did it, especially those redneck farmer brigade led by Durning. They kill him vigilante-style, but he, or his spirit, returns and takes his revenge. Well-acted (especially by Durning) and well-scored, this could have been even better with a less predictable plot.

**Dark Shadows** (2012, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, Helena Bonham Carter, Eva Green, Jackie Earle Haley, Jonny Lee Miller, Christopher Lee, Alice Cooper, Chloe Grace Moretz, David Selby, Jonathan Frid. Remake of a 1970s TV series strikes bronze, perhaps, not gold in Tim Burton's hands. Depp plays a vampire who is released from his coffin hundreds of years later in 1970s America. His family still lives in their castle-like estate, but they are as poor as churchmice. Depp's nemesis from the old days, witch Green has control of the sea-side town now. Plot is secondary, the real stars are the set and the costumes, although Depp and Green (and most of the others) ham it up deliciously.

**Dark Star** (1974, USA) **C-83m.** \*\*½ D: John Carpenter. Starring Dan O'Bannon, Dre Hachich, Brian Narelle. So-so first feature film from recognized horror film director Carpenter. On the space ship 'Dark Star' a few spaced-out astronauts are on a mission to destroy unstable planets and suddenly have to contend with the computer and a speaking bomb which wants to blow itself up. Sci-fi satire spoofing 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY is occasionally hilarious, but also quite silly. Written by Carpenter and O'Bannon, who expanded their short film they made in college. O'Bannon would later write the screenplay to ALIEN.

**Dark Touch** (2013, EIR/FRA/SWE) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Marina de Van. Starring Missy Keating, Marcella Plunkett, Padraic Delaney, Charlotte Flyvholm, Steve Wall. Horror drama from the director of IN MY SKIN (2002) and DON'T LOOK BACK (2009). An 11-year-old girl with psychic, telekinetic powers is the only survivor of a family massacre that she might have triggered. She is taken in by benevolent neighbors, but the supernatural occurrences don't stop. Everybody still believes the family was assaulted by criminals. Stylish direction and photography cannot overcome credibility issues and rather flaccid pace. Keating is the daughter of pop star Ronan.

**Dark Tower, The** (2017, USA) **C-95m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Nikolaj Arcel. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Idris Elba, Tom Taylor, Dennis Haysbert, Ben Gavin. Blockbuster Stephen King adaptation about a young boy with a special gift, who dreams of a parallel world, where two

antagonists, gunslinger Elba and mage McConaughey are fighting each other. If the dark tower is destroyed with the (psychic) help of children, the real world will also end. Solidly made but quite pointless fantasy adventure/western-mix along the PERCY JACKSON formula. McConaughey terribly hams it up.

**Dark Water** (2005, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Walter Salles. Starring Jennifer Connelly, John C. Reilly, Tim Roth, Dougray Scott, Pete Postlethwaite, Ariel Gade. Remake of the Japanese chiller HONOGURAI MIZU NO SOKO KARA (2002) featuring Connelly, who makes her return to horror films after 20 years (Dario Argento's PHENOMENA). She plays a single mother, who is going through a divorce and moves into a derelict apartment building with her daughter. Soon, she is troubled by water dropping from the ceiling, noise from upstairs and her daughter's imaginary friend. Is a ghost haunting the place? Atmospheric chiller is unrelentingly brooding and downbeat, but pretty much on a par with the original.

**Dark Waters** (1994, ITA/GBR) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Mariano Bano. Starring Louise Salter, Venera Simmons, Mariya Kapnist, Pavel Sokolov, Valeri Bassel. After her father's death, young Salter travels to a Crimean island to find out why he financially supported a religious convent there and tries to solve the mystery behind her own childhood. Strange, vague horror chiller is oddly hypnotic in its creation of a maelstrom of atmosphere, although the plot never really thickens. Contains relatively few effects but manages to hold your attention nevertheless. Mainly for connoisseurs of European macabre cinema, others may be put off early on. Written by Andy Banks, edited by the director. Filmed in Russia and Rome. Also known as DEAD WATERS.

**Darwin's Nightmare** (2004, AUT/FRA/BEL/CDN/FIN/SWE) **C-111m. \*\*\* D:** Hubert Sauper. Shattering documentary about Tanzania, a poor 3rd world country in Africa, whose only economic asset, Lake Victoria, is being exploited by Europeans and Russians. The Nile perch, a predator, has killed all other species in the lake and is flown to rich countries, while the poor locals receive the fishbone. The native population can work in factory jobs, but since only the factory owners are getting rich, poverty still reigns the streets. Too hesitant, unstructured in its approach but compelling nonetheless, this film has the power to make you cry about the injustice in the world. Nominated for Best Documentary Oscar.

**Daughter of Darkness** (1989, USA) **C-91m. \*½ D:** Stuart Gordon. Starring Anthony Perkins, Mia Sara, Jack Coleman, Robert Reynolds. Young American Sara, haunted by nightmares, goes to Romania to look for her lost father and discovers that he is a 200 year-old vampire. Film starts okay, then disintegrates as it becomes clear that the plot won't go beyond its premise. Pretentious, almost offensively, and badly acted. For those who want to see Perkins play a vampire. He is the only good one in the cast. Filmed in Budapest.

**Da Uomo a Uomo** (1968, ITA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Giulio Petroni. Starring Lee Van Cleef, John Phillip Law, Mario Brega, Luigi Pistilli, Anthony Dawson, José Torres, Franco Balducci. Revenge western with a cult following about Law's quest to find and kill outlaws that wiped out his family 15 years ago. Van Cleef is trying to find them, too; he spent the last 15 years in prison after being betrayed by them. A cool western, with excellent widescreen cinematography by Carlo Carlini, stylish direction, and an elaborate score by Ennio Morricone (used by Quentin Tarantino for his KILL BILL films). Major flaw: Languid plotting makes this occasionally pretentious. English titles: DEATH RIDES A HORSE, AS MAN TO MAN.

**David Copperfield** (1935, USA) **130m. \*\*\* D:** George Cukor. Starring Freddie Bartholomew, Frank Lawton, W.C. Fields, Lionel Barrymore, Madge Evans, Roland Young, Basil Rathbone, Edna May Oliver, Maureen O'Sullivan, Elsa Lanchester. MGM's stab at Dickens probably seemed like the real thing when it was originally released but has lost most of that reported

magic over the years. Charles Dickens' classic novel about the life of a young boy (Bartholomew) who becomes an orphan early on in life. Solid storytelling but scant stylistics (Dickens' narrative was probably more cinematic). Produced by David O. Selznick.

**David Cronenberg - I Have to Make the Word Be Flesh** (1999, FRA) **C-70m. \*\*½ D:** André S. Labarthe. Novelist Serge Grünberg interviewed the Canadian shock specialist David Cronenberg in January 1999, asking him some rather vague questions about his oeuvre. Intermittently we see some video clips of Cronenberg's films, from SHIVERS to CRASH. All in all, an interesting insight into the mind of a cult director. It could have been a little better-structured. A must for Cronenberg's followers.

**Da Vinci Code, The** (2006, USA) **C-167m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ron Howard. Starring Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou, Ian McKellen, Jean Reno, Paul Bettany, Alfred Molina, Jürgen Prochnow. Blockbuster adaptation of the Dan Brown bestseller about a symbologist (Hanks), who is drawn into an adventure when he is asked to help a young woman (Tautou) find out who killed her grandfather in the Louvre and which fundamental secret the killers are trying to protect. Intriguing puzzler with historical references to Leonardo Da Vinci, Sir Isaac Newton and even the Holy Grail is uneven as a movie, but well-directed and well-scored (by Hans Zimmer). Those who know the book may be more critical, but film holds up well beyond two hours. Originally premiered at 149m.

**Dawn of the Dead** (1978, USA) **C-139m. \*\*\*\* D:** George A. Romero. Starring David Emge, Ken Foree, Scott H. Reiniger, Gaylen Ross, David Crawford, David Early, Richard France, Tom Savini, George A. Romero. "When there is no more room in Hell, the dead will walk the Earth!" George Romero's sequel to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is an apocalyptic horror masterpiece, a parable on the decline of Western civilization. A national emergency grips the country as a growing army of zombies relentlessly attacks the living. Policemen Foree and Reiniger join Emge and Ross, who intend to flee in a helicopter from the mass hysteria that is engulfing the country. Ultimately, they find themselves in a huge shopping center, which might give them temporary refuge from the flesh-eating corpses. Can they keep the living dead at bay? Influential, trendsetting horror shocker is one of the best genre films of all time. Excellent make-up and special effects by Tom Savini, good, brooding score by Goblin (featuring Dario Argento), hairraising setpieces, black humor, all presented through a thoughtful script by director Romero. The incredibly tense final thirty minutes will tie your stomach in knots! Apart from doing the music, Dario Argento also functioned as script consultant and supervised the European cut (119m.) of the film. In fact, several versions of the film are in existence. Released theatrically at 126m., complete version includes more soft-spoken plot elements, such as the refugees' increasing disillusionment with their situation. Beware of edited prints. Coproduced by Claudio Argento. Romero completed the Dead-trilogy with DAY OF THE DEAD in 1985.

**Dawn of the Dead** (2004, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Zack Snyder. Starring Sarah Polley, Ving Rhames, Jake Weber, Mekhi Phifer, Ty Burrell, Jayne Eastwood, Matt Frewer, Scott H. Reiniger, Tom Savini, Ken Foree. Adrenalin-pumped but pointless remake of the classic 1978 horror movie by George Romero. Several people find refuge in a shopping mall, after an epidemic sweeps through the country turning dead people into flesh-eating zombies. Hardly any novelties (the zombies run and there are 'twitchers'), film lacks the original's oppressive atmosphere totally and only seems interested in gory effects. Unexpectedly, film comes to bloody life in the final thirty minutes. Still, works only if you can disengage this movie from the memory of the original. Tom Savini, Ken Foree and Scott Reiniger of the original cast have cameos.

**Dawn of the Mummy** (1981, USA/EGY/ITA) **C-93m.** \*½ D: Frank Agrama. Starring Brenda King, Barry Sattels, George Peck, John Salvo, Ibrahim Khan. Low-budget shocker about an ancient pharaoh curse and its effects on present-day gravediggers. Filmed on location in Egypt but script is so bad that you'll find your attention wandering. Fast editing doesn't help. Only for horror fans.

**Dawn of the Planet of the Apes** (2014, USA) **C-130m.** \*\*\* D: Matt Reeves. Starring Andy Serkis, Jason Clarke, Gary Oldman, Keri Russell, Toby Kebbell, Kodi Smit-McPhee, Judy Greer. Fine sequel to **RISE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES** (2011) picks up 8 years after the events of the first movie. Ape Caesar is leading a colony of apes in the woods surrounding San Francisco. Mankind has been decimated by deadly virus, and only a small community of survivors are holed up in derelict SF. When an expedition is trying to reach a dysfunctional dam to restore power, tensions grow between apes and humans, and forces within both parties put them on the brink of war. Visually arresting science-fiction has a deliberate pace, but the effects are astounding and the finale is excellent. Subtle references to the original first sequel **BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES** (1970) make it all the more enjoyable for buffs (e.g. subway, riding through fire, bomb).

**Day After Tomorrow, The** (2004, USA) **C-124m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Roland Emmerich. Starring Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Emmy Rossum, Dash Mihok, Ian Holm, Glenn Plummer, Perry King. Rather dumb disaster thriller about a sudden global climate change, which, as predicted by scientist Quaid, will turn the Northern hemisphere into an ice desert. Quaid's son Gyllenhaal is holed up in New York City when the disaster happens. Emmerich, who receives story and screenplay credit, makes this almost as idiotic as **INDEPENDENCE DAY** (1996). The special effects keep you watching, but otherwise this is very weak.

**Daylight** (1996, USA) **C-114m.** \*\*\* D: Rob Cohen. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Amy Brenneman, Viggo Mortensen, Dan Hedaya, Karen Young, Claire Bloom, Barry Newman, Stan Shaw, Colin Fox, Sage Stallone. Well-made, formulaic disaster thriller featuring Stallone as former chief of Emergency Medical Services, who starts a rescue operation when an explosion seals both ends of the tunnel under the Hudson River in New York City. Reminiscent of **THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE** and rather unimaginative but exciting and effective, with Stallone an assured hero.

**Day of the Dead** (1985, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*½ D: George A. Romero. Starring Lori Cardille, Terry Alexander, Joseph Pilato, Jarlath Conroy, Antone DiLeo, Richard Liberty, George A. Romero. Final part of Romero's **DEAD**-trilogy is ambitious but suffers in comparison to the superior **DAWN OF THE DEAD** and from the fact that the **Zombie** film had run its course already. The plot concerns some survivors of the epidemic, who have found temporary refuge at an underground army bunker. Professor 'Frankenstein' (Liberty) wants to study the living dead, but Captain Rhodes (Pilato) intends to wipe them out. Who is going to escape? Due to a lack of funds Romero had to make compromises, and it shows in terms of plot development, but Tom Savini's effects are as gruesome as ever. For horror buffs. Rumored sequel, titled **TWILIGHT OF THE DEAD**, was never made.

**Day of the Dead** (2008, USA) **C-87m.** \*½ D: Steve Miner. Starring Mena Suvari, Nick Cannon, Michael Welch, AnnaLynne McCord, Stark Sands, Matt Rippy, Pat Kilbane, Ving Rhames, Ian McNeice. Loose remake of Romero's third **DEAD** feature is almost completely worthless. Suvari (why?) plays an army corporal, whose hometown has been sealed off because of mysterious flu epidemic. Soon those infected turn into zombies and attack the living. Only similarities here are army presence and a 'humane' zombie. With a script this weak not even the effects are thrilling. Went straight to DVD.

**Day of the Woman** (1978, USA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Meir Zarchi. Starring Camille Keaton, Eron Tabor, Richard Pace, Anthoy Nichols, Günther Kleemann. Beautiful writer Keaton withdraws to a house by a lake to write her first novel, but is harassed by local thugs – who think she just turned up for their pleasure. After a violent rape attack, which leaves her almost dead, she proceeds to take her revenge, in ultra-violent fashion. Despite its premise this is NOT a feminist revenge picture, this is just as misogynist as any other exploitation film of that time. Very hard to watch at times, with echoes of LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT and DELIVERANCE (two movies that couldn't be more dissimilar), this horror thriller is overly simple and unnecessarily drawn out. The outrageousness of the material sort of keeps you watching. Don't view if in doubt, banned in many countries. A minor cult favorite, especially because of its alternative title I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE. Aka I HATE YOUR GUTS, THE RAPE AND REVENGE OF JENNIFER HILL. Remade in 2010.

**Days of Heaven** (1978, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: Terrence Malick. Starring Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, Robert Wilke, Stuart Margolin. Writer-director Malick's follow-up to his cult drama BADLANDS (1973) is similar in story and tone. A roaming young couple (Gere and Adams) find work at Shepard's farm. When he shows some interest in Adams, Gere eggs her on to become his lover – with tragic results. An evocative film, where nature plays a major role, this was Malick's last before directing THE THIN RED LINE in 1998. Score by Ennio Morricone makes use of the memorable theme from 'Carnival of the Animals'. Cinematography by Néstor Almendros (aided by Haskell Wexler) won an Oscar. Malick won Best Director at the Cannes Film Festival.

**Days of Wine and Roses** (1962, USA) **117m.** \*\*\*½ D: Blake Edwards. Starring Jack Lemmon, Lee Remick, Charles Bickford, Jack Klugman, Alan Hewitt, Tom Palmer, Jack Albertson. Shattering drama realistically depicts two lovers' descent into alcoholism, which threatens to destroy their lives. Lemmon is terrific in one of his best roles, Remick his match as secretary who falls for the wrong guy. Film is so realistic it is sometimes hard to swallow, and Edwards' treatment is not too cinematic (story was originally conceived for television), but otherwise this drama is a must. The final fifteen minutes are excellent. Henry Mancini's score is fine, he won an Oscar for the title song.

**Day the Earth Stood Still, The** (2008, USA/CDN) **C-104m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Scott Derrickson. Starring Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Connelly, Kathy Bates, Jaden Smith, John Cleese, James Hong. Big-budget remake of the 1951 sci-fi classic, about astro-biologist Connelly, who is whisked away to Manhattan, where an extra-terrestrial object is calculated to impact. It turns out to be a spaceship which lands in Central Park, and its terrifying mission is slowly disclosed to her and her foster son Smith by alien-turned-human Reeves. Fast-paced CGI-adventure does provide a timely message, but it still seems hollow, maybe because most of the characters are stereotypes. Not so bad if you go along for the ride.

**Day the Fish Came Out, The** (1967, GBR/GRE/USA) **C-109m.** \*\* D: Michael Cacoyannis. Starring Tom Courtenay, Colin Blakely, Sam Wanamaker, Candice Bergen, Ian Ogilvy, William Berger, Michael Radford. This misfire was writer-director Cacoyannis' follow-up to the huge hit ZORBA THE GREEK (1964). Attempted satire on cold war antics – this was advertised as a kind of DR. STRANGELOVE – deals with two pilots who lose a nuclear bomb and crashland on an idyllic Greek island. This misfortune soon turns the island into a busy venue for all kinds of characters. Often annoying and doesn't know where it's going. Stands today as a curio. You might also want to watch it for ravishing Bergen, whose role is minor. Has some crazy costumes, by the director himself.

**Day the Lord Got Busted, The** (1976, USA) **C-71m.** \*\* D: Burt Topper. Starring Fabian (Fabian Forte), Nai Bonet, Tony Russel, Larry Bishop, Casey Kasem, William Bonner. Straight B-movie

drama about drifter Fabian, who catches the attention of phony preacher Russel, who intends to promote him as the Son of Jesus and make him a star. However, the young man cannot escape his origins and the deadly attraction of drugs. Interesting to some degree. Original version may run longer. Aka SOUL HUSTLER.

**Dazed and Confused** (1993, USA) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Richard Linklater. Starring Jason London, Wiley Wiggins, Sasha Jenson, Rory Cochrane, Milla Jovovich, Marissa Ribisi, Adam Goldberg, Anthony Rapp, Matthew McConaughey, Ben Affleck, Parker Posey. Entertaining, funny period piece about a day in the life of high school grads in 1976, their attitudes, problems and friendships. Just as episodic as writer-director Linklater's debut feature SLACKER, but also much more coherent. Amusing, realistic characterizations add to the fun. Wiggins is especially cute as one of the freshmen, who are constantly running from the seniors. Good 70s soundtrack. Linklater also co-produced the film.

**Dazzle** (1999, SAF) **C-88m.** \*\* D: David Lister. Starring Maxwell Caulfield, Chantelle Stander, Mia Sara, Jeff Fahey, Charlotte Savage. Harmless, inoffensive fantasy movie about a fairy who crashes into widowed writer Caulfield's garden and becomes a (human) amnesiac. Predictable stuff, okay for kids.

**Dead & Buried** (1981, USA) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Gary A. Sherman. Starring James Farentino, Melody Anderson, Jack Albertson, Dennis Redfield, Nancy Locke Hauser, Lisa Blount, Robert Englund, Bill Quinn, Michael Currie, Lisa Marie, Barry Corbin, Michael Pataki. Unusual horror film about sheriff Farentino, who has just been assigned to small town community of Potter's Bluff and can't believe strange series of murders that take place. Interestingly the audience is let in on more details: The villagers perform these ritualistic killings, and witchcraft and voodoo may figure in the story as well. Slow pace lessens effect, but interest is maintained. Finale is best part. Written by Dan O'Bannon (ALIEN).

**Dead as a Doorman** (1986, USA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Gary Youngman. Starring Robin Cahall, Sharon Schlarth, Bruce Taylor, Bradley Whitford. Pretty unexciting thriller about writer Cahall, who tries to track down a doorman killer in downtown Atlanta. Plays like harmless TV fare, some of the writing is ambitious, though. Re-titled DOORMAN.

**Deadfall** (1968, GBR) **C-120m.** \*\*½ D: Bryan Forbes. Starring Michael Caine, Giovanna Ralli, Eric Portman, David Buck, Leonard Rossiter, Nanette Newman, John Barry. Interesting late-sixties crime drama starts like a heist movie. Cat burglar Caine is contacted by pretty Ralli and her elderly husband Portman, who need his help to steal diamonds. He agrees to become their accomplice and falls for Ralli in the proceedings. Moody, deliberately paced drama is ennobled by a fine John Barry score (the master himself appears as a conductor), Forbes' directorial touches make this worthwhile, although it lacks action. Title song by Shirley Bassey sounds like from a Bond movie (which this sadly isn't). Adapted from a novel by Desmond Cory.

**Dead in Tombstone** (2013, USA) **C-97m.** \*\* D: Roel Reiné. Starring Danny Trejo, Mickey Rourke, Anthony Michael Hall, Dina Meyer, Richard Dillane. It's THE EXPENDABLES less the budget in a western setting, mindless action and little to no substance. Cult star Trejo plays a gunslinger, who is double-crossed by his own brother. He suggests a wager to Lucifer, played by Rourke, who sends him back to the living. It's Trejo's brother and his gang in exchange for his soul. Some stylish camerawork and a fairly good score save this really empty film. Shot in Romania, released directly to video.

**Dead Kids** (1981, NZL) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Michael Laughlin. Starring Michael Murphy, Louise Fletcher, Dan Shor, Fiona Lewis, Arthur Dignam, Dey Young, Marc McClure, Scott Brady, Charles Lane. Policeman Murphy is investigating the recent murders of teenagers and comes to the conclusion that the local lab may have something to do with it. Not a horror

film, as some believe, but a barely suspenseful 'thriller'. Some gruesome scenes can be understood as a nod to all the gory horror flicks of the early 1980s. Nothing to get excited about. Cowritten by Bill Condon (director of CANDYMAN: FAREWELL TO THE FLESH), who also has a brief role. Coproduced by David Hemmings. Aka STRANGE BEHAVIOUR.

**Deadlier Than the Male** (1967, GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ralph Thomas. Starring Richard Johnson, Elke Sommer, Sylva Koscina, Nigel Green, Suzanna Leigh, Steve Carlson, Virginia North, Laurence Naismith. Pretty good Bond imitation from experienced director Thomas (HOT ENOUGH FOR JUNE). Johnson comes pretty close to Sean Connery as Bulldog Drummond, a gentleman spy (originally a character from a 1930s/1940s film series). He must stop sexy but lethal duo of Sommer and Koscina, who want to kill a King from the Near East to complete an oil deal. Good-looking 60s fodder, a bit too talky compared to the James Bond movies of the time, though Sommer and Koscina are would have made great Bond girls. Cowritten by Jimmy Sangster. Some prints run 98m. Followed by one sequel, SOME GIRLS DO (1969).

**Deadlock** (1970, GER) **C-92m. \*\* D:** Roland Klick. Starring Mario Adorf, Anthony Dawson, Marquard Bohm, Mascha Elm Rabben, Sigurd Fitzek. Odd thriller disguised as a western, about gold digger Adorf and his involvement with two bank robbers somewhere in Mexico. They quarrel about who is to have the loot – in THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY-style. Interesting, offbeat, but search in vain for action or suspense. A cult film in Germany. Photographed by Robert van Ackeren. See also SUPERMARKT.

**Deadly Affair, The** (1966, GBR) **C-107m. \*\*½ D:** Sidney Lumet. Starring James Mason, Simone Signoret, Maximilian Schell, Harry Andrews, Roy Kinnear, Lynn Redgrave, Corin Redgrave, David Warner. Time has not been kind to old-fashioned espionage tale based on the novel by John LeCarré. Mason investigates the mysterious suicide of a former agent, while dealing with his own botched marriage. Excellent cast, nice jazzy score by Quincy Jones, but strangely cold and unappealing, also visually.

**Deadly Alliance** (1978, USA) **C-78m. \*½ D:** Paul S. Parco. Starring Tony De Fonte, Kathleen Arc, Mike Lloyd Gentry, Michele Marsh, Walter Prince. Forgettable actioner made on a miniscule budget about a group's attempts to reveal a conspiracy. Some scenes are okay, but generally worthless, extremely cheap.

**Deadly Blessing** (1981, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring Maren Jensen, Susan Buckner, Sharon Stone, Lois Nettleton, Ernest Borgnine, Jeff East, Lisa Hartman. A young couple is menaced by a fanatic rural sect who keeps warning everybody of the 'Incubus'. When two friends come to support Jensen after her husband died - in what seemed - an accident, they are soon stalked by a mad killer. Well-plotted, suspenseful horror thriller with some interesting remarks on religious fanaticism. The score is good, Borgnine earnest as the leader of the sect. A worthy predecessor to SCREAM.

**Deadly Companions** (1961, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sam Peckinpah. Starring Maureen O'Hara, Brian Keith, Steve Cochran, Chill Wills, Strother Martin. Unexciting, sentimental western about Keith, who accidentally kills a boy and accompanies his mother (O'Hara) through Indian territory. Two outlaws are also after them. Characters in this western drama are well-drawn, but film lacks punch. An atypical Peckinpah movie; this was his first directorial effort. Based on a novel of the same title.

**Deadly Force** (1983, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Paul Aaron. Starring Wings Hauser, Joyce Ingalls, Paul Shenar, Al Ruscio, Arlen Dean Snyder, Estelle Getty, Paul Benjamin, Aaron Norris. B-thriller surpasses your expectations in many ways. Hauser is quite good as an ex-cop who goes after a serial killer. Agreeable pacing, okay plot. Score is not bad either. Overall, an okay timekiller.

**Deadly Sunday** (1982, USA) **C-83m.** \*½ D: Donald M. Jones. Starring Dennis Ely, Henry G. Sanders, Gyl Roland, Douglas Alexander. Pretty vile thriller about a family of four, whose stop at a diner in the middle of nowhere plunges them into a nightmare. Several sadistic criminals have taken everybody hostage there and show no mercy. Rather pointless, confusing, about in the same league as *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT* (1972).

**Dead Man** (1996, USA/GER/JAP) **120m.** \*\*\*½ D: Jim Jarmusch. Starring Johnny Depp, Gary Farmer, Lance Henriksen, Michael Wincott, Iggy Pop, Jared Harris, Billy Bob Thornton, Crispin Glover, Gabriel Byrne, John Hurt, Alfred Molina, Robert Mitchum. Highly unusual, hypnotic western about Cleveland-born bookkeeper William Blake (Depp), who comes to the town of Machine to take up a job in tough businessman Mitchum's steel mill. However, the position is no longer vacant. The same night he shoots Mitchum's son in self-defense and has to flee. He finds a friend in an Indian (Farmer). Superbly cast and shot in glorious black and white, meditative film is not for all tastes. Those looking for an offbeat, stylish film will undoubtedly love it. Fine score by Neil Young. Film legend Robert Mitchum's last role.

**Dead Man Walking** (1995, USA) **C-122m.** \*\*\*½ D: Tim Robbins. Starring Susan Sarandon, Sean Penn, Robert Prosky, Raymond J. Barry, R. Lee Ermey. Exhilarating examination of the last days of a death row inmate, based on a true story. Sarandon won an Oscar for her performance as a nun, who chooses to be a spiritual guide to convicted murderer Penn, who is awaiting execution. Uncomfortable look at someone faced with imminent death, a valid rumination on the reasons for and the arguments against capital punishment. Excellent performances, sensitive handling by director Robbins.

**Dead Next Door** (1988, USA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: J.R. Bookwalter. Starring Pete Ferry, Bogdan Pecic, Michael Grossi, Jolie Jackunas, Robert Kokai, Floyd Ewing Jr., Scott Spiegel, J.R. Bookwalter. Cheap splatter homemovie about a zombie epidemic and a few survivors who have formed a Zombie Squad in order to wipe out the undead. Amateurish in terms of acting and directing, much too obviously inspired by George Romero's *DEAD-trilogy* (*DAY OF THE DEAD* in particular). The leading characters are named after horror director Sam Raimi (who co-executive produced sans credit) and special effects wizard Tom Savini. In fact, the whole budget of this one seems to have gone into special make-up effects (which are quite good, however). Running time is stretched out by closing credits which run longer than ten minutes! Only for splatter freaks.

**Dead of Night** (1945, GBR) **103m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alberto Calvacanti, Charles Crichton, Basil Dearden, Robert Hamer. Starring Mervyn Johns, Roland Culver, Antony Baird, Judy Kelly, Miles Malleson, Sally Ann Howes, Googie Withers, Ralph Michael, Michael Redgrave, Basil Radford, Naunton Wayne, Frederic Valk. Sublime British chiller about the gathering of six persons at a country house, five of whom narrate an eerie tale of the supernatural. The sixth, Johns, is having disquieting premonitions. The tales (based on short stories by H.G. Wells, E.F. Benson, John V. Baines and Angus MacPhail) vary in quality: Whereas the hide-and-seek story (2) and the golf incident (4) are rather juvenile and mildly amusing, the third story about a mirror reflecting a different room is intriguing and even scary. It turns out they just advertise the fifth and best of the tales (about schizophrenic ventriloquist Redgrave), which is a frame story itself. Chinese-box narrative ends in a most startling conclusion. Film is notable for its brilliant narrative and some superb acting. Highly recommended. Written by Baines and MacPhail. Photographed, among others, by Douglas Slocombe. Beware of cut versions.

**Dead of Night** (1974, USA/CDN/GBR) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Bob Clark. Starring John Marley, Lynn Carlin, Richard Backus, Henderson Forsythe, Anya Ormsby, Bob Clark. Backus' family is devastated when they hear of the death of their son in Vietnam. Then he inexplicably

returns home, and with him a mysterious murder spree. What is wrong with Andy? Slow-moving horror film adds a downbeat dose of realism and psychology, but almost recovers during finale. This was Tom Savini's first make-up effects job and it foreshadows his zombie work for DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978). Director Clark made BLACK CHRISTMAS the same year. Also known as DEATHDREAM, NIGHT WALK, THE NIGHT ANDY CAME HOME, THE VETERAN, and WHISPERS.

**Dead or Alive: Hanzaisha** (1999, JAP) **C-105m**. D: Takashi Miike. Starring Riki Takeuchi, Sho Aikawa, Renji Ishibashi, Hitoshi Ozawa, Shingo Tsurumi, Ren Osugi. Mind-numbing avantgarde action, almost as unbearable as the director's earlier FUDOH (1996). "Story" is about mobster Takeuchi and his nemesis, cop Aikawa, who has problems of his own. Plot is unfocused, pace is a disaster; some stylistic flourishes are forgotten at ridiculous climax. Even cult movie fanatics will find it hard to enjoy this. On-screen title is D.O.A.; somebody should have reminded Miike that this also stands for Dead On Arrival.

**Dead People** (1973, USA) **C-89m**. \*\*\* D: Willard Huyck, Gloria Katz. Starring Michael Greer, Marianna Hill, Joy Bang, Anitra Ford, Royal Dano, Elisha Cook Jr. A young woman travels to Point Doom in search of her father, finds nothing but a mysterious diary in his beach house replete with bizarre wall paintings. It seems he was afraid of the returning of the Blood Moon and writes of changes on his own body. Is he still alive? Bizarre cult horror movie cannot quite escape its cheap production values, but stay with it, as story develops into an intriguing variation of zombie films. Wait till you see the rat-eating albino! Film's slow pace actually works in favor of it. Eerie electronic score by Phillan Bishop. Directors Huyck and Katz cowrote AMERICAN GRAFFITI that same year! Also known as MESSIAH OF EVIL, REVENGE OF THE SCREAMING DEAD, THE SECOND COMING.

**Deadpool** (2016, USA) **C-108m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Tim Miller. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Morena Baccarin, T.J. Miller, Ed Skrein, Brianna Hildebrand. Wild fantasy action movie featuring the irreverent, foul-mouthed character of Deadpool (Reynolds), who became a superhero (of sorts) after an experiment to save him from cancer went awry. Film relies a lot on Deadpool's antics and one-liners and balances it out with over-the-top action and gore. Film's uneven plot weighs it down unfortunately, and everything, including the action, becomes self-gratifying. People seem to love it because it's so different from all the other comic-book superhero movies.

**Dead Rising: Watchtower** (2015, USA) **C-118m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Zach Lipovsky. Starring Jesse Metcalfe, Meghan Ory, Virginia Madsen, Dennis Haysbert, Rob Riggle, Reese Alexander. Adaptation of the successful horror video game series started in 2006 is set during the zombie apocalypse. A reporter visiting a quarantine zone realizes that the antidote that keeps infected people from turning is losing effect. Together with two other people, he must try to find a way out. Polished, well-filmed and edited, if you don't care about plot or suspense and are satisfied with the effects, you might actually find this good. The story is worthless and goes on too long.

**Dead Silence** (2007, USA) **C-91m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: James Wan. Starring Ryan Kwanten, Amber Valetta, Donnie Wahlberg, Michael Fairman, Joan Heney, Bob Gunton, Laura Regan. Director Wan's follow-up to his smash-hit SAW (2004) is a crackerjack horror film about a ventriloquist's dummy, which seems to bring death to those around it. Kwanten, whose wife died mysteriously, returns to his hometown to investigate mysterious ventriloquist, who may be behind it all. Beware the Stare! Not entirely logical but atmospheric, stylish, well-directed and scary as hell! So suspenseful it creates a heightened sense of awareness in you. Superb subliminal score is reminiscent of SUSPIRIA (1977), and film's finale is a nod to INFERNO (1980). A treat for horror fans. Like SAW (2004), this was written by Leigh

Whannell, from a story by himself and director Wan. DVD version contains an alternate opening and ending.

**Dead Zone, The** (1983, USA) **C-103m**. \*\*\* D: David Cronenberg. Starring Christopher Walken, Brooke Adams, Tom Skerritt, Herbert Lom, Anthony Zerbe, Colleen Dewhurst, Martin Sheen, Nicholas Campbell. After a near-fatal accident, teacher Walken falls into a coma, only to reawaken five years later with the gift of second-sight. Is he to use it or ignore it? Soon, several serious events demand his involvement... Low-key chiller, or horror drama, rates among the best Stephen King adaptations: Fine score by Michael Kamen, excellent ensemble cast, thoughtful (though slightly disjointed) script by Jeffrey Boam (INNER SPACE, LOST BOYS). Trivia note: Starts similarly to Cronenberg's RABID (accident with supernatural consequences) and is another example of the director's fascination with the pathological and/or clinical.

**Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam** (1987, USA) **C-83m**. \*\*\* D: Bill Couturié. Featuring the voices of Tom Berenger, Ellen Burstyn, Willem Dafoe, Robert De Niro, Brian Dennehy, Kevin Dillon, Matt Dillon, Robert Downey Jr., Michael J. Fox, Mark Harmon, John Heard, Harvey Keitel, Elizabeth McGovern, Judd Nelson, Sean Penn, Randy Quaid, Eric Roberts, John Savage, Martin Sheen, Kathleen Turner, Robin Williams. Reminiscence of the Vietnam war, made up entirely of authentic film material, with excerpts from letters from soldiers and their families, read by big names in the film biz. Likely to start you crying (if you were there), but also much too pathetic in parts, and it provides a questionable glorification of war. Anyway, this one is effectively compiled, with some truly priceless oldies on the soundtrack.

**Death and the Compass** (1992/1996, GBR/MEX/JAP) **C/B&W-86m**. \*\* D: Alex Cox. Starring Peter Boyle, Christopher Eccleston, Miguel Sandoval, Zaide Silvia Gutiérrez, Pedro Armendáriz Jr., Alex Cox. Attempted art film / mystery thriller by director Cox (SID AND NANCY). Weary police commissioner Sandoval relates the story of top-notch investigator Boyle, whose biggest challenge was to capture elusive super-criminal Red Scharlach. What might have become a cult thriller à la THE ELEMENT OF CRIME (1984) remains stilted and pretentious, also due to budgetary limitations. Improves towards the finale when the sets become more fantastic. Filmed for British TV in 1992, with an original running time of 50m., film was expanded by Cox four years later (mostly by adding Sandoval's frame narration). Based on a story by Jorge Luis Borges. Previously filmed as SPIDERWEB (a short) starring Nigel Hawthorne.

**Death at a Funeral** (2007, USA/GBR/GER) **C-91m**. \*\*½ D: Frank Oz. Starring Matthew Macfadyen, Keeley Hawes, Andy Nyman, Even Bremner, Daisy Donovan, Alan Tudyk, Jane Asher, Kris Marshall, Rupert Graves, Peter Vaughan. Black comedy set during a funeral, where all kinds of crazy characters create crazy situations. One of the guests has accidentally taken LSD, there's a midget claiming to be the dead man's lover and a senile old man who hates young people. Not very funny, especially in the first half, film has some very funny scenes in the second half, but not enough.

**Deathbed** (2002, USA) **C-83m**. \*\* D: Danny Draven. Starring Tanya Dempsey, Brave Matthews, Meagan Mandum, Michael Sonye, Joe Estevez. Rather obvious horror film produced by Charles Band and Stuart Gordon. Dempsey and Matthews move into a loft, which used to be a warehouse in the 30s. They find an old bed in the attic, in which – as the title sequence leaves no doubt – somebody was killed. Of course, the bed exudes a deadly influence on the couple. Not badly made, some scares, but really only for horror fans.

**Death Doll** (1989, USA) **C-85m**. \*½ D: Sidney Mims. Starring Andrea Walters, William Dance, Jennifer Davis. A young couple receive a strange warning from one of those clairvoyant dolls

you find in amusement parks, and soon the man dies. The woman then seems to be stalked. Not completely without interest, but film is poorly written, amateurishly directed – to say nothing of the low production values. If you must – watch in fast forward.

**Death Game** (1996, USA) **C-81m.** D: Randy Chevelave. Starring Timothy Bottoms, Nicholas Hill, Evan Lurie, Kristina Copeland, David McCallum, Vince Murdocco. Cheap sci-fi action about several characters who travel to Old L.A., which has been devastated by a war and is controlled by megalomaniac McCallum. They are caught in a labyrinth, where they are hunted by a lethal robot. Not at all worth your time, even if you are a genre fan. Made for television, executive produced by Roger Corman.

**Deathgasm** (2015, NZL) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jason Lei Howden. Starring Milo Cawthorne, James Blake, Kimberley Crossman, Sam Berkley, Daniel Cresswell. Splatter comedy for gorehounds and metalheads: Outsider Cawthorne finally makes friends with fellow rockers and forms a band. When they get hold of a metal legend's music notes, they play the tune and unwittingly summon a demon – and turn all those who heard the music into flesh-eating zombies. Engaging horror comedy offers ample splatter mayhem, but the script is rather weak and the humor doesn't always work. In terms of effects this rivals Peter Jackson's BRAINDEAD (1992).

**Death House** (1988, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Nick Marino, John Saxon. Starring Dennis Cole, Anthony Franciosa, John Saxon, Alex Courtney, David S. Freeman, Howard George. Little-known horror thriller about Cole, who is framed for murder when his wealthy boss Franciosa catches him fooling around with his wife. In prison, he uncovers the plan of agent Saxon, who conducts gruesome experiments with death row prisoners. Interestingly mixes zombie horror with the realism of prison films, but results are far from engrossing. Uneven, with a longish plot setup. Some effects are quite potent. This was cult actor John Saxon's only film as a director.

**Death Is a Woman** (1966, GBR) **C-88m. \*½** D: Frederic Goode. Starring Patsy Ann (Trisha) Noble, Mark Burns, Shaun Curry, William Dexter, Terrence De Marney. British – not Italian – James Bond imitation about feud among spies on Malta. A picture postcard from the mediterranean island, nothing more. There's a distinct lack of action and the plot becomes boring early on. A movie that deserves to be forgotten. Film's only well-directed scene is right at the beginning. Alternative titles: LOVE IS A WOMAN, SEX IS A WOMAN.

**Death Line** (1972, GBR) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Gary Sherman. Starring Donald Pleasence, Norman Rossington, David Ladd, Sharon Gurney, Hugh Armstrong, Christopher Lee. Leaden pace considerably hampers otherwise interesting horror thriller about a madman who lives in an abandoned underground station in London. Inspector Pleasence is baffled by mysterious disappearances of passengers. Some gruesome elements, but much too slow. Odd sense of humor, too. From the director of DEAD & BURIED (1981). Also known as RAW MEAT.

**Death on the Nile** (1978, GBR) **C-140m. \*\*\*½** D: John Guillermin. Starring Peter Ustinov, Jane Birkin; Louis Chiles, Bette Davis, Mia Farrow, Jon Finch, Olivia Hussey, George Kennedy, Angela Lansbury, Simon MacCorkindale, David Niven, Maggie Smith, Jack Warden, Harry Andrews, I.S. Johar, Sam Wanamaker. Formidable whodunit, set on board a cruise ship on the River Nile. Practically all passengers have a motive for killing wealthy honeymooner Chiles, who married her best friend Farrow's lover. Belgian master sleuth Hercule Poirot (Ustinov) has a hard time cracking the case. Very-well made, with a superb cast and especially fine art direction-set decoration and costume design. Script by Anthony Shaffer. Photographed by Jack Cardiff. Score by Nino Rota. Ustinov's debut as Agatha Christie's ingenious detective (Albert Finney played Poirot in MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS in 1974). Followed by EVIL UNDER THE SUN (1982).

**Death Proof** (2007, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Kurt Russell, Zoe Bell, Rosario Dawson, Vanessa Ferlito, Sydnee Poitier, Traci Thoms, Rose McGowan, Jordan Ladd, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Quentin Tarantino, Eli Roth, Michael Parks, James Parks. After gangster movies (RESERVOIR DOGS, PULP FICTION, JACKIE BROWN) and martial arts/revenge movies (KILL BILL), Tarantino celebrates the Grindhouse features of the 1970s, particularly those featuring muscle cars and tough heroes. Russell is a stuntman, who follows two different groups of hot young women – for reasons that are quite obscure. Just what does he need his ‘death-proof’ stunt car for? By now it should have become clear that Tarantino does not want to make good movies, he is too much immersed in trying to pay homage to films he considers cool. His DEATH PROOF story is talky, overlong, anachronistic, and quite pointless. Russell’s character is inconsistent and the two plot strands are not tied up well at all. Even if the flaws are all too obvious, they also pervade the films Tarantino is paying homage to, and to be honest, the movie is fun to watch, at least for movie buffs, who will excuse its flaws. Tarantino also scripted and photographed the picture. Originally released in the U.S. as one half of a double feature with Robert Rodriguez’ PLANET TERROR called GRINDHOUSE. It ran about 90m. there, in Europe the movies were released separately, with DEATH PROOF running 114m.

**Death Race 2000** (1975, USA) **C-80m. \*\* D:** Paul Bartel. Starring John Carradine, Simone Griffeth, Sylvester Stallone, Louisa Moritz, Mary Woronov, Don Steele, Joyce Jameson, John Landis, Paul Bartel. In the year 2000, several racing champions compete in grueling coast-to-coast death race, where points are scored by running people over with the car. Pretty weak, but satirical black humor makes the film endurable. Based on a story by Ib Melchior. Lewis Teague (ALLIGATOR, CUJO) co-directed the second unit and was also associate editor of the film. Followed by DEATHSPORT.

**Death Race 2050** (2017, USA) **C-90m. BOMB D:** G.J. Echternkamp. Starring Manu Bennett, Malcolm McDowell, Marci Miller. Abysmal remake or sequel to Roger Corman's DEATH RACE 2000 (1975). A new race begins with several contestants, who must make it to the finishing line and kill people for points. It's all a big show, of course. Annoying, overacted, with cheap digital effects, this completely lacks the cult appeal of the original.

**Death Sentence** (2007, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Wan. Starring Kevin Bacon, Garrett Hedlund, Kelly Preston, Jordan Garrett, Stuart Lafferty, Aisha Tyler, John Goodman, Matt O’Leary. Manager Bacon’s life is thrown out of tracks, when his son is killed in an armed robbery of a gas station. When it becomes clear that lack of evidence will only put the killer behind bars for several years, Bacon changes his testimony so that the guy is released and he can get his own, proper revenge. However, he hasn’t reckoned with the gang that’s behind it all. Well-paced and well-made by the director of SAW (2004), but unlikely twists and turns ultimately mark this as an action or revenge fantasy. Bacon is convincing, as expected. Good SAW-like Charlie Clouser score. Based on Brian Garfield’s sequel novel to *Death Wish*, which was filmed with Charles Bronson in 1974.

**Death Ship** (1980, CDN/GBR) **C-91m. ? D:** Alvin Rakoff. Starring George Kennedy, Richard Crenna, Nick Mancuso, Sally Ann Howes, Kate Reid, Saul Rubinek. When a luxury liner crashes into a mysterious ship and sinks, only a few people survive in a rescue boat. They seem to be saved when a ship approaches them, but it turns out evil powers try to corrupt captain Kennedy and several murders are the consequence. After premise is established, film goes absolutely nowhere. Idiotic, pretentious and a waste of time and celluloid. Don’t board this one.

**Death Trap** (1976, USA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Tobe Hooper. Starring Neville Brand, Mel Ferrer, Carolyn Jones, Marilyn Burns, William Finley, Stuart Whitman, Roberta Collins, Kyle

Richards, Robert Englund. Unsettling, disturbing horror film, director Hooper's follow-up to his masterpiece THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE (1974). Plot deals with psychopathic hotel owner Brand, who has a pet alligator swimming in the bayou next to his house. The guests he slices up with his scythe are fed to the beast. One day worried father Ferrer drops by, looking for his lost daughter. Oppressive atmosphere, bizarre characters and some nasty scenes make this difficult to watch sometimes but Hooper's stylistics and an electrifying score (with the director's collaboration) make this unmissable for horror fans. Some redundant scenes, but finale is a knock-out. A matter of taste (literally!). Also known as EATEN ALIVE, HORROR HOTEL, HORROR HOTEL MASSACRE, LEGEND OF THE BAYOU, MURDER ON THE BAYOU and STARLIGHT SLAUGHTER.

**Death Warmed Up** (1984, NZL/AUS) **C-78m.** \*\* D: David Blyth. Starring Michael Hurst, Margaret Umbers, William Upjohn, Norelle Scott, David Weatherly, Bruno Lawrence. Quite ambitious, not-bad, but ultimately flawed horror thriller about a mad brain surgeon, who has turned most people on an unspecified island into zombies. Young Hurst, who was sort-of hypnotized by the doctor into killing his own parents, comes to the island to get his revenge. Several scenes drag interminably and film seems long despite short running time. Some found this good; judge for yourselves.

**Deathwatch** (2002, GBR/GER/FRA/ITA) **C-94m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Michael J. Bassett. Starring Jamie Bell, Rúaidhrí Conroy, Mike Downey, Laurence Fox, Andy Serkis, Hugo Speer, Hugh O'Connor. On a WW1 battlefront several British soldiers find refuge in a German trench. Soon they find that it seems to be haunted. The minds of the men begin to crack. Dense atmosphere keeps this fairly interesting. An adequately acted, often too pretentious mixture of war and horror film, written by first-time director Bassett.

**Death Weekend** (1976, CDN) **C-89m.** \*\* D: William Fruet. Starring Branda Vaccaro, Don Stroud, Chuck Shamata, Richard Ayres, Kyle Edwards. Typical 70s exploitation thriller about couple Vaccaro and Shamata, who are harrassed by a group of rednecks headed by Stroud. Follows a typical plotline but features an adequate direction and an atmospheric score. Scenes of cruelty are repulsive at times. Mostly recommended to fans of 70s sleaze, others stay away (or watch STRAW DOGS). Reminiscent of the cult slasher I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE. Produced by Ivan Reitman.

**Death Wish** (1974, USA) **C-93m.** \*\*\* D: Michael Winner. Starring Charles Bronson, Hope Lange, Vincent Gardenia, Steven Keats, William Redfield, Stuart Margolin, Jeff Goldblum, Olympia Dukakis, Christopher Guest. Chilling, believable thriller about an everyman (Bronson), whose wife is killed and whose daughter-in-law is raped by a brutal gang. The pacifist throws his ethics overboard and goes on a one-man rampage through the streets of N.Y.C., killing every thug in the way. Some found this morally indefensible, but film is undeniably well-made. Good score by Herbie Hancock. Some sources credit Claude Chabrol(!) as a cowriter. William Lustig (MANIAC) was among the editors. Based on the novel by Brian Garfield. Goldblum's first film. Followed by four sequels.

**Décade Prodigieuse, La** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-109m.** \*\*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Anthony Perkins, Michel Piccoli, Marlène Jobert, Orson Welles, Guido Alberti, Dominique Zardi. One of master director Chabrol's most bizarre films, this curio is about psychotic sculptor Perkins, who asks family friend and lawyer Piccoli for help. He has fallen in love with his overbearing father Welles' young wife Jobert. Film's odd structure and title refers to the Ten Commandments. Worth watching for buffs because of a highly interesting cast, but movie never becomes interesting or suspenseful. Piccoli sleepwalks through his role. Based on a novel by Ellery Queen. English title: TEN DAYS WONDER.

**Decima Vittima, La** (1965, ITA/FRA) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Elio Petri. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Ursula Andress, Elsa Martinelli, Salvo Randone, Massimo Serato. 60s cult film about a futuristic society, where the Big Hunt is all about two people squaring off against each other in a global battle to the death. American Andress is ready to make her tenth kill as the hunter, and Italian Mastroianni is the victim. Can he use his charm to stop her? Plot takes second chair to stylish sets and locations, and there's ample chemistry between the stars, sexy Andress and subdued Mastroianni. Based on a story by Robert Sheckley (LE PRIX DU DANGER). English title: THE TENTH VICTIM.

**Deconstructing Harry** (1997, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Woody Allen. Starring Woody Allen, Richard Ben-jamin, Kirstie Alley, Billy Crystal, Judy Davis, Bob Balaban, Elisabeth Shue, Demi Moore, Robin Williams, Caroline Aaron, Eric Bogosian, Mariel Hemingway, Amy Irving, Julie Kavner, Eric Lloyd, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Stanley Tucci. Unusually frank Woody Allen film about a neurotic writer who cannot seem to come to terms with his life. When he publishes his new novel, most of his friends recognize themselves and accuse him of indiscretion. This is the frame story for amusing vignettes that Allen seems to have written in one go; the episodes in the film seem slight and unmotivated (at least to non-Allen fans), but it's fun to see stars take funny, small roles, and Woody is just as witty as ever. A matter of taste, like most of his films, this one is very much a self-examination. At the very least it gives you an idea about the creative process inside a writer's mind.

**Deep, The** (1977, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Peter Yates. Starring Jacqueline Bisset, Nick Nolte, Dick Anthony Williams, Robert Shaw, Louis Gossett Jr., Eli Wallach. Adventure drama set on the Bermudas about your couple Bisset and Nolte, who goes treasure hunting in the crystal clear waters. They find strange little bottles instead that may be of interest to Gossett's gang. Rough diver Shaw becomes their helper. Film offers widescreen gloss, attractive stars and a fine score by John Barry... if it only wasn't for the flaccid pace and the lackluster plot. Wallach shines as Shaw's seedy sidekick. Based on the novel by Peter Benchley (JAWS). Also shown in a 176m.(!) extended version.

**Deep Blue Sea** (1999, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Renny Harlin. Starring Thomas Jane, Saffron Burrows, Samuel L. Jackson, Jacqueline McKenzie, Michael Rapaport, Stellan Skarsgard, LL Cool J, Aida Turturro, Ronny Cox. Scientists working on the cure for the Alzheimer disease haven't reckoned with the sharks they have been experimenting on, as they obviously start using their artificially enlarged brains in order to mutilate and kill. In a giant, partially flooded lab under the sea the few remaining scientists strive to reach the top level in constant fear of shark attacks. Bubble-gum movie is a cross between JAWS and THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE, adding some contemporary science criticism. Acceptable fare, but lacks an airtight plot.

**Deep Dark** (2015, USA) **C-79m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael Medaglia. Starring Sean McGrath, Denise Poirier, Anne Sorce, Tabor Helton, Monica Graves. Initially intriguing fantasy horror drama about an unsuccessful artist, who moves into his uncle's apartment and starts hearing a voice coming through a hole in the wall. Guided by this (female) voice, he creates real art and becomes a star, but all this comes at a price. Film falls apart in the final third, when plot strands are never resolved. The ending is especially weak. Written by the director.

**Deep End** (1971, USA/GER) **C-88m. \*\*** D: Jerzy Skolimowski. Starring Jane Asher, John Moulder-Brown, Karl Michael Vogler, Diana Dors, Louise Martini, Burt Kwouk. Coming-of-age tale set in London about shy fifteen-year-old Moulder-Brown, whose first job is being a bath house attendant. He falls in love with colleague Asher, who's a few years older and more experienced, and he feels the first pangs of puberty. Awkward, downbeat drama

doesn't seem special, though this has cult film status in some circles. One song is by Cat Stevens.

**Deep End, The** (2001, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Scott McGehee, David Siegel. Starring Tilda Swinton, Goran Visnjic, Jonathan Tucker, Peter Donat, Josh Lucas, Raymond (J.) Barry. Thriller drama about Swinton, who is a loving mother but disapproves of her gay son's macho lover. When she finds him dead one morning and believes that her son killed him, she gets rid of the corpse... not knowing what she is getting herself into. Low-key but moody, well-scripted by the directors, their first film after *SUTURE* (1993). That Lake Tahoe setting is especially nice. Based on the novel *The Blank Wall* by Elizabeth S. Holding, which was filmed before as *THE RECKLESS MOMENT* (1949).

**Deep End of the Ocean, The** (1999, USA) **C-106m. \*\*½** D: Ulu Grosbard. Starring Michelle Pfeiffer, Treat Williams, Whoopi Goldberg, Jonathan Jackson, Cory Buck, Tony Musante. A family is shattered when their little son disappears. After years of desperate search, the mother can't believe her eyes when a little kid knocks on their door, who is no one else but their son. A typical Hollywood contrivance but ever so smoothly done. Good performances by all involved. Based on a book by Jacquelyn Mitchard.

**Deep Impact** (1998, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE 2** D: Mimi Leder. Starring Robert Duvall, Téa Leoni, Elijah Wood, Vanessa Redgrave, Morgan Freeman, Maximilian Schell, James Cromwell, Ron Eldard, Blair Underwood. Pathetic disaster movie about a comet on collision course with the Earth. Astronaut Duvall is sent on a mission to destroy it with some atom bombs. Completely unconvincing, unrealistic storyline and lackluster direction in a film which is unspectacular until the last five minutes. The Hollywood schmaltz is simply unbearable. Incredibly scripted by two top screenwriters, Bruce Joel Rubin and Michael Tolkin. Redgrave, appearing for several minutes only, gives a chillingly good performance.

**Deep Rising** (1998, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Stephen Sommers. Starring Treat Williams, Famke Janssen, Anthony Heald, Kevin J. O'Connor, Wes Studi, Derrick O'Connor, Jason Flemyng. Flashy, exciting, but also stupid monster horror about a group of hi-jackers who find that their latest quarry, a Titanic-like luxury liner, has recently run out of passengers. A giant octopus from the deep sea has chewed them up to the bone. How convenient that the terrorists are equipped with enough guns and ammo to fight the monster. Really stupid, but well-directed and edited. A smash for those in the mood, but overlong by at least 20 minutes (couldn't they have cut out the dialogue completely?). At least Heald brings some gusto to his role as the megalomaniacal owner of the vessel. Sommers went on to direct the *MUMMY* movies.

**Deep Throat** (1972, USA) **C-63m. \*½** D: Jerry Gerard (=Gerard Damiano). Starring Linda Lovelace. Infamous porn, one of the best known of the genre, about a young woman who is dissatisfied with her (sex) life and goes to a (randy) doctor who tells her that her clitoris is in her throat! Not without a sense of humor but mostly silly. Plot dissolves into scenes of graphic (and none too aesthetic) sex. Damiano has a cameo.

**Def by Temptation** (1990, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: James Bond III. Starring James Bond III, Cynthia Bond, Samuel L. Jackson. Stylishly shot, surprisingly subdued Troma release about young priest in spe who comes to New York and finds himself seduced by a sexy woman that turns out to be a soul-eating demon. The story is perhaps not for all tastes (it's targeted at Afro-American audiences) but the film is undeniably well-realized. Bond III also scripted and produced the picture.

**Deja Vu** (2006, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Tony Scott. Starring Denzel Washington, Paula Patton, Val Kilmer, Jim Caviezel, Adam Goldberg, Elden Henson, Erika Alexander, Bruce Greenwood, Matt Craven. Ultra-slick high-tech thriller about ATF agent Washington, who

investigates in the aftermath of a New Orleans ferry bombing which killed more than 500 people. When he is asked to join a special unit which has the technology to look into the past by “bending” the time-continuum, they try to find out who planted the bomb. Can they catch the terrorist this way and save hundreds of lives? The catch: The past is a video-stream that delivers pictures which are exactly 4 days and 6 hours old, there is no going back beyond that (or forward). Sounds silly and unbelievable, but movie is so superbly directed and suspenseful that you are in for a terrific thrill ride if you buy into that premise with its delightful complications. Washington gives a dynamite performance. Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer.

**Delegation – Eine Utopische Reportage, Die** (1970, GER/ITA/FRA) **C-101m. \*\*\*½ D:** Rainer Erler. Starring Walter Kohut. Astounding film about reporter Kohut, who does some research for a German TV station about a U.F.O. sighting in Canada and, thinking he is really on to something, jeopardizes his career by continuing the investigation obsessively. Interviewing witnesses and experts, Kohut comes closer and closer to revealing the truth. Most intriguingly, his story is revealed post-mortem by showing the reels of film discovered in his wrecked car. Remarkable science-fiction mockumentary caused some viewers to panic when originally broadcast. Fascinating, thought-provoking, a must-see, much too little-known. From conspiracy specialist Erler (FLEISCH, PROFESSOR COLUMBUS).

**Delicatessen** (1991, FRA) **C-99m. \*\*\*½ D:** Marc Caro, Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Pascal Benezech, Dominique Pinon, Marie-Laure Dougnac, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, Karin Viard, Howard Vernon, Jean-Francois Perrier, Dominique Zardi. Grotesque, absurd black comedy set in the post-apocalyptic future, about hapless but inspiring circus artist Pinon, who takes a job as a handyman at Dreyfus’ apartment house, unaware that the butcher is hacking up the residents – and selling the flesh as meat (gulp!). Hilarious set-pieces, colorful characters, a brilliant (and touching) fantasy. A winner from start to finish. Stylish photography by Darius Khondji. A must for lovers of off-beat cinema, others may be put off by the subject matter and unusual presentation. Some prints contain a prologue by Terry Gilliam.

**Delirio Caldo** (1972, ITA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Ralph Brown (=Renato Polselli). Starring Mickey Hargitay, Rita Calderoni, Raoul Traucher, Carmen Young, Christa Barrymore, Tano Cimarosa. Interesting, quite well (if unevenly) plotted psycho thriller about psychiatrist Hargitay, who’s also a sex killer cooperating with the police on his own case! Deliriously perverted giallo with good score by Gianfranco Reverberi has distracting scenes of police investigation, but subject matter is irresistible, especially for genre buffs. Convincing performances by Hargitay and the lovely Calderoni. Written by the director. Released in the U.S. at 85m. (with different scenes), restored for DVD. English titles: DEATH AT THE VILLA and DELIRIUM.

**Delitto Matteotti, Il** (1973, ITA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Florestano Vancini. Starring Mario Adorf, Riccardo Cucciolla, Damiano Damiani, Vittorio De Sica, Umberto Orsini, Franco Nero. Earnest historical drama set in Italy of the 1920s. Politician Matteotti (Nero) dares to speak out against Fascist party and their leader Mussolini (Adorf) in parliament. On the next day he is kidnapped and silenced. Will Mussolini stand the public outrage and the attacks of the opposition? Talky but generally well-handled drama, intensely acted, with supporting actor Adorf doing well in the leading role, as well as director Damiani in a rare acting role. English title: THE ASSASSINATION OF MATTEOTTI.

**Deliverance** (1972, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*\* D:** John Boorman. Starring Jon Voight, Burt Reynolds, Ned Beatty, Ronny Cox, Ed Ramey, Billy Redden, Bill McKinney, Herbert ‘Cowboy’ Coward, James Dickey, Charley Boorman. Just before the flooding of a valley, four city guys decide to take a canoe trip down a river that leads into that valley. Little do they know of the dangers of the trip, nor do they show any respect towards the local people. The ‘duel’

with nature (and naturals) will ultimately change their lives. A fascinating, powerful action drama about human intolerance and the powers of nature. Boorman's direction is unsensationalistic, his use of setting in the presentation of the unfolding tragedy is unmatched, except by perhaps PLATOON (1986) or THE THIN RED LINE (1998). The perfect proof that an action film can be quiet and disturbing, this is one of the best action dramas ever made (and quite possibly a major influence on the redneck/backwoods slasher movie!). 'Dueling Banjos' sequence, foreshadowing the plot, is unforgettable. Excellent cinematography by Vilmos Zsigmond. James Dickey adapted his own novel and has a brief role at the end.

**Deliver Us From Evil** (2014, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Scott Derrickson. Starring Eric Bana, Edgar Ramirez, Olivia Munn, Chris Coy, Dorian Missick, Sean Harris. Extremely dark, powerful and unrelenting thriller from the director of the eerie SINISTER (2012). Bana, a cop battling inner demons, is faced with an outlandish case of an Iraq war veteran, who has come back to New York and exerts an evil influence on people, much like a cult leader. Is he 'possessed'? Soon supernatural phenomena start occurring around Bana and his family. Ramirez, a priest with experience in exorcisms, becomes a vital partner. Densely atmospheric, almost oppressive, with brilliant sound effects (recalling SUSPIRIA), this horror drama is not for the faint of heart. Plot resorts to clichés at some points and is quite uneven, but genre fans should really get their kicks out of this. Also borrows atmosphere from JACOB'S LADDER (1990). Based on the autobiographical(!) book by detective Ralph Sarchie. Score by Christopher Young.

**Dellamorte Dellamore** (1994, ITA/FRA) **C-103m. \*\*½** D: Michele Soavi. Starring Rupert Everett, Anna Falchi, Francois Hadji-Lazaro, Mickey Knox, Fabiana Formica, Barbara Cupisti, Michele Soavi. Overly bizarre, almost satirical zombie film about cemetery keeper Everett, whose job includes sending undead people back to their graves. One day he falls in love with beautiful Falchi and finds himself in a dilemma when she is bitten by her dead husband and becomes a zombie herself. Film becomes increasingly weird and nonsensical in the final third, leaving you with director Soavi's stylistics and Everett's enjoyable performance. A unique cult horror film that should have been more clearly plotted. Based on a novel by Tiziano Sclavi. Good score by Manuel De Sica. Effects by Sergio Stivaletti, editing by Franco Fraticelli (two Argento regulars). English title: CEMETERY MAN.

**Delusion** (1991, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Carl Colpaert. Starring Jim Metzler, Jennifer Rubin, Kyle Secor, Jerry Orbach, Robert Constanzo. Surprisingly effective road movie thriller about computer expert Secor, who's cheating his old firm out of a lot of money, most of which is now in the car which is taking him to Reno. In the Nevada desert he picks up a couple, who obviously had an accident. However, soon it turns out that they are not his passengers, but he is theirs! A cat and mouse game begins. Interesting characterizations, unpredictable storyline, a sleeper. Good widescreen photography, too. Written by the director and Kurt Voss.

**Demented** (1980, USA) **C-88m. \*½** D: Arthur Jeffreys, Alex Rebar. Starring Sallee Elyse, Bruce Gilchrist (=Harry Reems), Deborah Alter, Kathryn Clayton, Bryan Charles. A woman is gang-raped and enters a clinic to get over this traumatic incident. When she is released, her husband Reems tries his best to comfort her in their home. However, he has an affair with another woman and the local teen gang has planned to scare her out of her wits. A good idea? Talky, unpleasant thriller in the mold of DAY OF THE WOMAN / I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE. The acting is not bad (especially that of porn star Reems), but film is worthless.

**Demolition Man** (1993, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Marco Brambilla. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Wesley Snipes, Sandra Bullock, Nigel Hawthorne, Benjamin Bratt, Bob Gunton,

Glenn Shadix, Denis Leary, Dan Cortese, Jesse Ventura, Rob Schneider. High-tech, slam-bang sci-fi action thriller about cop Stallone, who, like his nemesis Snipes, is convicted to some 50 years in deep-freeze. When Snipes escapes, Stallone is brought back to hunt him down in the futuristic world of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some effective action set-pieces punctuated by some silly comedy make this no-brainer an okay view. Edited by Stuart Baird.

**Demon, The** (1979, SAF/NED) **C-94m**. \*½ D: Percival Rubens. Starring Jennifer Holmes, Cameron Mitchell, Craig Gardner, Zoli Marki, Peter J. Elliott. Rather inept South-African-produced slasher movie about psychic Mitchell, who is assigned to help find somebody's missing daughter and track down mysterious killer that is roaming the streets at night. Gratuitous nudity, hardly any gore in this confusing, illogical horror film. Alternative title: MIDNIGHT CALLER.

**Demoni** (1985, ITA) **C-88m**. \*½ D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Urbano Barberini, Natasha Hovey, Karl Zinny, Fiore Argento, Nicoletta Elmi, Michele Soavi, Lamberto Bava, Sergio Stivaletti. Extremely gory, appropriately titled splatter movie, one of the slimiest and ugliest of its time. At the premiere of a new horror movie a woman puts on a mask which turns her into a slimy creature. Soon everyone she bites becomes one of the 'demoni'. Apart from the really disgusting effects this is an absolutely worthless horror film. The plot is simply stupid. Even if you watch it for the effects you will be bored. Nonetheless, this has been quite popular among gore fans. Written by Lamberto Bava, Dario Argento, Franco Ferrini and Dardano Sacchetti. Produced by Dario Argento. English title: DEMONS. Followed by DEMONI 2.

**Demoni 2** (1986, ITA) **C-91m**. \*½ D: Lamberto Bava. Starring David Edwin Keith, Nancy Brilli, Coralina Cataldi Tassoni, Asia Argento, Lamberto Bava. Sequel-cum-remake of the above features more of the same slime and slaughter (and more than enough references to Romero's DEAD-trilogy), as the demons of the first film enter an apartment building through a TV set and bite everyone in the way. As plotless as its predecessor, and as violent. Made by the same crew as Part One. Asia Argento's film debut. Score by Simon Boswell. English title: DEMONS 2.

**Demonia** (1988, ITA) **C-85m**. \*\*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Brett Halsey, Meg Register, Lino Salemme, Lucio Fulci. Another surprise in Fulci's filmography is this atmospheric horror film, made at a time when the director had lost most of his filmmaking powers and tried to compensate with buckets of gore. The story concerns a young archaeologist (Register), who is affected by a strange presence during excavations with Halsey in Sicily. Is it the ghost of a nun that was crucified there 500 years ago? Rather slow but quite well-plotted and atmospheric, to reiterate. Well-worth the purchase for Fulci's fans. Also known as LIZA. Released in 1990.

**Demonio, Il** (1963, ITA/FRA) **B&W-94m**. \*\*½ D: Brunello Rondi. Starring Daliah Lavi, Frank Wolff, Anna María Aveta, Tiziana Casetti. Stark drama set in rural Italy, where Lavi may or may not be rightfully accused of being a witch. She attempts to turn the head of Wolff, who wants to marry another woman. The superstitious populace, who wallow in their rites, blame everything bad on her, and soon her own family can't protect her anymore. Interesting to watch, well-performed by Lavi, although film's realism, using laymen actors, sometimes works in its favor, but more often not. Not really a horror film, as title may have you believe. From the director of LE TUE MANI SUL MIO CORPO (1970). The 'spider-walk' was referenced ten years later in THE EXORCIST. Sergio Martino was second assistant director. English title: THE DEMON.

**Demon Seed** (1977, USA) **C-94m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Donald Cammell. Starring Julie Christie, Fritz Weaver, Gerit Graham, Berry Kroeger, Lisa Lu, voice of Robert Vaughn. Terrific, brilliant

science-fiction horror film – director Cammell’s second after the acclaimed PERFORMANCE (1970) – is a mix between 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY and ROSEMARY’S BABY, two genre classics themselves. Scientist Weaver has created a super-computer called Proteus IV that is learning the knowledge of mankind within days and is developing emotions and a will. When Weaver refuses Proteus to study on its own, the computer (voiced by Robert Vaughn) goes on to take over the scientist’s highly-computerized house and terrorizes his wife Christie – with a plan too terrible to disclose. Shocking, highly intelligent script by Robert Jaffe and Roger O. Hirson (adapting Dean R. Koontz’s novel) and brilliantly bizarre direction and visuals make this the best of 1970s sci-fi. Julie Christie gives an outstanding performance. Excellent score by Jerry Fielding.

**Demons of the Mind** (1972, GBR) **C-85m.** \*\*\* D: Peter Sykes. Starring Shane Briant, Gillian Hills, Patrick Magee, Paul Jones, Michael Hordern, Yvonne Mitchell, Kenneth J. Warren, Robert Hardy. Engrossing Hammer production about a psychotic count and his two children, whom he keeps locked up in his castle. There are rumors of a demon in the woods among the rural population, which they are trying to exorcise with pagan rituals. Excellent score (by Harry Robertson), good direction by Sykes, one of Hammer’s best films of the early 1970s. Written by Christopher Wicking. Alternative titles: BLOOD EVIL, BLOOD WILL HAVE BLOOD, NIGHTMARE OF TERROR.

**Demon Wind** (1990, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Charles Phillip Moore. Starring Eric Larson, Francine Lapensee, Bobby Johnson. Although this horror movie seems like a dumb EVIL DEAD imitation at the beginning, with a group of teenagers visiting a haunted house, it improves when the undead finally attack and the devil himself shows up. Some interesting twists toward the end almost earn it a good rating, though the acting isn’t always seamless. The director also wrote the screenplay.

**Denise Calls Up** (1996, USA) **C-80m.** \*\*\* D: Hal Salwen. Starring Tim Daly, Caroleen Feeney, Dan Gunther, Dana Wheller-Nicholson, Liev Schreiber, Aida Turturro. Funny examination of the lives of telephone addicts, who never seem to have the time to meet in person. Simple plot is perhaps too slight but several clever and hilarious scenes make it fun to watch. Don’t miss the hospital scene!

**Denn Sie Kennen Kein Erbarmen – Der Italowestern** (2006, GER/FRA) **C-87m.** \*\*\* D: Hans-Jürgen Panitz, Peter Dollinger. Featuring interviews with Franco Nero, Tomas Milian, Pierre Brice, Gianni Garko, Damiano Damiani, Sergio Sollima, Sergio Leone, Sergio Corbucci, Lars Bloch, Robert Hossein. Interesting documentary on the spaghetti westerns of the 1960s and 1970s examines the beginnings of the genre, Leone’s work and its influence, as well as other notable examples. A must for fans, although this is clearly incomplete (no mention of Hilton, Fulci, Carnimeo, other less important directors, no cross-references). Highlights: Rare interview footage of Sergio Leone and Sergio Corbucci (both dead since 1989 and 1990, respectively), Sollima’s vivid memories. Made for German/French TV channel arte.

**Dentist, The** (1996, USA) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Brian Yuzna. Starring Corbin Bernsen, Linda Hoffman, Michael Stadvec, Ken Foree, Tony Noakes, Mark Ruffalo, Brian Yuzna. Super-rich dentist Bernsen starts losing his temper when he suspects his wife of cheating on him with a pool cleaner. Guess how his patients must suffer for it. Grisly horror movie with a scary, unhinged performance by Bernsen. Remains a little too oppressive, though, and is definitely not recommended to the faint at heart. Followed by a sequel! Cowritten by Stuart Gordon, produced by Pierre David.

**Dentist II, The** (1998, USA) **C-99m.** \*½ D: Brian Yuzna. Starring Corbin Bernsen, Jillian McWhirter, Linda Hoffman, Jim Antonio, Wendy Robie, Susanne Wright, Jeff Doucette, Clint Howard. Straight horror film about psychopathic dentist Bernsen, who escapes from

psychotherapy and moves into little town of Paradise, where he opens his practise when the old doctor dies. Ugly shocker has almost no plot afer premise is established, but Bernsen brings some conviction to his role, which is better defined than those of other films' killers. Don't watch this if you are scared of going to the dentist's. Produced by Pierre David.

**Derailed** (2005, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Mikael Hafström. Starring Clive Owen, Jennifer Aniston, Vincent Cassel, Giancarlo Esposito, Xzibit, RZA, Tom Conti. Thriller about family father Owen, who meets beautiful stranger Aniston on a train one day and hesitantly begins an affair. When they want to spend their first night together, they are interrupted by a mugger (Cassel), who rapes Aniston and starts to blackmail Owen. Watchable concoction from a novel by James Siegel. Far-fetched and mean-spirited occasionally, but not bad.

**Deranged** (1974, CDN/USA) **C-82m. \*\*\*½ D:** Alan Ormsby, Jeff Gillen. Starring Roberts Blossom, Cosette Lee, Leslie Carlson, Robert Warner, Marcia Diamond. Unusual horror film aspiring to be a true-crime semi-documentary. When fifty-something Blossom's mother dies, she leaves him with a hatred for women. His obsessive love for her ultimately drives him to bring her back home from the cemetery – and keep her fresh. Bizarre, uneven account of a man's horrible obsession has alternately chilling, oddly touching sequences and humoresque scenes that do not work. Difficult to watch, definitely not for the squeamish. Might have worked better with a less conventional direction. Reportedly inspired by the same case that served as a basis for *PSYCHO* (1960) and *THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE* (1974). Early credit for make-up artist Tom Savini. Aka *DERANGED: CONFESSIONS OF A NECROPHILIAC*.

**Descent, The** (2005, GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Neil Marshall. Starring Shauna Macdonald, Natalie Mendoza, Alex Reid, Saskia Mulder, MyAnna Buring, Nora-Jane Noone, Oliver Milburne. A year after losing her husband and daughter in a freak accident, Macdonald teams up with her girlfriend-clique again to go on an adventure tour through a subterranean cave system. When they are cut off from the exit, they must search for a way out – and find hideous cannibalistic creatures instead. Highly touted horror shocker takes long to establish its premise and even longer for the monsters to show up. The action is well-filmed, and gorehounds will get their share of blood and gore; what's missing is the ability to make the viewer care about the characters and this hurts the movie considerably. And what is the point of it all? Written by director Marshall (*DOG SOLDIERS*).

**Desparate Trail, The** (1994, USA) **C-93m. \*\* D:** P.J. Pesce. Starring Sam Elliot, Craig Sheffer, Linda Fiorentino, Frank Whaley, John Furlong, P. J. Pesce. Embittered marshal Elliot is after outlaws Fiorentino and Sheffer in this oddly unimaginative TV western. Corny dialogue, annoying score, unimaginative script make this one seem phony and unconvincing. Scenes of violence seem totally out of place. Nevertheless sure to satisfy conservative audiences who expect to be 'entertained', as well as fans of its stars.

**Desperado** (1995, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*½ D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Joaquim de Almeida, Cheech Marin, Steve Buscemi, Carlos Gomez, Quentin Tarantino, Tito Larriva, Danny Trejo. Set some time after *EL MARIACHI* (1992), Rodriguez' second feature treads very much the same paths. The mariachi (now Banderas, who's hot like never before) returns to the town where it all happened to get his revenge on the local gangland boss. He befriends sexy, voluptuous Hayek along the way. Polished, stylish thriller has almost no plot, but, as cult movies like this go, isn't really in need of one as overall coolness prevails. Excellent editing by the director, glossy photography by Guillermo Navarro. Followed by *ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO* (2003).

**Despicable Me 2** (2013, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\*½ D:** Chris Renaud, Pierre Coffin. Starring (the voices of) Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Benjamin Bratt, Miranda Cosgrove, Russell Brand, Steve

Coogan. Sequel to the 2010 animation hit is a step down unfortunately. Gru, having settled into a normal suburban existence with his three 'gurls' is hired by an organization to find out who abducted an entire Russian lab from the Arctic, which was experimenting on mutations. Gru then goes undercover at a shopping mall to find out who of the shopowners is the mastermind behind the operation. Episodic, poorly plotted comedy has some good laughs, but it's really only the minions that are funny anymore.

**Des Pissenlits Par la Racine** (1963, FRA/ITA) **84m.** \*\*½ D: Georges Lautner. Starring Michel Serrault, Maurice Biraud, Louis de Funès, Mireille Darc, Francis Blanche, Darry Cowl, Guy Grosso, Venantino Venantini. Farcical black comedy about stoic musician Serrault, his irate cousin de Funès, and an ex-convict called Pommes-Chips, who quarrel about femme fatale Darc and a lottery ticket which might turn them into millionaires. Some amusing bits in this dated French comedy, a slight disappointment considering the involvement of great actors Serrault and de Funès. Based on a novel by Clarence Weff. French version is said to run 95m. Also known as SALAD BY THE ROOTS.

**Detective, Un** (1969, ITA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Romolo Guerrieri. Starring Franco Nero, Florinda Bolkan, Adolfo Celi, Delia Boccardo, Laura Antonelli. Nero plays a Mike Hammer-style investigator, who uses his fists more than his wits to find out who murdered a kinky gigolo. Several characters complicate the proceedings, but unless you dig the period flavor, you will be bored. Based on the novel *Macchie di Belletto (The Make-Up Stain)* by Ludovico Dentice. Original version may run 103m. English titles: RING OF DEATH, DETECTIVE BELLI.

**Detention** (2011, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Joseph Kahn. Starring Shanley Caswell, Josh Hutcherson, Alison Woods, Spencer Locke, Dane Cook, Aaron David Johnson. Mad-cap slasher movie spoof set in a high school, whose alumni are stalked by 'Cinderhella', a character from a recently-released horror film. Thrown into the wild mix is a bear statue that is actually a time machine. It's SCREAM meets THE BREAKFAST CLUB meets SCOTT PILGRIM... sometimes too strange to thoroughly enjoy, but extremely fast-paced and has interesting ideas. Caswell is also an ideal heroine. The video-clip style editing is owed to director Kahn's music video past. Has cult movie possibilities.

**Deux Anglaises** (1971, FRA) **C-132m.** \*\*\*½ D: Francois Truffaut. Starring Jean-Pierre Léaud. Near-brilliant love drama about naive young Frenchman Léaud and his relationship with two Welsh sisters over a period of ten years. Neither of the three can quite decide if they are in love. Low-key, sensitive film is beautifully made (kudos to cinematographer Nestor Almendros) and shows how little actors sometimes need to contribute. An exercise in high-brow film-making, by one of the great directors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Haunting, mesmerizing, masterful, a must for demanding viewers.

**Deux Hommes dans Manhattan** (1959, FRA) **84m.** \*\*½ D: Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Jean-Pierre Melville, Pierre Grasset, Jean Darcante, Christiane Eudes, Ginger Hall. Cold, aloof drama about journalist Melville and photographer Grasset, who embark on a nightly odyssey through Manhattan, searching for a missing U.N. diplomat and the truth about his disappearance. Writer-director Melville acts indifferently, which is a major liability. Atmospheric, jazzy score and location-filming among film's assets. Mainly for Melville scholars, others may be put off by typically cold (French) approach to subject matter. Can be seen perhaps as the flip-side of 'American-abroad' thrillers.

**Deuxième Souffle, Le** (1966, FRA/ITA) **B&W-150m.** \*\* D: Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Lino Ventura, Paul Meurisse, Marcel Bozzuffi. Long, uneventful misfire from a master director. Ventura, a criminal with a reputation, breaks out of prison and joins a gang of fellow gangsters who intend to rob a platinum transport. However, they haven't reckoned with inspector Meurisse's cleverness. Overlong dissection of a criminal's return to his breeding

ground, without so much as an emotional stir from anybody. There's not even any music. It's understandable that around 30 minutes were cut from original version for some showings. Melville's immediate follow-up, *LE SAMOURAI* (1967), is infinitely better. Based on a novel by José Giovanni (a former criminal, hence the ultra-realism). English title: *THE SECOND BREATH*.

**Devil** (2010, USA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Erick Dowdle. Starring Chris Messina, Logan Marshall-Green, Jenny O'Hara, Bojana Novakovic, Bokeem Woodbine Matt Craven. Outstanding little sleeper set in a high-rise building where five strangers board an elevator and get stuck. Cop Messina happens to be on the scene because of a suicide investigation and soon can't believe what the security cameras inside the elevator are showing... Clever, suspenseful horror thriller keeps you guessing, and Fernando Velasquez' brilliant score adds to the excitement. Story by M. Night Shyamalan. Photographed by Tak Fujimoto.

**Devil in the Flesh** (1998, USA) **C-91m. D:** Steve Cohen. Starring Rose McGowan, Alex MacArthur, Phil Morris, Robert Silver, Peg Shirley, Wendy Robie. Starlet McGowan exploits her fame achieved in Wes Craven's *SCREAM*, playing a teenager who may have something to do with the death of her mother and her mum's lover, who was also her teacher. She moves to her granny's house and falls in love with her new (tattooed) poetry teacher MacArthur. Guess what happens. No psychological depth whatsoever, no twists (excepting the ending) and very little continuity. The sex scenes seem forced, in order to make this one an adult film. You've seen this one a thousand times before (Teenage-girl-falls-in-love-with-her-sexy-teacher-and-goes-mad-cause-she-can't-have-him-killing-a-few-people-along-the-way-because-she's got the ... see title).

**Devil Rides Out, The** (1968, GBR) **C-95m. \*\*\* D:** Terence Fisher. Starring Christopher Lee, Charles Gray, Nike Arrighi, Patrick Mower, Sarah Lawson, Paul Eddington. Exciting horror about Lee's efforts to protect a friend from the influence of devil-worshippers. Sometimes incoherent, and thus a little pretentious, but suspenseful and taut. Pales, however, in comparison to *ROSEMARY'S BABY*, which was made the same year. Richard Matheson adapted Dennis Wheatley's classic novel. U.S. title: *THE DEVIL'S BRIDE*.

**Devils, The** (1971, GBR) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Ken Russell. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Oliver Reed, Dudley Sutton, Max Adrian, Gemma Jones, Murray Melvin, Michael Gothard. Powerful historical drama set in 17<sup>th</sup> century France about clergyman Reed, who protects his town from an evil cardinal but is himself a womanizer. When the mother superior (Redgrave) of the local convent falls in love with him and is consumed by forbidden passion, the opponents of the priest may have found a way to discredit him completely. Controversial film is really pure performance art, with great no-holds-barred performances, brilliant direction and a bizarre score by Peter Maxwell Davies. Based on a play by John Whiting and Aldous Huxley's novel *The Devils of Loudon*. Originally rated X, now a cult film, nunsplotation became an entire subgenre in the 1970s. Beware edited prints. Production design by Derek Jarman. Stuart Baird was assistant editor, Ronnie Taylor (OPERA) camera operator.

**Devil's Advocate, The** (1997, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Taylor Hackford. Starring Keanu Reeves, Al Pacino, Charlize Theron, Jeffrey Jones, Judith Ivey, Connie Nielsen, Craig T. Nelson. Keanu Reeves plays a brilliant lawyer who has never lost a case in his life. Soon he is hired by Pacino, for whose lawfirm he wins every single case (while completely neglecting his wife) until a murder case really puts his loyalty to the test. Does Pacino have supernatural powers, or is he the Devil himself? Rather predictable thriller drama with only a handful of really good scenes. Pacino is terrific as usual, but this adaptation of Andrew Neiderman's novel is unsatisfying and not always credible. Big complaint: Film suggests that sex is evil

(smoking, too). The finale in Pacino's penthouse is reminiscent of the climax in Dario Argento's *INFERNO*. Special effects by Rick Baker.

**Devil's Candy, The** (2015, USA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sean Byrne. Starring Ethan Embry, Shiri Appleby, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Kiara Glasco, Leland Orser. Powerful, unsettling horror film with a penchant for 80s heavy metal music about a young family who move into a countryhouse, not knowing that the previous owners' son (Vince) is haunted by the devil and ready to make a sacrifice. Plot doesn't fully gel, but film is very well-directed and conveys the unrelenting terror well. Use of metal songs also a plus. Writer-director Byrne's second feature after the cult thriller *THE LOVED ONES* (2009).

**Devil's Own, The** (1997, USA) **C-110m. \*\*½** D: Alan J. Pakula. Starring Harrison Ford, Brad Pitt, Margaret Colin, Ruben Blades, Treat Williams, George Hearn, Mitchell Ryan, Natascha McElhone, Simon Jones. Pitt plays a determined IRA terrorist, who comes to the U.S. to buy weapons for his war, and is put up by straight-arrow cop Ford, who thinks he only wants to find a job. Thriller drama carries the stamp of a major filmmaker and is well-acted, but the material is only so-so and never hits bull's-eye. Perhaps the characters should have been better fleshed out. Pakula's last film.

**Devil's Knot** (2013, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Atom Egoyan. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Colin Firth, Alessandro Nivola, James Hamrick, Bruce Greenwood. True crime companion piece to director Egoyan's excellent *THE SWEET HEREAFTER* (1997) also puts a tragedy about children in its center. Three boys from a Southern community go missing and are discovered brutally murdered on the next day. The police are quick to point their finger at three teenagers, who are known as devil worshippers. Private investigator Firth has a closer look at the case. Often hard to watch, but always fascinating view on dynamics inside a community and prejudice. Cowritten by Scott Derrickson.

**Devil's Rock, The** (2011, NZL) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Paul Campion. Starring Craig Hall, Matthew Sunderland, Gina Varela. Potent horror film set on the eve of D-Day in 1944, on a small British island, where two Allied soldiers infiltrate a secret Nazi base. It turns out that all but one of the Germans have fallen prey to a flesh-eating, shape-shifting demon summoned by Nazi occultists in order to use as a powerful weapon against the enemy. Set almost entirely inside the bunker, it's atmospheric, suspenseful and well-acted. Good, gory effects by the Weta people. Talented Campion's feature film debut. He's not related to Jane.

**Devil Wears Prada, The** (2006, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Franklin. Starring Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt, Stanley Tucci, Simon Baker, Adrian Grenier, Tracie Thoms, Rich Sommer, Gisèle Bündchen. Comedy about naïve Hathaway who applies for a job at a leading fashion magazine and gets it despite obviously not being suited for it. Streep, the editor-in-chief, can be a real devil, as the title goes, but the young girl is determined and tries to adapt to her boss's demands. No surprises in this adaptation of Lauren Weisberger's novel (she had the real *Vogue* editor in mind), Streep is the whole show here.

**Devonville Terror, The** (1983, USA) **C-82m. Ⓜ** D: Ulli Lommel. Starring Suzanna Love, Robert Walker Jr., Donald Pleasence, Paul Willson, Mary Walden. Dreadful concoction about witch burnings 300 years ago and mad doctor Pleasence, who tries to make some women confess to witchcraft in modern-day New England. Talky drama, with the (poor) effects confined to the finale. A waste of time, only the score has some merit.

**Diable par la Queue, Le** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Philippe De Broca. Starring Yves Montand, Madeleine Renaud, Maria Schell, Jean Rochefort, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Clotilde Joano, Claude Piéplu, Tanya Lopert, Marthe Keller, Philippe De Broca. Impoverished aristocratic family changes their castle into a hotel, and with the help of the local gas station attendant, this turns into a lucrative business... until criminal Montand is among the

“victims”. Mild farcical comedy features only a handful of laughs, despite excellent cast. A disappointment from the director of *LE TRIBULATIONS D’UN CHINOIS EN CHINE* (1965). Playful score by Georges Delerue. English title: *THE DEVIL BY THE TAIL*.

**Diabolical, The** (2014, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alistair Legrand. Starring Ali Larter, Max Rose, Chloe Perrin. Haunted house horror with a sci-fi touch: Single mother Larter and her two small children are haunted by terrifying apparitions in their suburban house. She enlists the help of parapsychics and, later, her boyfriend, who’s also a scientist. Plot is pretty ridiculous and not chilling at all, except perhaps the ugly apparitions. Still, it oddly remains watchable. Nowadays every horror script seems to get greenlit for the big-screen, this is TV movie material at best.

**Diabólica Malicia** (1972, SPA/ITA/GER/GBR/USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Andrea Bianchi, James Kelley. Starring Mark Lester, Britt Ekland, Hardy Krüger, Lilli Palmer, Harry Andrews, Conchita Montes. Intriguing psycho drama is essentially a giallo with its intricate storyline. Ekland has married widower Krüger and must contend with his 12-year-old son, who has been expelled from school for abnormal behavior. The boy is a troubled soul but starts manipulating Ekland beyond anything you could ever imagine. Whose side will Krüger be on? Another unique, baffling puzzler from the early 70s, with a ravishing Ekland and nice Spanish locations. Beautiful score by Stelvio Cipriani. Also known as *NIGHT CHILD, WHAT THE PEEPER SAW, CHILD OF THE NIGHT, and NIGHT HAIR CHILD*.

**Diabolik** (1967, ITA/FRA) **C-100m. \*\*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring John Phillip Law, Marisa Mell, Michel Piccoli, Adolfo Celi, Terry-Thomas, Claudio Gora. Super-criminal Diabolik (Law) is baffling the authorities with his crimes, especially police inspector Piccoli, who is hot on the cunning man’s trail. However, he and his sexy sidekick Eva (Mell) keep eluding the police. Only Mario Bava could have succeeded with an adaptation of the Italian comic strip: Stylish, tongue-in-cheek actioner, lushly photographed by Antonio Rinaldi, underscored by a typically sixties Ennio Morricone score and filmed at some incredibly hip sets. Costumes are great, too. One of many highlights: The bizarrely shot scene in the hippie bar. Also known as: *DANGER: DIABOLIK*. Original running time: 105m. Shot in 1,85:1 Panoramica.

**Diaboliquement Votre** (1967, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-91m. \*½** D: Julien Duvivier. Starring Alain Delon, Senta Berger, Sergio Fantoni, Peter Mosbacher, Claude Piéplu. After losing his memory in a near-fatal car crash Delon is taken care of by his wife and a friend of theirs, who is also a doctor. Soon Delon has doubts whether the two aren’t just play-acting. Rather predictable psycho thriller with no twists and no suspense. Delon should be anxious and suspicious, but he’s cynical and indifferent instead. Duvivier’s last film was photographed Henri Decaë. Based on *Manie de la Pêrsecution* by Louis C. Thomas.

**Diamonds Are Forever** (1971, GBR) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Guy Hamilton. Starring Sean Connery, Jill St. John, Charles Gray, Lana Wood, Jimmy Dean, Bruce Cabot, Bruce Glover, Putter Smith, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn, Leonard Barr, Laurence Naismith. Loosely plotted, episodic James Bond adventure about the secret agent’s continuing battle against Ernst Blofeld, played this time by Charles Gray. The villain is gathering diamonds from South Africa for an evil plan. Certainly not as good as its predecessor *ON HER MAJESTY’S SECRET SERVICE* but sparked by good ideas and the presence of Connery, who plays 007 for the (officially) last time. Most of the action is set in Las Vegas. Title song by Shirley Bassey. This was the seventh Bond film, followed by *LIVE AND LET DIE*.

**Diary of the Dead** (2007, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: George A. Romero. Starring Michelle Morgan, Joshua Close, Shawn Roberts, Amy Ciupak Lalonde, Joe Dinicol, Scott Wentworth, George A. Romero. Fifth *DEAD* movie takes a new spin on the zombie formula, as a film crew provide

POV shots of the epidemic spreading around them. Romero makes use of and criticizes the reality-TV craze and internet-based video blogs, but his script is undermined by second-rate performances and episodic structure. Still, maintains interest and a fair amount of suspense. Some potent gore effects. Features voice cameos of none other than Wes Craven, Quentin Tarantino, Stephen King, Guillermo del Toro, and Simon Pegg! Followed by another sequel in 2009.

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010, USA) C-94m. \*\*½ D:** David Bowers. Starring Zachary Gordon, Robert Capron, Rachael Harris, Steve Zahn, Devon Bostick, Chloe Grace Moretz. Based on the bestselling series of books, this comedy centers on a typical 10-year-old kid in his first year of middle school. Doesn't quite capture the irreverent tone of the book, but fairly funny anyway. Peanuts-style score is good. Followed by two sequels.

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules (2011, USA) C-99m. \*\*\* D:** David Bowers. Starring Zachary Gordon, Devon Bostick, Rachael Harris, Steve Zahn. Funny first sequel is actual an improvement on the 2010 original. This installment focuses on the relationship between Greg and his wanna-be-rock-star older brother. Episodic, as was to be expected, but some truly funny sequences. Zachary Gordon is making this role his own. Followed by Part 3 in 2012.

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days (2012, USA) C-94m. \*\*½ D:** David Bowers. Starring Zachary Gordon, Devon Bostick, Rachael Harris, Steve Zahn. Third movie in the series of book adaptations starts out funny, then resorts to a chronicle of how Greg messed up his summer vacation. A series of misadventures with the same (likable) characters. For fans.

**Diavoli della Guerra, I (1969, ITA/SPA) C-99m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Bitto Albertini. Starring Guy Madison, Claudio Biava, Venantino Venantini, Anthony Steel, Pascale Petit, Raf Baldassarre, John Ireland. Undistinguished war drama about the unusual friendship between Venantini, a German hauptmann, and U.S. soldier Madison during World War Two. Uneven, poorly plotted yarn is rightfully forgotten. Only interest springs from Stelvio Cipriani's score and an alleged (but unlikely) co-writer credit for French auteur Jean-Pierre Mocky. Aka WAR DEVILS.

**Diavolo a Sette Facce, II (1971, ITA) C-90m SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Osvaldo Civirani. Starring Carroll Baker, George Hilton, Stephen Boyd, Lucretia Love, Luciano Pigozzi (Alan Collins), Franco Ressel, Daniele Vargas. Quite good giallo set in Amsterdam about troubled Baker, who turns to her lawyer Boyd and his macho partner Hilton when she is followed and harassed by thugs. It turns out that her sister was involved in a diamond robbery... can the womanizers shed light on the mystery? Interesting casting of Boyd, elaborate score by Stelvio Cipriani, medium plot. English title: THE DEVIL HAS SEVEN FACES.

**Dick (1999, CDN/USA) C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Andrew Fleming. Starring Kirsten Dunst, Michelle Williams, Dan Hedaya, Will Ferrell, Bill McCulloch, Teri Garr, Saul Rubinek. Satire about two teenage airheads (Dunst and Williams), who accidentally befriend President Nixon and become his "secret advisors". Who could have known that it was them who got the Watergate scandal going? Quite amusing, but also annoying (the girls giggle all the time) and not that terribly interesting (at least for those, who don't remember the real events). Good 70s design, well-acted, but not director Fleming's best.

**Dictado (2012, SPA) C-95m. \*\* D:** Antonio Chavarrías. Starring Juan Diego Botto, Barbara Lennie, Magica Perez, Marc Rodriguez. Botto is approached by a former friend, who caused a tragic accident with him many years ago. When soon after this friend commits suicide, leaving behind a little girl, Botto's wife Lennie suggests taking care of her. The little girl brings back harrowing memories and puts their relationship to a test. Slightly Hitchcockian plot,

elegant score, film remains watchable until it falls apart at the barely credible end. English title: CHILDISH GAMES.

**Die and Let Live** (2006, USA) **C-74m. \*\* D:** Justin Channell. Starring Josh Lively, Zane Crosby, Sarah Bauer, Ashley Goddard, Jordna Hess, Lloyd Kaufman, Justin Channell. Ultra-low-budget zombie horror comedy set in somebody's house and backyard, about a group of teens who want to make a party and get harassed by the flesh-eating undead. Not bad by C-movie standards, with some good special make-up effects and an engaging performance by Crosby. The ska punk soundtrack is also fun. Watch at a party with some beers. Edited by the director.

**Die Another Day** (2002, USA/GBR) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lee Tamahori. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Halle Berry, Toby Stephens, Rosmund Pike, Rick Yune, Judi Dench, John Cleese, Michael Madsen, Will Yun Lee, Kenneth Tsang, Samantha Bond, Madonna. An aging Bond (Brosnan) finds a tough enemy in the son of a North Korean general. Ultimately, he threatens to use a powerful ray gun in space to scorch the Earth. A sexy NFA agent (Berry) lends Bond a hand in the operation. Fairly well-directed and edited thriller is good in the first half, but (somewhat muddled, complicated) story is drowned out by gigantic action set-pieces. Still, one of the better later Bonds, with fine art direction and production design. This was the 20<sup>th</sup> film in the series (and a little reminiscent of the 7<sup>th</sup>, DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER).

**Die Hard** (1988, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John McTiernan. Starring Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, Reginald VelJohnson, Alan Rickman, Alexander Godunov, Robert Davi. Outstanding, violent action thriller, a highlight of the 1980s. On Christmas Eve, cop Willis intends to pick up his soon-to-be ex-wife Bedelia from a high-rise office building. Just then, a group of high-tech terrorists storm the skyscraper and take everyone hostage. Can Willis use his experience and wits to outsmart the criminals? First half is not always on-target, even occasionally stupid, but final thirty minutes are sensational. Film meant Willis' major breakthrough and was followed by two sequels. Based on Roderick Thorp's novel *Nothing Lasts Forever*. Well-photographed by Jan de Bont (SPEED). Director McTiernan went on to make THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER (1990).

**Die Hard 2** (1990, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Renny Harlin. Starring Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Atherton, Reginald VelJohnson, Franco Nero, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, Art Evans, Robert Patrick, John Leguizamo, Vondie Curtis-Hall. Exciting DIE HARD sequel, set one year later, pits weary cop Willis against some well-organised airport terrorists, who try to free South American colonel Nero, who is about to land. Less original than the first film but no less exciting. Based on the novel *58 minutes* by Walter Wager. Followed by DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE (1995).

**Die Hard: With a Vengeance** (1995, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John McTiernan. Starring Bruce Willis, Jeremy Irons, Samuel L. Jackson, Graham Greene, Colleen Camp, Larry Bryggman. Fast-paced, exciting sequel to DIE HARD (1988) and DIE HARD 2 (1990), about down-and-out cop Willis, who is picked by mad bomber Irons to fulfil mad-cap tasks in the middle of Manhattan, because he holds a very personal grudge against him (and for another reason specified later). Willis teams up with store owner Jackson to avert disaster. Plot is almost comic-bookish in its lunacy, but at this pace it does not matter. Entertaining popcorn movie with stars in great form.

**Die, Monster, Die!** (1965, USA/GBR) **C-79m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Daniel Haller. Starring Boris Karloff, Nick Adams, Freda Jackson, Suzan Farmer, Terence de Marney, Patrick Magee. Okay sci-fi/horror hybrid about American Adams, who comes to visit his love interest Farmer's mansion. The townspeople seem to be afraid of something, and indeed the patriarch of the family has something to hide... Colorful, quite well-acted chiller, just a tad too slowly paced.

For fans. Based on the H.P. Lovecraft story 'The Colour Out of Space', which was filmed again in 1987 (as THE CURSE), in 2008 (in Italy) and 2010 (in Germany). Also known as THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE WORLD, and MONSTER OF TERROR.

**Die Screaming, Marianne** (1971, GBR) **C-99m.** \*½ D: Pete Walker. Starring Susan George, Barry Evans, Christopher Sanford, Judy Huxtable, Leo Genn. So-called 'thriller' about beautiful George, whose father has a villa in Portugal. She might be the inheritor of her late mother's fortune, so some sleazy characters pick her up in England and intend to sell her to her father and rival-sister. Absolutely uninteresting, doesn't even have any nude scenes (despite director Walker's reputation). George, who starred that same year in Sam Peckinpah's STRAW DOGS, gives a remarkably dull performance. Also known as DIE, BEAUTIFUL MARIANNE.

**Die Sister, Die!** (1972, USA) **C-82m.** \*\* D: Randall Hood. Starring Jack Ging, Edith Atwater, Antoinette Bower, Kent Smith. Standard thriller about Ging, who hires a nurse to take care of his demented sister. What he really intends to do, however, is kill her. The nurse is about to get a lesson in family history. Some interesting horror elements fail to enliven tired plot. Not bad, but far from exciting. Also known as THE COMPANION.

**Digging To China** (1998, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Timothy Hutton. Starring Evan Rachel Wood, Kevin Bacon, Mary Stuart Masterson, Marian Seldes, Cathy Moriarty. Heart-warming drama, set in the 1960s, about a 10 year-old girl (Wood) growing up in a shabby motel, whose mother is always drunk and sister keeps having a different lover each day. Her friendship with a mentally retarded man (Bacon), who comes to live at the motel for a few days, gives them both new hope for a better future. Good drama with winning performances fortunately doesn't resort to kitsch. Good use of oldies on the soundtrack.

**Dillinger è Morto** (1968, ITA) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: Marco Ferreri. Starring Michel Piccoli, Anita Pallenberg, Annie Girardot. Husband Piccoli comes home from work one evening, cooks dinner, reads in a newspaper about Dillinger's death - and goes off-the-wall. Surreal, strangely fascinating drama is pretty senseless but nevertheless compelling, even hypnotic. An artistic triumph for writer-director Ferreri, whose use of the soundtrack also contributes a lot.

**Dîner de Cons, Le** (1998, FRA) **C-80m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Francis Veber. Starring Thierry Lhermitte, Jacques Villeret, Francis Huster, Daniel Prévost, Alexandra Vandernoot. French farce by comedy expert Veber about a publisher, who invites a chubby, eccentric chance acquaintance to a traditional dinner, where friends keep bringing idiots in order to amuse themselves. However, they never reach the dinner place and Lhermitte is actually taught a lesson he will never forget. Comedy seems like a stage play but is occasionally hilarious. This was actually photographed by Luciano Tovoli (SUSPIRIA). English title: THE DINNER GAME.

**Dinosaur** (2000, USA) **C-82m.** \*\*\* D: Eric Leighton, Ralph Zondag. Starring (the voices of) D.B. Sweeney, Alfre Woodard, Ossie Davis, Max Casella, Hayden Panettiere, Joan Plowright. Animated feature from Disney set in the time of the dinosaurs about a dino who is raised by a family of lemurs and must flee for his life when a meteorite shower destroys their island. They join a band of dinosaurs looking for a mystical nesting place. Quite dramatic tale, told with very little comic relief packs a wallop in its action scenes (of which there are aplenty). It's a certain lack of story that keep this from soaring to classic Disney spheres. Excellent score by James Newton Howard.

**Dio Perdona... Io No!** (1967, ITA) **C-99m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Giuseppe Colizzi. Starring Terence Hill, Bud Spencer, Frank Wolff, Gina Rovere, José Manuel Martín. Below-standard spaghetti western about several characters trying to find a hidden treasure is notable in so far only,

as it was Hill and Spencer's first film together. No slapstick, but also no excitement. English title: GOD FORGIVES, I DON'T.

**Dio, Sei Proprio un Padreterno!** (1973, ITA/FRA) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Michele Lupo. Starring Lee Van Cleef, Tony Lo Bianco, Edwige Fenech, Jean Rochefort, Fausto Tozzi, Mario Erpichini, Jess Hahn, Adolfo Lastretti, Silvano Tranquilli, Romano Puppo, Robert Hundar (=Claudio Hundari), Tom Felleghy, Goffredo Unger. Action comedy with the emphasis on action, about gangster Van Cleef who is sent to prison and becomes friends with small-time crook Lo Bianco, with whom he plans to escape. Buddy movie without serious plot. Score by Riz Ortolani is most interesting thing. Photography by Aldo Tonti and Joe d'Amato. Uncut print runs 97m. Also known as ESCAPE FROM DEATH ROW, FRANK AND TONY, MEAN FRANK AND CRAZY TONY, and POWER KILL.

**Direktoren for det Hele** (2006, DAN/SWE/ICE/ITA/FRA/ NOR/FIN/GER) **C-99m.** \*\* D: Lars von Trier. Starring Jens Albinus, Peter Gantzler, Fridrik Thor Fridriksson, Benedikt Erlingsson, Iben Hjejle, Jean-Marc Barr, Sofie Grabol. Comedy experiment from enfant terrible Lars von Trier (ANITCHRIST) about an unemployed actor who is hired by a friend to play the (non-existent) boss of his company. He has to negotiate deals and handle neurotic employees. All this is filmed Dogma-style, even with off-commentary by von Trier himself (a la RIGET), but apart from a few amusing situations, not much is to be had from this. See it as an experiment. English title: THE BOSS OF IT ALL.

**Dirty Dancing** (1987, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Emile Ardolino. Starring Jennifer Grey, Patrick Swayze, Jerry Orbach, Cynthia Rhodes, Jack Weston, Emile Ardolino. In the summer of 1963, seventeen-year-old Grey goes to a holiday camp with her parents, little dreaming that she will meet and fall in love with a dance pro (Swayze) and have the 'time of her life'. Sort of a cult classic for dance-freaks, this romantic drama is well-paced but throws all credibility overboard early on. You can actually have a good time if you buy into it, however. Oscar winner for Best Song.

**Dirty Game, The** (1965, FRA/ITA/GER/USA) **B&W-107m.** \*\*½ D: Christian-Jacque, Werner Klingler, Carlo Lizzani, Terence Young. Starring Henry Fonda, Robert Ryan, Vittorio Gassman, Annie Girardot, Bourvil, Robert Hossein, Peter van Eyck, Maria Grazia Buccella, Mario Adorf, Klaus Kinski. European spy thriller divided into three stories, made in the wake of the James Bond movies. The first one stars Fonda as a spy who manages to escape to West Berlin one rainy night and has a secret to disclose to general Ryan. The second story is set in Africa and features Bourvil as an unlikely super agent even cooler than Bond. The third one has Gassman trying to find out who kidnapped an important scientist. First one (directed by Young) is the best, most atmospheric, the other two undermine the fun a bit (it should have been shot in color). For buffs. French original title: LA GUERRE SECRETE. Also known as THE SECRET AGENTS, THE DIRTY AGENTS.

**Dirty Harry** (1971, USA) **C-102m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Don Siegel. Starring Clint Eastwood, Harry Guardino, Reni Santoni, John Vernon, Andrew Robinson, Don Siegel. An action classic that set the tone for many 70s thrillers: Eastwood plays a battle-hardened cop, whose violent methods differ greatly from those endorsed by his superiors. When a psychopathic serial killer goes on a rampage in San Francisco, Eastwood embarks on a revenge chase, intending to catch and kill the madman. Riveting, tense, well-filmed cop thriller takes a few unlikely twists too many, but stands today as one of the most successful and influential pulp films of its era. Exceptional score by Lalo Schifrin. Followed by four sequels, starting with MAGNUM FORCE.

**Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry** (1974, USA) **C-93m.** \*\*\* D: John Hough. Starring Peter Fonda, Susan George, Adam Roarke, Vic Morrow, Roddy McDowall, Kenneth Tobey. Diverting road movie

actioner about Fonda and Roarke who rob a supermarket safe and then make off with the money. George plays Fonda's one-night-stand that refuses to be shaken off and complicates the proceedings, Morrow the grumpy cop hunting them. Cool Fonda, sexy George and some car stunts make it worthwhile. Based on a novel by Richard Unekis.

**Dirty Rotten Scoundrels** (1988, USA) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Frank Oz. Starring Steve Martin, Michael Caine, Glenn Headley, Anton Rodgers, Barbara Harris, Ian McDiarmid, Dana Ivey. Two fraudulent ladykillers meet on the French riviera and try to outdo each other: Caine is the „noble“ gentleman who only goes for rich single women, Martin a fast-talking American, who tries to make fast money with stories about his sick grandmother. Some terrific work by Martin makes this a must for his fans and there *is* enough going on to keep you involved but the mediocre plot prevents this comedy from being a scream.

**Discopathe** (2013, CDN) **C-81m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Renaud Gauthier. Starring Jérémy Earp-Lavergne, Catherina Antaki, Francois Aubin, Sandrine Bisson, Katherine Cleland. Quite original horror thriller about a traumatized young man in the 1970s, whose murderous ways are triggered by disco music! Plot is trash, but characters are fun and there's period flavor, too. Rather gory, with nods to late 70s, early 80s slasher movies like MANIAC (1980). Written by the director.

**Disorderly Orderly, The** (1964, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Frank Tashlin. Starring Jerry Lewis, Glenda Farrell, Everett Sloane, Karen Sharpe, Kathleen Freeman, Del Moore, Milton Frome. One of Jerry's best-loved films is episodic comedy about the title character, a male nurse, who gets from one slapstick situation into the next. There's a romantic subplot, too, involving nurse Farrell. Lewis also executive produced this one.

**District 9** (2009, USA/NZL) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D: Neill Blomkamp. Starring Sharlto Copley, Jason Cope, Nathalie Bolt, Sylvaine Strike, Vanessa Heywood. Impressive science-fiction action drama shot in semi-documentarian style, set 20 years after an alien invasion in South Africa, where more than a million prawn-like, 7-foot-tall aliens live in slums around Johannesburg, South Africa. Naive government officer Copley is in charge of relocating them – when riots make this necessary – but after an unfortunate incident, he finds himself compelled to defend their cause. Tense, breathtakingly filmed sci-fi is totally original, but also relies heavily on coincidence and 'impossible missions' in its plot. Also stands as a powerful statement on apartheid issues. Based on director Blomkamp's short film ALIVE IN JOBURG (2006). Produced by Peter Jackson. Nominated for 4 Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

**Disturbing Behavior** (1998, USA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: David Nutter. Starring Natassia Maltke, Tobias Mehler, Nick Stahl, Steve Railsback, Chris Owens, Katharine Isabelle, James Marsden, William Sadler. Chiller set in a high school in a picture-perfect American town, where more and more misfits suddenly turn into harmless pupils. Is it a conspiracy? Or are they conducting human experiments? Quite good technically, with a good score and soundtrack, but plot is so clichéd and derivative (INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS meets STRANGE KIDS) you won't spot any novelties. Not too mean-spirited, watchable thanks to the short running time.

**Dites-Lui Que Je L'Aime** (1977, FRA) **C-106m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Miller. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Miou-Miou, Claude Piéplu, Jacques Denis, Dominique Laffin. Psycho drama about Depardieu's obsessive love for a woman who is already married and has recently born a child. Miou-Miou is his neighbor, who takes an interest in him but has to realize that there is only one woman in his life. Well-directed, well-scored and especially well-acted study of the destructiveness of love, but extremely unsettling and difficult to watch. For demanding

movie-goers only. Not as fascinating as Miller's MORTELLE RANDONNEE but compelling and believable, adapted from a novel by Patricia Highsmith. English title: THIS SWEET SICKNESS.

**Dito nella Piaga, Il** (1969, ITA) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Tonino Ricci. Starring George Hilton, Klaus Kinski, Ray Saunders, Betsy Dell, Ugo Adinolfi. Earnest WW2 action drama about outlaw G.I. Kinski, who is forced to run for his life, when Germans attack just before his execution. He is joined by black soldier Saunders and American general Hilton. Together, they manage to reach a quiet village. Solidly filmed drama is less thrilling (or comprehensible) in its truncated 77m. video version titled THE LIBERATORS. Score by Riz Ortolani. Also known as SALT IN THE WOUND and THE DIRTY TWO.

**Diva** (1981, FRA) **C-123m. \*\*½ D:** Jean-Jacques Beneix. Starring Wilhelmina Wiggins Fernandez, Frederic Andrei, Richard Bohringer, Thuy Ann Luu, Dominique Pinon. Romantic thriller filled with 80s images starts well but soon abandons plot and wallows in its cool style. A postman, who has just secretly recorded a concert of his favorite opera singer, comes in possession of a tape which proves that the chief of police is a criminal. He is then chased by several people. Has the reputation of a cult film (and is certainly well-made), but today it seems ridiculous in its style. First-time director Beneix adapted a novel.

**Divergent** (2014, USA) **C-139m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Neil Burger. Starring Shailene Woodley, Theo James, Kate Winslet, Ashley Judd, Mekhi Pfifer, Zoe Kravitz. Box-office smash set in the future, where people are divided into factions, each with their own tasks. A young woman is about to choose her faction when it becomes clear she is a divergent, who is hunted by the ruling class. Science-fiction thriller based on the novel by Veronica Roth is well-made but long and not very innovative. It's also rather targeted at teenage girls. The subtext of the film, however, that of a teenager looking for a sense of belonging, makes absolute sense.

**Django** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-87m. \*\*½ D:** Sergio Corbucci. Starring Franco Nero, Eduardo Fajaro, José Bódalo, Loredana Nusciak, Ángel Álvarez. European western that – despite being an imitation of Leone's DOLLARI films – became influential in its own right and spawned a lot of imitations with the title character named Django. Here, Nero plays the "man with no name", who fights for himself while manipulating two rivalling bands of revolutionaries. Violent, generally not bad, but clearly inferior in timing and dramaturgy to the Leone classics. Story and screenplay by brothers Bruno and Sergio Corbucci (IL GRANDE SILENZIO). Followed by a sequel in 1987.

**Django 2: Il Grande Ritorno** (1987, ITA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Ted Archer (=Nello Rossati). Starring Franco Nero, Christopher Connelly, Licinia Lentini, Donald Pleasence, William Berger. Official DJANGO (1966) sequel no longer resembles a western: Nero has become a monk, living his life in peace and quiet. One day, a former lover arrives, claiming that Django's daughter was kidnapped by villain Connelly. Django then goes after that man and becomes a slave. Pretty violent action/revenge movie remains watchable thanks to Nero's committed performance. English title: DJANGO STRIKES AGAIN.

**Django - Ein Sarg voll Blut** (1968, ITA/GER) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carmineo). Starring George Hilton, Loni von Friedl, Horst Frank, Walter Barnes, Giorgio Sammartino. Django and his partner Bully come to a small village looking for a judge who could tell them the whereabouts of a young lady who may know something about a treasure worth \$500,000. Above-average spaghetti western, ambitiously directed and written, but still just a cut above the rest. Lots of shoot-outs will satisfy genre fans.

**Django Unchained** (2012, USA) **C-165m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kerry Washington, Samuel L. Jackson, Dennis Christopher, James Remar, Don Johnson, Franco Nero, James Russo, Don Stroud, Russ Tamblyn, Amber Tamblyn, Bruce Dern, Jonah Hill, Robert Carradine, Tom Savini, Michael

Parks, Quentin Tarantino. Cult director Tarantino aims at westerns and slavery dramas in this long, violent thriller about slave Django (Foxy), who joins German bounty hunter Waltz (wonderfully sardonic), both intending to free the black man's wife from the clutches of evil mandingo expert DiCaprio's clutches. Not really an homage to spaghetti westerns (despite some familiar themes and the presence of Nero, the original DJANGO), more like a slavery drama or even blaxploitation a la MANDINGO (Washington's character is called Von Shaft, after all). Finally, it's also not too dissimilar to the psychotronic cult western EL TOPO (1970) with its exaggerated bloodletting. The plot, despite all its unevenness, Tarantino's trademark (over)indulgences and anachronisms, manages to engross you despite overlength, and the performances are top-notch, with a close race between DiCaprio's irate villain and Jackson's arrogant slave as to which is the best. Written by the director.

**Djinn** (2013, UAE) **C-82m.** \*\* D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Razane Jamal, Aiysha Hart, Paul Luebke, Khalid Laith. First horror film from the United Arab Emirates, directed by genre expert Hooper. After the sudden death of their infant, an Arab couple move back to the Emirates. He takes up a new job, but his wife feels uncomfortable in their new high-rise apartment building. It turns out that it houses some demons. Horror film is fairly good-looking, atmospheric and quite well-acted, but plot isn't convincing. It improves somewhat towards the end, but the ending is too abrupt. Sat on the shelf for quite a while – rumor has it that the Arab authorities were unhappy with the supernatural content.

**Dobutsu Takarajima** (1971, JAP) **C-79m.** \*\*½ D: Hiroshi Ikeda. Starring (the voices of) Minori Matsushima, Sôko Tenchi, Asao Koike, Kousei Tomita, Hitoshi Takagi. Loosely adapted from R.L. Stevenson's classic *Treasure Island*, this Japanese children's anime is nice for kids, okay for adults. Jim receives a treasure map from Long John Silver and joins some pirates in the search for the legendary island. Quite violent, full of action, but plot is too often interrupted by silly comedy. Hayao Miyazaki was key animator and story consultant on this. His girl heroine is one fierce chick. English title: ANIMAL TREASURE ISLAND.

**Doc Savage: The Man of Bronze** (1975, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Anderson. Starring Ron Ely, Paul Gleason, William Lucking, Michael Miller, Eldon Quick, Darrell Zwerling, Paul Wexler, Pamela Hensley, Michael Berryman. Juvenile, often ridiculous and pathetic superhero adventure about the title character (Ely) and his quest to find out truth behind his father's sudden death. Enjoyable on a certain no-brain level, mainly for kids. Produced and cowritten by George Pal (his last work before his death), based on Kenneth Robeson's novel.

**Docteur Petiot** (1991, FRA) **C-101m.** \*\*\* D: Christian de Chalonge. Starring Michel Serrault. Chilling fact-based thriller about French physician Docteur Petiot who killed 27 people during World War Two, all of whom were trying to escape from the threat of the Nazis. Serrault's top performance (he also co-produced the film), bizarre, eerie sound effects and good photography are the assets of this engrossing period-piece.

**Docteur Popaul** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Mia Farrow, Laura Antonelli, Daniel Ivernel. Belmondo is fine as young lady-killing doctor, who marries an ugly duckling (Farrow) in order to inherit her father's clinic. His sensuous sister-in-law (Antonelli), however, makes it difficult for him to stay faithful. Sometimes delightfully mean-spirited farce suffers from slowly paced plot (by Paul Gégauff) and the director's indifferent handling. Based on the novel *Meurtre a Loisir* by Hubert Montheilet English titles: HIGH HEELS and SCOUNDREL IN WHITE.

**Doctor Dolittle** (1967, USA) **C-152m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Richard Fleischer. Starring Rex Harrison, Samantha Eggar, Anthony Newley, Richard Attenborough, Peter Bull. Heavy-handed adaptation of the beloved children's tales by Hugh Lofting, about doctor Harrison, whose conversion to a veterinarian is told in indifferent fashion. Episodic plot also concerns Eggar's

infatuation with the animal doctor. Sometimes funny, certainly well-designed and colorfully shot (by Robert Surtees), but it lacks esprit and appealing characters. An okay view, a slight disappointment, given these epic dimensions. It was nominated for nine Oscars, winning two (Special Effects, Best Song). Remade in 1998.

**Doctor Sleep** (2002, GBR) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Nick Willing. Starring Goran Visnjic, Shirley Henderson, Paddy Considine, Miranda Otto, Corin Redgrave, Fiona Shaw, Colin Farrell. So-so thriller about psychologist Visnjic, who is asked by inspector Woodward to help her track down a serial killer that is abducting little girls. Some interesting directorial touches, but plot is clichéd and overly cruel at times. A downbeat film, to be sure, but genre fans might want to check it out anyway. Based on the book by Madison Smartt Bell. Score by Simon Boswell. Alternative title: HYPNOTIC.

**Doctor Strange** (2016, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Scott Derrickson. Starring Benedict Cumberbatch, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Rachel McAdams, Benedict Wong, Mads Mikkelsen, Tilda Swinton, Michael Stuhlbarg, Benjamin Bratt. Cumberbatch carries this Marvel adaptation as a neuro-surgeon, whose career is put to a halt by a car accident. He travels to Nepal to find a cure and is initiated into a cult that has access to multiple dimensions. Impressive visual effects and Cumberbatch make this above average, even though the plot doesn't ignite sparks (pun intended). Derrickson also coscripted.

**Document of the Dead** (1989, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½** D: Roy Frumkes. Featuring George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Richard P. Rubinstein, Ken Foree, David Emge, Scott Reiniger, Michael Gornick. Documentary about horror filmmaker George A. Romero, made over a period of ten years by director Frumkes. Brief (and inadequate) comment is made on Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and MARTIN. The largest part of this documentary is dedicated to the making of the zombie classic DAWN OF THE DEAD, featuring behind-the-scenes interviews with special effects maestro Tom Savini, producer Richard Rubinstein (among others) and, most interestingly, Romero himself. Frumkes returns to Romero in 1989, taking a look at the filming process in TWO EVIL EYES. A must for Romero buffs (his TV commercial 'The Calgon Story' is stunning!) and those interested in independent filmmaking, others needn't bother.

**Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story** (2004, USA/GER) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Rawson Marshall Thurber. Starring Vince Vaughn, Christine Taylor, Ben Stiller, Rip Torn, Justin Long, Stephen Root, Joel Moore, Chris Williams. Missi Pyle, Jason Bateman, Hank Azaria, William Shatner, David Hasselhoff. Raucously funny sports comedy made in the vein of OLD SCHOOL (2003), which also starred Vaughn. In order not to lose his gym to villain Stiller (who looks hilarious), Vaughn and his friends compete in a dodgeball tournament in Las Vegas to win the money needed to keep it. Totally predictable, but funny and entertaining with lots of star cameos.

**Død Snø** (2009, NOR) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Tommy Wirkola. Starring Vegar Hoel, Stig Frode Henriksen, Charlotte Frogner, Lasse Valdal, Jeppe Beck Laursen. Quite entertaining horror film about a group of friends who meet up for a stay at a remote cabin in the Norwegian mountains. Then some Nazi zombies rise and attack them. Not as stupid as it sounds, this references films like BRAINDEAD (1992) and THE EVIL DEAD (1982) and has some good, gory effects. The Nazi zombies work, even in broad daylight, and that is saying something. Plot is minimal, though. Less discriminating gorehounds will add half a star to the rating. Followed by a sequel. English title: DEAD SNOW.

**Dogma** (1999, USA) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kevin Smith. Starring Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Linda Fiorentino, Alan Rickman, Chris Rock, Salma Hayek, Jason Lee, Kevin Smith, Jason Mewes, George Carlin, Alanis Morissette, Janeane Garofalo, Bud Cort. No-holds-barred religious satire about two fallen angels (Damon and Affleck), who've found a way to return to Paradise, which, however, would destroy the world. Fiorentino goes on an odyssey to

stop the gun-toting youngsters and collects some truly offbeat characters along the way. Director Smith's large compendium of bizarre, absurd, sometimes hilarious ideas, doesn't quite gel in this movie. The dramatic flow is hindered at times, the climax is also not very satisfying and rather confusing. Still, very much in the same stance as Smith's earlier independent films. Mewes has the film's funniest lines, as a sex-obsessed, foul-mouthed and constantly stoned SLACKER.

**Dolce Casa degli Orrori, La** (1989, ITA) **C-80m.** \*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Jean-Christophe Brétigniere, Cinzia Monreale, Lubka Lenzi, Lino Salemme. One of several films director Fulci made back-to-back in the late 80s, this chiller deals with two children, who seem to have devilish powers, which they use against everybody when their parents are killed brutally by a burglar. Pretty pointless, pretentious and absurd. Avoid. English title: THE SWEET HOUSE OF HORRORS.

**Dolce Corpo di Deborah, Il** (1969, ITA/FRA) **C-92m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Romolo Guerrieri. Starring Carroll Baker, Jean Sorel, Ida Galli, Luigi Pistilli, Michel Bardinet, George Hilton. Newly-wed couple Baker and Sorel travel to the husband's hometown, where old memories of his deceased ex-girlfriend are awakened. There's strange Pistilli, who claims Sorel drove her to suicide. Will this puzzle eventually destroy their relationship? Mystery drama is deliberately paced and uneven, but maintains your interest, especially if you are devoted to such 'gialli'. Marvelous score by Nora Orlandi (though it disappears in the second half). Some interesting directorial touches, too. Script by Ernesto Gastaldi. English titles: THE BODY, THE SWEET BODY OF DEBORAH.

**§** (1971, USA) **C-121m.** \*\*\* D: Richard Brooks. Starring Warren Beatty, Goldie Hawn, Gert Fröbe, Robert Webber, Scott Brady, Arthur Brauss, Robert Stiles, Wolfgang Kieling. Bank heist movie with a first-rate cast. Beatty is an American security specialist working for Fröbe's bank in Hamburg, Germany, who has set his sights on several safe deposit boxes used by criminals. Starts a bit confusing, but develops into a neat caper. Some people consider this top-notch. Score by Quincy Jones contains one truly classic theme. Written by the director. Also known as DOLLARS, THE HEIST.

**Dolls** (1987, USA/ITA) **C-77m.** \*½ D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Ian Patrick Williams, Carolyn Purdy-Gordon, Carrie Lorraine, Guy Rolfe, Hilary Mason, Bunty Bailey, Cassie Stuart, Stephen Lee. Big come-down for the director of RE-ANIMATOR and FROM BEYOND. Strange horror/fairy-tale mix about a group of people who choose the wrong house to spend the night in. Dollmaker Rolfe and his wife Mason (DON'T LOOK NOW) seem kind, but their little dolls prove to be murderous demons. Film tries hard to be atmospheric but script is illogical and the dialogues stupid. Child actress Lorraine's lines are especially silly. No seven year-old behaves that way. John Buechler's special effects are okay. Filmed in Italy.

**Dolores Claiborne** (1995, USA) **C-131m.** SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D: Taylor Hackford. Starring Kathy Bates, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Judy Parfitt, Christopher Plummer, David Strathairn, Eric Bogosian, John C. Reilly, Ellen Muth, Bob Gunton. Exceptional, chilling psycho drama, based on the novel by Stephen King. Journalist Leigh learns that her estranged mother (Bates) has been framed for murder and travels to her former home on a spry New England island. She finds herself confronted with an embittered elderly woman, who may hold the key to what both of them have become. The house reverberates with echoes of a half-forgotten, half-repressed past. Masterfully told, with impeccable flashbacks, emotionally exhausting, one of the best Stephen King adaptations. Unfortunately ignored at the Academy Awards (and everywhere else, too). Fine score by Danny Elfman.

**Dolphin Tale** (2011, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Charles Martin Smith. Starring Morgan Freeman, Ashley Judd, Harry Connick Jr., Nathan Gamble, Kris Kristofferson. Amiable true story about

an introvert 11-year-old boy who finds a stranded dolphin on the beach one day and helps to nurture him back to life. When its flipper needs to be amputated, he goes to great lengths to find a cure. Nice subplots add much flavor to otherwise predictable storyline.

**Domino** (2005, USA/FRA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Tony Scott. Starring Keira Knightley, Mickey Rourke, Edgar Ramirez, Rizwan Abbasi, Delroy Lindo, Mo'Nique, Ian Ziering, Brian Austin Green, Macy Gray, Dabney Coleman, Lucy Liu, Jacqueline Bisset, Dale Dickey, Christopher Walken, Mena Suvari, Tom Waits. Flashy, Tarantino-style thriller about real-life bounty hunter Domino Harvey (Knightley), daughter of actor Laurence Harvey, whose unusual childhood made her a rebel and ultimately brought her to become a professional bounty hunter, usually working in a team with Rourke and Ramirez. In flashbacks she tells the story of a \$100 million robbery and her involvement in it. Stylish, video-clip style editing camouflage that there is very little plot and character development, but film's cult appeal makes it enjoyable. In fact, it seems to take its inspiration from earlier cult films like PULP FICTION, NATURAL BORN KILLERS or the Tony Scott-directed TRUE ROMANCE. The real Domino died of an accidental overdose just months before film's premiere. Scripted by Richard Kelly (DONNIE DARKO).

**Don Juan DeMarco** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Jeremy Leven. Starring Marlon Brando, Johnny Depp, Faye Dunaway, Geraldine Pailhas, Bob Dishy, Rachel Ticotin, Talisa Soto, Richard Sarafian, Tresa Hughes, Franc Luz. Enticing film about twenty-one year-old Depp, who believes he is Don Juan, the world's greatest lover, impersonified, and is entrusted to psychiatrist Brando, to whom he relates his upbringing and adventures. Beautifully filmed, well-cast film is good and could have been great, had the plot been more fleshed out. Pretty nonsensical and whimsical at times, but made believable by a fine cast.

**Donna della Domenica, La** (1976, ITA/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Luigi Comencini. Starring Jacqueline Bisset, Marcello Mastroianni, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Aldo Reggiani, Pino Caruso, Lina Volonghi. Satirical crime drama about the murder of a lawyer and subsequent investigation by commissario Mastroianni. Frustrated wife Bisset may have done it with homosexual friend Trintignant, but it turns out that there are more suspects and Mastroianni doesn't have a clue. This adaptation of Franco Lucentini and Carlo Frutti's novel lacks suspense but makes interesting observations of Italian bourgeois society. Good ensemble keeps things bubbling. Good score by Ennio Morricone. Photographed by Luciano Tovoli. Also known as THE SUNDAY WOMAN.

**Donna del Lago, La** (1965, ITA) **B&W-82m. \*\*\*½ D:** Luigi Bazzoni, Franco Rossellini. Starring Peter Baldwin, Salvo Randone, Valentina Cortese, Pia Lindström, Piero Anchisi, Philippe Leroy, Virna Lisi. Existential mystery drama, sometimes labeled an early giallo, about a troubled writer (Baldwin), who returns to a lakeside community to write a novel, but secretly he wishes to see a woman again. When he learns that she has killed herself, he does some research and finds himself in the middle of a family scandal. Moody, almost dream-like psycho drama with a haunting score (by Renzo Rossellini) unfolds beautifully, with voice-over narration a particular treat. Rare but a must-see. Script by the co-directors, the composer, and Giulio Questi, based on the novel by Giovanni Comisso. English titles: THE LADY OF THE LAKE, THE POSSESSED.

**Donnie Brasco** (1997, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Mike Newell. Starring Al Pacino, Johnny Depp, Michael Madsen, Bruno Kirby, James Russo, Anne Heche, Zeljko Ivanek, Gerry Becker. Pacino is superb as small-time crook and loser, who helps Depp, an undercover agent working for the FBI, to get along in N.Y.C. mafia circles. Depp himself has problems with his family because he's never at home. Fine, well-paced drama with Depp the wrong choice for a family father. He seems miscast, whereas Pacino is perfect in an award-caliber

performance. Realistic drama with good characterizations could have been a little more entertaining.

**Donnie Darko** (2001, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Richard Kelly. Starring Jack Gyllenhaal, Holmes Osborne, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daveigh Chase, Mary McDonnell, Patrick Swayze, Drew Barrymore, Katharine Ross. Unusual, very (too?) mysterious movie about troubled teenager Donnie Darko (Gyllenhaal), who is in psychiatric treatment. His imaginary(?) friend, a (scary) giant rabbit sends him sleepwalking nearly every night and predicts the end of the world in 28 days. How and why is this supposed to happen? Movie raises countless questions and creates an eerie atmosphere. Writer-director Kelly has fashioned a confusing, much-discussed Lynchian story that requires multiple viewing. Astounding, if not completely satisfying, a cult hit. Countless references to other cult movies make it even more interesting for buffs. Barrymore also executive produced.

**Don't Answer the Phone!** (1980, USA) **C-95m. \*½** D: Robert Hammer. Starring James Westmoreland (=Rad Fulton), Ben Frank, Flo Gerrish, Nicholas Worth. Tiresome slasher movie, a TAXI DRIVER wanna-be, about a deranged vietnam vet, who poses as a photographer and strangles young women. Most of the film is boring police routine, so don't expect to be entertained. Bizarre score is more unnerving than effective. Also known as THE HOLLYWOOD STRANGLER.

**Don't Be Afraid of the Dark** (1973, USA) **C-74m. \*\*** D: John Newland. Starring Kim Darby, Jim Hutton, Barbara Anderson, William Demarest, Pedro Armendáriz Jr., Lesley Woods. Made-for-TV horror movie about a young couple who move into the wife's grandmother's mansion only to discover that it is haunted by small creatures. Some creepy moments, but mostly unconvincing, technically on TV (sub-)standard.

**Don't Be Afraid of the Dark** (2010, USA/AUS/MEX) **C-99m \*\*½** D: Troy Nixey. Starring Katie Holmes, Guy Pearce, Bailee Madison, Jack Thompson. Big-budget remake of the 1973 TV movie *looks* like it cannot fail. Holmes and Pearce are renovating an old house that turns out to have a haunted basement. Their little daughter, however, might fall prey to little creatures that dwell there. Great premise, attractive production design, but plot is contrived and the main characters have no chemistry. Their actions are not believable. Judge for yourself. Produced by Guillermo del Toro.

**Don't Blink** (2014, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Travis Oates. Starring Mena Suvari, Zack Ward, Brian Austin Green, Joanne Kelly, Robert Picardo. A group of friends drive to a mountain resort only to find it eerily deserted. Where has everybody gone? And why are there no birds or insects around? Then they start disappearing one by one. Can they figure out the mystery? Thriller takes its cue from Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*, but even though this is essentially a B-movie, it's watchable all the way through, even intriguing. Written by the director.

**Don't Breathe** (2016, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Fede Alvarez. Starring Stephen Lang, Jane Levy, Dylan Minnette, Daniel Zovatto. Three young burglars set their sights on a blind vietnam vet's home, where there is supposed to be a lot of cash hidden away. Getting inside the property is quite hard, but getting *out* proves to be near impossible, as the vet knows how to defend himself. Breathless suspense through-out, a fine example of a nail-biter, although it doesn't know when to quit. Good showcase for veteran Lang and stunningly pretty Levy.

**Don't Give Up the Ship** (1959, USA) **B&W-90m. \*\*\*** D: Norman Taurog. Starring Jerry Lewis, Dina Merrill, Diana Spencer, Mickey Shaughnessy, Robert Middleton. Solid Lewis vehicle, with the star slightly less childish this time. He plays a navy officer, who is responsible for a battleship, which has now disappeared. Despite wanting to leave on his honeymoon, he tries

to reconstruct what has happened, but needless to say, everything goes wrong. Likable comedy has some good performances and a typical Taurog touch. Not a laugh riot, but nice entertainment.

**Don't Go in the Woods** (1982, USA) **C-81m. BOMB D:** James Bryan. Starring Jack McClelland, Mary Gail Artz, James P. Hayden. Atrocious slasher movie about a bunch of people who get killed in the woods by some crazy guy. Terrible acting, terrible music, terrible story. Some blood, but even that looks fake. Avoid.

**Don't Look Now** (1973, GBR/ITA) **C-110m. \*\*\* D:** Nicholas Roeg. Starring Donald Sutherland, Julie Christie, Hilary Mason, Clelia Matania, Massimo Serato. After the fatal accident of their daughter, restaurator Sutherland and his wife Christie travel to Venice to forget. Once there a blind medium tells Christie that she has seen their dead daughter. Strange things start to happen, not all of which make sense, culminating in an electrifying climax. Cryptic mystery, not always on top of the material, but good art direction and unusual, symbolic direction make it a memorable experience. Nice score by Pino Donaggio. Based on a short story by Daphne du Maurier.

**Don't Make Waves** (1967, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Alexander Mackendrick. Starring Tony Curtis, Claudia Cardinale, Robert Webber, Joanna Barnes, Sharon Tate, David Draper, Jim Backus. Delightful comedy from the director of *THE LADYKILLERS* (1955) and *A HIGH WIND IN JAMAICA* (1965). Curtis plays a tourist, who comes to Malibu beach and loses his car and personal belongings in a freak accident involving beautiful Cardinale. The Italian takes him in, but Curtis soon has to cope with jealous lover Webber. In the meantime, he falls in love with ravishing beach bunny Tate. Swiftly paced, funny satire on Californian beach life and the beach movies of the 50s and 60s climaxes in hilarious, over-the-top finale. This lightweight, lively time-capsule was director Mackendrick's final film. Lush cinematography by Philip H. Lathrop. Based on the novel *Muscle Beach* by Ira Wallach.

**Don't Raise the Bridge, Lower the River** (1968, GBR) **C-99m. \*\* D:** Jerry Paris. Starring Jerry Lewis, Terry-Thomas, Jacqueline Pearce, Bernard Cribbins, Patricia Routledge. Latter-day Lewis vehicle has him in London of the Swinging Sixties, with a wife who is dissatisfied because he cares only for his business. Less frantic performance by Lewis results in fewer laughs. Scripted by Max Wilk, based on his novel.

**Don't Say a Word** (2001, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gary Fleder. Starring Michael Douglas, Sean Bean, Brittany Murphy, Skye McCole Bartusiak, Guy Torry, Jennifer Esposito, Victor Argo, Famke Janssen, Oliver Platt. Thriller about psychiatrist Douglas, whose daughter is kidnapped and who is forced by the kidnappers to unlock the secret of mental patient Murphy – within ten hours. It may all have to do with a diamond heist performed ten years earlier. Well-paced, convincingly acted, but plot relies too much on incidents and thus seems contrived. Esposito's role is especially thankless. Adapted from a novel by Andrew Klavan.

**Doomwatch** (1972, GBR) **C-92m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Sasdy. Starring Ian Bannen, Judy Geeson, John Paul, Simon Oates, Jean Trend, George Sanders. Serious, compelling drama about Dr. Bannen's investigation of a small British island, which is rumored to be contaminated by chemical waste. And just what are the inhabitants trying to cover up? Bannen is convincing as the man who slowly uncovers the mystery, score is appropriately dramatic. An interesting thriller drama that somehow sits between the genres horror, science-fiction, mystery, thriller and drama (and comfortably at that). One of the best films by Peter Sasdy, one of Hammer's main directors. A follow-up to a British TV-series.

**Doppelgänger** (1969, GBR) **C-101m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Parrish. Starring Roy Thinnes, Ian Hendry, Patrick Wymark, Lynn Loring, Loni von Friedl, Herbert Lom. Stylish British science-fiction outing about a sensational discovery, a planet that rotates around the sun on exactly the

same orbit as the Earth, only it can never be seen by telescopes because it is exactly opposite and the sun is blocking it from view. Two astronauts embark on a mission to explore the planet. Rather slowly paced, but well-produced, suspenseful, with an interesting twist towards the end. Fine score by Barry Grey. Also known as JOURNEY TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN.

**Dopperugengâ** (2003, JAP) **C-106m.** \*\* D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Kôji Yakusho, Hiromi Nagasaku, Yusuke Santamaria, Masahiro Toda, Hitomi Sato. Psycho drama (not a horror film) about scientist Yakusho, who hears of the appearance of somebody's Doppelgänger and is more than troubled when his own turns up, as legend has it that when you see it you will die. While working on a robot wheelchair that disabled people can operate with their will-power, the scientist must come to terms with his alter ego, an often unconventional, uninhibited darker side of his. Interesting, even intellectual examination of inner demons unfortunately becomes very strange towards the end and reaches an unsatisfying conclusion. Cowritten and co-edited by the director. For some of the Doppelgänger scenes it expands into widescreen format using the split-screen technique. English title: DOPPELGÄNGER.

**Dorian** (2001, CDN/GBR) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Allan A. Goldstein. Starring Malcolm McDowell, Ethan Erickson, Victoria Sanchez, Ron Lea, Jennifer Nitsch. Fair modernization of the Oscar Wilde classic with the title character (Erickson) becoming a fashion model, guided into his demise by towering manager McDowell. Quite interesting, though never really exciting. McDowell is devilishly good and carries the whole picture. Also known as PACT WITH THE DEVIL.

**Dorian Gray** (1970, GBR/ITA/GER) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Massimo Dallamano. Starring Helmut Berger, Richard Todd, Herbert Lom, Marie Liljedahl, Margaret Lee, Isa Miranda. Strangely appealing film version of Oscar Wilde's famous novel about handsome Berger and his picture painted by Todd, which ages instead of him. Trashy time-capsule, wonderfully scored by Peppino de Luca and Carlos Pes. Too slow-moving and in love with itself (like the title character) but worth watching for fans of pseudo-art films of the early 1970s. Coproduced by Samuel Z. Arkoff. Also known as THE SECRET OF DORIAN GRAY and DAS BILDNIS DES DORIAN GRAY.

**Dossiers de l'Inspecteur Lavardin, Les: Diable en Ville, Le** (1988, FRA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Christian de Chalonge. Starring Jean Poiret, Bruno Cremer. Slow-moving, only partly interesting Lavardin mystery about a factory owner (Cremer), one of whose workers gets killed the day before a major strike. Interesting touches (clearly by Claude Chabrol, who cowrote the screenplay) lose validity due to bad pacing by director de Chalonge, who fouled up MALEVIL eight years earlier. Produced for French TV.

**Dossiers de l'Inspecteur Lavardin, Les: Escargot Noir, L'** (1988, FRA/SUI/ITA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Poiret, Stéphane Audran. Fine entry into the Lavardin series has inspector Poiret investigate mysterious serial killings in a small town, where a black snail is left with every victim. Though deliberately paced and mildly entertaining at the beginning, it neatly builds suspense, and Poiret is excellent in the lead role.

**Dossiers de l'Inspecteur Lavardin, Les: Maux Croises** (1988, FRA/ITA/SUI/BEL/POR) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Poiret, Caroline Beaune, Jacques Brunet, Rosine Cadoret, Riccardo Cucciolla. Inspector Lavardin (Poiret) comes incognito to an Italian resort in order to find out more about a businessman who may be involved in illegal transactions. When this man's wife, a respected mystery writer, is found murdered, Lavardin has to change his objective. Another strand of action involves some candidates for a quiz show. Quite complex entry in the Lavardin series is made fun by Poiret's delightful sardonic

performance, but Chabrol (who cowrote the screenplay) is generally below his standard here.

**Dos Veces Judas** (1969, SPA/ITA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Nando Cicero. Starring Klaus Kinski, Antonio Sabato, Cristina Galbó, Narciso Ibanez Menta. Talky, boring attempt at a spaghetti western *drama*, with Kinski and Sabato playing two brothers who are at odds with each other. Hardly any action. Italian title: DUE VOLTE GIUDA. English titles: SHOOT TWICE, TWICE A JUDAS and THEY WERE CALLED GRAVEYARD.

**Dottoressa Ci Sta Con Colonello, La** (1980, ITA) **C-78m. \*\* D:** Michele Massimo Tarantini. Starring Nadia Cassini, Lino Banfi, Alvaro Vitali, Malisa Longo. Low-brow sex comedy about colonel Banfi, who thinks he's sexually inadequate, especially after seeing his latest recruit's giant member. He has the hots for a sexy doctor and dreams of a transplantation. Some funny scenes. Fourth film in a series of DOTTORESSA/SOLDATESSA sex comedies set in the army.

**Double, The** (2013, GBR) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Ayoade. Starring Jesse Eisenberg, Mia Wasikowska, Wallace Shawn, Yasmin Paige, Noah Taylor, James Fox, Cathy Moriarty. Interesting surreal drama plays like BRAZIL, if Roman Polanski had directed – and starred – in it. Eisenberg, who looks strikingly like a young Polanski, plays a terminally insecure office clerk in a big corporation. He is in love with fellow worker Wasikowska – the only other young one in the entire company, it seems – but he's too shy to approach her. Then something mysterious happens: A co-worker is hired, who looks exactly like him, but has a totally different character. At times, this psycho drama seems like a stunt, but cult movie references (especially to THE TENANT) make it fun for buffs. Based on the novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, which Polanski almost adapted in the mid-1990s. Same novel filmed before by Bernardo Bertolucci in 1968 (as PARTNER.).

**Double Jeopardy** (1999, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Bruce Beresford. Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Ashley Judd, Bruce Greenwood, Annabeth Gish, Roma Maffia, Davenia McFadden. Thriller about a woman (Judd) who is framed for and convicted of the murder of her husband. When she learns that he is still alive, she sets out to find and kill him, since she can't be tried for the same crime twice according to federal law. Interesting but entirely unrealistic script seems extremely contrived, taking only the most convenient and obvious twists and turns. Still, fast-paced and entertaining enough to make for an okay view.

**Double Vie de Véronique, La** (1991, FRA/POL) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Krzysztof Kieslowski. Starring Irène Jacob, Wladyslaw Kowalski, Guillaume de Tonquedec, Philippe Volter. Enigmatic drama about two women, one French, one Polish (both played by Jacob), whose souls seem to be somehow intertwined. Well-directed, meditative film shows how subtly a life can be affected by another. In that sense, humans are like marionettes on a string. Some stunning sequences, but overall, film does not sustain feature length. English title: THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE.

**Double Vision** (2002, HGC/TIW) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Chen Kuo-Fu. Starring Tony Leung Ka Fai, David Morse, Rene Liu, Leon Dai, Yang Kuei-Mei, Lung Sihung. It's cop culture clash a la BLACK RAIN (1990) when FBI agent Morse is called to Taipei to investigate mysterious deaths, which may be the work of a serial killer – or even a supernatural force! It turns out that victims are sent through the (Taoist) five hells one by one to give the killer immortality. Interesting, thoughtful script (cowritten by the director) makes this above-average of its type. Original title: SHUANG TONG.

**Doulos, Le** (1961, FRA/ITA) **108m. \*\*½ D:** Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Serge Reggiani, Jean Desailly, René Lefèvre, Fabienne Dali, Monique Hennessy, Michel Piccoli, Dominique Zardi. Following his release from prison, Reggiani plans his next

coup. When it goes wrong, he blames fellow thug Belmondo, who has a special relationship with the cops. But did he really betray him? A minor film by a great director: Sluggish pace, less-than-intriguing plot almost overshadowed by technical finesse (especially direction, photography, score). Most interesting for Melville adepts. Also notable for early involvement of Volker Schlöndorff (assistant to Melville) and Bertrand Tavernier (advertiser). The director scripted from Pierre Lesou's novel. English title: THE FINGER MAN.

**Down by Law** (1986, USA/GER) **107m.** \*\* D: Jim Jarmusch. Starring Tom Waits, John Lurie, Roberto Benigni, Nicoletta Braschi, Ellen Barkin. Jarmusch's follow-up to STRANGER THAN PARADISE (and third film) is an anti-movie with a narrative that is barely there. Three losers wind up in a Louisiana prison cell and plot to escape. Sort-of a road movie drama with time to waste, typically quirky stuff, but you're not sure there's a deeper meaning this time. For Jarmusch fans. Excellent black-and-white photography by Robby Müller.

**Down to You** (2000, USA) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Kris Isaacson. Starring Freddie Prinze Jr., Julia Stiles, Selma Blair, Shawn Hatosy, Zak Orth, Ashton Kutcher, Henry Winkler. Not-bad romantic comedy about picture-perfect couple who both narrate their love story and try to find out why it didn't work out in the end. Pretty kitschy and clichéd, but fans of such teen romances should get their share. Written by the director.

**Dracula** (1958, GBR) **C-82m.** \*\*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Michael Gough, Melissa Stribling, Carol Marsh, John Van Eyssen. Classic Hammer chiller, loosely based on Bram Stoker's vampire novel, casts Lee in his star-making role as Count Dracula, who thirsts for human blood. Cushing, as Dr. Van Helsing, and Gough are his adversaries in 19<sup>th</sup> century England. Well-made horror film boasts impressive camerawork and lighting, stylish direction and a dramatic score. It's too bad that the script (by Jimmy Sangster) is only so-so. Followed by seven sequels, starting with THE BRIDES OF DRACULA (1960).

**Dracula** (1979, USA/GBR) **C-109m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: John Badham. Starring Frank Langella, Laurence Olivier, Donald Pleasence, Kate Nelligan, Trevor Eve, Tony Haygarth. Estimable attempt at filming Bram Stoker's famous novel about vampiric count and his quest in early 20<sup>th</sup> century England. Usually not counted among the better DRACULA versions, but cast is game and production (by Walter Mirisch) is handsome. Try and catch it in widescreen. Well-photographed by Gilbert Taylor, nice score by John Williams.

**Dracula** (1992, USA) **C-127m.** \*\*\*½ D: Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Gary Oldman, Winona Ryder, Anthony Hopkins, Keanu Reeves, Richard E. Grant, Cary Elwes, Bill Campbell, Sadie Frost, Tom Waits, Monica Bellucci. Exciting, enticing, quite possibly the ultimate *Dracula* adaptation: In substitution of the crazy Renfield, Jonathan Harker (Reeves) must travel to Transylvania to complete real estate deal with a sinister count, who – as it becomes clear – has denounced God and lived in the shadows for centuries. In turn-of-the-century London the vampire finds the likeness of his lost love in Harker's fiancée Ryder, but also meets fierce opposition in professor Van Helsing (Hopkins). Beautiful, superbly directed horror drama with forceful performances, especially by the scenery-chewing Oldman. Deliberately paced, a bit episodic but a must. Fine photography by Michael Ballhaus. Oscar winner for Best Costumes, Best Make Up, Best Effects. Often also referred to as BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA.

**Dracula 3D** (2012, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-110m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: Dario Argento. Starring Rutger Hauer, Asia Argento, Thomas Kretschmann, Marta Gastini, Unax Ugalde, Miriam Giovanelli, Maria Cristina Heller. Cheap effects and horrendous dubbing ruin this rather faithful adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel by horror maestro Argento. Plot is almost exactly similar to Francis Coppola's 1992 version, but acting, production values and especially the digital

effects are shoddy. Even the score (by Claudio Simonetti!) seems out of place, even though it is at times appropriately bombastic. Some trademark gore, but even that is mostly done digitally. Old-school film maker Argento's first foray into 3D is a major disappointment. Photographed by Luciano Tovoli. Title on-screen is DRACULA DI DARIO ARGENTO.

**Dracula A.D. 1972** (1972, GBR) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Alan Gibson. Starring Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Stephanie Beacham, Michael Coles, Christopher Neame, Caroline Munro. Seventh installment in the Hammer series, a follow-up to SCARS OF DRACULA. This time the setting is modern-day London, where the evil count (Lee) is opposed by a descendant of Prof. Van Helsing (Cushing). Dracula has found new victims in the pot-smoking friends of Van Helsing's daughter. Nice story idea, competently filmed but also very weakly plotted. The Dracula formula has finally run out of steam. Followed by THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA, the last film of the series. Alternative title: DRACULA TODAY.

**Dracula Contra Frankenstein** (1972, SPA/FRA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring Dennis Price, Howard Vernon, Mary Francis (=Paca Gabaldon), Alberto Dalbes. Horror trash with a hazy plot about Dr. Frankenstein, who revives and blackmails Dracula to help him take over the world(?). Some scenes go on endlessly. The only competent thing about this film is Bruno Nicolai's nice score. English title: DRACULA, PRISONER OF FRANKENSTEIN.

**Dracula: Dead and Loving It** (1995, USA/FRA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Mel Brooks. Starring Leslie Nielsen, Peter MacNicol, Steven Weber, Amy Yasbeck, Lysette Anthony, Harvey Korman, Mel Brooks, Anne Bancroft. Mel Brooks spoofs the hundreds of existing Dracula movies in this rather lame parody. Plot sticks close to the original Bram Stoker novel, but there are too few really funny scenes to make this work. Film comes a little untimely, three years after Francis Ford Coppola's mega-success and almost thirty years after Roman Polanski's brilliant parody THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS. Remains watchable thanks to compact running time and nice production design. Cowritten and produced by director Brooks.

**Dracula Père et Fils** (1976, FRA) **C-96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Eduard Molinaro. Starring Christopher Lee, Bernard Menez, Marie-Hélène Breillat, Barnard Alane, Catherine Breillat, Raymond Bussièrès, Gérard Jugnot, Dominique Zardi. Old Dracula (Lee) has fathered a son and two hundred years later they are forced to leave their Transsylvanian home. They travel to modern-day France, where Drac becomes a vampire actor(!) and his son still struggles with his aversion toward sucking blood. Amusing spoof, with a great self-ironic performance by Lee, but laughs peter out in final third. Based on the novel by Claude Klotz. English title: DRACULA AND SON.

**Dracula: Prince of Darkness** (1966, GBR) **C-90m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Terence Fisher. Starring Christopher Lee, Barbara Shelley, Andrew Keir, Francis Matthews, Suzan Farmer, Philip Latham. After BRIDES OF DRACULA (1960), Hammer's second sequel to DRACULA (1958) revives the count in his castle to kill some American tourists. Vampire horror sticks relatively close to its source, there's even the fly-eating Renfield character. Good photography, dramatic score, but plot is less thrilling and poorly paced. And the ending disappoints. For Drac's (Lee's) fans. Followed by DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM HIS GRAVE (1968).

**Dracula's Dog** (1978, USA) **C-83m.** \*½ D: Albert Band. Starring Michael Pataki, Reggie Nalder, José Ferrer, Jan Shutan, Libby Chase. One of Dracula's disciples (Nalder) is awakened by accident along with his vampiric dog(!). They both go in search of Dracula's only relative, who just happens to be living in the L.A. area. Laugh-out-loud material is presented in dead-serious manner with hardly any potent horror scenes. Boring, unexciting for humans, great action for dogs (my Retriever couldn't get his eyes off the screen). Nalder would again be cast as vampire in Tobe Hooper's SALEM'S LOT (1979). Effects by Stan Winston. Also known as ZOLTAN, HOUND OF DRACULA.

**Dracula 2000** (2000, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Patrick Lussier. Starring Gerard Butler, Christopher Plummer, Jonny Lee Miller, Justine Waddell, Jennifer Esposito, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Sean Patrick Thomas. In London of the year 2000 a group of thieves steal what is antiques dealer Van Helsing's most prized possession: a coffin with Dracula's remains. Naturally, the demonic count is revived and goes after Van Helsing's daughter (Waddell), who has a telepathic tie to the vampire. Razzle-dazzle special effects, impressive photography (by Peter Pau) only partially redeem poor plot. Still, it's good to see Dracula with more verve than ever (even if Butler was a slight casting choice). Coproduced by Wes Craven, hence the alternative title: WES CRAVEN PRESENTS DRACULA 2000.

**Dracula Vs. Frankenstein** (1971, USA) **C-90m. \*½ D:** Al Adamson. Starring J. Carrol Naish, Lon Chaney Jr., Anthony Eisley, Regina Carrol, Russ Tamblyn, John 'Bud' Cardos. Unintentionally funny monster horror trash about Dr. Frankenstein's attempts to create a new monster. Dracula shows up too. Trash value earns this half a star for B-movie freaks. Aka THE BLOOD SEEKERS, BLOOD OF FRANKENSTEIN, THE REVENGE OF DRACULA and SATAN'S BLOODY FREAKS, to name only the more colorful titles.

**Drag Me to Hell** (2009, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Alison Lohman, Justin Long, Lorna Raver, Dileep Rao, David Paymer, Sam Raimi. Raimi's return to the horror genre about bank clerk Lohman, who thinks refusing an old woman an extension on her loan payment will get her the much desired promotion to assistant manager. The old woman turns out to be a gypsy who puts a curse on her that will eventually drag her to hell. Is there a way of getting rid of the curse? Some typical slapstick gruesomeness in this, but the plot should have been less slapdash, and neither Lohman nor Long can make you believe in it. Okay suspense score by Christopher Young. Rated PG-13!

**Dragon Fist** (1979, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Lo Wei. Starring Jackie Chan, Nora Miao, James Tien, Yam Sai-Kun. Another one of director Lo Wei's attempts at turning Jackie Chan into Bruce Lee's successor is crudely plotted old-school kung fu movie about Jackie's intention to avenge the death of his master, and an intrigue spun by the evil Wai clan which nearly foils his plan. Absence of silly slapstick, some good scenes involving Jackie make it watchable, but plotting is amateurish (if admittedly ambitious). For fans. Also known as IN EAGLE DRAGON FIST.

**Dragon Flies, The** (1975, AUS/HGK) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Brian Trenchard-Smith. Starring Jimmy Wang-Yu, George Lazenby, Ros Spiers, Hugh Keays-Byrne, Rebecca Gilling, Samo Hung. Hong Kong cop Wang-Yu travels to Sydney to try and nail crime lord Lazenby. Lots of action, little plot, but generally OK. Interesting for its cast, as well as its location. The attempt at fashioning an ENTER THE DRAGON-clone (see Samo Hung's cameo at the beginning of the film) with a James Bond feel fails because the star lacks the charisma of Bruce Lee and the plotting is lame. Aka THE MAN FROM HONG KONG.

**Dragonfly** (2002, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*½ D:** Tom Shadyac. Starring Kevin Costner, Susanna Thompson, Joe Morton, Ron Rifkin, Kathy Bates, Matt Craven. Mystery thriller about Chicago emergency room doctor Costner, whose wife has died in a tragic accident in Venezuela. While trying to get over this loss, he starts receiving signals and messages, which seem to be from her. What is she trying to tell him? Well-made, suspenseful, even exciting thriller that builds to a wildly improbable climax, which identifies it as just another one of those contrived Hollywood movies that are technically faultless.

**Dragon Gate Inn** (1966, TIW) **C-111m. \*\*\*½ D:** King Hu. Starring Shang Kuan, Chun Shih, Bai Ying, Jian Tsao, Hsu Feng. Taiwanese martial arts classic about a family clan, whose head has been executed and who must flee to title place. However, they are not safe from an evil minister's clutches. Plot is too often slow, talky (not to mention confusing), but film should

be viewed for King Hu's forceful direction and excellent editing. Owes a bit to the spaghetti westerns of that time (or is it the other way round?). Climactic fight best part. Remade in 1992. Also known as DRAGON INN, and LONG MEN KE ZHEN.

**Dragonheart** (1996, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*** D: Rob Cohen. Starring Dennis Quaid, David Thewlis, Dina Meyer, Julie Christie, Pete Postlethwaite, Jason Isaacs, Brian Thompson, Lee Oakes, Wolf Christian, Terry O'Neill, voice of Sean Connery. Enjoyable fantasy film about a knight (Quaid), who sets out to kill dragons, because one of them has given half of his heart to a king who has become cruel. Unknowingly, this knight befriends the creature (voice by Sean Connery), and they decide to battle the king. Stunning effects, nice score, a good but not great film. It lacks the intended epic scope, since the setting is not clearly defined.

**Dragon Lord** (1982, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*½** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Chen Hui-Min, Sidney Yim, Wong In-Sik, Mars. Unfunny, nearly plotless action comedy, a do-it-yourself-project for superstar Chan, who also directed and cowrote the screenplay. He plays a young fighter (what else?) who is competing with his friend for the love of a beautiful girl. By coincidence they stumble upon smugglers who illegally deal with antiquities. Only for the Jackie Chan cult. Produced by Golden Harvest.

**Dragons Forever** (1988, HGK) **C-89m. \*\*** D: Samo Hung. Starring Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Deannie Yip, Yuen Biao, Pauline Yeung. Jackie Chan is a lawyer hired by a dubious organisation who switches sides when he starts romanticising the woman who is accusing them of poisoning her lake. A large part of the plot (strictly speaking the subplot) is devoted to romance and comedy, which are both absolutely dreadful. The action scenes are explosive, though. Fans are recommended to fast forward to the finale. Leonard Maltin has rated this \*\*\*½!!! Also known as CYCLONE Z.

**Dragon Squad** (1973, HGK) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Binner, Wang Yu. Starring Wang Yu. Four diverse characters unite to battle a ruthless crime syndicate. Predictable but routinely made kung fu action set in the 1920s. Overly melodramatic score makes it fun on a trash level. Aka: FOUR REAL FRIENDS.

**Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story** (1993, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Rob Cohen. Starring Jason Scott Lee, Lauren Holly, Robert Wagner, Michael Learned, Nancy Kwan, Kay Tong Lim, Sterling Macer, Ric Young, Sven-Ole Thorson. Screen-bio about the life and times of martial arts legend Bruce Lee, from his days in Hong Kong to his early death in 1973. Jason Scott Lee impersonates Bruce Lee very well (the film is generally well-cast), but American viewpoint is sometimes unbearable: Several times it is suggested that Lee was an American, his romance with his later wife (Holly), whose novel *Bruce Lee: The Man Only I Knew* this is based on, is unbearably corny at times. Those who accept such a Hollywood treatment will find the film entertaining. Still, it's especially disappointing that there is hardly any background information given about his films.

**Dreamcatcher** (2003, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lawrence Kasdan. Starring Morgan Freeman, Thomas Jane, Jason Lee, Damian Lewis, Timothy Olyphant, Tom Sizemore, Donnie Wahlberg, Jonathan Kasdan. Well-made Stephen King adaptation about four childhood friends, who reunite every year at a remote cabin in the woods to reminisce about a special friend they had, who gave them a special psychic gift. Now it seems they are in need of that, for something sinister is roaming the woods and infecting people and animals alike. Intriguing, well-directed horror film is unfortunately undermined by silly (and unbelievable) subplot concerning involvement of the army (with top-billed Freeman). Still, never boring, recommended to King fans and horror aficionados in general. Fine cinematography by John Seale, good score by James Hewton Howard. Written by director Kasdan and William Goldman.

**Dream Demon** (1988, GBR) **C-89m**. \*\*½ D: Harley Cokeliss. Starring Jemma Redgrave, Kathleen Wilhoite, Timothy Spall, Jimmy Nail, Mark Greenstreet, Susan Fleetwood. Rather potent, terror-filled splatter horror that draws its inspiration from new classics such as NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1984) or HELLRAISER (1987) without being innovative. Virginal Redgrave is harassed by reporters just before her marriage to a celebrity and starts having nightmares of the gory kind. A woman who tries to help her is also drawn into them. Technically apt, but rather meaningless, alas. Worth seeking out for gorehounds.

**Dreamers, The** (2003, GBR/FRA/ITA) **C-115m**. \*\*\* D: Bernardo Bertolucci. Starring Michael Pitt, Eva Green, Louis Garrel, Anna Chancellor, Robin Renucci, Jean-Pierre Léaud. Erotic drama set in 1968 Paris, where inexperienced American student Pitt makes the acquaintance of sexually liberated twins Green and Garrel. Set against the backdrop of the student protests and the closing of the Cinémathèque Française, film is irresistible to film buffs, with lots of references from classic 30s cinema to 1960s *Nouvelle Vague*. Plot is slight, though. Explicit sex scenes (with sensational Green) earned this an NC-17 rating. Written by Gilbert Adair.

**Dreaming, The** (1988, AUS) **C-86m**. \*\* D: Mario Andreacchio. Starring Arthur Dignam, Penny Cook, Gary Sweet, John Noble. Lumbering mystery drama about a doctor, who starts having visions when she fails to save dying Aboriginal girl. It turns out an old curse is taking effect and her father may know more about it. Tries to be dreamlike but remains much too vague.

**Dreamscape** (1984, USA) **C-99m**. \*\*\* D: Joseph Ruben. Starring Dennis Quaid, Max von Sydow, Christopher Plummer, Eddie Albert, Kate Capshaw, George Wendt. Science-fiction thriller about a young man (Quaid) gifted with telekinetic powers, who is hired by von Sydow's company to participate in an experiment to enter people's dreams. It works and Plummer, an influential man in Washington, D.C., persuades the President, who keeps having terrible nightmares, to let someone enter his dreams and find the cause for the nightmares. In truth, he has other plans. Neither credible, nor very logical, film's assets are a swift pace, good performances and fine effects. There are also some potent horror scenes. Written by director Ruben, Chuck Russell (THE BLOB) and David Loughery. Score by Maurice Jarre.

**Drei Räuber, Die** (2007, GER) **C-75m**. \*\*\* D: Hayo Freitag. Starring (the voices of) Joachim Król, Bela B. Felsenheimer, Charly Hübner, Katharina Thalbach, Elena Kreil. Adaptation of the children's book by Tomi Ungerer (who also narrates) about a poor little orphan girl, who is kidnapped by three robbers, when she should have been brought to the orphanage run by cruel Thalbach. Maybe a bit nasty and dark for little children, but design – at times reminiscent of Tim Burton – is a treat. English title: THE THREE ROBBERS.

**23** (1998, GER) **C-99m**. \*\*½ D: Hans-Christian Schmid. Starring August Diehl, Fabian Busch, Dieter Landuris, Jan-Gregor Kremp, Stephan Kampwirth, Peter Fitz, Zbigniew Zamachowski, Hanns Zischler. Intriguing drama, based on a true story, about paranoid young computer expert Karl Koch, who is convinced after having read the book *Illuminatus* that the world is ruled by a secret society which is responsible for many conspiracies and catastrophes. Koch becomes obsessed with the number 23, which he believes is the code of the "Illuminated". The film recounts his story, his spying for the KGB and his self-destructive drug addiction. Well-acted and quite fascinating (the real Karl Koch died on 23<sup>rd</sup> of May under mysterious circumstances!), however, the ragged story-telling not only undermines the film's credibility but also deprives it of any serious point. Still, oddly captivating, a movie with cult possibilities.

**Dr. Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine** (1965, USA) **C-88m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Norman Taurog. Starring Vincent Price, Frankie Avalon, Dwayne Hickman, Susan Hart, Jack Mullaney, Fred

Clark, Milton Frome. Absolutely demented, incredibly silly (and perhaps unique) slapstick comedy. Mad scientist Dr. Goldfoot (Price) has invented title device, which produces gorgeous bikini girls he can command via remote control. His aim is to gain world domination. Interesting set-pieces and Taurog's feeling for slapstick hardly make this watchable. A real curio. Price gleefully recreates his torture role from PIT AND THE PENDULUM (1961) – including the pendulum! – in mad-cap haunted castle finale. Followed by SPIE VENGONO DAL SEMIFREDDO (aka DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE GIRL BOMBS) – directed by Mario Bava!

**Drive** (2011, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Nicolas Winding Refn. Starring Ryan Gosling, Carey Mulligan, Bryan Cranston, Albert Brooks, Oscar Isaac, Christina Hendricks, Ron Perlman, Russ Tamblyn. Acclaimed crime drama about stunt car driver Gosling, who also works as a getaway driver during robberies. He becomes involved with single mother Mulligan, whose husband is in prison and then gets in way over his head when he tries to help them. Unfolds slowly and quietly, carried by a good soundtrack (by Cliff Martinez), in final third turns into a Greek tragedy. Gosling plays this like a statue, but it's part of his character. Violent outbursts put this into the cult movie realm. Based on the book by James Sallis. Director Refn followed this with the even more polished ONLY GOD FORGIVES (2013).

**Dr. M** (1990, GER/FRA/ITA) **C-116m. \*\*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Alan Bates, Jennifer Beals, Jan Niklas, Hanns Zischler, Benoît Regent, Peter Fitz, Andrew McCarthy, Wolfgang Preiss, Isolde Barth. Chabrol treads science-fiction territory in this thriller set in near-future Berlin, where more and more people commit suicide. A strange holiday company, along with its owner, media czar Bates, is all too obviously responsible. Policeman Niklas attempts to unveil a conspiracy. Certainly interesting but could have used a dose of surrealism, which would have made this fascinating. Unfortunately, Chabrol's direction remains too conventional. Based on the novel *Mabuse, der Spieler* by Norbert Jacques, which was previously filmed by Fritz Lang in 1922. Released in the U.S. as CLUB EXTINCTION.

**Dr. M Schlägt zu** (1973, GER/SPA) **C-79m. Ⓜ D:** Jess Frank (=Jess Franco). Starring Jack Taylor, Fred Williams, Eva Garden, Ewa Stroemberg, Friedrich Joloff, Siegfried Lowitz, Rocha. Atrocious screenplay downs this German-Spanish coproduction, in which some mad scientists are after a secret formula. Or something like that. Score by Rolf Kühn is not bad, though. Franco appears unbilled as the chief of police.

**Dr. No** (1962, GBR) **C-110m. \*\*\*½ D:** Terence Young. Starring Sean Connery, Ursula Andress, Joseph Wiseman, Jack Lord, Bernard Lee, Anthony Dawson, Lois Maxwell, Peter Burton, Martine Beswick. The film that started it all: The first James Bond movie holds up today as fine, colorful entertainment. Ian Fleming's Secret Agent 007, convincingly portrayed by Sean Connery, is called to Jamaica to investigate the disappearance of a government official. It may have something to do with an encoding device that an evil crime lord is trying to bring to his fortress island. Exciting action adventure contains all of the classic Bond ingredients: An exotic setting, a suspenseful plot, a potent villain (Wiseman) and a beautiful Bond girl (Andress). This is one of the best films in the series, topped only, perhaps, by ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE (1969). Classic score by John Barry and Monty Norman, fine production design by Ken Adam. Followed by FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE (1963).

**Drôle de Paroissien, Un** (1963, FRA) **83m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Bourvil, Francis Blanche, Jean Poiret, Jean Yonnel, Jean Tissier, Jean-Pierre Mocky. Typically irreverent Mocky comedy about a family of social parasites, who are threatened with eviction, until religious son Bourvil comes up with the idea to rob offertory boxes in all the churches of Paris! Mad-cap farce is quite enjoyable, Poiret a stand-out. One dream sequence

is in color. Based on the novel *Deo Gratias* by Michel Sevin. English title: THANK HEAVEN FOR SMALL FAVORS.

**Drowning Mona** (2000, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Nick Gomez. Starring Danny DeVito, Bette Midler, Neve Campbell, Jamie Lee Curtis, Casey Affleck, William Fichtner, Marcus Thomas, Peter Dobson, Mark Pellegrino. Lame farcical comedy set entirely in a small town, where all the characters know each other. When Midler dies in a planned car accident, sheriff DeVito is baffled to find so many suspects among her relatives. Who tried to get rid of her? In flashbacks, we are told the story of her life and death. Not funny enough, nor fluently plotted, a disappointment. Only the cast maintains a marginal interest.

**Dr. Phibes Rises Again!** (1972, GBR) **C-89m.** \*½ D: Robert Fuest. Starring Vincent Price, Robert Quarry, Valli Kemp, Fiona Lewis, Peter Jeffrey, Peter Cushing, Bery Reid, Terry-Thomas, Hugh Griffith. Silly, pointless sequel to THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES. Price, reprising his role from the original film, attempts to resurrect his dead wife in Egypt. Not worth your time, unless you want to check out that cast. Price is pretty ridiculous (he speaks without moving his lips). Cowritten by the director.

**Dr. Strangelove, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb** (1964, GBR) **94m.** \*\*\*½ D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Slim Pickens, Keenan Wynn, Peter Bull, James Earl Jones. Classic satire on the absurdity of war about 'hairy' situation brought about by crazy general Jack D. Ripper, who singlehandedly launches an atomic attack against the Soviet Union, because he thinks they poisoned his drinking water. Sellers is brilliant and unforgettable in three roles, including the title character's. Film must have seemed especially scathing when it originally came out and has lost most of its impact over the years, but some set pieces are just hilarious. At the very least it will convince you of how easily something can go fatally wrong. Jones' film debut. Based on the novel *Red Alert* by Peter George. Original running time (allegedly) 102m.

**Dr. Terror's House of Horrors** (1965, GBR) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Freddie Francis. Starring Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Donald Sutherland, Michael Gough, Bernard Lee. A mysterious stranger (Cushing) tells the fortunes of the five men sitting with him in a train compartment. Atmospheric, well-made horror chiller with many intelligent ideas. Well-acted, a stylish gem.

**Dr. Wai and the Scripture With No Words** (1996, HGK) **C-91m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Jet Li, Rosamunde Kwan, Billy Chow, Takeshi Kaneshiro, Johnny Kong. Enjoyable, captivating action adventure by genre master Ching about Indiana Jones-like scientist Dr. Wai (Jet Li), who goes in search of a missing scripture, which harnesses supernatural powers. Naturally, he is not the only one after the precious scroll. Great action set-pieces, imaginative effects and direction, perfect for fans. Done with the same zest as Ching's SWORDSMAN series.

**Drunken Master in the Tiger's Eye** (1978, HGK) **C-89m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Yuen Wo-Ping. Starring Jackie Chan, Hsiao-Tien, Huang Cheng-Li. Chan isn't taking his martial arts education seriously, so his father sends him to his uncle, a 'drunken master'. He teaches Jackie how to fight - and drink. This is a kung-fu film with comic bits that actually work! Above-average eastern suffers from an indifferent script (written by the director). Followed by a sequel. Aka DRUNKEN MASTER. Originally 106m.

**Duck Tales: Treasure of the Golden Sun** (1987, USA) **C-125m.** \*\*\*½ D: none credited. Starring (the voices of) Alan Young, Tony Anselmo, Jim Cummings, Joan Gerber, Chuck McCann, Terence McGovern. DuckTales movie comprised of the first five episodes of the long-running Disney TV series. Huey, Dewey and Louie must spend some time with Uncle Scrooge and find out an antique ship model might lead them to a treasure. Two competitors, Flintheart

Glomgold and El Capitán have joined forces to win the race to the gold. Fast-paced adventure still grows tiresome after a while, as there is not much coherence. For fans.

**DuckTales: the Movie – Treasure of the Lost Lamp** (1990, USA) **C-74m**. \*\*½ D: Gaetan Brizzi, Paul Brizzi, Bob Hathcock, Clive Pallant, Mathias Marcos Rodric, Vincent Woodcock. Starring (the voices of) Alan Young, Rip Taylor, Christopher Lloyd, Russi Taylor. Big-screen adaptation of Disney's TV series, produced by their television animation department. Scrooge McDuck and his nephews go to Egypt to find a legendary treasure, discover magical lamp with genie inside. Retains the fast-pace of the TV episodes, but mostly to negative effect. Plot seems rushed and underdeveloped. Still, a cute adventure movie for kids and fans of the Disney ducks.

**Dude, Where's My Car?** (2000, USA) **C-83m**. \*\* D: Danny Leiner. Starring Ashton Kutcher, Seann William Scott, Jennifer Garner, Marla Sokoloff, Kristy Swanson, David Herman, Brent Spiner. Low-brow comedy in the vein of the AMERICAN PIE films, about two stoned pals, who don't remember anything from last night and incredibly get involved in the search for an extra-terrestrial device! Funny scenes outweighed soon by general silliness.

**Due Faccia del Dollaro, Le** (1968, ITA/FRA) **C-94m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Roberto B. Montero. Starring Monty Greenwood, Jacques Herlin, Gérard Herter, Gabriella Giorgelli. Four disparate characters try to steal gold from a Fort. Spaghetti western in the heist tradition is nothing special but maintains suspense. Morricone imitation score is not bad either.

**Duel** (1971, USA) **C-90m**. \*\*\* D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Dennis Weaver, Tim Herbert, Charles Peel, Eddie Firestone. Suspenseful second feature (made for television) of renowned director Spielberg about conservative, pedantic businessman Weaver, driving through the middle of nowhere, who encounters a dirty, ugly truck, which begins terrorizing him. Well-directed thriller, from a short story by Richard Matheson. Jim Fargo (THE ENFORCER) was assistant director.

**Duellists, The** (1977, GBR) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Ridley Scott. Starring Keith Carradine, Harvey Keitel, Alber Finney, Edward Fox, Cristina Raines, Robert Stephens, Tom Conti, Pete Postlethwaite, narrated by Stacy Keach. Impressively designed and photographed drama based on Joseph Conrad's novel *The Duel*. Around the year 1800 Napoleonic soldier Carradine is challenged to a duel by roughneck Keitel for almost nothing at all. This feud continues over the years and leads to several duels between the two gentlemen. Ridley Scott's first feature film is difficult to enjoy, but you'll marvel at the images, which seem to come directly of some painter's canvas. Won the Best First Work award at Cannes.

**Duel of the Iron Fist** (1971, HGK) **C-95m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Chang Cheh. Starring David Chiang, Ti Lung, Wang Chung, Chen Kuan Tai. After a one-year absence, young fighter Ti returns to his home and must learn that one of his former friends has taken over the martial arts club and turned his girlfriend into a prostitute. He swears revenge and gets help from an ambiguous character, Chiang. Earnest action drama set in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century features knife fights galore, whose excitement doesn't quite match the bare-knuckle fights of other easterns. Film also takes a few unlikely twists in the second half. Interesting for buffs; others stay away, especially from edited U.S. print, which ends in the middle of the final fight! Aka THE DUEL and DUEL OF THE SHAOLIN FIST.

**2099 - Dopo la Caduta di New York** (1983, ITA/FRA) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Martin Dolman (=Sergio Martino). Starring Michael Sopkiw, Valentine Monnier, Edmund Purdom, George Eastman. 'Flash' Sopkiw goes into post-apocalyptic Manhattan to retrieve the last fertile woman on the devastated planet. He meets mutants, replicants and talking apes(!) on his way. Under-produced, derivative science-fiction remains fairly entertaining, although (or because?) it's

very trashy. A lot of action throughout. Eastman appears as 'Big Ape'! Released in the U.S. as AFTER THE FALL OF NEW YORK.

**Dukes of Hazzard, The** (2005, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jay Chandrasekhar. Starring Johnny Knoxville, Sean William Scott, Jessica Simpson, Burt Reynolds, Joe Don Baker, James Roday, Steve Lemme, Willie Nelson, Jay Chandrasekhar, Nikki Griffin, Barry Corbin. The 70s TV series makes it to the big screen in this fast, loud, funny action comedy. Knoxville and Scott play the Duke cousins, who find out that hot-shot Reynolds is planning some evil things in Hazzard County. And yes, there's a race coming up, for which Reynolds has hired racing star Roday. Plot is second-rate, but this does not matter when the laughs are there and the action delivers. Scott (of the AMERICAN PIE films) gives another engaging performance.

**Dumbo** (1941, USA) **C-64m. \*\*\* D:** Ben Sharpsteen. Still-charming animated Disney classic about the elephant baby with giant ears, who lives through quite a lot of suffering until he understands that being different has its advantages, too. Dumbo doesn't say a word, which mutes the effects of this relatively short movie sometimes, but it *is* one of Disney's holy cows today, so why quibble? Oscar winner for Best Score.

**Dummy** (2003, USA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Greg Pritikin. Starring Adrien Brody, Milla Jovovich, Illeana Douglas, Vera Farmiga, Jessica Walter, Ron Leibman, Jared Harris. Charming tale from American suburbia about Brody, who discovers his penchant for ventriloquism, quits his job and tries to learn the art. Along the way he falls in love with his unemployment counsellor Farmiga. Jovovich is also fun as Brody's iconoclastic but aimless friend. Likable performances and warm-hearted script make this a winner. Written by the director.

**Dust Devil** (1992, GBR/SAF) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Stanley. Starring Robert Burke, Chelsea Field, Zakes Mokae, John Matshikiza, Rufus Swart, William Hootkins, Marianne Sägebrect. Atmospheric horror about a demon trapped inside a human body, who murders 'lost souls' in order to re-enter the spiritual realm he has come from. Field, fleeing from an unhappy marriage, turns out to be tougher than the rest of his victims. Dark, well-photographed horror film set in the Namibian desert is deliberately paced and vague but also engrossing and at times even fascinating. Burke is charismatic as the title creature. Not for every taste, but cult movie fans should find this enigmatic, stylish film interesting. Fine score by Simon Boswell. Originally released at 87m., then issued in a 104m. 'final cut', which inserts deleted scenes and was supervised by director Stanley. Some versions may run even longer.

**Dyatlov Pass Incident, The** (2013, USA/GBR/RUS) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Renny Harlin. Starring Holly Goss, Matt Stokoe, Luke Albright, Gemma Atkinson, Ryan Hawley. Five U.S. college students embark on a trip into the Ural mountains, where in 1959 nine Russian skiers died under mysterious circumstances. They want to film a documentary there, and we are presented with this found footage. Well-made, interesting throughout, all the more chilling as the tragedy in 1959 really occurred, and there is no full explanation so far. The acting is not perfect (it's not in most found footage horror films), but it's never boring.

**Earth** (2007, USA/GBR/GER) **C-96m. \*\*\* D:** Alastair Fothergill, Mark Linfield. Narrated by James Earl Jones (US version), Patrick Stewart (UK version). Beautiful globe-spanning documentary that travels from the North Pole to the South Pole, visiting several climate zones and examining the wonders of our planet. Astounding, never-before-seen footage of animals and landscapes, set to a majestic, sweeping score. A must, will remind you of how beautiful this world is. Also known as PLANET EARTH, based on the television series of the same name.

**Earth Dies Screaming, The** (1962, GBR) **B&W-62m. \*\* D:** Terence Fisher. Starring Willard Parker, Virginia Field, Dennis Price, Thorley Walters. Watchable sci-fi shocker along the lines of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956) about several survivors of a gas attack(?) that

has killed nearly everyone. Then some people(?) in spacesuits arrive and attack them. Not bad by the director of several Hammer classics, but performances are much too casual for the genre. Price is totally inappropriate.

**Earthquake** (1974, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Mark Robson. Starring Charlton Heston, Ava Gardner, George Kennedy, Lorne Greene, Geneviève Bujold, Richard Roundtree, Marjoe Gortner, Barry Sullivan, Lloyd Nolan, Victoria Principal, Walter Matuschanskayasky (=Walter Matthau), Monica Lewis, Pedro Armendáriz Jr., Donald Moffat. Typical disaster thriller, made when the genre was at its zenith. Soap opera-like introduction features Heston as an architect, Gardner as his desperate wife, and Bujold as Heston's new love interest (with kid), as well as Roundtree as a stunt driver and Kennedy as a hardened cop. When an earthquake hits the city (Los Angeles), it spreads chaos and destruction. Some suspenseful cliffhanger situations, great special effects and an impressive quake-sequence in the middle of the film make this recommendable – unless the 45-odd minutes of dull introduction put you off. Written by George Fox and Mario Puzo(!). Score by John Williams, photography by Philip H. Lathrop. Originally released in "Sensurround", which featured a special low-frequency bass speaker setup. Won an Oscar for Best Sound and a Special Achievement Award for Best Visual Effects. Lengthened by several minutes for film's cable TV premiere. Sort-of remade/ripped-off in Japan as JISHIN RETTO (1980).

**Eastern Promises** (2007, GBR/CDN/USA) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Viggo Mortensen, Naomi Watts, Vincent Cassel, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Sinéad Cusack, Jerzy Skolimowski. Crime drama, a companion piece to Cronenberg's A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE (2005), which also starred Mortensen. Here he plays a driver for the Russian mafia in London, who gets involved in midwife Watts' investigation into the death of a 14-year-old girl, who gave birth to a baby in her hospital. Heavy-going at times, almost solemn, the lack of action is made up for by scenes of harsh blood-letting. Film wraps up nicely, which makes up for the fact that it's a bit too talky and stagey. Written by Steven Knight, score by Howard Shore.

**East Side Story** (1997, GER/FRA) **C-77m. \*\*\* D:** Dana Ranga. Interesting documentary about film musicals made behind the Iron Curtain from the 1930s to the 1960s. Only about 40 were made, and most of them had to keep close to the Soviet ideology, meaning they showed happy workers dancing in the fields, steel mills etc.! Features many enlightening interviews, as well as footage from the films in question. More of interest to cinéastes than to ordinary moviegoers. Some clips are in black-and-white, some in widescreen.

**Ebola Syndrome** (1996, HGK) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Herman Yau. Starring Anthony Wong Chau-Sang, Ming Wan Yeung, Shing Fui-On, Lo Meng. Extremely violent horror thriller set mostly in South Africa, where a sadistic low-life has fled after killing his boss and his wife. Working for a Chinese restaurant, he goes looking for meat in the African bush and contracts Ebola when he rapes a tribeswoman. Not only does he proceed to kill his new boss, he also turns him and his girlfriend into minced meat for the hamburger special on the next day! Then the traumatized daughter of the first couple he killed recognizes him and he is forced to flee back to Hong Kong – with the Ebola virus inside him. Pretty disgusting but fun for gorehounds, especially because of Wong's scenery-chewing performance, his story seems reminiscent of HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER (1986), although in an over-the-top Hong Kong-style. Watch out for edited prints.

**Echappement Libre** (1964, FRA/SPA/ITA/GER) **103m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jean Becker. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jean Seberg, Gert Fröbe, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Fernando Rey, Wolfgang Preiss. Crime comedy starts nice, then bogs down: Fröbe hires Belmondo to smuggle gold hidden in a sports car to Beirut and assigns Seberg as his partner. Soon, the

smart Frenchman decides to keep the gold for himself. Nice locations, attractive stars and a story that becomes weaker and weaker. Some found it good, though. An adaptation of a novel by Clet Coroner. English title: BACKFIRE.

**Écoute Voir** (1978, FRA) **C-115m. \*\*½ D:** Hugo Santiago. Starring Catherine Deneuve, Sami Frey. Deneuve stars as a private investigator who is assigned by the owner of a large estate to find out who wants to get access to his premises. It turns out a dangerous sect intends to use the man's invention - a machine which manipulates the human will - for their own sakes. Low-key, not terribly involving, but well-worth a look at, especially for fans of Deneuve. Jazzy, experimental soundtrack adds to the film's mood.

**Écume des Jours, L'** (2013, FRA/BEL) **C-131m. \*\*½ D:** Michel Gondry. Starring Romain Duris, Audrey Tautou, Gad Elmaleh, Omar Sy, Aïssa Maïga, Alain Chabat. Hyper-creative fantasy romance about inventor Duris, who falls in love with Tautou and marries her in surreal Paris. Very little narrative thrust but a kaleidoscope of bizarre, experimental, simply crazy ideas and situations. Not all of them work or provide the intended laughs, but it's lightweight and hard to dislike. Also shown in a 98m. truncated version. Based on the novel by Boris Vian, which was previously filmed in 1968. English titles: MOOD INDIGO, and THE FOAM OF THE DAYS.

**Ed and His Dead Mother** (1993, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Jonathan Wacks. Starring Ned Beatty, Steve Buscemi, John Glover, Gary Farmer. Neat black comedy about Buscemi, who's shattered when his mother dies – and baffled when enigmatic businessman Glover knocks on his door and offers to bring her back from the dead. And she does come back – with a vengeance! Quite funny, but too self-conscious and a tad too slow. Good performances. Also known as MOTHERHOOD.

**Eden Lake** (2008, GBR) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\* D:** James Watkins. Starring Kelly Reilly, Michael Fassbender, Tara Ellis, Jack O'Connell. Contrived, nasty horror thriller about loving couple Reilly and Fassbender, who go camping near a lake, then make the acquaintance of teenage bullies, who become their worst nightmare when an argument escalates. Some truly stupid scenes, paired with the unconvincing villainy of the boys, bog the film down. It becomes a chore to watch, unless you get off on torture and humiliation. Written by the director.

**Edge, The** (1997, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lee Tamahori. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Alec Baldwin, Elle Macpherson, Harold Perrineau, L.Q. Jones, Bart the Bear. Wilderness adventure set in Alaska about billionaire Hopkins, a well-educated and interested man, whose plane crashes in the middle of nowhere, with only a photographer (Baldwin) and his assistant surviving. In their quest for survival, the men do not only have to fight a wild bear but also their own rivalry, with Hopkin's wife Macpherson being the object of desire. Nice location filming and some good scenes between the stars make film worth watching, though the premise is contrived and the situations not always credible.

**Edge of Tomorrow** (2014, USA/CDN) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Doug Liman. Starring Tom Cruise, Emily Blunt, Bill Paxton, Brendan Gleeson, Jonas Armstrong. Science-fiction thriller plays like a video game: War strategist Cruise, trying to figure out how to beat highly sophisticated aliens that have invaded our planet, falls out with a high official and gets sent straight into the action. When he is wounded, he gets caught in a time loop, living the same day over and over again, which gives him the chance to try and figure out how to really beat the super-intelligent, super-fast spider-like killing machines. The loop becomes tiring after a while, but the effects are a wow. All in all, it's well worth watching.

**Edge of Winter** (2016, CDN/USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Rob Connolly. Starring Joel Kinnaman, Tom Holland, Shaun Benson, Shiloh Fernandez. Thriller drama set in wintry Canada, where troubled father Kinnaman takes care of his sons while his ex-wife and her new partner are

off on a cruise. He takes them out into the wilderness for some male bonding, but fate has it that their car crashes, which leaves them stranded. As his mental state deteriorates, hope for help is waning. An okay view for 50 minutes or so, but then disintegrates completely with several twists. The boys' ordeal becomes almost impossible to sit through.

**Ed TV** (1999, USA) **C-122m.** \*\*½ D: Ron Howard. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Jenna Elfman, Woody Harrelson, Sally Kirkland, Martin Landau, Ellen DeGeneres, Rob Reiner, Dennis Hopper, Elizabeth Hurley. Amusing, intermittently clever satire, TRUMAN SHOW-style about brainless Everyman McConaughey, whose life is presented 24 hours a day in a TV show by a declining cable network. Not consistently credible, slightly overlong, but entertaining. A remake of the Canadian film LOUIS XIX: ROI DES ONDES.

**Edward Scissorhands** (1990, USA) **C-105m.** \*\*\*½ D: Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Winona Ryder, Dianne Wiest, Anthony Michael Hall, Kathy Baker, Robert Oliveri, O-Lan Jones, Vincent Price, Alan Arkin, Nick Carter. Touching, irresistible Burton movie, a typically dark fantasy about the title character, an artificial human (Depp), whose maker (Price) sewed all but his hands onto his body, instead he is wearing huge scissors. One day he is discovered by cosmetics saleswoman Wiest, who takes him to her suburban home and integrates him into their society. However, the young man remains 'different' despite his unique talents. Intelligent story by Tim Burton and Caroline Thompson links the classic plots of *Pinocchio* and *Frankenstein*. Excellent score by Danny Elfman, remarkable art direction, too. A real treat (even if it hits its stride rather late), one of Tim Burton's best films.

**Ed Wood** (1994, USA) **124m.** \*\*\* D: Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patricia Arquette, Jeffrey Jones, G. D. Spradlin, Vincent D'Onofrio, Lisa Marie, Bill Murray, Mike Starr, George 'The Animal' Steele. Screen-bio of legendary/notorious trash film director Edward D. Wood, Jr., whose *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* has been labelled 'worst film of all time'. Typically stylish Burton homage, shot in eye-popping black-and-white, is probably less compelling to non-movie buffs, but fine performances, including Martin Landau's brilliant, heart-breaking portrayal of the dying Bela Lugosi, make the film worth watching. Oscars went to Landau and his make-up designer Rick Baker. Howard Shore composed the score.

**Eglima Sto Kavouri** (1974, GRE) **C-79m.** \*\* D: Kostas Karagiannis. Starring Lakis Komninos, Dorothy Moore, Vagelis Seilinos, Dimitris Bislani, Fragoulis Fragoulis, Jane Paterson. A sex killer is roaming the city and Komninos intends to use him to get rid of his rich, neurotic wife. Rather poorly handled, barely watchable thriller was one of a handful of Greek exploitation films, distantly related to the giallo. English titles: *THE RAPE KILLER*, *DEATH KISS*, and *HE MURDERED HIS WIFE*.

**18 Bronzgirls of the Shaolin** (197?, HGK) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Chien Lai Yeh. Starring Yueh-Hua, King Kong. Confusing kung fu actioner with silly comic touches is only partly redeemed by an exciting (and increasingly violent) last 20 minutes.

**18 Fatal Strikes** (1979, HGK) **C-83m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Ching Chen. Starring Tung Wai, Shih Tien, Mang Kuang, Min Chiang. Simply plotted but phenomenally choreographed eastern about two young peasants who save the life of a shaolin monk. Subsequently he teaches them the art of Kung Fu, and together they take on a white-haired manchu, who is after the monk. Comic bits mingle better with the action than usual. The German TV version is cut and misses the final two minutes.

**Eighteenth Angel, The** (1997, USA/ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: William Bindley. Starring Christopher MacDonald, Rachel Leigh Cook, Stanley Tucci, Wendy Crewson, Maximilian Schell, Cosimo Fusco, Venantino Venantini, Ted Rusoff. After her mother has committed suicide, Cook's father allows the teenager to go to Italy for a photo shooting, but it turns out

priest Schell is waiting for an "eighteenth angel" that would ensure the rebirth of the Anti-Christ. Horror thriller isn't very clever (criticism of genetics is slight), but credibly acted by MacDonald and atmospheric thanks to Italian setting. Schell had a similar role in JOHN CARPENTER'S VAMPIRES a year later. Written by David Seltzer (THE OMEN).

**8 Mile** (2002, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Curtis Hanson. Starring Eminem, Kim Basinger, Mekhi Pfifer, Brittany Murphy, Evan Jones, Omar Benson Miller. Typical street drama about an underdog achieving fame features star rapper Eminem in a tailor-made role as a self-conscious white rapper, whose way to fame is difficult, also because of his social background. Basinger plays his trailer-trash mother. Might carry additional impact for Eminem fans, but otherwise, this lacks spark. Oscar winner for Best Song.

**8MM** (1999, USA) **C-123m. \*\* D:** Joel Schumacher. Starring Nicholas Cage, Joaquin Phoenix, James Gandolfini, Peter Stormare, Anthony Heald, Christopher Bauer, Catherine Keener, Myra Carter. Private detective Cage is asked by a rich widow to investigate the origins of an 8mm snuff film she found in her late husband's safe. All she wants is to know whether the girl tortured in the movie was really killed. Family father Cage delves into the netherworld of the pornography/bondage industry and soon finds himself engulfed in a maelstrom of sex and violence, where he just can't shake off his personal feelings for the girl. Cage's poorly defined character mars this potentially nerve-wrecking thriller, and as a result the film's transgression from a simple detective thriller to a kind of 'Death Wish' revenge pic is hardly credible. Well-made, to be sure, but its unpleasantness is - unfortunately - not offset by a good plot.

**Election** (1999, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alexander Payne. Starring Matthew Broderick, Reese Witherspoon, Loren Nelson, Chris Klein, Phil Reeves, Colleen Camp. Unusual satirical comedy about high school teacher Broderick and his nemesis, ultra-ambitious student Witherspoon. When she runs for president of the student council, Broderick talks dumb ex-football player Klein into competing against her. And that's just the main thread of a meandering plot that includes lesbianism, adultery and jealousy. Generally on-target, but obviously tries to include too many details of the novel it's based on (written by Tom Perretta). Still, highly original and well-acted.

**Electra Glide in Blue** (1973, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** James William Guercio. Starring Robert Blake, Billy Green Bush, Mitchell Ryan, Jeannine Riley, Elisha Cook, Jr. Ambitious, well-acted drama focusing on the life of highway patrolman Blake, who is striving to be a homicide cop and thinks his chance has come when a local hermite is found dead in his hut. Stylish, well-directed, with poetic location photography by Conrad Hall (IN COLD BLOOD, BUTCH CASSIDY AND SUNDANCE KID); his use of a zoom lens (in almost every scene) is also remarkable. Plot loses focus after about an hour, but film still a must for followers of the American independent cinema. It has developed a cult reputation. Coproduced by director Guercio, who also composed the score. Also shown at 113m.

**Element of Crime, The** (1984, DAN) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Lars von Trier. Starring Michael Elphick, Esmond Knight, Me Me Lei, Gerald Wells, Ahmed El-Shenawi, Astrid Henning Jensen, Lars von Trier. 'The Element of Crime' is a book written by a criminologist which should improve the understanding of a criminal mind. With its help a detective (Elphick) wants to track down serial killer Harry Grey who has been murdering young girls selling lottery tickets. Frame story sees him in Cairo undergoing hypnosis in order to return to Europe (Germany, to be exact) to solve the case. Fascinating thriller boasts cowriter-director von Trier's overwhelming visual style (as seen before in BEFRIELES BILLEDER), the film's intellectual pensiveness is transferred slowly to the viewer. Surreal narrative will undoubtedly only appeal to intelligent audiences. This is a cult film that will surely be rediscovered and hailed

as a masterpiece in years to come. Feature film debut of the ingenious Lars von Trier (EUROPA, RIGET, BREAKING THE WAVES). First part of a trilogy, followed by EPIDEMIC and EUROPA. Esmond Knight, who plays the author of 'The Element of Crime', appeared in Laurence Olivier's HAMLET in 1948 (which is set in Denmark). Original Danish language title:FORBRYDELSENS ELEMENT. Shot in English.

**Elephant** (2003, USA) **C-81m. \*\*½ D:** Gus Van Sant. Starring Alex Frost, Eric Deulen, John Robinson, Elias McConnell, Jordan Taylor, Carry Finklea, Timothy Bottoms. Examination of a school shooting as seen through the eyes of various characters. Non-linear narrative is much like that of PULP FICTION (1994), but offers little in terms of motives and explanations. Interesting throughout, despite minute-long, seemingly pointless sequences, with which director Van Sant tries to plunge the viewer into a typical school day at an average high school. Ultimately, his criticism comes a year too late, after Michael Moore's scathing BOWLING FOR COLUMBINE (2002). Still took a Palm D'Or at Cannes.

**Elephant Man, The** (1980, GBR/USA) **123m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David Lynch. Starring Anthony Hopkins, John Hurt, Anne Bancroft, John Gielgud, Wendy Hiller, Freddie Jones, Michael Elphick. Extraordinary drama, based on the real-life story of John Merrick, a grotesquely disfigured young man (Hurt), who is discovered by a renowned doctor (Hopkins) in Victorian London and saved from his freak show host/owner (Jones). The kind treatment by the doctors soon make the 'Elephant Man' reveal his true nature – that of a sensitive, intelligent being. Unsensationalistic, well-acted, Lynch's follow-up to his debut feature ERASERHEAD (1978) is almost completely atypical of his oeuvre but nevertheless hits the mark. Beautifully photographed in black-and-white by Freddie Francis, moving score by John Morris. Nominated for eight Oscars but didn't win any.

**11-11-11** (2011, USA/SPA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Timothy Gibbs, Michael Landes, Wendy Glenn, Benjamin Cook. Effective horror thriller takes its cue from numerology, as writer Gibbs, mourning the death of his wife and son, suddenly realizes that the numbers 11-11 keep coming up again and again in his life. It seems they stand for a mysterious portal that is about to open. Days before November 11th, 2011, he is called to the death bed of his father, who lives in Barcelona with his wheelchair-bound brother. Stylish, well-made shocker has clever references to Stephen King novels and films (MISERY, THE SHINING), as well as more recent PARANORMAL ACTIVITY-type movies. From the director of SAW 2+3+4, who again shows a talent for atmosphere. Critically drubbed upon release, maybe you have to be a horror fan to appreciate it. Gibbs is great in the lead role. Bousman also scripted.

**Elf** (2003, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Jon Favreau. Starring Will Ferrell, James Caan, Bob Newhart, Edward Asner, Mary Steenburgen Zoey Deschanel, Michael Lerner. Good-natured, and most importantly, very funny Christmas comedy about human Ferrell, who grows up among elves, and sets out to find his real dad Caan in New York City. In the big city the naive guy falls in love with cute store attendant Deschanel. Has become a holiday favourite, thanks to Ferrell's riotous performance.

**Elisa** (1995, FRA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jean Becker. Starring Vanessa Paradis, Clotilde Coureau, Sekkou Sall, Florence Thomassin, Michel Bouquet, Philippe Léotard, Gérard Depardieu. Well-wrought drama about a homeless 17 year-old girl called Marie (Paradis), who uses her good looks to get by and occasionally commits small crimes with her friends. She is deeply troubled by the fact that her mother, who was forced to work as a prostitute, committed suicide when she was only three years old. One day Marie decides to look for her lost father, in order to get her revenge on the man who she thinks is responsible for her miserable life. Well-acted, credible film cowritten by director Becker (UN ETE MEURTRIER)

scores high emotionally and dramatically, despite being slightly overlong. Dedicated to Serge Gainsbourg.

**Elizabeth** (1998, GBR) **C-123m. \*\*\* D:** Shekhar Kapur. Starring Cate Blanchett, Joseph Fiennes, Richard Attenborough, Geoffrey Rush, Kathy Burke, Christopher Ecclestone, Fanny Ardant, Eric Cantona, Sir John Gielgud, Jean-Pierre Léaud. Well-directed historical drama about the formative years of Queen Elizabeth I. (Blanchett), who came to power during the Restoration period and paved the way for England's world domination in the following years. Well-acted, well-produced, a must for history experts and laymen alike, although plot itself is not very compelling.

**Elizabethtown** (2005, USA) **C-123m. \*\*\*½ D:** Cameron Crowe. Starring Orlando Bloom, Kirsten Dunst, Susan Sarandon, Alec Baldwin, Bruce McGill, Judy Greer, Jessica Biel, Paul Schneider. When shoe designer Bloom causes his company to lose a billion dollars he's ready to commit suicide. Then he receives news of his father's death and must travel to Kentucky to arrange his funeral. On his way he meets flight attendant Dunst, who may give his life a new meaning. Philosophical, satirical, touching drama laced with wonderful music and pitch-perfect performances. Dunst's character is too good to be true, though. Written by director Crowe. Photographed by John Toll.

**Ella Enchanted** (2004, USA/EIR/GBR) **C-96m. \*\*½ D:** Tommy O'Haver. Starring Anne Hathaway, Hugh Dancy, Cary Elwes, Aidan McArdle, Joanna Lumley, Minnie Driver, Eric Idle, Jimi Mistry, Vivica A. Fox, Patrick Bergin, voice of Steve Coogan. Family fantasy movie is a mix between Cinderella and SHREK. Hathaway got an unwelcome gift at birth – she has to obey every command. This causes a lot of problems, especially when an evil stepmother and her two ugly daughters come into her life. Will she get her Prince Charming anyway? Some laughs, nice sets, but plot (an adaptation of Gail Carson Levine's novel) is lacking pizzazz. Hathaway is radiant.

**Elysium** (2013, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Neill Blomkamp. Starring Matt Damon, Jodie Foster, Sharlto Copley, Alice Braga, Diego Luna, Wagner Moura, William Fichtner. Visually arresting science-fiction thriller set in 2154, with rich people living on Elysium, a gigantic, green, open-air space station orbiting the Earth. The poor population lives in slum-like conditions on our ravaged planet. Damon plays a worker, who gets the chance to alter the source code of Elysium, but he must contend with an evil mercenary. Ambitious plot tries to pack so much in that it sometimes lacks explanation and even depth, but Blomkamp's direction is as energetic as in his debut feature DISTRICT 9 (2009). The visual effects are excellent. Damon and Foster's presence gives this a mainstream feel, which this film doesn't need at all.

**Emanuelle e Françoise le Sorelline** (1975, ITA) **C-96m. \*½ D:** Joe D'Amato. Starring George Eastman, Rosemarie Lindt, Anne Carol Edel, Patrizia Gori, Massimo Vanni. Another non-official EMMANUELLE movie, whose name was a synonym for sex in the 1970s and beyond. Here, the vixen avenges the death of her sister, who was driven to suicide by selfish, destructive actor Eastman. She kidnaps him and subjects him to teasings and torture. Rather boring. Photographed by director D'Amato, who also produced and coscripted with Bruno Mattei. English titles: BLOOD VENGEANCE, DEMON RAGE, and EMANUELLE'S REVENGE.

**Emanuelle e gli Ultimi Cannibali** (1977, ITA) **C-88m. \*½ D:** Joe d'Amato. Starring Laura Gemser, Gabriele Tinti, Nieves Navarro, Donald O'Brien, Mónica Zanchi, Percy Hogan. Joe d'Amato's contribution to the infamous cannibal movie canon has black Emanuelle Gemser travel in to the jungle to find and study a cannibal tribe. Sex and gore galore, with traces of a 'normal' plot. Stay away if you are easily offended (though other cannibal movies seemed

even more disgusting). Aka EMANUELLE AND THE LAST CANNIBALS, EMANUELLE'S AMAZON ADVENTURE and TRAP THEM AND KILL THEM.

**Embryo** (1976, USA) **C-104m.** \*½ D: Ralph Nelson. Starring Rock Hudson, Barbara Carrera, Diane Ladd, Roddy McDowall, Anne Schedeen. Poorly paced attempt at updating the FRANKENSTEIN theme casts Hudson as doctor, who experiments with a special growth potion on fetuses. When his experiment with a dog succeeds, it's only a matter of time till he tries it on a human embryo. Voice-overs give it a documentary feel not needed, production values are low. Look in vain for traces of style. Alternative title: CREATED TO KILL.

**Emelie** (2015, USA) **C-82m.** \*½ D: Michael Thelin. Starring Sarah Bolger, Carly Adams, Carl Bailey, Chris Beetem. Bolger plays a babysitter straight from hell in this clichéd thriller. On their anniversary night, Beetem takes his wife out to dinner, while a replacement babysitter handles the kids. Watchable at first, but when she subjects the children to an almost unwatchable series of sadistic degradations, the film becomes a chore to watch. Proceed at your own risk. It also doesn't make a lot of sense.

**Emerald Forest, The** (1985, GBR) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John Boorman. Starring Powers Boothe, Meg Foster, Yara Vaneau, William Rodriguez, Estee Chandler, Charley Boorman. On the edge of the rainforest, an uncharted region of the world, dam constructor Boothe loses his son, when he is kidnapped by a native tribe. After 10 years of searching, he may just find him among tribe of so-called invisible people, a tribe which has no contact to the outside world. Impressive adventure drama is similar in theme to director Boorman's masterpiece DELIVERANCE (1972) but its plot contrivances often undermine its message. Still, well worth watching, not just for fans of the director.

**Emergo** \*½

**Emmanuelle** (1974, FRA) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Just Jaeckin. Starring Sylvia Kristel, Alain Cuny, Marika Green, Daniel Sarky, Jeanne Colletin. A classic of erotic cinema, this soft-core sex film inspired countless imitations. Virginal Kristel moves to her diplomat-husband in Thailand and is introduced to the pleasures of the bodily kind. Not exactly compelling, but quite well-made, with a moody score by Pierre Bachelet and Francis Lai and a convincing, star-making performance by beauty Kristel. Based on the novel by Emmanuelle Arsan. Followed by six sequels.

**Empire of Ash II** (1988, USA) **C-86m.** ½ D: Lloyd A. Simandl, Michael Mazo. Starring Melanie Kilgour, Thom Schioler, Frank Wilson, James Stevens. Ultra-cheap sci-fi wanna-be about a group of outlaws who try to rule some kind of forestland. Possibly the worst MAD MAX imitation ever. There's not even a Part One! Believe it or not, followed by a sequel.

**Enchanted** (2007, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kevin Lima. Starring Amy Adams, Patrick Dempsey, James Marsden, Timothy Spall, Idina Menzel, Rachel Covey, Susan Sarandon, narrated by Julie Andrews. Disney fantasy starts out like a wonderful reminiscence of their classics cartoons, bogs down when the main character, a princess, is thrown down a well and enters the real world, 21<sup>st</sup> century New York City (for which the film expands into widescreen format). She is saved by single dad Dempsey, who can't explain why she behaves so strangely. A generally good concept, but they had to apply the blockbuster formula, with an overblown finale. Too bad.

**End, The** (1978, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Burt Reynolds, James Best (uncredited).. Starring Burt Reynolds, Dom DeLuise, Sally Field, Strother Martin, David Steinberg, Joanne Woodward, Norman Fell, Myrna Loy, Kristy McNichol, Pat O'Brien, Carl Reiner, James Best. Black comedy about Reynolds, who learns that he is terminally ill and thus decides to kill himself. This give rise to many complications, some funny, some sad. A mild satire, though DeLuise is hilarious as a mental patient whom Reynolds befriends.

**Endemoniada, La** (1975, SPA) **C-88m**. \*½ D: Amando De Ossorio. Starring Julián Mateos, Marián Salgado, Fernando Sancho, Lone Fleming, Angel del Pozo. Poorly structured, poorly written Spanish EXORCIST rip-off about a witch, who kills herself (facing kidnapping charges) and possesses the body of a ten-year-old child to complete her devilish plan. Lame horror film, only the score is convincing. English titles: THE POSSESSED, and DEMON WITCH CHILD.

**Ender's Game** (2013, USA) **C-114m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Gavin Hood. Starring Harrison Ford, Asa Butterfield, Hailee Steinfeld, Abigail Breslin, Ben Kingsley, Viola Davis. Science-fiction dud based on the novel by Orson Scott Card. Butterfield plays a talented thirteen-year-old who gets sent to a space academy to become a commander in order to defeat an alien army that almost wiped out our entire civilization years ago. Ridiculous roles for all the stars, entirely predictable.

**Endgame – Bronx Lotta Finale** (1983, ITA) **C-97m**. \*½ D: Joe D'Amato. Starring Al Cliver, Laura Gemser, George Eastman, Jack Davis, Al Yamanouchi, Gabriele Tinti, Mario Pedone, Gordon Mitchell, Michele Soavi. Italian post-apocalyptic sci-fi is merely a collection of ideas from better films. In 2025, the champion (Cliver) of a RUNNING MAN-like TV show agrees to help a telepathic woman (Gemser) to lead her people to freedom. Lots of mutants cross their path. Maintains a feeble interest in the first half, deteriorates in the second. A waste of time, unless you want to see that cast. D'Amato also scripted (with Eastman), produced and photographed the picture. Soavi, who has a cameo at the end, functioned as assistant director.

**Endless Night** (1971, GBR) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Sidney Gilliat. Starring Hayley Mills, Hywel Bennett, Britt Ekland, George Sanders, Per Oscarsson, Lois Maxwell, Peter Bowles. *Very* interesting Agatha Christie adaptation, much too little-known. Bennett plays a driver, who blames his working-class background for preventing him to become the arts/antiques expert he secretly desires to be. If only he had the money to buy beautiful estate Gypsy's Acre and set up his existence there. Little does he know that fate has paved the way for this already. Intricately plotted, suspenseful mystery with an excellent Bernard Herrmann score. Midsection suffers most from leisurely pacing, but overall film is a must. There are more nuances to Bennett's character than in all the other characters of Agatha Christie adaptations together. Photographed by Harry Waxman. Gilliat's last film as a director.

**End of Days** (1999, USA) **C-122m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Peter Hyams. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Gabriel Byrne, Robin Tunney, Kevin Pollak, CCH Pounder, Derrick O'Connor, Udo Kier, Mark Margolis, Rod Steiger. Arnold is back, playing a doubting-Thomas bodyguard, who finds himself trying to prevent the reunion of Satan (Byrne) with a chosen victim (Tunney) on New Year's Eve 1999. Like in director Hyams' THE RELIC, tons of explosions, hyper-kinetic action delivered through an illogical but okay plot. Action fans will get their share, others might discard this film realizing that it only wants to cash in on the millennium hysteria. Schwarzenegger is fun as usual.

**End of the Line** (2007, CDN) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Maurice Devereaux. Starring Ilona Elkin, Nicolas Wright, Neil Napier, Emily Shelton, Tim Rozon. Exciting little shocker about nurse Elkin, who learns of the mysterious suicide of a colleague in the subway, then experiences a night of horror herself, when she is attacked by lunatics who tell of the coming of a demon. Together with a few others she tries to fend off attacks by these obviously religiously motivated fanatics. Low-budget but well-paced survival horror with some potent effects.

**Enemy** (2013, CDN/SPA) **C-91m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Denis Villeneuve. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Mélanie Laurent, Sarah Gadon, Isabella Rossellini. Fascinating mystery drama about depressed teacher Gyllenhaal, who one day watches a movie and discovers an actor who

looks exactly like himself. When he investigates, he learns that they have many things in common. Puzzler about an identity crisis has some excellent surreal touches and is well-handled by director Villeneuve (PRISONERS). Some may find it difficult to access and not literal enough. It was based on a novel by José Samarango.

**Enemy of the State** (1998, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Tony Scott. Starring Will Smith, Gene Hackman, Jon Voight, Lisa Bonet, Regina King, Stuart Wilson, Loren Dean, Jake Busey, Scott Caan, Gabriel Byrne, James LeGros, Jamie Kennedy, Seth Green, Philip Baker Hall, Jason Robards, Tom Sizemore. Stellar cast in rip-roaring action film about NSA official Voight's plans for seamless observation a la George Orwell's 1984. Smith plays a lawyer who accidentally gets involved in the scheme and becomes a target because he has proof of Voight's terrible practices. Flashy direction, superb pace ... there is simply no time for the hole in the story to shine through. Really only a typical Hollywood contrivance but technically excellent. Hackman's character is one big reference to Francis Ford Coppola's classic THE CONVERSATION (1974).

**Enfants Terribles, Les** (1950, FRA) **104m. \*\*\* D:** Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Nicole Stéphane, Edouard Dermithe, Renée Cosima, Jacques Bernard, Melvyn Martin, narrated by Jean Cocteau. Melville's second feature is a profound character study about the relationship between brother and sister, Stéphane and Dermithe, who are quasi-orphans. She feels responsible for her sickly brother and tries to take his fate into her own hands – with tragic results. Non-sensationalistic, poetic treatment (not *quite* in the realm of a Cocteau film), although Melville was still practising for his later, greater movies. Stéphane's excellent performance is chillingly believable. Cosima plays *two* characters. Based on the novel by Jean Cocteau, who also narrates. Fine use of classical music by Johann Sebastian Bach and Antonio Vivaldi. Photography by Henri Decaë. Produced and cowritten by Melville. English title: THE STRANGE ONES.

**Enfer, L'** (1994, FRA) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Emmanuelle Béart, Francois Cluzet, Nathalie Cardone, André Wilms, Jean-Pierre Cassel. Chabrol's adaptation of a screenplay by Henri-Georges Clouzot (written in 1964) about seemingly perfect couple Béart and Cluzet, whose idyllic world crumbles when he grows increasingly jealous and follows every step she takes. Well-directed and acted, an unrelenting descent into the dark side of human nature. A matter of taste regarding how far you will let yourself be manipulated, but masterfully handled by Chabrol.

**English Patient, The** (1996, USA) **C-161m. \*\*\*½ D:** Anthony Minghella. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Juliette Binoche, Willem Dafoe, Kristin Scott Thomas, Naveen Andrews, Colin Firth, Julian Wadham, Jürgen Prochnow, Kevi Whatley. Meticulous, well-produced epic tale of a badly burned Englishman (Fiennes), who is tended to by a Canadian nurse (Binoche) during World War Two. Slowly he remembers the events leading up to the plane crash. Perfectly mounted drama starts slow and becomes more and more fascinating as it goes along. Well-acted, especially by Scott Thomas, Minghella's adaptation of Michael Ondaatje's novel is occasionally confusing and hard to follow (which is a flaw of many literary adaptations) but patient viewers will be doubly rewarded. Winner of nine Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Supporting Actress (Binoche).

**Enigma** (2001, GBR/USA/GER/NED) **C-117m. \*\*\*½ D:** Michael Apted. Starring Dougray Scott, Kate Winslet, Saffron Burrows, Jeremy Northam, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Corin Redgrave, Mick Jagger. Period drama set during World War Two, about continuous attempts to crack German message code and expert Scott, whose involvement with femme fatale Burrows may be the key to solving the mystery of the code and unveiling a possible conspiracy against the British. Good production values, performances (especially lovely Winslet's) in diffuse

film that you never completely figure out (not an intention by the filmmakers). Script by Tom Stoppard is an adaptation of Robert Harris' novel. Score by John Barry. Mick Jagger coproduced and appears in a cameo as a soldier.

**Enigma Rosso** (1978, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** Alberto Negrin. Starring Fabio Testi, Christine Kaufmann, Ivan Desny, Brigitte Wagner, Fausta Avelli, Tony Isbert, John (Jack) Taylor, Helga Liné. Quite good murder mystery, giallo-style, about inspector Testi, who investigates killing of sixteen-year-old girl. At her boarding school she was part of a clique of girls, who have a naughty hobby... and the killer is targeting more teens. Plot sort-of imitates the classic giallo PROFONDO ROSSO (1975), but film lacks Dario Argento's audacity or style. Testi is quite good, though it's a mystery why Kaufmann appears at all. Screenplay is credited to six writers, among them Massimo Dallamano and director Negrin. Expert score by Riz Ortolani. Alternative titles: TRAUMA, RED RINGS OF FEAR, VIRGIN KILLER, VIRGIN TERROR.

**Eno Nakano Bokuno Mura** (1996, JAP) **C-112m. \*\*½ D:** Yoichi Higashi. Starring Mieko Harada, Keigo Matsuyama, Shogo Matsuyama, Kyoza Nagatsuka. Japanese childhood reminiscence about two little twin boys who grow up in rural post-WW2 Japan. Based on the lives of two children's books authors, film is occasionally beautiful but remains dramatically flat. Nevertheless took the Silver Bear at the Berlin film festival. English title: VILLAGE OF DREAMS.

**Enragés** (2015, FRA/CDN) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Eric Hannezo. Starring Lambert Wilson, Virginie Ledoyen, Guillaume Gouix, Francois Arnaud, Laurent Lucas. Remake of the Mario Bava classic CANI ARRABBIATI (1974) is tame by comparison, lacking the uncompromising grit of the original. Four bank robbers go on the run, when their heist almost goes wrong, and take three people hostage in the car. Road movie thriller with hectic direction improves at the end, when it pays better visual homage to Bava. English title: RABID DOGS.

**Enter the Dragon** (1973, USA/HKG) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Clouse. Starring Bruce Lee, John Saxon, Jim Kelly, Ahna Capri, Bob Wall, Shih Tien, Angela Mao, Yang Tse. Lee (as 'Mr Lee' more or less playing himself) is assigned to infiltrate island fortress of evil crime boss Tien, who holds a martial arts tournament there every three years. Plot is unimportant, and film suffers from that for over an hour, but the last twenty minutes are so tense and fascinating they will tighten every slack muscle in your body. The final fight shows Lee at his very best. He is credited as choreographer, but rumor has it that he also codirected the film with Clouse. Fine score by Lalo Schifrin. Coproduced by Raymond Chow. Samo Hung has a cameo at the beginning of the film. Alternative U.S. title: THE DEADLY THREE.

**Enter the Fat Dragon** (1978, HKG) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Samo Hung. Starring Samo Hung, Peter K. Yang, Roy Chiao-Hung, Lim Kin-Ming, Leung Kar Yan. Hung is a hayseed that comes to the big city to find a job. He gets involved in all kinds of street-brawling action, which earns him respect - but no money. Then he takes up a job at his uncle's restaurant. Kung fu comedy is likable due to the star's dedicated performance, but that's about it. Hung's last opponent (Leung Kar Yan) plays his master in THE VICTIM. German video version is cut.

**Entity, The** (1981, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sidney J. Furie. Starring Barbara Hershey, Ron Silver, David Labiosa, George Coe, Margaret Blye, Alex Rocco. Hershey plays a mother of three, who one day starts suffering vicious attacks by an invisible sexual force. Is it a demon? Or is she going insane? Psychologist Silver tries to help her with Freud - to no avail. Rather outlandish, silly premise somehow remains watchable thanks to straight-faced performances, a professional score by Charles Bernstein. Written by Frank De Felitta, based on his novel (allegedly based on fact!). Released abroad before getting an early 1983 U.S. release.

**En Toute Innocence** (1987, FRA) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Alain Jessua. Starring Michel Serrault, Nathalie Baye, Suzanne Flon, Francois Dunoyer. Sylvie Fennec. Chabrol-like drama about elderly man Serrault, who unwittingly sees his son's wife committing adultery and has a terrible car accident as a consequence. With broken legs and self-imposed muteness, he tries to evade a confrontation. Interesting, well-acted (Flon and Serrault make a great pair), but always a leg behind a thoroughly good thriller. Photographed by Jean Rabier.

**Entrapment** (1999, USA/GBR) **C-113m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jon Amiel. Starring Sean Connery, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Ving Rhames, Will Patton, Terry O'Neill. Mild diversion about master-thief Connery, who is so fascinated by lady Zeta-Jones that he agrees to turn her into a master-thief, too. Romance (quite unreal) meets high-tech action, complemented by some exciting chases. Not that stimulating; further hampered by an incredibly stupid ending. When does Connery finally make good films again?

**Epidemic** (1987, DAN) **106m.** \*\*½ D: Lars von Trier. Starring Lars von Trier, Niels Vørsel, Susanne Ottesen, Udo Kier. More confusing than enigmatic story of two filmmakers who write a screenplay about an epidemic which is ravaging around a big city. A young doctor tries to cross the hermetically closed city boundaries to help the victims of the plague. Von Trier alternately shows the filmmakers' research journeys through Europe, shot in 16mm, and the events taking place in their 'film', filmed in 35mm by Henning Bendtsen, who used to be Carl Theodor Dreyer's regular cinematographer. Although the idea for EPIDEMIC is intriguing, the narrative is confusing and doesn't make much sense. Too little time is invested in fleshing out the story of the film within the film, which is gorgeously shot, however. Still, this one should not be easily discarded; it may require multiple viewing to completely understand it. Lars von Trier's second feature, following THE ELEMENT OF CRIME. He also coedited and cowrote the film (with his co-star Vørsel). One segment is in color.

**Episode 50** (2011, USA) **C-78m.** **BOMB** D: Joe Smalley, Tess Smalley. Starring Josh Folan, Chris Perry, Natalie Wetta, Keithen Hergott. Totally unwatchable mess of a movie tries to cash in on all the found-footage horror movies. Plays like a TV show, has no character development or proper plot set-up. It's annoying instead of scary. A complete waste of time.

**Equilibrium** (2002, USA) **C-107m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Kurt Wimmer. Starring Christian Bale, Dominic Purcell, Sean Bean, Christian Kahrman, John Keogh, Sean Pertwee, Emily Watson, David Hemmings. In the near future anyone who shows emotions is outlawed and persecuted. Policeman Bale is especially cold and untouched by all this, until his colleague Bean steals a book which is supposed to be burned. Obviously, there is a rebel movement out there. Writer-director Wimmer should be accused of plagiarism. His film is like *Fahrenheit 451* meets *1984* with absolutely no ideas of its own. Some flashy action sequences may make it interesting for action fans. Also known as CUBIC.

**Equipier, L'** (2004, FRA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Philippe Lioret. Starring Sandrine Bonnaire, Philippe Torreton, Grégori Derangère, Emilie Dequenne, Anne Consigny. French drama told in flashback. In 1963 a stranger arrives in small Breton community to work as a lighthouse worker. He is at first rejected by everyone, but he has special skills – and good looks... Nicely quiet drama, nothing special, some nice views of the landscape and subtle dramatics. English title: THE LIGHT.

**Era of Vampire, The** (2002, HGK/JAP/NED) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Wellson Chin. Starring Kwan Chan Kwok, Ken Chang, Suet Lam, Michael Chow Man-Kin. Also known as TSUI HARK'S VAMPIRE HUNTERS, this horror / action hybrid deals with a group of warriors who try to fend off army of vampires in medieval China. Incredibly muddled, disjointed script by producer Tsui Hark

makes very little sense. Some flashy action scenes aside, this B-movie is not scary or suspenseful at all. The vampires suck their victim's blood in an odd way, too. Avoid.

**Eraser** (1996, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Charles (Chuck) Russell. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, James Caan, Vanessa L. Williams, James Coburn, Robert Pastorelli, James Cromwell, Danny Nucci. In-your-face action entertainment about pro Schwarzenegger, who, working for the witness protection program, provides people with new identities. His latest client (Williams) is such an important witness that Arnie cannot even trust his own bosses. Lots of action but mean-spirited, contrived and much too serious, with Caan's character ridiculously overdone. Leaves a very bitter aftertaste.

**Eraserhead** (1977, USA) **89m. \*\*\*** D: David Lynch. Starring John (Jack) Nance, Charlotte Stewart, Allen Joseph, Jeanne Bates, Judith Anna Roberts, Laurel Near, V. Phipps-Wilson, Jack Fisk, Jennifer (Chambers) Lynch. David Lynch's first feature is a nightmare movie if there ever was one, full of symbolism and frightening images. Nance's affair with a girl results in the birth of an ALIEN-like freak baby. Too surreal to clearly describe it, this movie is very slowly paced but also fascinating, even hypnotic. A cult favorite, impressively shot. Lynch also wrote, produced and worked on the complete picture. Clearly a matter of taste.

**Ercole al Centro della Terra** (1961, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Reg Park, Christopher Lee, Leonora Ruffo. Bava's second feature is just as atmospheric: When Hercules finds out that his bride-to-be has fallen sick, he enters Hades, the world of the dead, to get the cure. Lee is fine as the villain, and the final attack of the vampires is a gem. Naive but colorful fun, coscripted and photographed by the director. English title: HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD.

**Ercole alla Conquista di Atlantide** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*½** D: Vittorio Cottafavi. Starring Reg Park, Fay Spain, Ettore Manni, Gian Maria Volonté. Relentlessly talky, aimless peplum movie about Hercules attempts to bring down despotic queen of Atlantis. Park is absolutely terrible. Special effects are limited to the beginning of the film. Cowritten by Ducio Tessari, score by Armando Trovajoli. Also known as HERCULES AND THE CAPTIVE WOMEN.

**Ercole Contro i Figli del Sole** (1964, ITA/SPA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*½** D: Osvaldo Civirani. Starring Mark Forest, Anna-Maria Pace, Giuliano Gemma, Franco Fantasia, Rosalba Neri. Hercules ends up on the shores of Peru and helps local prince Gemma to regain his throne and punish usurpers. Unconvincing, poorly acted, mostly laughable entry in the series, whose popularity was already about to expire. Also known as HERCULES AGAINST THE SONS OF THE SUN.

**Ercole Contro i Tiranni di Babilonia** (1964, ITA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Domenico Paolella. Starring Rock Stevens (=Peter Lupus), Helga Liné, Mario Petri, Livio Lorenzon. One of the last HERCULES movies, this premiered on Christmas Day in 1964. Lupus plays the strongman, who searches for his enslaved wife, the queen of the Greeks, who was enslaved by the Babylonians. Just intrigue, no adventure (let alone fantasy), but production values are good enough to make this a still okay view. English title: HERCULES AND THE TYRANTS OF BABYLON.

**Ercole Contro Molock** (1963, ITA/FRA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*½** D: Giorgio Ferroni. Starring Gordon Scott, Rosalba Neri, Alessandra Panaro, Michel Lemoine, Geneviève Grad, Jany Clair. Boring costumer set in the city of Mycene, where goddess Demeter's son Moloch receives sacrifices in the form of beautiful young virgins. Glaucos/Hercules enters the city in order to destroy the despotic ruler. Not at all interesting. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. English titles: HERCULES AGAINST MOLOCH and CONQUEST OF MYCENE.

**Ercole Contro Roma** (1964, ITA/FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Piero Pierotti. Starring Alan Steel, Wandisa Guida, Mimmo Palmara, Daniele Vargas. Solidly filmed sword-and-sandal movie

about superhero Hercules (Steel), who is called to help old friend Arminia against some usurpers. Late entry into the series has no supernatural aspects (apart from Herc's strength) and remains a second-rate adventure. Score is good, though. English titles: HERCULES AGAINST ROME, HERCULES IN ROME.

**Ercole e la Regina di Lidia** (1959, ITA/FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Pietro Francisci. Starring Steeve Reeves, Sylvia Lopez, Gabriele Antonini, Sylva Koscina. Colorful but episodic, almost incoherent muscleman epic features Reeves as Hercules, who is brainwashed and abducted by an evil queen, while his wife is held captive by a despotic ruler. Better-produced than most peplum films, this features fine visuals by Mario Bava, who also have directed some parts. Several strikingly atmospheric sequences are proof of this. Watch it for the maestro's involvement, not for the plot or the action. Alternative titles: HERCULES UNCHAINED, HERCULES AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

**Ercole l'Invincibile** (1963, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Al World (=Alvaro Mancori). Starring Dan Vadis, Spela Rozin, Carla Calò, Ken Clark, Hugo Arden (=Ugo Sasso). Strongman Hercules (Vadis) goes on a mission to defeat a dragon and take his smallest, magical tooth. However, when the Royal Family is abducted, he must enter a subterranean kingdom and rescue them along with the princess he is in love with. Uneven but nicely naïve spectacle is more of an adventure than other entries in the sword-and-sandal genre and sometimes even creates a sense of awe and wonder. While far from being a good movie, this one may be enjoyed by kids (who'll certainly chuckle at the antics of Herc's bumbling sidekick). Vadis is earnest in title role. Also known as HERCULES AGAINST THE ELEPHANTS' EMPIRE, HERCULES THE INVINCIBLE, and SON OF HERCULES IN THE LAND OF DARKNESS.

**Ercole Sfida Sansone** (1963, ITA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Pietro Francisci. Starring Kirk Morris, Richard Lloyd, Enzo Cerusico, Liana Orfei, Aldo Giuffré. Typically boring muscleman adventure, about Hercules, who accidentally ends up in a foreign country with some friends. There he assists Samson in defeating a tyrant. Solidly filmed, with a rousing score (by Angelo Francesco Lavagnino and Carlo Savina), but simply not original or involving enough. English title: HERCULES, SAMSON & ULYSSES.

**Erin Brockovich** (2000, USA) **C-131m. \*\*\*** D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring Julia Robert, Albert Finney, Aaron Eckhart, Marg Helgenberger, Cherry Jones, Peter Coyote, Erin Brockovich. Fine comedy drama about Roberts, a divorced mother of three children, who tries hard to find a job, and otherwise uses her good looks to get by. Finally she is employed at Finney's law firm and finds herself challenged with a case that may help to prove herself. Well-acted, funny dialogues, a sure pick for an entertaining evening. Based on a real case (Erin Brockovich appears briefly as a waitress).

**Eroi all'Inferno** (1974, ITA) **C-86m. \*\*** D: Michael Wotruba (=Joe D'Amato). Starring Ettore Manni, Lars Bloch, Rosemarie Lindt, Klaus Kinski, Roberto Dell'acqua, Paul Muller. Okay Italian war actioner about a group of WW2 P.O.W.s, who escape a German prison camp in France and help some partisans capture German general Kinski. Less offensive than most other films by D'Amato, who also scripted and photographed the picture. Kinski's role is no more than a cameo. English titles: HEROES IN HELL.

**Errand Boy, The** (1961, USA) **92m. \*\*\*½** D: Jerry Lewis. Starring Jerry Lewis, Brian Donlevy, Howard McNear, Lorne Greene, Dan Blocker, Michael Landon, Pernell Roberts. Sporadically funny Lewis comedy about an idiot (guess who?) going to work for a big movie company to find out what's going wrong on their grounds. From then on, everything goes wrong. Episodic, not always funny, basically a vanity production for its star. The 'Bonanza' cast appears unbilled.

**Escaflowne** (2000, JAP) **C-102m. \*\*½ D:** Kazuki Akane, Yoshiyuki Takei. Starring (the voices of) Maaya Sakamoto, Tomokazu Seki, Jôji Nakata, Majumi Iizuka. Bombastic anime is a remake of a 1996 television series that had 26 episodes. A suicidal school girl is transported into a fantasy world, where she is told to be the Wing Goddess, who alone can defeat Lord Vulcan. Story drowns in typical Anime style and is difficult to access, some of the animation is impressive. Fans of the original series may find this most intriguing. Also known as ESCAFLOWNE: THE MOVIE.

**Escalofrío** (1977, SPA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** Carlos Puerto. Starring Ángel Aranda, Sandra Alberti, Marian Karr, José Maria Guillén. Contrived, illogical but eerie and atmospheric tale of a young couple who is invited to a secluded house where the owners are members of a satanic cult. Fine camera work lifts this horror thriller above average. Just don't expect to find a rational explanation for the going-ons. Watch out for that doll! Produced by Juan Piquer Simon. English titles: DON'T PANIC and SATAN'S BLOOD.

**Escape From Alcatraz** (1979, USA) **C-112m. \*\*\* D:** Don Siegel. Starring Clint Eastwood, Patrick McGoohan, Roberts Blossom, Jack Thibeu, Fred Ward, Paul Benjamin, Larry Hankin, Danny Glover. Modest but typically solid suspense drama about Alcatraz inmate Eastwood, his prison life and plans for escape from the island. A suspenseful and intelligent thriller, adapted from the novel by Campbell Bruce (based on a real case!). A major influence on THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION.

**Escape From Hellhole** (1983, FIL/INES) **C-83m. ½ D:** Maman Firmansyah. Starring Guphy Sintara, Dicky Zulkarnaen. Asian prison movie about country maid Sintara, who is tricked into believing she'll live with her friend's rich uncle, but in fact she ends up in a brothel... and finally in prison. Poorly written, sloppily filmed, a complete washout. Film is even short on nudity. Avoid at all costs. Uncut version runs some 100m.

**Escape From New York** (1981, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\* D:** John Carpenter. Starring Kurt Russell, Lee Van Cleef, Ernest Borgnine, Donald Pleasance, Isaac Hayes, Season Hubley, Harry Dean Stanton, Adrienne Barbeau, Tom Atkins, Charles Cyphers, John Diehl, George 'Buck' Flower, John Carpenter (voice), Debra Hill (voice). Juvenile sci-fi action set in 1997(!), where Manhattan is a high-security prison. Russell plays a daredevil who is hired by Van Cleef to find and bring back none other than the President (Pleasance), whose plane crashed into Manhattan. Rather silly action film was successful nevertheless and led to a sequel 15 years later: ESCAPE FROM L.A. James Cameron was co-creator of the special effects!

**Escape From Planet Earth** (2013, USA/CDN) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Cal Brunker. Starring (the voices of) Brendan Fraser, Rob Corddry, Ricky Gervais, Jonathan Morgan Heit, Jessica Alba, Sarah Jessica Parker. Okay animated feature is nothing special plotwise. Some kind of alien superhero accepts mission to the Dark Planet (=our Earth), gets captured, and then his nerdish brother attempts to rescue him. Some chuckles, but you've seen it all before. Some razzle-dazzle effects and good animation make it worthwhile.

**Escape From the Planet of the Apes** (1971, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Don Taylor. Starring Roddy McDowall, Kim Hunter, Bradford Dillman, Natalie Trundy, Eric Braeden, William Windom, Sal Mineo, Ricardo Montalban, M. Emmet Walsh, James (B.) Sikking. The two likable chimps Zira and Cornelius from the first two APES movies have surprisingly survived nuclear holocaust by boarding Heston's spaceship and flying to 20<sup>th</sup> century L.A. There they meet with awe and disbelief, especially when they foretell the future of mankind, which is hard to swallow for government officials. Less bizarre and more satirical than the first two parts, a good continuation of the saga. Followed by CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES.

**Escape to Witch Mountain** (1975, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: John Hough. Starring Eddie Albert, Ray Milland, Donald Pleasence, Kim Richards, Ike Eisenmann, Walter Barnes, Harry Holcombe. Just okay fantasy adventure about two orphans with special extra-sensory powers, who end up running from super-rich Milland, who wants to use their powers for himself. Nice drifter Albert helps them get to their destination. Disney movie has a flaccid pace and is not always convincing. It comes across as okay family fare. Based on the book by Alexander Key. Remade in 1995 (as a TV movie) and 2009 (as a blockbuster). Followed by a sequel, RETURN FROM WITCH MOUNTAIN, in 1978.

**Esecutori, Gli** (1976, ITA) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Maurizio Lucidi. Starring Roger Moore, Stacy Keach, Ivo Garrani, Fausto Tozzi, Ennio Balbo, Romano Puppo, Ettore Manni. Strictly standard action thriller about Moore and Keach, who team up in finding out who used an ancient cross from Sicily to smuggle cocaine. Mafia movie has some nice car chases but that's about it. Moore seems to enjoy it. Score by Luis Enríquez Bacalov includes a haunting theme for the finale and the closing credits. Original running time: 100m. English titles: STREET PEOPLE, THE EXECUTIONERS, THE EXECUTORS, THE SICILIAN CROSS.

**Esercito di 5 Uomini, Un** (1969, ITA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Don Taylor. Starring Peter Graves, James Daly, Bud Spencer, Tetsuro Tamba, Nino Castelnuovo, Daniela Giordano, Annabella Andreoli, Carlo Alighiero, Claudio Gora, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. Five men get together to rob half a million dollars in gold from a moving train. They intend to help Mexican revolutionaries. Story setup is weak and whole film suffers from it. Quite violent western adventure was scripted by Marc Richards and Dario Argento. Score by Ennio Morricone is quite good, but he has done much better. A minor mix of THE WILD BUNCH and THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN. English title: FIVE MAN ARMY. Beware of edited prints.

**Esercito Più Pazzo del Mondo, L'** (1981, ITA) **C-81m.** \*½ D : Marino Girolami. Starring Pino Caruso, Adriana Russo, Andy Luotto, Massimo Boldi, Sabrina Siani. Another one of those low-brow Italian comedies that should never have reached screens in other countries. Several bumbling idiots turn an army camp upside down. One unfunny gag after the other, grows tiring after a while. Might work for you if intoxicated and in a group, otherwise stay away from this yawn.

**Espanto Surge de la Tumba, El** (1973, SPA) **C-86m.** \*½ D: Carlos Aured. Starring Paul Naschy, Emma Cohen, Jacinto Molina, Victor Alcázar. Typical Spanish horror flick about a group of friends who make contact with the ghost of a warlock, who turns them into zombies one-by-one in a remote castle. Quite violent, atmospheric but awfully cheesy. Poorly acted and scripted, only for trash fans. Usually shown in cut version. English title: HORROR RISES FROM THE TOMB.

**Espinazo del Diablo, El** (2001, SPA/MEX) **C-107m.** \*\*\* D: Guillermo del Toro. Starring Eduardo Noriega, Marisa Paredes, Federico Luppi, Inigo Garcés, Fernando Tielve. Original drama set in 1930s Spain, where the civil war casts a giant shadow over remote school run by Noriega. Newcomer Tielve, an orphan like many of his comrades, is soon to make contact with the ghost of a little boy that is haunting the fortress-like school. What's the mystery behind the apparition? Intelligent ghost story, well-directed by del Toro. Creepy and absorbing, although film gives away its option for greatness by putting all the blame on one character and ending like a crime story (the final twist *is* chilling, though). Produced by Pedro Almodóvar. English title: THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE.

**Estambul 65** (1965, SPA/ITA/FRA) **C-117m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: Antonio Isasi-Isasmendi. Starring Horst Buchholz, Sylva Koscina, Mario Adorf, Perette Pradier, Klaus Kinski, Georges Rigaud, Gérard Tichy. Poor Euro actioner, a lame James Bond imitation. Boyish Buchholz is miscast as playboy who is asked by lady Koscina to free nuclear scientist, held for ransom by an

unknown villain in Istanbul. 60s flavour, stars in the cast cannot compensate for ultra-thick layer of dust on this film. It's overlong, to boot. Also known as THAT MAN IN ISTANBUL and L'HOMME D'ISTANBUL.

**Esther and the King** (1960, USA/ITA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Raoul Walsh. Starring Joan Collins, Richard Egan, Denis O'Dea, Sergio Fantoni. Mario Bava's color cinematography elevates unexciting costumer about an intrigue at the King's Court in Persia. Alternative running time: 109m.

**Estigma** (1980, SPA/ITA) **C-95m. \*½** D: José Ramón Larraz. Starring Christian Borromeo, Alexandra Bastedo, Emilio Gutiérrez Caba, Craig Hill, Massimo Serato, Helga Liné. Deadening horror film about a young man who has psychic powers, which may even make people kill themselves. Talky trash with some nudity. English title: STIGMA.

**Estratto dagli Archivi Segreti della Polizia di una Capitale Europea** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Robert Hampton (=Riccardo Freda). Starring Camille Keaton, Tony Isbert, Máximo Valverde, Luigi Pistilli, Luciana Paluzzi, Paul Müller. Wildly plotted horror chiller about a group of friends who run out of gas in the middle of nowhere during a thunderstorm and find refuge in a villa. Little do they know that the owner is about to have a black mass in the basement. Keaton's pearl necklace is said to have devilish powers, too! Strange film is confusing, even illogical, but stays with you because it is not too literate. Recommended to fans of director Freda, who – like in his previous giallo L'IGUANA DALLA LINGUA DI FUOCO (1971) – includes some jarring special effects. Score by Stelvio Cipriani is way too melodramatic and overblown. Obscure movie was probably never released officially anywhere outside Italy and Spain (title there was TRAGICA CEREMONIA EN VILLA ALEXANDRA).

**Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind** (2004, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*** D: Michel Gondry. Starring Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst, Tom Wilkinson, Elijah Wood, Mark Ruffalo, David Cross, Jane Adams. Another unique movie from the mind of Charlie Kaufman (BEING JOHN MALKOVICH). Disoriented Carrey hesitantly falls in love with neurotic Winslet, but their romance is not to last. One day he learns she had him erased from his memory. He then decides to undergo the same procedure, but he finds letting go of the memories extremely hard. Creative romantic comedy features an array of interesting ideas and weird characters, and thus sometimes feels more experimental than heart-felt. Still, sort of a must-see. Good score by Jon Brion. Oscar-winner for Best Screenplay.

**Etoile** (1988, ITA) **C-101m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Del Monte. Starring Jennifer Connelly, Gary McCleery, Laurent Terzieff, Olimpia Carlisi, Charles Durning. Dreamy, interesting paraphrase of the quintessential ballet Swan Lake about an American student in Budapest who wants to audition for a show and finds herself drawn to an old theater and ultimately its owner. McCleery, who accompanies his uncle Durning to some auctions, falls in love with her and investigates her strange behavior. Perhaps not completely convincing, but well-acted, well-scored, and subject matter is intriguing, to reiterate. Connelly is radiant in a role not that dissimilar to that in her film debut, Dario Argento's PHENOMENA (1985). Also known as BALLETT.

**Etoile du Nord, L'** (1982, FRA) **C-124m. \*\*½** D: Pierre Granier-Deferre. Starring Simone Signoret, Philippe Noiret, Fanny Cottencon, Julie Jézéquel, Jean Rougerie, Dominique Zardi. Oddly captivating crime drama set in the 1930s, based on the novel *Le Locataire* by Georges Simenon. Noiret, a luckless traveler on the way from Egypt to Europe, meets a beautiful dancer traveling with a shady businessman. She puts Noiret up with her mother Signoret, who rents rooms in their house. There, Noiret begins spinning tales about his time in Africa, until they learn that the businessman has been murdered and his money stolen.

Sensitively handled drama benefits from casting of the flawless Noiret and Signoret (in one of her last roles), but ultimately this is too deliberately paced and not as rewarding as Granier-Deferre's *LE CHAT* (1971). Score by Philippe Sarde. English title: *THE NORTH STAR*.

**Etrange Couleur des Lames de Ton Corps, L'** (2013, BEL/FRA/LUX) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani. Starring Klaus Tange, Ursula Bedena, Joe Koener, Birgit Yew. The directors' follow-up to their art-house hit *AMER* (2009) again pays tribute to the sights and sounds of the Italian giallo genre. A troubled man returns home to his wife only to find she has disappeared. In the apartment complex the neighbors all behave strangely, and soon the police start to suspect him to have killed her. Plot is basically unimportant, film is one long visual experiment, with striking images and artistic editing. The end result isn't fully satisfying, but the references to Italian horror classics *PROFONDO ROSSO* (1975) and *SUSPIRIA* (1977) make this a must for buffs. English title: *THE STRANGE COLOR OF YOUR BODY'S TEARS*.

**Etrange Desir de Monsieur Bard, L'** (1953, FRA) **112m. \*\*\* D:** Geza von Radvanyi. Starring Michel Simon, Yves Deniaud, Geneviève Page, Henri Crèmeux, Louis de Funès. Aging bus driver Simon learns that he may not live for very much longer and decides to buy the love of a young dancer with the money he has recently won in a casino. Good-natured, endearing comedy drama with Michel Simon in top form. Occasionally, co-writer/director von Radvanyi uses grotesque images, which lends the film an odd aura. Louis de Funès, in one of his earliest roles, lends hilarious support as a seedy businessman who wants to rid Simon of his money.

**Etrangers, Les** (1969, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-88m. \*½ D:** Jean-Pierre Desagnat. Starring Senta Berger, Michel Constantin, Julián Mateos, Hans Meyer. Below-standard Euro thriller plays like a spaghetti western: A bank robber finds refuge at Berger's hut and realizes that he may have to share his loot, or else he may be murdered. Violent, poorly written, based on a novel by André Lay. Aka *THE STRANGERS* and *FRÜHSTÜCK MIT DEM KILLER*.

**Etrusco Uccide Ancora, L'** (1972, ITA/GER/YUG) **C-105m. SCOPE\*\*\*½ D:** Armando Crispino. Starring Alex Cord, Samantha Eggar, John Marley, Nadja Tiller, Enzo Tarascio, Horst Frank. Boozing archaeologist Cord, researching around an old Etruscan burial ground is baffled by murders happening in and around his crew and, suffering from memory lapses, soon becomes the prime suspect himself. Quite ambitious plot is more Freudian in the vein of Dario Argento's 'animal' giallos but also rather poorly paced. Riz Ortolani's expert score makes this quite suspenseful and boosts the rating by half a star. English titles: *THE ETRUSCAN KILLS AGAIN*, *THE DEAD ARE ALIVE*, and *OVERTIME*.

**E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial** (1982, USA) **C-120m. \*\*\*½ D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Henry Thomas, Dee Wallace, Robert MacNaughton, Drew Barrymore, Peter Coyote, K.C. Martel, Sean Frye, C. Thomas Howell, Erika Eleniak. Spielberg's most endearing film is perfect kids fare and irresistible entertainment. Not-so-happy 10-year-old Thomas makes the acquaintance of impish extra-terrestrial, whose kind have abandoned him on Earth. A friendship develops, and the question arises how long he can keep it a secret from his family and ultimately the government. Script can't bear closer scrutiny, but movie creates a sense of wonder and builds perfectly to dramatic, tear-jerking finale. Richly orchestrated score by John Williams won an Oscar, so did the visual effects and the sound. Expanded from 115m. for 2002 re-release.

**Ettore lo Fusto** (1972, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Enzo Girolami (=Enzo G. Castellari). Starring Vittorio De Sica, Rosanna Schiaffino, Giancarlo Giannini, Philippe Leroy, Aldo Giuffrè, Luciano Salce. Broad, typically Italian comedy spoofs Homer's *Iliad*, with De Sica playing Jove, who witnesses immoral events around Helen of Troy (Schiaffino). The setting

is transported to the contemporary Roman netherworld of pimps and prostitutes. Fast-paced, mad-cap comedy for those who like this kind of stuff. Cowritten by Lucio Fulci! English title: HECTOR THE MIGHTY.

**Eureka** (1983, GBR/USA) **C-130m. \*\*\*** D: Nicolas Roeg. Starring Gene Hackman, Theresa Russell, Rutger Hauer, Jane Lapotaire, Mickey Rourke, Joe Pesci, Ed Lauter, Corin Redgrave, Joe Spinell, Frank Pesce, James Faulkner. Uneven but visceral, fascinating drama about Hackman, who spends 15 years in the Arctic trying to find gold. When he does, he becomes the world's richest man and makes himself enemies in his daughter Russell's lover Hauer and 'entrepreneurs' Pesci and Rourke, who want to build a casino on his Caribbean Island. Part-saga, part-psycho drama, this may not be to everyone's taste, but Roeg's direction is powerful and the performances are good. Contains some of the most violent effects in a non-horror film. Based on a book by Marshall Houts, which in turn is based on the real-life case of Harry Oakes. One of composer Hans Zimmer's earliest screen credits.

**Europa** (1991, DAN/SWE/FRA/GER) **C/B&W-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Lars von Trier. Starring Barbara Sukowa, Jean-Marc Barr, Ernst-Hugo Järegård, Udo Kier, Eddie Constantine, Lars von Trier. American Barr comes to Germany in October 1945 to take up a job as sleeping car attendant and gets involved with the railroad owner's daughter Sukowa, who may be involved with Nazi-like underground organization called the 'Werewolves'. Hypnotic fantasy drama utilizes all stylistic means imaginable, coming up with a completely stunning and awe-inspiring film. Another eye-opening, creative film by writer-director von Trier, who calls to mind the works of Buñuel, Welles and David Lynch. Also known as ZENTROPA.

**Europa Report** (2013, USA) **C-91m. \*\*\*** D: Sebastián Cordero. Starring Sharlto Copley, Embeth Davidtz, Michael Nyqvist, Christian Camargo, Karolina Wydra, Anamaria Marinca. Good sci-fi about a mission to Europa, Jupiter's fourth-largest moon (and about the size of our own), which has a liquid ocean under its icy surface. Six crew members reach their destination after 22 months, their story is told through countless cams installed in the ship and the astronauts' suits, so it's more or less a found-footage movie. Remains appropriately vague and only hints at the outcome (and perils) of the mission, which keeps you watching. Low-budget, but recommended.

**Euro Trip** (2004, USA) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Jeff Schaffer. Starring Scott Mechlowicz, Jacob Pitts, Kristin Kreuk, Jessica Boehrs, Cathy Meils, Niall Iskhakov, Matt Damon, Vinnie Jones, Lucy Lawless, Dominic Raacke, Rade Serbedzija, Joanna Lumley. Mindy Sterling, Jeffrey Tambor. Teen comedy spin-off from ROAD TRIP (2000) that is fairly funny despite a stupid plot. Mechlowicz travels to Europe to tell his German keypal Boehrs that he loves her, but he gets stuck in virtually every European capital before finally meeting her. Some truly unfunny scenes mar the fun, but not bad as such. Ivan Reitman executive produced.

**Evan Almighty** (2007, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Tom Shadyac. Starring Steve Carell, Morgan Freeman, Lauren Graham, Johnny Simmons, Graham Phillips, Jimmy Bennett, John Goodman, Wanda Sykes, Harve Presnell. Innocuous family entertainment about TV host-turned-congress man Carell, who moves to a new neighbourhood with his family. Then one night, before starting out in congress he prays to God to be able to change things, and all of a sudden he becomes a 21<sup>st</sup> century Noah, with the task to build an ark. Funny to some degree, with over-the-top special effects towards the end. Written by Steve Oedekerk. A sequel to BRUCE ALMIGHTY (2003).

**Eve No Jikan** (2010, JAP) **C-106m. \*\*½** D: Yasuhiro Yoshiura. Starring (the voices of) Jun Fukuyama, Miki Itô, Kenji Nojima. Dazzling animation highlights this overlong, ponderous examination of a future with androids. The artificial humans become difficult to distinguish from real humans, especially in a mysterious café, where the androids try to act like humans.

Two friends discover the café and spend most of their free time there. Seems like it doesn't go anywhere, but some of the animation is innovative and beautiful. Interesting reference to the laws by Isaac Asimov. Based on a six-part anime series from 2008/2009. English title: THE TIME OF EVE.

**Event Horizon** (1997, USA/GBR) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Paul Anderson. Starring Laurence Fishburne, Sam Neill, Kathleen Quinlan, Joely Richardson, Richard T. Jones. The *Event Horizon*, a spaceship which vanished during a secret mission to Neptune in 2040, reappears mysteriously seven years later. A rescue team, headed by Fishburne, travels to the planet to find out what happened to the crew. When a scientist aboard (Neill) reveals that the vessel traveled into a black hole - and may have returned 'alive' - frightening things start to happen. Scary science-fiction horror has such an oppressive atmosphere it makes you forget about the second-rate (yet fascinating) plot. Possibly the best sci-fi horror film since Ridley Scott's ALIEN.

**Eventreur de Notre-Dame, L'** (1979, FRA/BEL/SPA) **C-96m.** D: Jess Franco. Starring Rosa Almirall (=Lina Romay), Cathernie Lafférière, Jess Franco, Lynn Monteil (=Nadine Pascal). Slow-moving horror trash shot for about 2¢ by cult director Franco: He himself plays (amateurishly so) an ex-priest who is obsessed with amorality and goes on a killing spree. Moves at a snail's pace. Franco used various pseudonyms in this production; he also cowrote the script (if there was one). He also filmed a version which features hard-core footage. Also known as CHAINS AND BLACK LEATHER, DEMONIAC, EXORCISM AND BLACK MASSES, EXORCISM, and THE RIPPER OF NOTRE DAME.

**Ever After** (1998, USA) **C-122m. \*\*½** D: Andy Tennant. Starring Drew Barrymore, Anjelica Huston, Dougray Scott, Patrick Godfrey, Megan Dodds, Melanie Lynskey, Timothy West, Judy Parfitt, Jeroen Krabbé, Jeanne Moreau. An old lady invites the Brothers Grimm to her castle to tell them the true story of Cinderella, which they changed into a fairy tale. What follows is basically a rendering of the classic tale with some deliberate changes (there's no fairy, and her sisters aren't ugly). Amiable, entertaining, but dramatically uneven, especially in the last half hour, which was added only to bring film to present length - and makes it almost crash. Nice costumes, George Fenton's score pulls all the stops (perhaps too many), and Barrymore is fun as some kind of an emancipated Cinderella. Cowritten by Tennant (FOOLS RUSH IN).

**Everest** (2015, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Baltasar Kormákur. Starring Jason Clarke, Keira Knightley, Emily Watson, Sam Worthington, Jake Gyllenhaal, Josh Brolin. Adventure drama based on the true story of several mountaineers who made their way to the peak of the highest mountain in the world in 1996. Film details their ascent and the subsequent tragedy when the weather turns bad. Interesting to some degree, but it's dramatically flat and uninvolved. Too bad.

**Everybody Wants Some!!** (2016, USA) **C-117m. \*\*½** D: Richard Linklater. Starring Blake Jenner, Juston Street, Ryan Guzman, Tyler Hoechlin, Wyatt Russell, Zoey Deutch. Labelled Linklater's ode to the late 1970s, this comedy/drama focuses on several days in the lives of a baseball team before college and training starts. Jenner is the newcomer and must find his place in the clique. Surprisingly shallow slice-of-life seems preoccupied with a recreation of the time period (right down to original clothes and products) and never catches fire plotwise. Slightly disappointing from the director of the similar DAZED AND CONFUSED (1993)

**Evil Dead** (2013, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Fede Alvarez. Starring Jane Levy, Shiloh Fernandez, Lou Taylor Pucci, Jessica Lucas, Elizabeth Blackmore. Pointless remake of Sam Raimi's horror classic provides buckets of gore but goes for shocks instead of style and

atmosphere. Five friends head to a cabin in the woods to help one of them to kick her drug habit cold turkey. In the basement they find dead cats and a book that resurrects a demon. Barely okay horror movie that suffers from weak plotting and an even weaker male lead. He can't hold a candle to Bruce Campbell (or chainsaw, for that matter).

**Evil Dead, The** (1981, USA) **C-85m.** \*\*\* D: Sam Raimi. Starring Bruce Campbell, Ellen Sandweiss, Hal Delrich, Betsy Baker, Sarah York, Ted Raimi, Scott Spiegel, Sam Raimi. Atmospheric, stylish – and potent – splatter classic, from 22-year-old director Raimi. A group of friends decide to spend their holiday in some cabin in the woods and accidentally resurrect demons that kill them one by one. Incredibly gruesome but also stylish, which makes the effects bearable. At times film shows the faults of a beginner and borrows extensively from such films as *SUSPIRIA* or *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* but can easily stand on its own. Don't watch it alone! Written and coproduced by Raimi, coedited by his pal Joel Coen. An extension of Raimi's short film *WITHIN THE WOODS* (1978), followed by *EVIL DEAD II* in 1987 and *ARMY OF DARKNESS* in 1993. Remade in 2013.

**Evil Dead II** (1987, USA) **C-85m.** \*\*\* D: Sam Raimi. Starring Bruce Campbell, Sarah Berry, Dan Hicks, Kassie DePaiva, Ted Raimi, Josh Becker, Scott Spiegel, Sam Raimi. 'Let's carve ourselves a witch!' Delightful sequel to *THE EVIL DEAD* has our hero Ash (Campbell) return to the remote cabin in the woods, only to unleash the demons again. Tongue-in-cheek horror comedy is less serious and scary than Part One (and somehow less original), but also much more enjoyable. Great comic book style splatter effects (aided no end by Campbell's outrageous facial expressions). The battle against Ash's own hand is a classic. Cowritten by Raimi. *ARMY OF DARKNESS* (1993) sets off right where this one ends.

**Evil Dead Trap** (1988, JAP) **C-104m.** ☒ D: Toshiharu Ikeda. Cast: N.N. Japanese horror about a television crew who goes to a deserted factory in search of an 'ultimate scoop', only to be gruesomely murdered by a residing maniac. Although this film sounds and partly looks like an Argento horror film, this is far from it. Has no ideas of its own and is eventually killed by stupid plot twists and a sluggish pace. Incredibly followed by a sequel!

**Evil Ed** (1995, SWE) **C-90m.** ☒ D: Anders Jacobsson. Starring Johan Rudebeck, Per Löfberg, Olof Rhodin. Absolutely dreadful film about a cutter who censors horror films and subsequently goes nuts. You'll also go nuts when trying to watch this movie. Neither a parody, nor a full-blooded horror film and moves at a deadly pace. Some stylish bits cannot save this mess. Ironically, German video version was cut.

**Evil in the Deep** (1976, USA) **C-79m.** **SCOPE \*\*** D: Virginia L. Stone. Starring Stephen Boyd, David Ladd, Chuck Woolery, Rosey Grier, Darby Hinton, Cheryl Stoppelmoor (=Ladd). Trivial adventure movie follows Boyd to the Caribbean, where he tries to find out why people coming in touch with an old treasure map end up dead. It all comes down to an underwater treasure search. Apart from glossy photography, has little going for it. Seems choppy on video (with cheesy voice-over narration), ran 96m. originally. Based on a novel by John Walker. Also known as *THE TREASURE OF JAMAICA REEF*, and *TREASURE OF THE JAMAICA DEEP*.

**Evilpeak** (1981, USA) **C-104m.** \*½ D: Eric Weston. Starring Clint Howard, R.G. Armstrong, Joseph Cortese, Claude Earl Jones, Haywood Nelson, Don Stark, Charles Tyner. Supernatural horror film that unsuccessfully (a euphemism for 'idiotically') combines 16<sup>th</sup> century satanism with modern-day computers. Nerd Howard discovers ancient burial site, then sets out to resurrect devil worshippers with the help of his home computer! May attract gorehounds, but dated technology destroys the film completely. Many shorter versions in existence.

**Evil Under the Sun** (1982, GBR) **C-117m. \*\*½ D:** Guy Hamilton. Starring Peter Ustinov, Jane Birkin, Colin Blakely, Nicholas Clay, James Mason, Roddy McDowall, Sylvia Miles, Dennis Quilley, Diana Rigg, Maggie Smith, Emily Hone, John Alderson. At a Greek holiday resort, everyone has a reason to hate Broadway diva Rigg. Soon, detective Hercule Poirot (Ustinov), who is among the guests, has to start an investigation. Whodunit by Agatha Christie (scripted by Anthony Shaffer) is too leisurely paced in the first half (until the inevitable murder), becomes more interesting in the second. Still, can't hold a candle to its predecessor **DEATH ON THE NILE** (1978), which had more suspense and better production design (although the locations are beautiful). Ustinov reprised the role for 3 TV movies in the mid-80s and the theatrical **APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH** (1988). Remade for TV in 2001.

**Exam** (2009, GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Stuart Hazeldine. Starring Adar Beck, Gemma Chan, Nathalie Cox, John Lloyd Fillingham, Chukwudi Iwuji, Luke Mably. Interesting psycho mystery about eight disparate job applicants, who are locked into a room for 80 minutes to take an exam, only the paper before them is empty. A psycho battle ensues. Not bad, not boring, but weighed down by too many annoying characters and a rather thin plot with unlikely complications.

**Excalibur** (1981, GBR) **C-140m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Boorman. Starring Nigel Terry, Helen Mirren, Nicholas Clay, Cherie Lunghi, Paul Geoffrey, Nicol Williamson, Gabriel Byrne, Liam Neeson, Corin Redgrave, Patrick Stewart, Charley Boorman. Powerful, tense, atmospheric rendition of the Arthur legend, dealing with the life of the legendary king, from his conception and his adulthood (pulling Excalibur out of the stone) to his manhood and his fellowship with the Knights of the Round Table. Earthy, perhaps too much for a fantasy film but Boorman's direction is so stylishly forceful, you are swept away by the proceedings and the narrative hardly reflects upon itself (which may be another liability). Film finds its focus in the final third (the quest for the Holy Grail) and becomes a thoroughly great motion picture. Startlingly graphic and adult in some scenes, this is not a children's movie. Performances range from Williamson's slightly over-the-top Merlin to Terry's utterly believable King Arthur. Good use of music by Wagner (from his operas) and Carl Orff. Produced and cowritten (with Rospo Pallenberg) by maverick filmmaker Boorman.

**Excess Flesh** (2015, USA) **C-103m. \*½ D:** Patrick Kennelly. Starring Bethany Orr, Mary Loveless, Wes McGee, Kristin Minter. Unpleasant is a perfect one-word description for this unrelenting psycho drama about two roommates, party girl Orr and neglected Loveless. One day the abuse by Orr goes too far and Loveless starts to turn the tables and impose her will on her – with disgusting consequences. Not uninteresting at the beginning, but later wallows in unpleasantries and becomes almost impossible to watch. For masochists.

**Excision** (2012, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Richard Bates Jr. Starring Annalynne McCord, Traci Lords, Ariel Winter, Roger Bart, Jeremy Sumpter, John Waters, Marlee Matlin, Ray Wise, Malcolm McDowell. Ugly teenager McCord hates her suburban existence and escapes into violent, sexual fantasies. She also plans to lose her virginity with a local hunk. Pretty raw and difficult to watch trash movie (some might call it sick) in the spirit of John Waters, who plays a psychiatrist(!) here. Stay away if you are easily offended.

**Execution** (1968, ITA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Domenico Paolella. Starring John Richardson, Mimmo Palmara, Rita Klein, Franco Giornelli, Piero Vida. Spaghetti western about a gunslinger who is mistaken for somebody who knows the whereabouts of a gold cache. It turns out that they look exactly alike (only the other one is some twenty years older). Slightly less routine than other spaghetthis, but direction is poor and pace is a disaster. Some violent scenes.

**Executive Decision** (1996, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Stuart Baird. Starring Kurt Russell, Steven Seagal, Halle Berry, John Leguizamo, Oliver Platt, Joe Morton, David Suchet, B.D. Wong, J.T. Walsh, Nicholas Pryor. DIE HARD meets AIRPORT in this crackerjack action thriller. A terrorist group hijack a Boeing 747, intending to force the U.S. government to free one of their leaders. A SWAT team led by Seagal sneaks into the flying(!) plane, which carries a nerve-gas bomb in the cargo hold, big enough to wipe out Washington D.C. Nerve-wrecking, extremely suspenseful, a bull's-eye like SPEED (1994), its only fault is that it goes on too long. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. Written by Jim and John Thomas (PREDATOR). Top editor Baird's first film as a director; previously he had worked on films like IF.... (1968), THE OMEN (1976), SUPERMAN (1978), and, surprise, surprise, DIE HARD 2 (1990).

**eXistenZ** (1999, CDN) **C-97m. \*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Jennifer Jason Leigh, Jude Law, Ian Holm, Willem Dafoe, Don McKellar, Sarah Polley. In the near future most humans have a 'bioport' implanted in the spines. This enables them to play virtual reality computer games, which seem very real. Game designer Leigh escapes assassination during the presentation of her newest achievement and goes on the run with unlikely bodyguard Law. They both enter the game "eXistenZ" to find out if something is wrong with it. Typically bizarre sci-fi from writer-director Cronenberg misfires due to pretentious plot that condescends to its audience and final twist which renders most of the previous going-ons illogical. Still, Cronenberg devotees may find some value in this, others beware.

**Ex Machina** (2015, GBR) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Alex Garland. Starring Domhnall Gleeson, Alicia Vikander, Oscar Isaac, Sonoya Mizuno. Irresistible science-fiction drama about computer programmer Gleeson, who wins a competition and is invited to the remote lab base / super-stylish home of his company's CEO Isaac. It turns out the eccentric scientist might have created the world's first AI, in the form of a beautiful girl robot. Gleeson's job is to perform tests by interacting with the android, but soon he realizes that there is more than meets the eye. Stylish sets, cool performances, a valid statement on the dangers of science. Written and directed by the screenwriter of Danny Boyle's 28 DAYS LATER (2002) and SUNSHINE (2007).

**Exorcism of Emily Rose, The** (2005, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Scott Derrickson. Starring Laura Linney, Tom Wilkinson, Campbell Scott, Jennifer Carpenter, Colm Feore, Joshua Close, Mary Beth Hurt, Henry Czerny. Top-notch lawyer Linney takes up case of priest Wilkinson, who must stand trial for causing the death of 19-year-old Emily Rose during an exorcism ritual. The agnostic lawyer and the public doubt the stories of demonic possession, but Wilkinson maintains his viewpoint. In flashbacks we are told the story of Emily's exorcism. Unsettling, exciting mystery horror is well-written and brilliantly scored by Christopher Young. Based on a real case that happened in Germany in 1970! Needs not shy comparison with the classic 1973 EXORCIST. Unrated version runs 122m.

**Exorcismus** (2010, SPA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Manuel Carballo. Starring Sophie Vavasseur, Stephen Billington, Richard Felix. Mostly bland and predictable exorcism thriller set in an every-day British middle-class home, where 15-year-old Emma is obviously possessed after taking designer drugs. Her uncle happens to be a priest who has experience with exorcisms. Takes some unlikely twists, which make it difficult to watch. (Would you leave her home alone, after everything that's happening?) There's also a distinct lack of suspense. Vavasseur's performance is good, though. Also known as LA POSESION DE EMMA EVANS.

**Exorcist, The** (1973, USA) **C-131m. \*\*\* D:** William Friedkin. Starring Ellen Burstyn, Max von Sydow, Lee J. Cobb, Kitty Winn, Jack MacGowran, Jason Miller, Linda Blair, William Peter Blatty, voice of Mercedes McCambridge. 70s horror classic about the possession and subsequent exorcism of an innocent 12-year-old girl (Blair) by worried priest Miller and

exorcism expert von Sydow. Film expertly builds an atmosphere of menace and hits its stride in the second half, when the satanic threat becomes real for the audience. William Peter Blatty won an Oscar for the adaptation of his own novel, although he sometimes prefers suspense to logic. Ought to be watched in a theater for maximum effect. Originally released at 121m., 10 minutes were added for re-release in 2000. Followed by two sequels and countless imitations.

**Exorcist II: The Heretic** (1977, USA) **C-103m.** \*\* D: John Boorman. Starring Linda Blair, Richard Burton, Louise Fletcher, Max von Sydow, Kitty Winn, Paul Henreid, James Earl Jones, Ned Beatty, Joey Lauren Adams. Sequel to THE EXORCIST, designed to be bigger and thus better, but plot makes no sense at all and the film becomes laughable. Burton plays an affiliate of the late Father (von Sydow) who exorcised young Blair in the original film. He tries to solve the mystery of the demon who possessed her. The biggest mystery is probably why director Boorman signed on for this one. He dissatisfaction with the result led to his recutting the film on the day of its premiere(!). This review refers to the European edition, but it is doubtful whether the 117m. or the 110m. versions are any better. Solid filmmaking (the sequences set in Africa are especially well-photographed), rendered almost worthless by atrocious scripting. At the very least, this features the most ridiculous hypnosis device in screen history. Score by Ennio Morricone. Followed by THE EXORCIST III (1990).

**Exorcist III, The** (1990, USA) **C-105m.** \*½ D: William Peter Blatty. Starring George C. Scott, Ed Flanders, Brad Dourif, Jason Miller, Nicol Williamson, Scott Wilson, Nancy Fish, Harry Carey Jr., Samuel L. Jackson. Second sequel to the 1973 horror hit, filmed by the original writer William Peter Blatty. Plot concerns police detective Scott, who investigates a series of grisly killings, which are somehow linked to the exorcism of the first film. Stupid, even ridiculous story, sparked somewhat by a few stylish and effective scenes. Dourif gives a searing performance as Patient X. Blatty's only directorial effort after the excellent THE NINTH CONFIGURATION (1980).

**Expendables, The** (2010, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Sylvester Stallone. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham, Jet Li, Dolph Lundgren, Eric Roberts, Randy Couture, Steve Austin, Gary Daniels, Mickey Rourke. Action thriller about a group of mercenaries whose latest mission includes bringing down a corrupt druglord in South America. Explosive and bloody throwback to Sly's golden days; a good idea to bring back action heroes of the 1980s and 1990s, but they could have done with a better plot. Still, you don't get this type of men on the big screen anymore (but that's not saying you need them). Cameos by Bruce Willis and Arnold Schwarzenegger (his first film appearance in six years). Followed by THE EXPENDABLES 2 in 2012.

**Expendables 2, The** (2012, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Simon West. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Jet Li, Dolph Lundgren, Chuck Norris, Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Terry Crews, Randy Couture, Liam Hemsworth. Sequel to the big action comeback is bigger, louder, funnier... but still not a good movie. Second-rate plot is not important, it's the glorified cameos by Norris, Willis and Arnie that keep this afloat. It was probably also a good decision to hand over the helm to Simon West. For action fans.

**Expendables 3, The** (2014, USA/BUL/FRA) **C-126m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Patrick Hughes. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Jason Statham, Harrison Ford, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mel Gibson, Wesley Snipes, Dolph Lundgren, Randy Couture, Terry Crews, Kelsey Grammer, Glen Powell, Antonio Banderas, Victor Ortiz, Ronda Rousey, Kellan Lutz. More of the same machismo and mayhem ensues as Stallone and his crew – which he has to substitute with newcomers for

some time – are going against super-evil arms dealer Gibson. Quite weak, but slam-bang finale compensates.

**Exquisite Corpses** (1989, USA) **C-93m.** \*½ D: Temístocles López. Starring Gary Knox, Zoe Tamerlis-Lund, Robert Lund, Daneil Chapman, John Bethune. Pseudo-artsy drama about a down-and-out newcomer to New York City, who manages to become a star by adapting to the “laws” of the wealthy people. The twist half-way through makes this incredibly pretentious, almost impossible to view. Star Knox also composed and arranged the music.

**Extasis** (1996, SPA) **C-91m.** \*\*\* D: Mariano Barroso. Starring Javier Bardem, Federico Luppi, Silvia Munt, Daniel Guzman. Three friends, Bardem, Luppi and Munt, steal unashamedly from their parents. When Luppi is caught, Bardem takes up his identity in order to befriend Luppi’s estranged father, a wealthy theater director. They intend to steal some valuable antiques from his flat - a plan which is doomed to fail. Well-written psycho drama about young people who have no perspectives in their lives and blame their elders for it. Good character development, a remarkable debut feature.

**Exterminator, The** (1980, USA) **C-102m.** ½ D: James Glickenhaus. Starring Christopher George, Samantha Eggar, Robert Ginty, Steve James, Tony di Benedetto. Vietnam vet goes on a killing spree because he is tired of seeing the human scum in the streets of N.Y.C. Incoherent, violent action film which applies the DEATH WISH formula. Technically OK, but plot is totally worthless. Eggar is given nothing to do, and Ginty doesn’t register at all in the title role. Followed by a sequel in 1984.

**Extinction** (2015, SPA/USA/HUN/FRA) **C-112m.** **SCOPE \*\*** D: Miguel Angel Vivas. Starring Matthew Fox, Jeffrey Donovan, Quinn McColgan, Valeria Vereau. Apocalyptic survival drama about three people who have survived a zombie holocaust and living next to each other in an eternally wintry setting. When a zombie creature returns, as possibly a harbinger of things to come, they are faced with a difficult decision. Stay or leave their shelter? Starts quite well, is nice to look at and has a fine score, but pace is deadening and some of the dialogue just plain laughable. Based on a novel by Juan de Dios Garduno.

**Extraterrestrial** (2014, CDN) **C-101m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: The Vicious Brothers. Starring Brittany Allen, Freddie Stroma, Melanie Papalia, Jesse Moss, Anja Savcic, Gil Bellows, Michael Ironside, Emily Perkins. Fairly exciting but rather dumb science-fiction horror film about a group of friends, whose party at their cabin in the woods is interrupted by aliens, who are clearly there to abduct or kill. Pretty random plot is outdone by general mayhem and special effects. Ironside has a funny extended cameo, but the ending ranks among the worst in recent memory.

**Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close** (2011, USA) **C-129m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: Stephen Daldry. Starring Tom Hanks, Thomas Horn, Sandra Bullock, Zoe Caldwell, John Goodman, Max von Sydow, Viola Davis, Jeffrey Wright. Emotionally exhilarating drama about loss and mourning. An 11-year-old boy loses his father in the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks and spends months trying to come to terms with his absence. When he finds a mysterious key hidden in his dad's closet, he goes in search of the lock that it fits, hoping to find a last message, or his father's legacy. Not entirely true-to-life, some characters and scenes are exaggerated and barely believable, but story packs an emotional wallop, and the score by Alexandre Desplat is excellent. Another exceptional drama by the director of THE HOURS (2002).

**Extreme Measures** (1996, USA) **C-118m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Michael Apted. Starring Hugh Grant, Gene Hackman, Sarah Jessica Parker, David Morse, Bill Nunn, John Toles-Bey, David Cronenberg. Grant stars as a hospital surgeon who senses a conspiracy going on when one of his patients disappears and, when he investigates, finds someone wants to destroy his life. It turns out Hackman is conducting immoral experiments with humans. Conspiracy

thriller tries hard to be thought-provoking but doesn't come off more than reasonably fast-paced and mildly suspenseful. Novel adaptation has Grant in a role, where he once isn't in love. Produced by Elizabeth Hurley. Cronenberg has a brief bit as a head of a medical review board.

**Eye, The** (2002, HGK/SGP/GBR) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Danny Pang, Oxide Pang Chun. Starring Sin-Je Lee (=Angelica Lee), Lawrence Chou, Chutcha Rujinanon. After receiving a cornea transplant which enables her to see for the first time since she was 2, young Lee starts having frightening visions – of dead people? Her psychologist Chou tries to help her figure out who the donor was. Uneven horror chiller, very much in the “new” Asian tradition has good direction and visuals to recommend it to horror fans. Cowritten by the Pang brothers. Followed by several sequels. Original title: GIN GWAI.

**Eye 2, The** (2004, HGK/THA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Pang Brothers (=Danny Pang, Oxide Pang Chun). Starring Shu Qi, Eugenia Yuan, Jesdaporn Pholdee, Philip Kwok. Almost completely unrelated sequel to the 2002 hit focuses on a suicidal young woman, who is haunted by the ghosts(?) of different people. Then she learns that she is pregnant, but her lover doesn't want anything to do with it. And her visions are getting worse and worse... Interesting, less “traditional” than its predecessor, this horror drama has some potent, creepy moments, and an excellent score. Followed by THE EYE 10 in 2005.

**Eye 10, The** (2005, HGK/THA) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Pang Brothers (=Danny Pang, Oxide Pang Chun). Starring Chen Po Lin, Isabella Leong, Ray McDonald, Chris Gu. Third film in the EYE series intends to multiply the horrors: Several youngsters try to scare each other with ghost stories, then they find a book that explains ten ways to have spooky encounters. When they try them out, one of the group disappears. It seems the ghosts don't like messing with their world. Tries to be funny and scare us at the same time, which doesn't really work, despite creepy images. Also known as THE EYE 3, and THE EYE INFINITY.

**Eye of the Beholder** (1999, GBR/CDN/USA) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Stephan Elliott. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ashley Judd, Patrick Bergin, Geneviève Bujold, k.d. lang, Jason Priestley. Flawed remake of the brilliant 1983 French film MORTELLE RANDONNEE, also based on the novel by Marc Behm. McGregor plays a troubled private eye, who falls in love with one of the persons he must observe (Judd) and subsequently follows her around the U.S., becoming a guardian angel of sorts. Off-beat thriller with an interesting stylistic approach and several astounding surreal elements may garner a cult film reputation, but script is unnecessarily diffuse and complicated. McGregor tries hard to copy Michel Serrault's haunting performance but still seems misplaced. Film will leave most viewers probably dissatisfied. A mixed bag, but definitely worth a look. Some prints run 101m. and should be avoided.

**Eye of the Devil** (1967, GBR) **89m.** \*\*½ D: J. Lee Thompson. Starring David Niven, Deborah Kerr, David Hemmings, Sharon Tate, Donald Pleasence, Edward Mulhare, Emlyn Williams, John Le Mesurier. Kerr discovers that her husband Niven is a member of a strange religious cult in this slowly-paced but intriguing horror thriller. Good score, effective editing, but plot remains too vague for too long. Entire cast is fine. Hemmings and Tate (in her film debut) shine in stylish roles. Based on Philip Lorraine's novel *Day of the Arrow*. Recommended to followers of the macabre. U.S. version is said to run 92m.

**Eyes of a Stranger** (1981, USA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Ken Wiederhorn. Starring Lauren Tewes, Jennifer Jason Leigh, John DiSanti, Peter DuPre, Gwen Lewis, Luke Halpin. Tedious, dull thriller about rapist and killer DiSanti, whose stalking is about to be discovered by TV newslady Tewes. Jennifer Jason Leigh gives her theatrical U.S. debut (baring her clothes!) and Tom Savini provides the special make-up effects, but otherwise this is slasher movie

garbage. That's director Wiederhorn's own SHOCK WAVES (1977) that's shown on TV. Cut to 84m. for U.S. release.

**Eyes of Laura Mars** (1978, USA) **C-103m**. \*\*\* D: Irvin Kershner. Starring Faye Dunaway, Tommy Lee Jones, Brad Dourif, René Auberjonois, Raul Julia, Frank Adonis, Darlanne Fluegel, Rose Gregorio, Michael Tucker. Well-made, stylish thriller about brilliant pop-art photographer Dunaway, who has scary premonitions of murder. The cop on the case (Jones) realizes that the murder scenes are really copies of her violent photographs. Suspenseful, well-scored, but also not very credible, especially the ending. Cowritten by John Carpenter, from his story. Quite similar to Dario Argento's thrillers, if not as consistently stylish.

**Eyes of My Mother, The** (2016, USA) **B&W-76m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Nicolas Pesce. Starring Kika Magalhaes, Diana Agostini, Will Brill, Flora Diaz. Deeply disturbing psycho drama shot in dire black-and-white, about Magalhaes, who was traumatized as a kid when a stranger killed her mother. Her mother, a religious Portuguese immigrant, had passed on surgical knowledge to her daughter, which she starts re-using as a grown-up. Extremely difficult to watch, with scenes that go on endlessly (and painfully), as well as jump cuts that will leave you wondering about what has happened. Major flaw: The child in the introduction displays no negative emotions, so the trauma isn't credible. Still, a powerful statement about a woman coming undone, exudes a morbid fascination.

**Eyes Wide Shut** (1999, GBR) **C-156m**. \*\*\* D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman, Madison Eginton, Jackie Sawris, Marie Richardson, Sydney Pollack, Rade Serbdzija, Leslie Lowe, Vinessa Shaw, Peter Benson, Todd Field, Alan Cumming, Michael Doven, Sky Dumont. Eccentric mastermind Stanley Kubrick's legacy takes New York doctor Cruise on an odyssey through his subconscious, as his wife gives him reason to believe she has been unfaithful and turns his feelings for her and other women upside down. Deliberately paced, strongly fascinating last film of one of the great directors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Highly symbolic, richly textured and not too literate, like most great films, this one provides room for discussion and certainly requires multiple viewing. Production resembled an odyssey itself, starting in 1997 and ending in 1999, shortly before Kubrick's death. The director fired Harvey Keitel and Jennifer Jason Leigh during the shooting (their roles were taken by Sydney Pollack and Marie Richardson). Cruise and Kidman come off very well, despite initial concerns. Kubrick's swan song was adapted by himself and Frederic Raphael from Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle*. This is not his best film, but still a must-see.

**Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain, Le** (2001, FRA/GER) **C-120m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Audrey Tautou, Mathieu Kassovitz, Rufus, Yolande Moreau, Artus de Penguern, Urbain Cancelier, Dominique Pinon, voice of Frédéric Mitterrand. Mischievous, lonely – and terminally shy – Amélie Poulain (Tautou) grows up without friends in a Parisian suburb. As an adult the imaginative girl works at a bar in Paris but her introvert character prevents her from making friends, let alone having a boyfriend or lover. All this changes when she finds a secret hiding place in her bathroom, which marks the beginning of her biggest adventure. Wonderful, immensely touching romantic comedy drama by the director of DELICATESSEN and LA CITE DES ENFANTS PERDUES makes perfect use of Tautou's innocent, immaculately beautiful face and creates a marvelous universe of odd, unique characters and situations. A must. Cowritten by director Jeunet.

**Faccia a Faccia** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-112m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sergio Sollima. Starring Tomas Milian, Gian Maria Volonté, William Berger, Jolanda Modio, Gianni Rizzo, Carole André, Angel del Pozo, Aldo Sambrell, Nello Pazzafini, Frank Brana, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Goffredo Unger. A rare spaghetti western with a brain: Professor Volonté must form an uneasy alliance with bandit Milian when he unwittingly gives him a chance to break free and then

becomes an outlaw himself. However, the thoughtful man tries to influence the brute positively. Some plot weaknesses are offset by stylish direction and fine Ennio Morricone score. Comes close to the Leone westerns of the time. Written by the director and Sergio Donati. English title: FACE TO FACE.

**Face of Eve, The** (1968, GBR/SPA/LIE/USA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: Jeremy Summers, Robert Lynn. Starring Celeste Yarnal, Robert Walker Jr., Herbert Lom, Christopher Lee, Fred Clark. Walker goes to the Amazon jungle in search of a missing pilot friend and meets mysterious amazon blonde Yarnal, who is like a female Tarzan. It turns out several characters are after a legendary treasure, which scientist Lee might have a map to. Rather cheap adventure is pretty ridiculous (especially in the scenes with the bumbling natives), but plot is not bad, some minor cult may take to this. Uncut version runs longer. Harry Alan Towers scripted and produced. Also known as EVE.

**Face/Off** (1997, USA) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: John Woo. Starring Nicholas Cage, John Travolta, Joan Allen, Alessandro Nivola, Gina Gershon, Dominique Swain, Nick Cassavetes, CCH Pounder. Woo blurs the boundaries of good and evil in this rip-roaring action thriller, his best U.S. film to date. Conservative cop Sean Archer (cool Travolta) is dying to catch ruthless terrorist Castor Troy (ultra-cool Cage), who has killed his son in an attempt to assassinate the cop. Finally he gets him but Troy falls into a coma. In order to find out about a bomb that's been planted by Troy's organisation somewhere in L.A., Archer decides to undergo a facial operation, which will leave him looking exactly like Troy. When Troy awakens from the coma he does the same .... and 'becomes' Sean Archer! Rather outrageous idea works thanks to excellent star performances, Woo's brilliant direction and some really explosive editing. James Bond would be proud of such a dynamite adventure. Alessandro Nivola (who plays Troy's brother) is even cooler than the stars and steals every scene he's in.

**Face of Fu Manchu, The** (1965, GBR) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Don Sharp. Starring Christopher Lee, Nigel Green, Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, Howard Marion-Crawford, Chin Tsai, Walter Rilla. First of five 60s adaptations of Sax Rohmer's novels about master criminal Fu Manchu and his continuous attempts to rule (or destroy) the world. His opponents: Scotland Yard inspector Green and biochemist(!) Fuchsberger. Dated, slowly paced, evokes little interest. Still, watchable and quite influential. Lee (as Fu Manchu) sleepwalks through his role. Followed by THE BRIDES OF FU MANCHU (1966).

**Faculty, The** (1998, USA) **C-107m.** \*½ D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Elijah Wood, Jordana Brewster, Clea DuVall, Laura Harris, Josh Hartnett, Shawn Hatosy, Famke Janssen, Piper Laurie, Bebe Neuwirth, Robert Patrick, Salma Hayek. A major disappointment from director Robert Rodriguez (FROM DUSK TILL DAWN) and screenwriter Kevin Williamson (SCREAM): Several school kids find out that aliens have taken over the bodies of their teachers, and everyone in the school is also in danger of having his 'body snatched'. This is no more than a bad remake of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, hardly entertaining and unpleasant to the nth degree. Some scares, but all for naught. Edited by the director.

**Fade to Black** (1980, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Vernon Zimmerman. Starring Dennis Christopher, Tim Thomerson, Gwynne Gilford, Norman Burton, Linda Kerridge, Mickey Rourke. Interesting take on TAXI DRIVER about nerdish film geek Eric Binford (Christopher), who lives under the thrall of his aunt. When he falls in love with Marilyn Monroe look-alike Kerridge, he finds the courage to stand up for himself and revenge himself (violently) on all those that suppressed him. Interesting thriller has lots of movie references (mostly to 30s and 40s gangster films), but is never really convincing, though Christopher gives his best. Ambitious script by director Zimmerman. Good score by Craig Safan.

**Fahrenheit 9/11** (2004, USA) **C-122m. \*\*½ D:** Michael Moore. Radical, deliberately one-sided documentary which looks at none other than the U.S. president and his role in the crisis following the World Trade Center attacks of 2001 and subsequent Iraq war. Tries to poke fun at the controversial figure of George W. Bush and reveal him as a kind of jack-ass, but often also works against itself, as you wonder why Moore never gives his 'victim' the chance to defend himself. If most of what the director accuses him of is true, then one can only shake one's head at Bush's re-election in 2004. No matter what your political persuasion is, you will find the pictures of war atrocities in Iraq difficult to stomach. Winner of the Grand Prize in Cannes.

**Failure to Launch** (2006, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tom Dey. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Sarah Jessica Parker, Zooey Deschanel, Justin Bartha, Bradley Cooper, Terry Bradshaw, Kathy Bates, Stephen Tobolowsky. Formulaic romantic comedy about 35-year-old man (McConaughey) who still lives with his parents, who hire a woman (Parker) to make him move out. Then they fall in love and predictable complications ensue. Contrivance made enjoyable by Dey's fast-paced direction, star-chemistry.

**Fair Game** (1986, AUS) **C-82m. \*\* D:** Mario Anracchio. Starring Cassandra Delaney, Peter Ford, David Sandford, Garry Who. Australian thriller set in the outback, where Delaney is running a sanctuary for animals. She clashes with three hunters, who proceed to bully her. When this situation escalates, she must run for her life. Plot is thin, but film is not bad. The score is so overblown, it becomes annoying. Judge for yourself, Quentin Tarantino reportedly liked this (which isn't saying THAT much).

**Fairy Tale: A True Story** (1997, GBR/USA) **C-99m. \*\*\* D:** Charles Sturridge. Starring Florence Hoath, Elizabeth Earl, Paul McGann, Phoebe Nicholls, Bill Nighy, Bob Peck, Peter O'Toole, Harvey Keitel. Warm-hearted, meticulously produced fantasy drama set in 1917, where much fuzz is made about two girls who have allegedly photographed fairies in their garden. Writer Arthur Conan Doyle (O'Toole), and magician/artist Harry Houdini (Keitel) come to investigate! Slightly uneven but magical, especially for kids. Surprising cameo at the end shall not be given away here. Keitel is excellent. Beautiful score by Zbigniew Preisner. From the director of WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD. Also known as ILLUMINATION.

**Faites Sauter la Banque** (1963, FRA, ITA) **89m. \*\*½ D:** Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Georges Wilson, Cathérine Demongeot, Yvonne Clech, Anne Doat, Jean Lefebvre. A bank manager advises decent shopkeeper de Funès to buy company shares which soon after turn out to be worthless. Being broke himself, the resourceful man decides to rob the bank across the street by digging a tunnel. His whole family is of help to him. Funny comedy is too slowly paced and thus mostly of interest to fans of the French comedian.

**Fakiren fra Bilbao** (2004, DAN) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Peter Flinth. Starring Sidse Babbett Knudsen, Julie Zangenberg, Aksel Leth, Moritz Bleibtreu, Ole Thestrup, Peter Gantzler, Fares Fares. Danish family entertainment about two twins, both around 12 years old, who move into an old mansion with their mother, and soon find that it harbors a mystery, especially when they meet fakir Bleibtreu, who was trapped inside a ballpen(!) for more than 50 years. Then some escaped cons complicate the proceedings. Okay kids adventure, though misses its target demographic; 12-year-old kids don't watch innocent stuff like this anymore. English title: THE FAKIR.

**Fall, The** (2006, USA/IND) **C-117m. \*\*½ D:** Tarsem (Singh). Starring Lee Pace, Catinca Untaru, Justine Waddell. Interesting piece of world cinema, director Singh's first movie since his debut, the serial killer bomb THE CELL (2000). A little girl recovers from a broken arm in a hospital circa 1920 and befriends injured stuntman Pace, who begins to tell her a fantastic story about five strangers whose quest is to find and kill an evil governor. Colorful settings

(this was reportedly filmed in 28 countries) and costumes cannot overcome story that is not engaging enough. It seems like a bastard child of Alejandro Jodorowsky and Robert Rodriguez at its best, at its worst you can't wait for it to be over.

**Fallen** (1998, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Gregory Hoblit. Starring Denzel Washington, John Goodman, Donald Sutherland, Embeth Davidtz, James Gandolfini, Elias Koteas, Gabriel Casseus, Robert Joy. After a serial killer is executed in the gas chamber a two-thousand year-old demon leaves his body and travels on, having control over every body he inhabits. Cop Washington is puzzled when similar murders are committed despite the killer being dead. Cop thriller with supernatural theme doesn't work because of overly realistic setting. Overlong film remains watchable thanks to good cast and some suspenseful sequences. The ending is a disappointment. And don't wait for the demon to show its true face.

**Fallen Angels** (1995, HMK) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Wong Kar-Wai. Starring Leon Lai, Michelle Reis, Takeshi Kaneshiro, Charlie Yeung, Karen Mok. Post-modernist drama about the alienated youth in Hong Kong, focusing on professional hitman Lai and the woman who assigns him to his jobs. Story is barely there and only serves as a frame for impressive images from the lives of the protagonists, turning out as a showcase for cinematographer Christopher Doyle. Voice-overs prevent the film from falling apart altogether. Well-received in many quarters, but without a clear narrative it's hard to like a film, even though it's interesting and stylishly made. See also CHUNG KING EXPRESS.

**Falling, The** (2014, GBR) **C-102m. \*\*½** D: Carol Morley. Starring Maxine Peake, Maisie Williams, Florence Pugh, Anna Burnett, Greta Scacchi, Symbolical drama set at a girls' school in late 1960s England. When premature Pugh suspects to be pregnant, all the girls seem to be affected, which leads to mass faintings. An odd chain of events is then triggered. Quite weird mystery is as difficult to access as, perhaps, PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK (1975), but not as engrossing. In fact, your response to this might range from 'dead boring' to 'fascinating'. Judge for yourself. Written by the director.

**Fall of the Roman Empire, The** (1964, USA) **C-172m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Anthony Mann. Starring Sophia Loren, Stephen Boyd, Alec Guinness, James Mason, Christopher Plummer, Anthony Quayle, John Ireland, Omar Sharif, Mel Ferrer, Eric Porter. One of the most intellectual historical epics of the 1950s and 1960s, detailing the fall of Rome, as Caesar (Guinness) is at first trying to make peace with all tribes only to realize that animosities remain hidden below the surface. Top cast, epic handling by director Mann. Shot in Ultra Panavision 70 (2,75:1) that produced a picture wider than any other technique. Also shown at 153m..

**Familiari delle Vittime Non Saranno Avvertiti, I** (1972, ITA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*½** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Telly Savalas, Antonio Sabato, Paolo Tedesco, Teodoro Corrà, Salvatore Billa. Disappointing, poorly plotted mafia thriller about upstart Sabato, who works his way up the organization to finally avenge his father's murder. Slow-moving stuff, cowriter-director De Martino has done better. Shot by Joe D'Amato. English titles: CRIME BOSS, NEW MAFIA BOSS, and THE MAFIA TERMINATOR.

**Family Jewels, The** (1965, USA) **C-99m. \*\*½** D: Jerry Lewis. Starring Jerry Lewis, Sebastian Cabot, Neil Hamilton, Jay Adler, Ellen Corby, Milton Frome, Donna Butterworth, Scatman Crothers. Sweet-natured comedy for Jerry Lewis fans. He plays the driver of a super-rich girl, who has lost her father and must now choose a new one in her five uncles (all played by Lewis!). The only really funny routine is in the pool hall, but film is hard to dislike.

**Family Man, The** (2000, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brett Ratner. Starring Nicolas Cage, Téa Leoni, Don Cheadle, Jeremy Piven, Saul Rubinek, Josef Sommer, Harve Presnell, Mary Beth Hurt. Ever-so-smooth Hollywood fantasy about hot-shot investment broker Cage, who abandoned his lover (Leoni) to start a career in New York City. Thirteen years later, he is

magically transported into the life he could have had, if he had stayed with his lover. If you buy this premise, you might like this drama. Others may find that it reeks of Hollywoodesque family values. By the director of the RUSH HOUR movies. Score by Danny Elfman. Well-photographed by Dante Spinotti.

**Family Plot** (1976, USA) **C-121m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Karen Black, Bruce Dern, Barbara Harris, William Devane, Ed Lauter, Cathleen Nesbitt. Hitchcock's last film is medium crime drama with black humor. Dern and Harris rip off elderly ladies with their psychic act, meet seriously villainous couple Black and Devane when investigating their latest victim's family history. Lightweight, talky drama that would qualify as plot-heavy if it had much plot to speak of. Still, interesting as Hitch's last project; he died four years later without getting another project off the ground (he had been involved in a spy drama called 'The Short Night'). Scripted by Ernest Lehmann, based on the novel *The Rainbird Pattern* by Victor Canning. Score by John Williams.

**Family Stone, The** (2005, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*\* D: Thomas Bezucha. Starring Claire Danes, Diane Keaton, Rachel McAdams, Dermot Mulroney, Craig T. Nelson, Sarah Jessica Parker, Luke Wilson. Comedy drama set around X-Mas, when the title family have a reunion, and eldest son Mulroney is bringing his fiancée Parker, who everybody seems to dislike. Character-driven drama scores thanks to good performances and just the right amount of melodrama. No classic, but enjoyable. Written by the director.

**Fan, The** (1981, USA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Edward Bianchi. Starring Lauren Bacall, James Garner, Maureen Stapleton, Hector Elizondo, Michael Biehn, Anna Maria Horsford, Dwight Schultz, Dana Delaney, Griffin Dunne. Boring, simply bad thriller about Biehn's obsession with musical star Bacall, which leads to several assaults and murders. A tedious adaptation of the novel by Bob Randall, interesting cast and Pino Donaggio score fail to enliven this.

**Fando y Lis** (1967, MEX) **96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Sergio Kleiner, Diana Mariscal, María Teresa Rivas, Tamara Garina, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Valerie Jodorowsky. Earthy art film (cult director Jodorowsky's first) about the odyssey of Fando and paralyzed Lis, who embark on a journey to the mythical city of Tar. Loosely structured film is held together by powerful images and scenarios, but diverts (or at least appears to divert) too often from its central issue. Fascinating viewing for Jodorowsky devotees, incomprehensible trash for outsiders (film caused a riot at its premiere and was subsequently banned in Mexico). Includes some interesting references to Jodorowsky's own life. Cowritten by the director and Fernando Arrabal, whose play this film is based on. Also known as TAR BABIES.

**Fanny Hill** (1964, USA/GER) **96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Laetitia Román, Miriam Hopkins, Ulli Lommel, Chris Howland, Helmut Weiss, Alexander D'Arcy, Walter Giller, Albert Zugsmith. Román (Mario Bava's LA RAGAZZA CHE SAPEVA TROPPO) is well-cast as naive country maid Fanny Hill, who comes to the big city and soon finds herself a protégé of 'lady' Hopkins (who owns a brothel). Some amusing bits, brief nudity in this first filmization of the novel by John Cleland. Redundant in the second half, as all the comedy is based on the fact that Fanny is unaware that all the men want to have sex with her. Co-producer Albert Zugsmith is said to have directed parts of this movie. Filmed about 10 times since.

**Fantasia Chez les Ploucs** (1971, FRA/ITA/EGY) **C-81m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*D: Gérard Pires. Starring Lino Ventura, Mireille Darc, Jean Yanne, Jacques Dufilho, Georges Demestre, Luigi Bonos, Nanni Loy, Rufus, Alain Delon. Crazy farce set and filmed in the United States. Ventura, constantly fooling the sheriff and his bumbling deputies, is running an illegal distillery. Yanne comes to visit his old buddy with his son, and they soon make the acquaintance of super-sexy Darc, who is wearing part of her gangster-lover's latest loot: A bikini slip made

entirely out of diamonds. Free-wheeling satire on the American way of life is the stuff cult movies are made of: Creative direction by Pires (TAXI), loose star performances and its extra-madness make it a joy to watch. Claude Miller (MORTELLE RANDONNEE) coscripted and did some second unit directing. Aldo Lado (MALASTRANA) was assistant director. English title: FANTASIA AMONG THE SQUARES.

**Fantasia, The** (1986, EIR) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Robin Hardy. Starring Christopher Cazenove, Timothy Bottoms, Moira Harris, John Kavanagh, Mick Lally. Fairly interesting thriller about a young woman (Harris) who moves to Dublin and soon is targeted by a dangerous serial killer. Well-made, at times intriguing, but characters are shallow and their motivations are not always clear. Director Hardy (of THE WICKER MAN fame) adapted the novel *Goosefoot* by Patrick McGinley.

**Fantasma d'Amore** (1979, ITA/FRA/GER/MON) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Dino Risi. Starring Romy Schneider, Marcello Mastroianni, Eva Maria Meineke, Wolfgang Preiss, Raf Baldassare. Fascinating psycho drama about merchant Mastroianni and his consternation upon seeing a former love (Schneider) on the bus almost irrecognizably withered and his subsequent obsession with her memory. It turns out she may have died some years ago – is he haunted by visions? Stars are completely convincing, haunting score by Riz Ortolani, a film not easily forgotten. Schneider, at forty, remains most ravishing. Photographed by Tonino delli Colli, based on a novel by Mino Milani.

**Fantasma dell'Opera, Il** (1998, ITA/HUN) **C-104m.** \*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Julian Sands, Asia Argento, Andrea Di Stefano, Nadia Rinaldi, Coralina Cataldi-Tassoni, Zoltán Barabás, István Bubik. Another remake of Gaston Leroux's THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, this time by Italian horror specialist Dario Argento. Meticulous production values, wonderful set design, but film lacks everything that made the story so tragic and irresistible in the first place. Sands is fatally miscast as a phantom without mask, Argento's daughter Asia does her best, but there's just no chemistry between her and the leading man. What's more, Argento's trademark gore scenes seem almost completely out of place, as if they were just used to shock and disgust the audience. Watchable for Argento devotees, but Gérard Brach and Argento's screenplay fails to come up with new ideas, let alone enforce the old ones. Good score by Ennio Morricone.

**Fantasma di Sodoma, Il** (1988, ITA) **C-84m.** 7 D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Claudio Aliotti, Maria Concetta Salieri, Robert Egon, Jessica Moore, Al Cliver. Cheap, dull, obvious horror/exploitation film about six teenagers who stumble into deserted villa and are confronted with the ghosts of evil Nazi soldiers and their whores. Repellent, dumb trash. THE GHOSTS OF SODOM, or SODOM'S GHOSTS are film's English titles.

**Fantastic Fear of Everything, A** (2012, GBR) **C-100m. BOMB** D: Crispian Mills, Chris Hopewell. Starring Simon Pegg, Zaak Conway, Alan Drake, Paul Freeman. The always watchable Pegg puts your patience to the test in this annoying mess about a paranoid writer on the brink of madness. He has been researching Victorian serial killers for a new book and suspects everyone and everything of trying to kill him. Mostly set in his shabby apartment, with absurd and bizarre situations, like baking socks in the oven and permanently closing a window with superglue. Don't say you weren't warned! A tasteless bomb that somehow got picked up for release by Universal.

**Fantastic Four** (2005, USA/GER) **C-106m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Tim Story. Starring Ioan Gruffudd, Jessica Alba, Chris Evans, Michael Chiklis, Julian McMahon. Four astronauts become superheroes after being exposed to radiation during a space experiment. Comic book adaptation starts out weak, with a seemingly neverending plot setup, then improves slightly,

with some good special effects and fairly entertaining twists. Followed by 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER (2007). Extended version runs 125m.

**Fantastic Mr. Fox** (2009, USA) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Wes Anderson. Starring (the voices of) George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Bill Murray, Jason Schwartzman, Michael Gambon, Willem Dafoe, Owen Wilson, Wes Anderson. Original comedy drama in stop-motion animated form pretends that foxes and other animals of the forest lead a life like humans (family, career, dreams, hopes, worries). The title character wants to move out of his family's hole in the ground and purchases a tree near three big farms. Although he has sworn to lead an honest life, he is tempted by the chicken, geese and turkey nearby and secretly plans robberies with his friend, a possum. Fast-paced, cleverly observed fable benefits a lot from George Clooney, who lends Mr. Fox his voice. A welcome alternative to the Disney-Pixar-Dreamworks phalanx, nominated for Best Animated Feature.

**Fantastic Voyage** (1966, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Richard Fleischer. Starring Stephen Boyd, Raquel Welch, Edmond O'Brien, Donald Pleasence, Arthur O'Connell, Arthur Kennedy, James Brolin. First-rate science-fiction adventure about a group of scientists, who are miniaturized inside a submarine and injected into the body of a dying man. Their mission is to travel to the brain and destroy tumor-like clot. It's artery travel rather than space travel, but Oscar-winning effects are fascinating and situations are suspenseful. An original adventure classic. Exciting, appropriately bizarre score by Leonard Rosenman, fine photography by Ernest Laszlo. Based on a story by Otto Klement and Jerome Bixby, sort of remade in 1987 as INNERSPACE.

**Fantomas** (1964, FRA/ITA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** André Hunebelle. Starring Jean Marais, Louis de Funès. Journalist Marais and chief-of-police de Funès are after a super-criminal in this sometimes mediocre but always worthwhile adaptation of a French comic book. The action pushes the comedy in the background, which is too bad because de Funès has some hilarious bits. Still, a remarkable production, with shades of James Bond. Followed by two sequels.

**Fantomas Contre Interpol** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** André Hunebelle. Starring Jean Marais, Louis de Funès. Fantomas returns, abducting two scientists, whose invention he wants to abuse to become ruler of the world. Agreeable sequel is full of costumes and chase sequences, punctuated by mild comedy.

**Fantomas Contre Scotland Yard** (1966, FRA/ITA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** André Hunebelle. Starring Louis de Funès, Jean Marais. In this last of the Fantomas adventures the formula tires, as the super-criminal blackmails some of the world's richest men. De Funès is finally given more time to display his comic talent, which makes up for weaknesses of the script. This final part of the trilogy was released in the U.S. as FANTOMAS AGAINST SCOTLAND YARD.

**Fantomes du Chapelier, Les** (1982, FRA) **C-120m. \*\*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Michel Serrault, Charles Aznavour, Monique Chaumette, Aurore Clément, Stéphane Audran. Shy Jewish taylor Aznavour suspects cunning hatter Serrault of being the strangler that is roaming the narrow streets of Paris by night. It turns out he keeps the corpse of his wife in his room, pretending that she is still alive. Stunning psycho thriller drama (with shades of Hitchcock's PSYCHO), superbly directed, brilliantly acted by Serrault, who is chilling as the mad hatter. Only quibble: The adaptation of Georges Simenon's novel leaves a few questions open, especially its ending will leave you unsatisfied. Nevertheless, a must-see. English title: THE HATTER'S GHOST.

**Farfalla Con le Ali Insanguinate, Una** (1971, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Duccio Tessari. Starring Helmut Berger, Giancarlo Sbragia, Ida Galli, Silvano Tranquilli, Carol André,

Wolfgang Preiss, Duccio Tessari. Unconventionally structured, interesting giallo about the murder of a school girl and the subsequent trial of middle-aged family father Sbragia. During the trial, flashbacks are used to deepen the story and clarify the mystery. Technically good, with some sharp editing and directing, this thriller plays like a semi-documentary at times. Incredibly rich and varied score by Gianni Ferrio. Written by the director and Gianfranco Clerici (NON SI SEVIZIA UN PAPERINO, L'ANTICRISTO). English title: THE BLOODSTAINED BUTTERFLY.

**Far From the Madding Crowd** (1967, GBR) **C-161m. SCOPE \*\*\*½D:** John Schlesinger. Starring Julie Christie, Peter Finch, Terence Stamp, Alan Bates, Fiona Lewis, Prunella Ransome. Elite filmization of Thomas Hardy's novel about willful woman (Christie) who is caught between three men, all of whom are in love with her. Superb drama is an intelligent examination of how women can affect the lives of men – and vice versa. Top direction and stylish photography (by Nicholas Roeg) make this a must for fans of period-dramas.

**Fargo** (1996, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\*½ D:** Joel Coen. Starring Frances McDormand, William H. Macy, Steve Buscemi, Harve Presnell, Peter Stormare. The Coens' breakthrough into mainstream is a wonderfully nutty and highly original film about a kidnapping gone wrong. Car salesman Macy hires two bumbling would-be killers who should knock off his wife, so that he can cash in the money from her life insurance. Naturally, everything goes wrong that possibly can. Superb performances (including Oscar-winning McDormand as a pregnant police woman) make this a must for any dedicated movie-goer, even outdoing the Coen's brilliant stylistics. If not their best it ranks among their most outrageous efforts.

**Far Out Man** (1990, USA) **C-81m. \*\* D:** Tommy Chong. Starring Tommy Chong, C. Thomas Howell, Rae Dawn Chong, Shelby Chong, Paris Chong, Martin Lull, Bobby Taylor, Judd Nelson, Cheech Marin, Michael Winslow, Paul Bartel. Write-director Chong summons a select cast of stars and friends for this rather inept comedy where he plays a left-over hippie, who travels across America in search of his wife who left him. For Chong's fans, anyone else might be easily offended. Not very funny. Also known as SOUL MAN II, although this is not a sequel.

**Fast and the Furious, The** (2001, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Rob Cohen. Starring Paul Walker, Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Rick Yune, Ted Levine, Rob Cohen. Undercover cop Walker infiltrates gang of street racers, hoping to bust them for some armed robberies. Hot-shot racer Diesel doesn't know if to trust the newcomer, but ultimately they become friends. Flashy action movie doesn't mean much, but succeeds as mindless entertainment, with the final thirty minutes quite exciting. Just don't look beneath the glossy façade. Success at the box-office prompted a sequel (2 FAST 2 FURIOUS).

**Fast Company** (1978, CAN) **C-93m. \*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring William Smith, Claudia Jennings, John Saxon, Nicholas Campbell, Don Franks, Cedric Smith, Judy Foster. Atypical Cronenberg film about aging drag-star racing champion Smith and his ruthless manager Saxon's attempts to "retire" him. Characters are stereotype and story lacks punch, though film is not at all bad. Cronenberg's direction shows talent, and the songs are pretty good. For car fanatics. Cowriter-director Cronenberg would later return to his fascination with cars in the controversial CRASH. Never released theatrically outside Canada.

**Faster** (2010, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** George Tillman Jr. Starring Dwayne Johnson, Billy Bob Thornton, Maggie Grace, Tom Berenger. Fast-paced, stylish revenge thriller starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, as an ex-con, who goes after the killers of his brother, immediately after his release from prison. Thrown into the mix are Billy Bob Thornton, as a seedy cop on drugs, and Oliver Jackson-Cohen, as a millionaire hitman. Pretty well-made,

violent, cool, occasionally reminiscent of Tarantino movies, with a good soundtrack by Clint Mansell.

**Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!** (1966, USA) **86m.** \*\*\* D: Russ Meyer. Starring Tura Satana, Haji, Lori Williams, Susan Bernard, Stuart Lancaster, Paul Trinko, Dennis Busch, Ray Barlow, Mickey Fox. Another cult favorite from director Russ Meyer (MUDHONEY): Bizarre adult melodrama about a trio of female ex-cons, who kidnap a young girl after killing her lover and hide out at a farm in the middle of nowhere. The wheelchair-bound owner and his two sons (one of whom is mentally retarded) soon learn that the women are tough, foul-mouthed and not to be played around with. Good melodramatic score, stylish camera perspectives and some incredibly snappy dialogue make this great fun to watch. Acting is not faultless, however. Strangely enough, there's no frontal nudity, although the women's sex appeal is sensational. From a story by director Meyer, who also edited the picture and produced it along with his wife Eve.

**Fast Food Nation** (2006, USA) **C-113m.** \*\* D: Richard Linklater. Starring Greg Kinnear, Luis Guzmán, Ashley Johnson, Patricia Arquette, Kris Kristofferson, Bruce Willis, Ethan Hawke, Avril Lavigne. Over-plotted comedy drama about the American fast food industry and its employees and workers. Film focuses on Kinnear, a marketing manager for a big fast food chain, who is ordered to investigate bad test results for meat at one of their factories. Director Linklater also examines the fates of the illegal Mexican workers and the unhappy restaurant employees. Spiced up with pointless, distracting star cameos, film fails to compel, mostly because of script that is poorly paced and doesn't interweave the stories well. What's more, we already *know* about this issue. SUPERSIZE ME (2004) was the better, spunkier approach. Cowritten by director Linklater, based on a book by Eric Schlosser.

**Fast Perfekter Seitensprung, Ein** (1995, AUT) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Reinhard Schwabenitzky. Starring Andreas Vitàsek, Elfi Eschke, Hans Clarin, Heinz Petters. So-called comedy about unhappily married Vitàsek, who meets voluptuous Eschke, who has just fled a marriage. They have an affair, which leads to predictable complications. Made watchable by a likeable cast of popular Austrian and German actors, but result is clichéd and contrived. May not mean much to non-Austrians, which is exactly the problem of the national film 'industry': it produces easy-to-take, none-too-clever films which appeal to Austrian audiences only. This film was made in this self-conscious vein. Its (national) success prompted two sequels.

**Fast Track** (2006, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Jesse Peretz. Starring Zach Braff, Amanda Peet, Jason Bateman, Charles Grodin. Mia Farrow, Lucian Maisel, Donal Logue, Josh Charles, Paul Rudd. Romantic comedy with the emphasis on comedy about young parents Braff and Peet, who move to her hometown in Ohio, where he has to start over in a new job with her dad Grodin (in his first screen role since the 1994 IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY). Too bad he must collaborate with her ex-lover, wheelchair-bound Bateman. And the baby-blues is just kicking in... Braff gets a relentless beating here until the finale, where the film goes completely overboard. Even the outtakes over the 10-minute closing crawl aren't very funny. Also known as THE EX.

**Fatal Frames** (1996, ITA) **C-131m.** \*\* D: Al Festa. Starring Stefania Stella, Rick Gianasi, David Warbeck, Ugo Pagliani, Leo Daniel, Alida Valli, Geoffrey Copleston, Linnea Quigley, Giorgio Albertazzi, Rossano Brazzi, Ciccio Ingrassia, Donald Pleasence, Angus Scrimm. Incredible horror over-indulgence features Italian singer Stella (née Di Giandomenico) as a pop star (what else?) whose latest music video director Gianasi is haunted by the killing of his wife. In Rome, the same killer seems to be threatening the crew and filming his victims. An unsuccessful attempt to revive the Italian horror film (more or less dead since 1991), ambitious perhaps, but slowly paced and fatally overlong. At least, director Festa (Stella's

spouse) tries to stage this stylishly, with some good lighting and editing. Still, it's simply too much (noise) and too little (plot), and practically only saved by some cameos of horror legends. Dedicated to Brazzi and Pleasence, whose last film appearance this was. Italian title: FOTOGRAMMI MORTALI.

**Fatal Games** (1984, USA) **C-87m. \*\* D:** Michael Elliot. Starring Sally Kirkland, Lynn Banashek, Sean Masterson, Michael O'Leary, Linnea Quigley, Christopher Mankiewicz. Some athletes who are contenders for the Olympic Games are killed off by a mad javelin thrower. Standard slasher movie, with some stylish photography and lighting, as well as a rather straight plot line (the writers seemed more interested in the hardship of training). An okay view, but tends to be boring. Also known as KILLING TOUCH, OLYMPIC NIGHTMARE.

**Fatevi Vivi: La Polizia Non Interverrà** (1974, ITA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Giovanni Fago. Starring Henry Silva, Rada Rassimov, Philippe Leroy, Gabriele Ferzetti, Franco Diogene, Lia Tanzi, Calisto Tanzi, Paul Muller. Not-bad, little-known police movie about the kidnapping of a rich man's daughter. Silva is the cop on the case, and he thinks Leroy is behind it all, a man with mafia-relations. Leroy then uses his connections to seek out the real kidnapers. A little unspectacular, but interesting cast makes this an okay view.

**Fathom** (1967, GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Leslie H. Martinson. Starring Raquel Welch, Tony Franciosa, Ronald Fraser, Richard Briers, Greta Chi, Clive Revill. Lightweight action comedy about sexy parachutist Welch, who is hired by the secret service to infiltrate Franciosa's organisation, which is after a nuclear device with the code name 'fire dragon'. A third party, Russian Revill, is also after it. Some nice period flavor, sunny Spanish locations, but plot is only so-so.

**Fatiche di Ercole, Le** (1957, ITA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Pietro Francisci. Starring Steve Reeves, Sylva Koscina, Fabrizio Mioni, Ivo Garrani, Gina Rovere. The granddaddy of all muscleman epics to follow, this one is also one of the best of its kind. Film follows the exploits of Hercules (or Ercole), as he assists Jason in finding a token of power. Plot is much too episodic and disjointed, but film buffs will savor rich production design, a rousing, bizarre score and some impeccable lighting and style effects by none other than Mario Bava (Some consider him to have been the co-director, too.). Later cut to 98m., and even 91m. English title is simply HERCULES. Immediate sequel: ERCOLE E LA REGINA DI LIDIA (1959). Followed by approximately 70 or 80 peplum epics between 1959-1964, after its release in the U.S. (in 1959) proved to be immensely successful.

**Faust: Love of the Damned** (2001, USA/SPA) **C-101m. \*\*\*½ D:** Brian Yuzna. Starring Mark Frost, Isabel Brook, Jennifer Rope, Jeffrey Combs, Mònica Van Campen, Leslie Charles, Andrew Divoff. Surprisingly stylish and effective horror film from Full Moon collaborator Yuzna. Frost plays an artist who strikes a deal with the devil and becomes a razorblade-wielding killer. Plot doesn't hold up, but direction, score, as well as gore and sex scenes will hold the interest of the devoted. Based on a graphic novel by Tim Vigil and David Quinn.

**Fauve est Laché, Le** (1958, FRA) **100m. \*\* D:** Maurice Labro. Starring Lino Ventura, Estella Blain, Paul Frankeur, Alfred Adam, François Chaumette. Restaurant owner and family father Ventura is 'per-suaded' by the police to spy on an old friend who may have something to do with the disappearance of a formula of a special fuel. Ventura, star of over 60 films, is muscular in a typical role, but film is unexciting and badly paced. Direction is below average. Claude Sautet cowrote the screenplay. This was his first screen credit. Frédéric Dard (LES MAGICIENS) also collaborated.

**Fear** (1996, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*½ D:** James Foley. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Reese Witherspoon, Alyssa Milano. Witherspoon's first boyfriend turns out to be a psychopath who doesn't like her daddy's attitude. Painfully derivative and predictable thriller

with *no* twists at all! Poor Foley's directorial effort can't save it. This might attract dumb (American?) teenagers.

**Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas** (1998, USA) **C-117m.** Ⓜ D: Terry Gilliam. Starring Johnny Depp, Benicio Del Toro, Tobey Maguire, Craig Bierko, Katherine Helmond, Mark Harmon, Tim Thomerson, Penn Jillette, Cameron Diaz, Lyle Lovett, Flea, Gary Busey, Christina Ricci, Michael Jeter, Harry Dean Stanton, Ellen Barkin. Painful, almost unbearable adaptation of Hunter S. Thompson's book about his drug-induced fantasies and adventures in Las Vegas with his lawyer/buddy. Movie is one long drug trip, filmed accordingly, but utterly unpleasant and pointless. Period flavor is there (especially on the sound-track), as well as some scattered laughs, but otherwise this is bottom-of-the-barrel. Cowritten by Gilliam.

**Fear City** (1984, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Abel Ferrara. Starring Tom Berenger, Billy Dee Williams, Jack Scalia, Melanie Griffith, Rossano Brazzi, Rae Dawn Chong, Joe Santos, Maria Conchita Alonso. Dark, unrelenting thriller set in the New York underworld of drugs and prostitution. Berenger plays a troubled ex-boxer, whose girlfriend Griffith, a stripper, may be targeted by a psychopath that carves up her colleagues. Not exactly a rewarding experience, but Ferrara cultists may find this a must for their collection. Alternative titles: BORDER, RIPPER.

**Fear in the Night** (1972, GBR) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Jimmy Sangster. Starring Judy Geeson, Joan Collins, Ralph Bates, Peter Cushing. Young woman goes to live with her husband at a boys' school and is soon stalked by a one-armed maniac. Script (co-written by the director) is not bad but teases the audience too long. Well-edited during the attack scenes. A Hammer Films production.

**Fearless Hyena, The** (1978, HGK) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Shih Tien, James Tien, Li Kuen, Yen Si-Kuan. Martial arts superstar Jackie Chan made his directorial debut with this eastern, which he also wrote and choreographed. It is about a young fighter living with his grandfather, who is hiding from an old enemy. Plot is lame (worst complaint: the pointless comic scenes), the fight scenes are first rate. Jackie's fans will rave about their idol (his physique and styles *are* impressive), whereas others will shake their heads at this nonsense. Produced by Lo Wei's production firm. Followed by a 1983 sequel.

**Fearless Hyena Part II, The** (1983, HGK) **C-90m.** Ⓜ D: Lo Wei, Chan Chuen. Starring Jackie Chan, Chen Hui Lou, Shek Tien, James Tien. Producer Lo Wei's attempt at *still* cashing in on Jackie Chan even after the star had left his company is almost criminal. Plot about two rivalling gangs and Jackie's involvement is incoherent, confusing. Several scenes were filmed using a body double. Don't watch this, not even if you are a fan.

**Fearless Vampire Killers or: Pardon Me, But Your Teeth Are in My Neck, The** (1967, GBR) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Roman Polanski. Starring Jack MacGowran, Roman Polanski, Sharon Tate, Alfie Bass, Ferdy Maine, Terry Downes, Ronald Lacey. Brilliant, timeless horror comedy about absent-minded professor Abronsius (unforgettable: Jack MacGowran) and his idiotic assistant Alfred (director Polanski himself), who travel to wintry Transsylvania, hoping to find 'real vampires'. When they hear the tale of a count living in a castle in the mountains they are out to investigate. Extremely funny film's assets are the beautiful visuals, which plunge the viewer deeply into a ghastly, rural winter and the score, which is eerie and satirical at the same time. Don't miss it. Cinematography by Douglas Slocombe. Cut to 98m. for U.S. release. The original version, running 118m., has so far not been made available to the public. Polanski later turned the film into a stage musical, which premiered in Vienna in 1997. Alternative title: DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES.

**Fear No Evil** (1981, USA) **C-99m. \*\*** D: Frank LaLoggia. Starring Stefan Arngrim, Frank Birney, Barry Cooper, Daniel Eden. Occasionally stylish but pretty stupid and trashy horror movie about antichrist Arngrim and archangels' quest to destroy him in modern day high-school setting. Might interest horror buffs, others steer clear! Features music by cult bands Sex Pistols and Talking Heads. Highly interesting for Joel Coen's involvement in the picture; he is credited as assistant editor. Also known as MARK OF THE BEAST.

**Fear X** (2003, DAN/GBR) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Nicolas Winding Refn. Starring John Turturro, Deborah Kara Unger, Stephen Eric McIntyre, William Allen Young, James Remar. Moody thriller drama about mall cop Turturro, who lost his wife in a mysterious shooting and has since been trying to find out who killed her and why she died. Then he sneaks into the empty neighbor's house and finds photos of a woman in Montana. He checks into a local hotel there and begins his investigation. Deliberately paced mood piece develops more and more into a Lynchian nightmare, with more than the hotel to remind you of Turturro's role in BARTON FINK (1991). Not a bull's-eye, but a nice show of talent by Refn (THE DRIVER). Hubert Selby Jr.'s (REQUIEM FOR A DREAM) last screenwriting credit.

**Feeling Minnesota** (1996, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE 2** D: Steven Baigelman. Starring Keanu Reeves, Vincent D'Onofrio, Cameron Diaz, Delroy Lindo, Courtney Love, Tuesday Weld, Dan Aykroyd. Ex-con Reeves returns to his family on the day of his brother D'Onofrio's marriage to prostitute Diaz, who's been forced to marry by her pimp. Quiet unexpectedly Reeves and Diaz fall in love and take it on the lam. Hopelessly muddled script tries to copy TRUE ROMANCE and PULP FICTION but does not manage to include one single likeable character in the plot. The result is a downbeat mess which goes on and on and on, with forced comic relief. The only interest springs from the cast, but you are better advised to stay away. Danny De Vito coproduced. The title was inspired by a Soundgarden song, if anyone cares.

**Felicia's Journey** (1999, CDN/FRA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: Atom Egoyan. Starring Bob Hoskins, Arsinée Khanjian, Elaine Cassidy, Sheila Reid, Nizwar Karanj, Ali Yassine, Peter McDonald. Director Egoyan's follow-up to THE SWEET HEREAFTER (1997) is equally brooding, fascinating psycho drama. A young Irish girl (Cassidy) comes to England to search for her lover, who has obviously abandoned her and finds herself courted by a kind, soft-spoken stranger, catering manager Hoskins. He offers to help in her desperate situation and slowly wins the girl's trust... just as his true nature is revealed to the audience. Meticulously, masterfully directed, richly textured psycho drama puts Egoyan in the league of a Claude Chabrol. Impressive visuals, good acting, and an unsettling score (by Mychael Danna – THE ICE STORM, GIRL, INTERRUPTED) make this a must. Some critics remarked on (underlying) simpleness of story – this is *the* cinematic way of making a simple story terrific. Egoyan also scripted, from the novel by William Trevor.

**Felidae** (1994, GER) **C-81m. \*\*** D: Michael Schaack. Voices of Ulrich Tukur, Mario Adorf, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Helge Schneider, Uwe Ochsenknecht. Watchable animated feature, based on a novel by Akif Pirinçci. A cat, from whose point of view the story is told, moves into a new house with his owner. He finds out there's a serial (cat) killer in the neighborhood and decides to unveil his identity. Pretty dark and violent, this animated film is not for children, since it also contains a sex scene(!). Plot is too self-conscious, and the animation is just average. Set in London.

**Félins, Les** (1963, FRA) **96m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: René Clément. Starring Jane Fonda, Alain Delon, Lola Albright, Sorrell Booke, Carl Studer, André Oumansky. Enticing, atmospheric psycho thriller-drama: Delon is fleeing from the wrath of an American businessman, whose wife he had an affair with. On the Riviera he meets two women (Fonda, Albright) who help

out in an organisation for the poor, and becomes their driver. At their beautiful estate Delon tries to seduce Albright, while Fonda seems to have the hots for him. The women, however, have other things in mind. Subtle, well-directed, with stylish photography by Henri Decaë and an exceptional score by Lalo Schifrin. Takes some time to get where it's going, but the ending is well-worth the wait. The two stars were never more ravishing. Fonda is especially enthralling. Based on the novel *Joy House* by Day Keene. Costa-Gavras is credited as assistant director. Highly recommended to fans of French thriller dramas (like me), others may find this less compelling. English titles: JOY HOUSE, and THE LOVE CAGE.

**Felix – Ein Hase auf Weltreise** (2005, GER/ITA) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Giuseppe Maurizio Laganà. Featuring the voices of Hugo Egon Balder, Uschi Glas. Rather weak animated feature about plush bunny Felix, who gets lost during one vacation and tries to get back to his owner. On his way back he has many adventures, including encounters with the Yeti, Nessy, and Captain Nemo. Episodic, inoffensive script, with animation that was standard in the 1980s. For the smallest viewers. Director Laganà was animator for the Italian animation classic ALLEGRA NON TROPPO (1977).

**Felix 2 – Der Hase und die Verflixte Zeitmaschine** (2006, GER) **C-82m.** \*\* D: Giuseppe Maurizio Laganà. Starring (the voices of) Patrick Flecken, Helmut Markwort, Sunyi Melles, Christiane Paul, Barbara Rudnik. Sequel to FELIX – EIN HASE AUF WELTREISE (2005) gives you more of the same sub-standard animation, episodic plot. The bunny gets catapulted through time and meets cave dwellers in the Stone Age, Vikings and Egyptians among others. A slight improvement over the first movie, but still nothing to get excited about. Really belongs on TV.

**Female Trouble** (1975, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: John Waters. Starring Divine, David Lochary, Mary Vivian Pearce, Mink Stole, Edith Massey, Cookie Mueller, Susan Walsh. Terrific Waters satire about one Dawn Davenport (Divine), who quits school at sixteen and turns to a life of crime. Fast-paced script by Waters with brilliant dialogues makes this film fascinating, when it easily could have been repulsive. Unpretentious, no-holds-barred look at life, with comically bizarre situations, and in the center cult star Divine in a sensational performance. Warning: Film contains enough nudity (male and female), violence (gore) and profanity to be considered offensive by some viewers.

**Femina Ridens** (1969, ITA) **C-86m.** \*\*\* D: Piero Schivazappa. Starring Philippe Leroy, Dagmar Lassander, Lorenza Guerrieri, Varo Soleri. Outré sex drama is a priceless time capsule from the late 1960s: Doctor Leroy lures journalist Lassander to his mansion, where he proceeds to abuse and torture her both physically and mentally. However, she proves a hard nut to crack. Will she be able to turn the tables on him? Phenomenal sets, creative direction, nice score by Stelvio Cipriani, and great chemistry between cool Leroy and ravishing Lassander. In fact, this could be called a LA DECIMA VITTIMA (1965) without the action. The plot is not so stupid, either, if a bit too lax. Deserves to be better known. English titles: THE LAUGHING WOMAN and THE FRIGHTENED WOMAN.

**Femme à Côté, La** (1981, FRA) **C-106m.** \*\*\* D: Francois Truffaut. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Fanny Ardant, Henri Garcin, Michèle Baumgartner, Veronique Silver. Thoughtful drama detailing the relationship between Depardieu and Ardant (both married) as they resume their affair years after they broke up. Good, well-acted character study, similar to the love dramas by Claude Chabrol. Cowritten by the director. English title: THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR.

**Femme de Chambre du Titanic, La** (1997, FRA/ITA/GER/SPA) **C-100m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Bigas Luna. Starring Olivier Martinez, Romane Bohringer, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón, Didier Bezace, Aldo Maccione. Glossy love drama about French factory worker Martinez, who wins a trip

to see the departure of the Titanic and falls in love with chambermaid Sánchez-Gijón on the luxury liner. When he returns he spins wild tales about an affair with that woman before an ever-increasing crowd of listeners, much to the chagrin of his wife Bohringer. Nice to look at, well-produced but lacks any dramatic impact whatsoever (to say nothing about nudity). Not even worth comparing to James Cameron's TITANIC, which premiered the same year. Based on the novel by Didier Decoin, screenplay cowritten by the director. English title: THE CHAMBERMAID OF THE TITANIC.

**Femme Fatale** (2002, FRA) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Brian De Palma. Starring Rebecca Romijn-Stamos, Antonio Banderas, Peter Coyote, Eriq Ebouaney, Edouard Montoute, Gregg Henry. Romijn-Stamos plays the title character, a cunning blonde bombshell, who cheats her partners out of a diamond loot (stolen during a premiere at the Cannes film festival). She gets a chance at erasing her traces when she is mistaken for a missing woman and accepts her identity. But that's just the beginning of a serpentine story. Stylish, typical De Palma thriller recalls his 1976 OBSESSION (among other films), but plot twists are so outrageous at times (and illogical) that the whole film becomes overtly artificial. Romijn-Stamos is hot, make no mistake. This film will produce varying responses – buffs will find it interesting, others will be frustrated early on. Sandrine Bonnaire appears as herself (in the Cannes festival scenes). Written by the director.

**Femme Infidèle, La** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-98m.** \*\*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Stéphane Audran, Michel Bouquet, Michel Duchaussoy, Maurice Ronet, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Excellent drama by Chabrol, cold and low-key but engrossing and ultimately shattering. Bouquet suspects his wife Audran of being unfaithful and hires a private detective to prove it. Is there a way of mending their broken relationship? Fascinating character study by one of the great French directors, made at the peak of his faculties. Brilliant, bizarre score by Pierre Jansen. Not for all tastes but undeniably powerful. The story unfolds not so much on screen as in the viewer's head. Written by the director. English title: UNFAITHFUL WIFE.

**Femmine Insaziabili** (1969, ITA/GER) **C-103m.** \*½ D: Alberto de Martino. Starring Dorothy Malone, Robert Hoffmann, Luciana Paluzzi, Frank Wolff, John Ireland, Roger Fritz, Romina Power, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Rainer Basedow. A murder happens and the dead man's friend starts to investigate, meddling with a chemicals company and some former lovers of the deceased. A murder mystery set in the United States, and made to look and feel like an American movie, but the realism takes away most of the appeal. It's poorly paced as well, and the story isn't compelling. Only the mystery angle loosely connects this to the giallo genre. Notable only for some late 60s psychedelia, especially an orgy sequence commented on by then-17-year-old Romina Power (Tyrone's daughter), who later appears nude. Bruno Nicolai's moody score is not enough to make this watchable. English titles: BEVERLY HILLS, and THE INSATIABLES.

**FernGully: The Last Rainforest** (1992, USA/AUS) **C-76m.** \*\*\* D: Bill Kroyer. Starring (the voices of) Tim Curry, Samantha Mathis, Christian Slater, Jonathan Ward, Robni Williams, Grace Zabriskie, Geoffrey Blake, Robert Pastorelli, Cheech Marin, Thomas Chong. Ecologically-minded animated feature about fairy-like creatures who live in a part of the rainforest, which is about to be destroyed. One of the workers is shrunk to their size and finds out about their cause. Unfortunately, there's also an evil spirit released from his tree prison, who wants to destroy the fairy folk. If it wasn't for the slapstick and whimsy, this would get fairly close to the work by Studio Ghibli. Still, an interesting, well-made adventure with an important message. Score by Alan Silvestri. Followed by a 1998 video sequel.

**Festen** (1998, DAN) **C-105m. \*\*\*** D: Thomas Vinterberg. Starring Ulrich Thomsen, Henning Moritzen, Thomas Bo Larsen, Paprika Steen, Birthe Neumann, Thomas Vinterberg. Harrowing drama about a family gathering which ends disastrously when the eldest son of patriarch Moritzen publically accuses the father of having abused him and his sister sexually when they were kids. Authentic, even painful portrayal of a dysfunctional family which sticks together despite terrible skeletons on the closet. The first of the DOGME films. Aka DOGME # 1 – FESTEN, and THE CELEBRATION.

**Field in England, A** (2013, GBR) **B&W-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ben Wheatley. Starring Michael Smiley, Reece Shearsmith, Julian Barratt, Peter Ferdinando. Strange drama set during a war, where a group of soldiers flee from a battlefield and trek across the countryside. Little happens, it's all dialogue, the black-and-white photography doesn't help. Experimental dud for people who must interpret everything into their movies. Also known as ENGLISH REVOLUTION.

**Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu, The** (1980, USA) **C-108m. \*½** D: Piers Haggard. Starring Peter Sellers, Helen Mirren, David Tomlinson, Sid Caesar, Burt Kwouk. Final film of legend Peter Sellers was released just a few weeks after his fatal heart attack. Here, he plays the title character, an Asian villain from the Sax Rohmer novels, who wants to brew the elixir of life to continue living at 168 years. Inspector Nayland Smith (also Sellers) is brought back from retirement to stop him. Boring and unfunny, Sellers somehow retains his dignity, although his illness is all too obvious. For his fans. Photographed by Jean Tournier.

**Fierce Creatures** (1997, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Fred Schepisi, Robert Young. Starring John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline, Michael Palin, Ronnie Corbett, Carey Lowell, Robert Lindsay. Amusing comedy reunites the A FISH CALLED WANDA cast in a story about seemingly incompetent zoo keeper Cleese and American managers Curtis and Kline, who are supposed to keep an eye on him and the finances. It's not the story that counts but the funny dialogues and spirited performances. Everybody's fine in this (admittedly mild) farce. Filmed in 1995 and 1996 (with Schepisi replacing Young).

**Fifth Element, The** (1997, FRA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Luc Besson. Starring Bruce Willis, Gary Oldman, Ian Holm, Milla Jovovich, Chris Tucker, Luke Perry, Brion James. Incredibly kitschy but hip and funny science-fiction comedy featuring Bruce Willis as taxi driver who has to save the world after beautiful alien Jovovich drops onto his cab. Story is pure escapism, not in need of a message. Reminiscent in many ways of BLADE RUNNER, film has nothing of the classic's dark atmosphere; it should rather be seen as its comic counterpart. Wonderful costumes by Jean-Paul Gaultier add to the fun. 'LEON' Jean Reno has a small role.

**51<sup>st</sup> State, The** (2001, USA/GBR/CDN) **C-92m. \*\*½** D: Ronny Yu. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Carlyle, Emily Mortimer, Meat Loaf, Rhys Ifans, Nick Bartlett, Angus McInnes. Free-wheelin', rowdy action comedy about chemist Jackson, who has just created a powerful drug and wants to sell the formula for \$20 million to a British dealer. Too bad there's a female assassin after him – hired by the guy he ditched back in the States. Thriller has some furiously directed sequences but runs out of steam (and story) in the second half; watch this for curiosity sake. Jackson and Carlyle have fun in their roles. Aka FORMULA 51.

**Fight Club** (1999, USA) **C-139m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Fincher. Starring Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, Helena Bonham Carter, Meat Loaf. Ed Norton has a secure job, but he is dying inside. He hasn't slept for weeks and starts going to evenings organised by the Methodist church for the terminally ill. One day a man (Pitt) enters his life and changes it completely. They become the founders of the Fight Club, a secret organization with its own codex, where men can get rid of their aggressions by fighting one-on-one. Fascinating to a certain degree, technically first-rate, but plot lacks credibility and the twist in the second half of the picture

is not as effective as intended. Worth a look for fans of director Fincher (SE7EN, THE GAME), others may be put off by the violent scenes.

**Fighter, The** (2010, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David O. Russell. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Melissa Leo. First-rate drama about social underdog Wahlberg, an aspiring boxer, who is trained by his crack-addict brother Bale and managed by his trailer-trash mother. His relationship with waitress Adams may build his self-confidence, but he can't seem to escape the destructive grasp of his family. Very well-told, engrossing biopic based on a true story, with brilliant performances by Bale and DiLeo (both won Oscars). Film was nominated for seven Oscars in total, including Best Picture.

**Fight for Survival** (1977, HGK) **C-100m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Hour Jeng. Starring Shang Kuan Ling-Fen, Kar-Ling, Wang Tao, Yuen Si Woo, Lee-Lin Lin. Dull, slow eastern about a young girl who wishes to learn the art of Kung Fu. When she is rejected at the Shaolin monastery, she seeks help from an old eremite, who makes her a master. She then goes on to retrieve stolen book of the Shaolin from several villains. Fights are not exciting, plotting too redundant. Also known as LADY WU TANG.

**Figlia di Frankenstein, La** (1971, ITA) **C-83m. \*\* D:** Mel Welles, Aureliano Lippi. Starring Joseph Cotten, Rosalba Neri, Paul Muller, Paul Whiteman, Herbert Fux, Mickey Hargitay. Cotten plays Dr. Frankenstein, whose daughter Neri – an M.D. herself – takes over his laboratory when the monster kills him. Low-budget horror tries to be atmospheric, and score is not bad, but plot is poorly paced. Watchable for Euro horror fanatics, others may not be so forgiving. Cotten went on to make GLI ORRORI DEL CASTELLO DI NORIMBERGA (BARON BLOOD) with Mario Bava. Sergio Martino was camera operator. Uncut print runs a few minutes longer. Alternative titles: LADY FRANKENSTEIN, MADAME FRANKENSTEIN, and DAUGHTER OF FRANKENSTEIN.

**Final Destination** (2000, USA) **C-98m. \*\* D:** James Wong. Starring Devon Sawa, Ali Larter, Kerr Smith, Kristen Cloke, Daniel Roebuck, Seann William Scott, Tony Todd. Teenager Sawa has a frightening premonition of a plane crash and therefore leaves his jet to Paris in panic. When the plane really crashes, he is faced with the disbelief of the police and friends, as well as a dark force that is trying to kill all survivors. Stupid, illogical horror movie that somehow remains watchable due to effective direction and editing.

**Final Girls, The** (2015, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Todd Strauss-Schulson. Starring Taissa Farmiga, Malin Akerman, Adam DeVine, Alexander Ludwig, Nina Dobrev, Alia Shawcat. Well-directed but otherwise rather bland horror satire. Farmiga's late mother was a legendary scream queen. During a screening of one of her most famous movies, a fire breaks out and some teens are sucked into the slasher movie on screen! With some horror film expertise they know which trappings to avoid in order to survive. Takes its cue almost entirely from the FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup> movies, film resorts to talkiness in the mid-section and is generally rather silly. Some effective moments.

**Final Programme, The** (1973, GBR) **C-89m. \*½ D:** Robert Fuest. Starring Jon Finch, Jenny Runacre, Hugh Griffith, Patrick Magee, Sterling Hayden, Harry Andrews. Daredevil, globetrotter, intellectual Jerry Cornelius (Finch) is faced with the possible end of the world and sets out to investigate the so-called Final Programme, which was designed to survive the Apocalypse. Science-fiction, based on the novel by Michael Moorcock, is much too pretentious and confusing to score any high points. A curio nevertheless, and as such it inspired a cult. From the director of the DR. PHIBES movies. Released in the U.S. as THE LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH (at 79/81m.).

**Final Terror, The** (1983, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\*½ D:** Andrew Davis. Starring John Friedrich, Adrian Zmed, Ernest Harden Jr., Lewis Smith, Rachel Ward, Daryl Hannah, Joe Pantoliano, Mark

Metcalf. Slasher movie in the vein of FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup> is actually better than most of the series' films. A group of teenagers intend to spend an idyllic weekend in the woods, but unfortunately there's a mental health clinic nearby. Could their psychopathic driver (Pantoliani) be involved? Direction, screenplay, photography, score, acting are quite good, the story could have been a little more exciting and compelling. Director Davis also photographed the picture (using the pseudonym A. Davidescu). Coproduced by Samuel Z. Arkoff.

**Finders Keeper, Lovers Weepers** (1968, USA) **C-74m.** \*\*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Anne Chapman, Paul Lockwood, Duncan McLeod, Gordon Wescourt, Robert Rudelson, Lavelle Roby, Jay Sinclair, John Furlong. Sex-and-crime melodrama about night club owner Lockwood, whose wife is enraged by his nightly escapades and becomes a topless dancer herself. And then some crooks decide to rob his bar. Above-average time-killer, with Meyer showing some style in editing, photography and direction.

**Finding Dory** (2016, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Andrew Stanton, Angus MacLane. Starring (the voices of) Ellen DeGeneres, Albert Brooks, Ed O'Neill, Diane Keaton, Eugene O'Neill. Sequel to the endearing Pixar hit FINDING NEMO (2003) about Nemo's sidekick Dory, who suffers from short-term memory loss and goes on a quest to find her parents. Good for the small fry, but grown-ups might be disappointed by the foreseeable plotting. A slight disappointment considering Pixar's high standards.

**Finding Nemo** (2003, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Andrew Stanton, Lee Unkrich. Starring the voices of Albert Brooks, Ellen DeGeneres, Alexander Gould, Willem Dafoe, Geoffrey Rush, Elizabeth Perkins, Barry Humphries, Eric Bana, Bruce Spence, John Ratzenberger. Huge Disney/Picar hit about a clownfish (voiced by Brooks), whose only son gets caught by a scuba diver. The worried father embarks on an adventure trek across the Pacific to find his son and win back his trust, which he forfeited earlier. Hectic, overly aggressive, and endowed with too many unlikely plot twists, but has first-rate animation and a lot of funny scenes. Not the masterpiece it was labelled, but good fun. Oscar winner for Best Animated Feature.

**Finding Neverland** (2004, GBR/USA) **C-101m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Marc Forster. Starring Johnny Depp, Kate Winslet, Julie Christie, Radha Mitchell, Dustin Hoffman. Sort-of biography of the creator of *Peter Pan*, writer J.M. Barrie (played by Depp). In turn-of-the-century London, the poet lives in a unhappy marriage and finds himself drawn to single mother Winslet, whose four sons ultimately provide the inspiration for Barrie's best-known work. Good performances, but Barrie's motivations are superficially dealt with only, and the emotional impact is muted. Based on a play by Allan Knee. Oscar-winner for Best Score.

**Fine Madness, A** (1966, USA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Irvin Kershner. Starring Sean Connery, Joanne Woodward, Jean Seberg, Patrick O'Neal, Colleen Dewhurst, Renee Taylor, Werner Peters, Jackie Coogan. Irreverent, radical poet Connery, always in need of money, plagues society with violent outbursts. His wife Woodward thinks only a psychiatrist can help him. So-so filmization of the satirical novel by Elliot Baker. Not funny enough but well-acted and generally not without interest. Screenplay by the author.

**Fingers** (1978, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*\*½ D: James Toback. Starring Harvey Keitel, Jim Brown, Danny Aiello. Concert pianist Keitel spends his life cashing back money his father has lent. Potent, absorbing drama about a man whose life slowly loses its meaning; he even fails playing the piano at an audition. Superb performances all around.

**Finian's Rainbow** \*\*\*½

**Finis Hominis** (1971, BRA) **B&W-79m.** **BOMB** D: José Mohica Marins. Starring José Mohica Marins, Teresa Sodré, Roque Rodrigues, Rosângela Maldonado, Mario Lima. Writer-director-actor Marins (COFFIN JOE) delivers utter trash with this story about a christ-like

persona, who shocks people at first, but then turns out to be kind of a savior. Use of music is almost completely inappropriate, technically it's a mess, often laughably bad. With this *Marins* puts himself in a league with *Jess Franco*, or even *Ed Wood*! English subtitle: *THE END OF MAN*.

**Fino alla Morte** (1987, ITA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Gioia Scola, David Brandon, Marco Vivio, Urbano Barberini. Interesting variation of *THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE* about Brandon (*AQUARIUS*) and Scola, who murdered Scola's husband six years ago and must now contend with her son's nightmares and the arrival of a stranger (*Barberini*, *OPERA*) who might know something about the case. Bava expectedly adds horror elements, although this is one of his more subtle works – and one of his best. Slightly overlong, not consistently good, but a must for fans of obscure movies. Cowritten by the director. Score by Simon Boswell. English title: *UNTIL DEATH*

**Fiocco Nero per Deborah, Un** (1974, ITA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Marcello Andrei. Starring Bradford Dillman, Marina Malfatti, Gig Young, Delia Boccardo, Lucretia Love. Deeply troubled twenty-something Malfatti would love to have a baby but she finds her husband Dillman off-putting. Then she starts having premonitions about impending deaths. Interesting psycho horror has nice directorial touches and an incredibly varied score (by Alberto Verrecchia), but pace is leaden, and script – an obvious imitation or rather variation of *ROSEMARY'S BABY* (1968) – provides no thrills. Buffs should give this one a look, others beware. English titles: *BLACK RIBBON FOR DEBORAH*, and simply *DEBORAH*.

**Fio do Horizonte, O** (1993, POR/SPA/FRA) **C-92m. \*\*\* D:** Fernando Lopes. Starring Claude Brasseur, Andréa Ferréol, Ana Padrao, Antonio Valero, Miguel Guilherme, Nicolau Breyner, Luís Santos. Intriguing psycho drama about pathologist Brasseur, who who day dissects a male body that somehow looks like him when he was much younger. He finds a photograph among the personal items and starts to become obsessed with finding out the identity of the man, who was shot near the Lisbon harbor. Awfully slow but consistently interesting, with a startling conclusion. Not for all tastes, but photography, score, acting are flawless. Based on a novel by Antonio Tabucchi. French title: *LE FIL DE L'HORIZON*.

**Fiore dai Petali d'Acciaio, Il** (1973, ITA/SPA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gianfranco Piccioli. Starring Gianni Garko, Carroll Baker, Ivano Staccioli, Pilar Velázquez, Paolo Senatore, Umberto Raho. Garko plays a surgeon, who accidentally kills his lover Senatore, when he pushes her away from him into the titular steel sculpture. He gets rid of the corpse, unaware that he has been followed. His estranged wife Baker asks police detective Staccioli for help. Complicated plot will have you guessing until the very last scene. Not one of the best examples of the giallo genre, but a must for fans anyway. English titles: *THE FLOWER WITH PETALS OF STEEL*, and *THE FLOWER WITH THE DEADLY STING*.

**Fiore delle Mille e Una Notte, Il** (1974, ITA/FRA) **C-131m. \*\*½ D:** Pier Paolo Pasolini. Starring Ninetto Davoli, Franco Citti, Tessa Bouché, Margaret Clementi, Ines Pellegrini, Franco Merli. The last part of Pasolini's Medieval trilogy, following *IL DECAMERON* and *I RACCONTI DI CANTERBURY* (all prototypical examples of the cyclical framed narrative, i.e. stories-within-stories). A loosely structured, often fascinating fantasy about a youth who falls in love with a slavegirl and spends the length of the film looking for her. In between, several stories from the Arabian Nights are interspersed. Pasolini doesn't manage to instill much meaning into his erotic fantasy, but authentic locations and imagery compensate for story-telling flaws. For patient viewers. Includes male and female full frontal nudity. Original version runs 155m. English titles: *ARABIAN NIGHTS*, *FLOWER OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*.

**Fire and Ice** (1983, USA) **C-81m. \*\*\* D:** Ralph Bakshi. Starring the voices of Susan Tyrrell, Maggie Roswell, Stephen Mendel, Alan Koss, William Ostrander. Quite appealing sword and

sorcery epic – made a year after CONAN’s box-office-success, about two warring tribes and a young warrior’s attempt to defeat the Ice Lord. Medium plot is outdone by dynamic animation (by Bakshi and the famed Frank Frazetta), which lets the characters move very realistically. A must for buffs.

**Firecracker** (2005, USA) **C/B&W-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Steve Balderson. Starring Karen Black, Mike Patton, Susan Traylor, Kathleen Wilhoite, Jak Kendall, Brooke Balderson, Paul Sizemore. David Lynch wannabe set in a small-town community in the 1960s and based on a true story. Teen Kendall suffers from a dysfunctional family, his mother (Black) is a religious fanatic, his father an alcoholic and his brother a brute. When a circus comes to town, he puts all his hopes in joining them as he is fascinated by their lead performer (also Black). A hope that is ultimately shattered. Tries hard to be stylish, with black-and-white sequences, use of slow-motion and flamboyant characters, but story is slowly-paced and none too interesting. Undermined mostly by Kendall’s ambitious but amateur performance.

**First Blood** (1982, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Ted Kotcheff. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna, Brian Dennehy, Bill McKinney, Jack Starrett, Michael Talbott, David Caruso. Stallone plays a vietnam vet returning to his home country, who is hassled by officer Dennehy and the local police force so much that he is transported back into the traumatic time in Vietnam. He escapes from the police station and hides out in the woods, his special training making it almost impossible for the cops to catch him. Incredibly dumb action thriller somehow made it to cult status, probably thanks to Stallone’s tense performance. Watchable, but rather dull. Stallone also coscripted, from the novel by David Morrell. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. Known simply as RAMBO in many other countries. Followed by RAMBO: FIRST BLOOD PART II (1985), RAMBO III (1988) and a TV series in 1986.

**First Great Train Robbery, The** (1979, GBR) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*D:** Michael Crichton. Starring Sean Connery, Lesley-Anne Down, Donald Sutherland, Alan Webb, Malcolm Terris, Wayne Sleep, Robert Lang. Title is the plot of this crime comedy about three ‘noble’ criminals who intend to steal gold from a moving train in the mid-1800s. Never terribly rousing but amusing and entertaining. Crichton wrote the screenplay from his own novel, which was based on a true incident. Well-produced by Dino de Laurentiis. U.S. title: THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY.

**First Men in the Moon** (1964, GBR) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Nathan Juran. Starring Edward Judd, Martha Hyer, Lionel Jeffries, Miles Malleon, Norman Bird, Peter Finch. Colorful science-fiction fantasy adventure could have used a tighter plot and less humbug. When the first humans land on the moon they discover an old flag and a reference to Queen Victoria. It turns out that in 1899, a private scientist developed a space ship which took him and two others to the moon and film mostly tells of their adventures. Mostly silly but done with flair and Ray Harryhausen’s Dynamation effects.

**First Mission** (1985, HGK) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Samo Hung. Starring Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Chan Lung, Dick Wei, James Tien, Phillip Ko, Emily Chu, Wu Ma, Corey Yuen, Melvin Wong. Jackie Chan plays a cop who must look after his retarded brother Hung. Things are complicated when the dumb giant accidentally gets hold of a bag full of jewelry – something the local gangsters want badly. Action-comedy-drama offers a welcome change of pace for a Jackie Chan movie, but plot is uneven and doesn’t really integrate its different elements well. The final fights are excellent – as usual with Hung movies. Worthwhile for Jackie and Samo’s fans. Also known as HEART OF THE DRAGON.

**First Snow** (2006, USA/GER) **C-102m. \*\*½ D:** Mark Fergus. Starring Guy Pearce, Piper Perabo, William Fichtner, J.K. Simmons, Shea Whigham, Rick Gonzalez, Jackie Burroughs. Pearce plays an aggressive travelling salesman, who decides to have his palm read while his

car is being repaired but doesn't like the outcome. Obviously the palm reader has seen something not right in his future. Should Pearce believe him, or go his own ways? Soon several coincidences show that the palm reader *was* right. Existential psycho drama with echoes of MEMENTO (2000) never cuts loose but remains interesting, evocative. Fichtner lends credible support as Pearce's colleague. Good score by Cliff Martinez.

**Fisher King, The** (1991, USA) **C-137m. \*\*\*½ D:** Terry Gilliam. Starring Jeff Bridges, Robin Williams, Mercedes Ruehl, Amanda Plummer, David Hyde Pierce, Adam Bryant, Paul Lombardi, Ted Ross, Lara Harris, Harry Shearer, Michael Jeter, Richard LaGravenese, Mel Bourne, Tom Waits. Wonderful comedy drama about cynical, self-centered radio DJ Bridges, who loses his job when one of his callers goes on a killing spree. Three years later, he meets crazy homeless Williams, who claims to be on a quest to get the Holy Grail – on New York's Fifth Avenue! Bridges is reluctant to help, but when he learns that he is indirectly responsible for the man's mental state, he tries to help Williams and thus redeem himself. Brilliantly acted slice-of-life, filled with amazing fantasy touches and a heart-warming central message recounted in film's titular story-within-a-story. Outstanding. An Oscar went to Ruehl for her incredible performance. Fine score by George Fenton.

**Fistful of Fingers, A** (1993, GBR) **C-78m. \*\*½ D:** Edgar Wright. Starring Graham Low, Martin Curtis, Oliver Evans, Quentin Green. Western spoof made on a shoestring budget was Edgar Wright's first feature (at the age of 21!). Basically a parody of the DOLLARS movies, this features a 'man with no name' and his (mis-)adventures in the Wild West. Plot is muddled and humor is juvenile, but editing and direction show talent. In fact, Peter Jackson's BAD TASTE (1987) may have served as a blueprint for this film. It's not as violent, but as fun in a comic-book sort of way.

**Fist of Fury** (1972, HGK) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Lo Wei. Starring Bruce Lee, Nora Miao, Jun Arimura, Robert Baker, Fu Ching Chen, Tony Liu, Lo Wei. Bruce Lee's best film transcends its simple revenge formula thanks to the legendary star's charisma. When Lee finds out that his teacher has been killed, he seeks ultra-violent vengeance on the killers – and takes on an entire martial-arts school! Good production design, slowly paced but not uninteresting plot. Lee went on to make ENTER THE DRAGON, his biggest commercial success. Also known as THE CHINESE CONNECTION.

**Fiume del Grande Caimano, Il** (1979, ITA) **C-87m. □ D:** Sergio Martino. Starring Barbara Bach, Claudio Cassinelli, Mel Ferrer, Romano Puppo, Richard Johnson. Terrible monster movie about a giant crocodile wreaking havoc in a small Caribbean community. Cast and crew must have been on holiday. This was cowritten by George Eastman! Also known as ALLIGATORS, BIG ALLIGATOR RIVER, BIG CAIMANO RIVER, GREAT ALLIGATOR (RIVER).

**Five Corners** (1988, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*½ D:** Tony Bill. Starring Tim Robbins, Todd Graf, Jodie Foster, John Turturro, Elizabeth Berridge, Rose Gregorio, Gregory Rozakis, John Seitz, Eriq La Salle. In 1964, a time of racial turmoil in the States, Five Corners in the Bronx is the scene for dramatic events itself, as Turturro, recently released from prison, tries to attract the attention of young Foster, whom he tried to rape months earlier. She is hoping to get help from friend Robbins, who protected her last time but has sworn to live a life without violence. Well-written period drama flavorfully captures the mood of the 1960s without relying too much on oldies of the time. Superbly scored (by James Newton Howard) and superbly acted (especially by Turturro), film is perhaps too dramatic and unrelenting but a remarkably moving achievement nevertheless. Co-produced by the director. Screenplay by John Patrick Shanley (MOONSTRUCK).

**Five Deadly Venoms** (1978, HGK) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Chang Cheh. Starring Chiang Sheng, Philip Kwok, Lu Feng, Wei Pai, Sun Chien, Lo Meng. Considered by some to be a genre classic,

this Chang Cheh eastern starts out interestingly, then becomes talky and confusing. A dying master tells his last student about five of his best students – each endowed with an invincible fighting technique – and instructs him to stop them from stealing money amassed by his clan. Even the fight scenes are average at best. Also known as FIVE VENOMS, and PICK YOUR POISON.

**(500) Days of Summer** (2009, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Marc Webb. Starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Zoey Deschanel, Geoffrey Arend, Chloe Moretz, Matthew Gray Gubler. Bitter-sweet romantic drama about two twens who meet on the job and start a brief fling. For him, it's true love, for her it's not, and film chronicles the 500 days of their relationship. Quite refreshing approach, but ultimately downbeat, Deschanel's cuteness can't save it. The tacked-on happy ending doesn't ring true, although it is kind of funny.

**Five Masters of the Shaolin** (1975, HGK) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Chang Cheh. Starring Alexander Fu-Sheng. Kung Fu film by genre expert Chang features lots of violent action but fails to awake much interest with its plot: Five Shaolin monks are the only ones to survive a Manchu raid and swear to take revenge. Patient viewers will find compensation in the showdown - the best part of the film.

**Five-Year Engagement, The** (2011, USA) **C-131m. \*\*½ D:** Nicholas Stoller. Starring Jason Segel, Emily Blunt, Chris Pratt. Romantic comedy about a couple, who want to get married but postpone this plan when she gets a post-grad job in Michigan, which means that he has to give up his restaurant job in San Francisco. Some laugh-out-loud jokes in this one, with some pretty outlandish scenes, but goes on too long. Produced by Judd Apatow.

**Flatland** (2007, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ladd Ehlinger Jr. Starring (the voices of) Chris Carter, Megan Colleen, Ladd Ehlinger Jr., Oscar Gutierrez, Simon Hammond. Highly interesting computer-animated experiment about a two-dimensional world, where society is divided into triangles, squares etc. One day the protagonist, an A square, is kidnapped by a sphere who intends to show him the wonders of 3-D. However, there is an impending war, because the Spacelanders want to wipe out the Flatlanders. Difficult to tune in to unconventional story and concept, with a strange, satirical written commentary, but story takes you in, and voice performances and score are professionally done. Based on an 1885 novel by mathematician Edwin A. Abbott, which was previously filmed as short movies in 1965 and 1982. Later in 2007, another short film version premiered, this was titled FLATLAND: THE MOVIE.

**Flatliners** (1990, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joel Schumacher. Starring Kiefer Sutherland, Julia Roberts, Kevin Bacon, William Baldwin, Oliver Platt, Hope Davis. A group of ambitious medical students start experimenting with the afterlife by 'flatlining' themselves (i.e. stopping their heartbeat for a few minutes). Soon after, however, they start having terrifying visions. Is the afterlife 'visiting' them? Intriguing thriller marks a stylish collaboration between director Schumacher (THE LOST BOYS) and cameraman Jan de Bont (SPEED). Plot isn't always on-target, but some strong scenes make it worthwhile. Contains one riveting reference to Nicholas Roeg's chiller DON'T LOOK NOW (1973), which starred Sutherland's father Donald. Coproduced by Michael Douglas.

**Flavia, la Monaca Musulmana** (1974, ITA/FRA) **C-101m. \*½ D:** Gianfranco Mingozzi. Starring Florinda Bolkan, María Casares, Claudio Cassinelli, Anthony Corlan (=Higgins), Spiros Focas. Infamous classic of 'nunsploitation' is a historical drama about a 15<sup>th</sup> century nun (Bolkan), who finds herself attracted by the Muslim religion and feels repelled by the sexual activity around her. 'Plot' is merely an excuse for graphic torture scenes and nudity, when it's not boring you to death with endless close-ups of Bolkan's face. Also known as FLAVIA THE

HERETIC, FLAVIA THE REBEL NUN, FLAVIA, PRIESTESS OF VIOLENCE, FLAVIA: HERETIC PREISTESS, and THE MUSLIM NUN.

**Fleisch** (1979, GER) **C-113m.** **\*\*½ D:** Rainer Erler. Starring Jutta Speidel, Wolf Roth, Herbert Herrmann, Charlotte Kerr, Bob Cunningham. Honeymoon turns into Nightmare when Speidel's husband (Herrmann) is abducted by an ambulance in New Mexico — for no apparent reason. She manages to flee and is picked up by trucker Roth, who helps her find out about the kidnapping. It turns out that someone is trading with human organs. Well-photographed thriller with an intelligent story (years ahead of its time) is dramatically uneven and keeps the viewer in the dark for too long. It also lacks any genuine thrills. Made for German television. Scripted by the director, based on his novel. U.S. title: SPARE PARTS.

**Flesh + Blood** (1985, USA) **C-126m.** **SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Paul Verhoeven. Starring Rutger Hauer, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Tom Burlinson, Jack Thompson, Susan Tyrrell, Brion James, Bruno Kirby. Action spectacle set in medieval times follows the exploits of a horde of outlaws headed by Hauer, who has just kidnapped young princess Leigh. Not very distinguished in terms of plot, but Verhoeven's rousing direction makes the difference. Lots of sex and gore may turn off conservative viewers.

**Flesh and Blood Show, The** (1972, GBR) **C-93m.** **\*½ D:** Pete Walker. Starring Jenny Hanley, Ray Brooks, Luan Peters, Judy Matheson, Robin Askwith, Patrick Barr. Some young actors are invited to a run-down theater in a deserted town and must find out that there's a mad killer stalking them by night. Poorly directed, not at all as interesting as it sounds, only the denouement shows some brains — too late. Watch THEATRE OF BLOOD (1973) instead. A flashback sequence is in black-and-white. Also known as ASYLUM OF THE INSANE.

**Flesh and the Fiends, The** (1959, GBR) **91m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Gilling. Starring Peter Cushing, June Laverick, Donald Pleasance, George Rose, Renee Houston, Dermot Walsh. Unusual mixture of horror and crime drama about doctor Cushing, who employs grave robbers to supply him with fresh corpses for his experiments. Will medical student Rose find out? Less sensationalistic than other chillers, this one works itself through to a moral conclusion and cannot really be called a horror film. Atmospheric and well-acted, though pacing and plot are uneven. Judge for yourself. Several versions of this film are in existence: MANIA (running 87/91m.), THE FIENDISH GHOULS (74m.) and PSYCHO KILLERS. Original uncut version runs 97m.

**Flesh Eating Mothers** (1989, USA) **C-89m.** **Ⓜ D:** James Aviles Martin. Starring Robert Lee Oliver, Donatella Hecht, Neal Rosen. Valorie Hubbard. A virus is infecting all female members of a suburban community and turns them into zombies. Lots of splatter mayhem ensues. Atrocious acting and amateurish direction kill this off before anyone gets killed in the movie. Director Martin's only effort for the cinema (thank goodness!). Don't mix this up with the slightly better RABID GRANNIES (see MEMES CANNIBALES).

**Flesh for Frankenstein** (1974, USA/ITA/FRA) **C-89m.** **SCOPE \*\* D:** Paul Morrissey, Antonio Margheriti. Starring Joe Dallesandro, Monique van Vooren, Udo Kier, Arno Juering, Dalila Di Lazzaro, Srdjan Zelenovic, Nicoletta Elmi. Producer Andy Warhol's take on the Frankenstein myth is ponderous, awfully slow. Baron Kier attempts to create a man and a woman who should produce offspring. If you don't fall asleep, you might savor the melancholy score (by Claudio Gizzi), and Luigi Kuveiller's cinematography. Otherwise, this is heavy-handed. Carlo Ponti coproduced, effects by Carlo Rambaldi. Ubaldo Terzano (one of Mario Bava's regular collaborators) is credited as camera operator. Originally filmed in 3-D. Uncut print runs 95m. Filmed back-to-back with BLOOD FOR DRACULA (1974). Also known as ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN, THE DEVIL AND DR. FRANKENSTEIN, THE FRANKENSTEIN EXPERIMENT, and simply FRANKENSTEIN.

**Flesh Gordon 2: Flesh Gordon Meets the Cosmic Cheerleaders**(1990, USA) **C-102m.** \*½ D: Howard T. Ziehm. Starring Vince Murdocco, Robyn Kelly, Tony Travis, Morgan Fox. Pure trash about the title character, some kind of superhero - in bed -, who is abducted by the Cosmic Cheerleaders, whose planet was hit by an impotence beam. Gordon is captured by creator of this beam, who wants to make a penis transplant! Some funny bits, but otherwise unbearably nonsensical. Sequel to the 1974 sex comedy FLESH GORDON. Edited by Joe (Giuseppe) Tornatore (CINEMA PARADISO)!

**Fleur du Mal, La** (2003, FRA/ITA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Benoît Magimel, Nathalie Baye, Mélanie Doutey, Suzanne Flon, Bernard Le Coq, Thomas Chabrol, Henri Attal. Typical Chabrol crime drama, though heavy-handed at times: Baye plays a local politician, whose campaign is torpedoed by a letter that discloses some outrageous facts about her family history. Who is behind it, and how will the family deal with it? Typically well-directed, well-acted drama is of medium interest only. Just doesn't add up to more. English title: THE FLOWER OF EVIL.

**Flic, Un** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Alain Delon, Richard Crenna, Cathérine Deneuve, Ricardo Cucciolla, Simone Valère, Michael Conrad. Slow crime drama about police detective Delon trying to catch a gang of criminals led by Crenna. Uninvolving and superficial, although the cast is good, and there are some fine directorial touches. Last film of famed director Melville (LE SAMOURAI, LE CERCLE ROUGE). English title: DIRTY MONEY.

**Flight** (2012, USA) **C-138m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Zemeckis. Starring Denzel Washington, Kelly Reilly, Don Cheadle, Bruce Greenwood, John Goodman. An airline pilot (Oscar-nominated Washington) with a drinking problem uses all his experience to avert a crash and is then faced with charges of flying under the influence, which may end his career and send him to prison. Heroin addict Reilly (especially lovely) becomes his partner in misery. Compelling drama with excellent performances, expert storytelling and direction. Good score by Alan Silvestri.

**Flight 90: Disaster on the Potomac** (1984, USA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Robert Michael Lewis. Starring Jeanetta Arnette, Barry Corbin, Stephen Macht, Richard Masur, Donnelly Rhodes, Jamie Rose. The AIRPORT formula gets the TV treatment in this low-grade, boring disaster thriller based on a real incident. The lives of the airplane victims are followed before the airplane crash and their desperate struggle for survival in the icy (styrofoam) Potomac river. Poor in all departments. Also known as FLIGHT NO. 90, FLORIDA FLIGHT 90.

**Flight of the Navigator** (1986, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Randal Kleiser. Starring Joey Cramer Paul Reuben, Veronica Cartwright, Cliff De Young, Sarah Jessica Parker. A young boy mysteriously disappears one night and reappears 8 years later to the shock and surprise of his parents. It turns out he was abducted in a spaceship and has now special powers, which the government is interested in. He then boards a UFO and manages to communicate with the onboard computer. Exciting, well-paced 80s adventure classic, not without lulls, but good for kids. Fine score by Alan Silvestri.

**Flipper's New Adventure** (1964, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Leon Benson. Starring Luke Halpin, Pamela Franklin, Helen Cherry, Tom Helmore, Francesca Annis, Brian Kelly. Sequel to FLIPPER (1963), about a boy and his dolphin (also a TV series). When the boy learns they are about to be evicted he runs away from home and ends up on a deserted island. When three escaped convicts hijack a family's yacht, he is joined by the mother and two daughters, one of whom he becomes friends with. Harmless adventure with nice settings. Best thing: Performance of newcomer Franklin (THE INNOCENTS, THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE). Also known as FLIPPER AND THE PIRATES.

**Flirt** (1995, USA/GER/JAP) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Hal Hartley. Starring Bill Sage, Parker Posey, Martin Donovan, Dwight Ewell, Geno Lechner, Peter Fitz, Miho Nikaidoh, Toshizo Fujisawa, Chikako Hara. Filmmaker Hartley tells three similar stories about love and relationships in three different settings, none of which is very compelling. In fact, drama becomes tedious after a while. Not without merit, but too slight.

**Fluch, Der** (1988, GER) **C-92m.** \*½ D: Ralf Huettner. Starring Dominic Raacke, Barbara May, Romina Nowack, Tobias Moretti. Pretentious mystery about an eight year-old girl with strange visions, who goes to the mountains one day with her parents, where they get lost and find the corpse of a girl that looks exactly like their little daughter. Badly acted film attempts to criticize the nonchalant attitude of tourists towards nature but comes up with a boring and improbable tale instead. Germany obviously can't do better than this. The film got good reviews there.

**Fluke** (1995, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Carlo Carlei. Starring Matthew Modine, Eric Stoltz, Nancy Travis, Jon Polito, Ron Perlman. Stunningly beautiful and touching film (with a distinctly European flavour) about a man who is reincarnated as a dog after a fatal car crash and goes on to join his mourning family. A rich score and eye-popping production design make this a must for kids and adults alike. In its message leagues ahead of BABE. Based on James Herbert's novel.

**Flushed Away** (2006, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: David Bowers, Simon Fell. Starring (the voices of) Hugh Jackman, Kate Winslet, Ian McKellen, Jean Reno, Bill Nighy, Andy Serkis, Shane Richie, David Bowers. Upper-class rat Jackman from London's Kensington gets flushed down the toilet and ends up in a city in the sewer populated by rats, slugs and the like, and run by psychopathic frog McKellen. He hooks up with tough girlie Winslet, who promises to bring him back to his golden cage if he helps her in return. Starts mildly, then improves in action sequences, ends up as good fun, with many funny characters (love Le Frog) and quite a lot of laughs. First computer-animated feature from Aardman Animation after their clay-animated Wallace and Gromit classics. Contains a few nifty references as well.

**Fly, The** (1958, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Kurt Neumann. Starring Al Hedison, Patricia Owens, Vincent Price, Herbert Marshall, Kathleen Freeman. Harrowing, dramatic horror film about a scientist (Hedison) whose experiments with a disintegration machine partly turn him into a fly. Frame-story has his wife tell all that has happened to a friend (Price). Unfortunately, this means giving away the climax right at the beginning. The audience is then left with the improbability of the going-ons, but earnest acting and fine dramatics overcome these flaws. Screenplay by James Clavell. Followed by RETURN OF THE FLY (1959) and CURSE OF THE FLY (1965). Remade in 1986 by David Cronenberg.

**Fly, The** (1986, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: David Cronenberg. Starring Jeff Goldblum, Geena Davis, John Getz, David Cronenberg. Typical Cronenberg horror shocker about brilliant scientist Goldblum, who has devised a way to teleport items and animals. When he tries the machine on himself, a fly sneaks into the telepod causing the computer to mix up the DNAs. Slowly, the scientist finds himself transformed into a hideous insect. Ugly but well-made sci-fi horror film has become a cult item and spawned a sequel in 1989. Oscar-winner for Best Makeup. Actually a remake (with blood and guts) of the 1958 chiller starring Vincent Price.

**Fly II, The** (1989, USA) **C-104m.** \*\* D: Chris Walas. Starring Eric Stoltz, Daphne Zuniga, Lee Richardson, John Getz, Frank C. Turner. Needless – but not bad – sequel to David Cronenberg's 1986 cult film. Stoltz plays Goldblum's son, who's aging so fast that, at 5, he looks like a grown-up. Soon his DNA will slowly transform into that of a monstrous fly creature – just what the scientists in the lab are waiting for. Some disgusting effects, okay for its type. Story by Mick Garris, screenplay co-authored by Frank Darabont.

**Fog, The** (1980, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Carpenter. Starring Adrienne Barbeau, Jamie Lee Curtis, Janet Leigh, John Houseman, Tom Atkins, Charles Cyphers, George 'Buck' Flower, Tommy Lee Wallace, John Carpenter. Typical Carpenter horror movie: Good production values, effective in terms of atmosphere and suspense, but also endowed with an addle-brained plot. A small coastal town is terrorized by a mysterious fog that brings back undead sailors who were misled and killed by the populace a hundred years ago. Direction and photography create chills and almost overcome the silly plot – almost. Carpenter cowrote the script with Debra Hill (also producer) and did the music, as usual. This was his first film after his breakthrough movie, HALLOWEEN (1978).

**Folie des Grandeurs, La** (1971, FRA/SPA/ITA/GER) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Gérard Oury. Starring Louis de Funès, Yves Montand, Alice Sapritch, Karin Schubert, Alberto de Mendoza, Venantino Venantini, Gabriele Tinti, Paul Préboist, Sal Borgese, Leopoldo Trieste, Frank Brana, Angel Alvarez, Fernando Bilbao. One of French comedian de Funès' rarest films is a slight disappointment: In this adaptation of a Victor Hugo story he plays a Minister of Finance (later he would be equally greedy as L'AVARE), who gets ousted by his (German) queen in 17<sup>th</sup> century Spain. He returns with a plan to make his valet Montand (strangely miscast) a count, who the queen should fall in love with. Complicated, not always funny, though de Funès gives a full-blooded performance. Filmed partly on the sets of the Spanish/Italian spaghetti westerns with elements of the western, which makes this costume comedy even stranger. Photographed by Henri Decae. English title: DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR.

**Folies Bourgeoises, Les** (1975, FRA/GER) **C-107m. \*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Ann-Margret, Henri Attal, Stéphane Audran, Charles Aznavour, Jean-Pierre Cassel, Sybil Danning, Bruce Dern, Curd Jürgens, Tomas Milian, Sydne Rome, Maria Schell, Dominique Zardi, Claude Chabrol. Interesting Chabrol drama unfortunately lacks depth: The marriage of a rich couple, writer Dern and society lady Audran, deteriorates rapidly as he has a writing blockade and she is paranoid and slowly going insane. Lots of international stars appear in minor roles. Closer in spirit (and surrealism) to Luis Bunuel's films of the 1970s than any other Chabrol movie. For Chabrol enthusiasts, others may be put off too easily by the unpleasant material. English title: THE TWIST.

**Following** (1998, GBR) **B&W-69m. \*\*½ D:** Christopher Nolan. Starring Jeremy Theobald, Alex Haw, Lucy Russell, John Nolan, Dick Bradsell. Debut feature from the maker of MEMENTO (2000) is low-budget, but contains intriguing ideas. An aspiring writer (Theobald) spends his time following people, soon makes the acquaintance of suave burglar Haw, who breaks into the homes of the people he follows. Interesting non-linear narrative, but direction is too self-conscious and the actors not always convincing. Written by director Nolan.

**Food of the Gods** (1976, USA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Bert I. Gordon. Starring Marjoe Gortner, Pamela Franklin, Ralph Meeker, Jon Cypher, Ida Lupino. Okay eco-horror film, based on portions of H.G. Wells' novel. Some tourists vacationing on a Canadian island are attacked by giant wasps. It turns out a mysterious liquid is responsible for the extreme growth of animals, like chicken, worms and especially rats. Occasionally dumb but well-paced with fairly exciting finale (that has overtones of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD). Effects range from unconvincing to pretty nasty. Director Gordon's second adaptation of the Wells novel, his VILLAGE OF THE GIANTS (1965) was set in a small American community. Followed by a sequel in 1989.

**Fools Rush In** (1997, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\* D:** Andy Tennant. Starring Matthew Perry, Salma Hayek, Jon Tenney, Carlos Gomez, Tomas Milian, Jill Clayburgh. Pleasant comedy about

construction site manager Perry, who has a one-night stand with Mexican photographer Hayek, and is shocked when three months later she pops up again, saying she is pregnant - and wants to keep the baby. However, what follows is a culture clash of different sorts. Amiable, if obvious romance comes to life in the last third, which is very entertaining. The soundtrack is well-compiled.

**Forbidden, The** (1978, GBR) **36m. n/r** D: Clive Barker. Starring Peter Atkins, Clive Barker, Doug Bradley, Phil Rimmer, Lyn Darnell, Julia Blake. Horror novelist Barker's second short (following SALOME) is an experimental, surreal, visually brooding (and for his fans certainly fascinating) extravaganza, a collage of sometimes powerful images, all presented in a 'negative' format. Film includes some full-frontal male nudity and can be interpreted in the context of Barker's own sexuality. Remained unedited for nearly twenty years. Issued in a double-bill with SALOME in the mid-1990s with an entirely new, atmospheric score. Not related at all to Clive Barker's short story 'The Forbidden', which was filmed as CANDYMAN in 1992.

**Forbidden World** (1982, USA) **C-82m. \*½** D: Allan Holzman. Starring Jesse Vint, Dawn Dunlap, June Chadwick, Linden Chiles, Fox Harris. The follow-up to GALAXY OF TERROR is similarly demented ALIEN rip-off, as commander Vint battles mutant monster bred by scientists on a space station. Lots of gore, some nudity to satisfy trash fans. Seems long despite short running time. Also shown at 77m. Coproduced by Roger Corman.

**Forced Entry** (1975, USA) **C-88m. □** D: Jim Sotos. Starring Tanya Roberts, Ron Max, Nancy Allen. Sickening horror thriller about retarded car mechanic Max, who thinks each woman is a whore and goes on a killing spree. Unbearable trash. Released in 1981.

**Force of the Ninja** (1988, USA) **C-93m. \*½** D: Emmett Alston. Starring Douglas Ivan, Patricia Ball, John Hobson, Douglas Hamanaka. Lame attempt at fashioning an American ninja movie: When the daughter of a Japanese monarch is kidnapped and held for ransom in Arizona, the Asians send a ninja expert to the States to free her and kill the kidnapers. Little action, boring even for ninja fans.

**Forces of Nature** (1998, USA) **C-108m. \*½** D: N.N. Starring Ben Affleck, Sandra Bullock, Ronny Cox, Blythe Danner. Affleck travels from New York to Savannah to marry his love N.N., but the plane crashes before take-off and he is forced to share a rental car with whirligig Bullock. Needless to say, they fall in love. Kitschy romance with extremely improbable situations that were obviously meant to bring about 'entertainment'. The stars have no chemistry to speak of, and the digital effects are out of place.

**Foreign Affair, A** (1948, USA) **116m. \*\*\*** D: Billy Wilder. Starring Jean Arthur, Marlene Dietrich, John Lund, Millard Mitchell, Peter von Zerneck, Stanley Prager. Congresswoman Arthur travels to post-war Berlin to see how the G.I. troops are doing and brings Captain Lund in trouble when she discovers that lascivious German Nazi sympathizer Dietrich has an affair with a U.S. soldier. Meanwhile Arthur develops a particular liking for the Captain. Enjoyable comedy works thanks to a typically fine script (co-authored by Wilder) and a charismatic performance by Dietrich. Her scenes in the Lorelei bar are stunning.

**Forest of Death** (2007, HGK) **C-98m. \*½** D: Danny Pang. Starring Shu Qi, Ekin Cheng, Rain Li, Lau Siu-Ming, Suet Lam, Tommy Luen, Lawrence Chou. Awful misfire from one half of the Pang Brothers about a female police officer who investigates the mysterious suicides in a nearby forest. She ultimately teams up with an aspiring scientist, who is experimenting with a plant lie-detector. And there is a strange hermit, whose daughter died in the forest. Far-fetched, completely unbelievable esoteric babble. Some effective editing cannot save it. An utter disappointment. Oxide served as co-producer. Cantonese title: SUM YUEN.

**Forest of the Damned** (2005, GBR) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Johannes Roberts. Starring Tom Savini, Daniel Maclagan, Nicole Petty, Sophie Holland. What can you expect from a low-budget, independent film about roadtripping teenagers who meet nude demons in the woods? Well, it ain't *that* bad. Savini gives his best as eremite who the kids also have to contend with. Direction tries for some atmosphere, but it's all too slowly paced and barely original.

**Forgotten Silver** (1995, NZL) **C-53m. n/r** D: Peter Jackson, Costa Botes. Featuring Peter Jackson, Johnny Morris, Costa Botes, Harvey Weinstein, Leonard Maltin, Sam Neill. Director Peter Jackson (LORD OF THE RINGS) presents this straight-from-the-hip mockumentary about (fictional) pioneer of filmmaking Colin McKenzie, a New Zealander, whose work just has been rediscovered by directors and critics. His life is traced from his adolescence to the first attempts to make movies – his innovations always coming before the previous record-setting ones. Concept wears thin early on and never creates sense of wonder needed. This seems like a job director Jackson did because he had the time, not because he wanted to do it. Still, some were intrigued by it. Jackson also scripted with co-director Botes.

**For Love of the Game** (1999, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sam Raimi. Starring Kevin Costner, Kelly Preston, John C. Reilly, Jena Malone, Brian Cox. Costner shines as aging baseball pro, who looks back on his career and problems in his private life during the preparations for an important ball-game. Slick entertainment, well-filmed by Sam Raimi (of all people), falters due to overlength and a possible lack of interest from audiences who don't happen to love baseball (which is admittedly rare in North America).

**Fortabte Sjaeles ø, De** (2007, DAN/SWE/GER) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Nikolaj Arcel. Starring Sara Langebaek Gaarmann, Lucas Munk Billing, Lasse Borg, Nicolaj Kopernikus, Lars Mikkelsen. Fantasy horror film for older children about 14-year-old Gaarmann, who moves to the Danish seaside with her mother and brother. She is interested in the occult and starts to investigate when her brother is obviously possessed by the ghost of a 19th century Freemason. It turns out a Necromancer is keeping souls trapped on a nearby island. Fairly well-made, dark and scary, but a bit derivative – especially its LORD OF THE RINGS imitation score. Good for kids. Also known as ISLAND OF LOST SOULS.

**Fortress** (1993, USA) **C-95m. \*½** D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Christopher Lambert, Kurtwood Smith, Loryn Locklin, Clifton Collins Jr., Lincoln Kilpatrick, Jeffrey Combs, Vernon Wells, voice of Carolyn Purdy-Gordon. One of director Gordon's most expensive movies is also actually one of his worst. After Lambert's wife becomes pregnant illegally in the near future, they are brought into a high-security prison, which no one can escape from. No one? Violent, quite popular among genre fans, but poorly scripted sci-fi action, followed by a sequel in 1999.

**40 Days and 40 Nights** (2002, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-96m. \*\*** D: Michael Lehmann. Starring Josh Hartnett, Shannyn Sossamon, Paulo Costanzo, Adam Trese, Griffin Dunne. Formulaic teen comedy about every girl's heartthrob Hartnett, who is screwing every chick he goes out with ever since he was dumped by his girlfriend. When he gets nightmares, he decides to remain chaste for 40 days and nights, not even kissing is allowed. Right then, wouldn't you know it, he meets Mrs. Right. Low-brow comedy targeted at teens, with a main character who is 25! Not exactly original, but its target audience probably won't mind (they pay for the sex jokes and Hartnett's body and face).

**40 Year Old Virgin, The** (2005, USA) **C-133m. \*\*** D: Judd Apatow. Starring Steve Carell, Catherine Keener, Paul Rudd, Romany Malco, Seth Rogen, Elizabeth Banks. Title tells all in comedy that is not so unwatchable as you might think: Carell plays the title character, whose private life has never gone past the teenage stage. He still fondly collects action figures, cycles to work and has never... well... Not as mean-spirited as it might have been, but still

goes on longer, MUCH longer than it should, with some entirely pointless scenes. A huge box-office hit, believe it or not. Originally 116m.

**For Whom to Be Murdered** (1978, HGK) **C-76m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Patrick Yuen. Starring Angie Chiu, Raymond Wong, Tony Wong. Poor actioner about two bumbling tourists in Hong Kong, who witness an attempted murder and are then chased by a crime syndicate. Silly comic relief, below-average fight scenes. Low-grade stuff, rightfully forgotten.

**For Your Eyes Only** (1981, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Glen. Starring Roger Moore, Carole Bouquet, Topol, Lynn-Holly Johnson, Julian Glover, Cassandra Harris, Desmond Llewelyn, Lois Maxwell. Change of pace for 007 sees his return to the minimalism of the 1960s. Modest plot about spying device lying under water just off the Greek coast, punctuated by some nice action sequences with good stunt work.

**Foto di Gioia, Le** (1987, ITA) **C-90m. \*\* D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Serena Grandi, Daria Nicolodi, Vanni Corbellini, David Brandon, George Eastman, Karl Zinny, Lino Salemme, Sabrina Salerno, Capucine. Barely watchable thriller in the giallo vein about voluptuous Grandi, who has her own publishing house and studio for nude photographs. When somebody starts killing her models, she is terrified and can't figure out who the madman is. One of Bava's lesser films, strictly standard in all departments, even Simon Boswell's score is less compelling this time. Watch it for the women's great nude physiques. Lamberto's son Fabrizio was assistant director. English titles: DELIRIUM, PHOTOS OF JOY, PHOTO OF GIOIA, GIOIA'S PHOTOGRAPH.

**Foto Proibite di una Signora per Bene, Le** (1970, ITA/SPA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Luciano Ercoli. Starring Dagmar Lassander, Pier Paolo Capponi, Susan Scott (=Nieves Navarro), Simón Andreu, Osvaldo Genazzani, Salvador Huguet. A happily married woman (Lassander) falls prey to a blackmailer, who claims that her indebted husband has murdered one of his creditors. Meanwhile, her best friend may be her husband's lover and part of the intrigue. Sex-and-crime Italian style, slowly paced, but well-directed and ennobled by superb lighting and photography (by Alejandro Ulloa), as well as inimitable early 70s style, right down to the props, costumes and make-up. Good score by Ennio Morricone. Cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi. Edited by the director. English title: FORBIDDEN PHOTOS OF A LADY ABOVE SUSPICION.

**Fountain, The** (2006, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Darren Aronofsky. Starring Hugh Jackman, Rachel Weisz, Ellen Burstyn, Mark Margolis, Stephen McHattie, Fernando Hernandez, Cliff Curtis, Sean Patrick Thomas. Richly symbolic drama about research scientist Jackman, whose troubled, sick wife Weisz has just completed a novel about the Mayan culture and Spanish conquistadors. The novel is also related in this film, with Jackman and Weisz taking up key roles. In a third plot strand, a bald Jackman is floating in space, living under a seemingly alive tree in a huge sphere. Visually arresting, beautifully scored drama whose success will depend on how you can relate to it. The overall theme is a bit downbeat and depressing. From the director of PI (1998) and REQUIEM FOR A DREAM (2000).

**Four Christmases** (2008, USA/GER) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Seth Gordon. Starring Vince Vaughn, Reese Witherspoon, Robert Duvall, Sissy Spacek, Jon Voight, Jon Favreau, Mary Steenburgen, Dwight Yoakam, Colleen Camp, Laura Johnson, Carol Kane. Pretty crazy Christmas comedy about happily not-married couple Vaughn and Witherspoon (deliberately miscast as a couple), who intend to spend Xmas on Fiji. Then all the flights are cancelled, so they have no choice but to visit all four of their divorced parents, with disastrous results. Comedy runs hot and cold but has some truly hilarious scenes, especially at Duvall's home.

**Four Feathers, The** (2002, USA/GBR) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Shekhar Kapur. Starring Heath Ledger, Kate Hudson, Wes Bentley, Djimon Hounsou, Michael Sheen. After leaving the army

because of a pending war in Africa, 19<sup>th</sup> century soldier Ledger loses his honor and fiancée Hudson. He then embarks on a journey to war-torn Sudan to redeem himself. Remake of the 1939 adventure classic (also filmed in has surprisingly little emotional impact, but is exquisitely filmed, well-directed and well-acted by Ledger. Based on the novel by A.E.W. Mason. Score by James Horner.

**4: Rise of the Silver Surfer** (2007, USA/GER) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Tim Story. Starring Ioan Gruffudd, Jessica Alba, Chris Evans, Michael Chiklis, Julian McMahon, Kerry Washington, Stan Lee, voice of Laurence Fishburne. Sequel to FANTASTIC FOUR is equally lifeless fantasy actioner about the four Marvel superheroes: Gruffudd and Alba are about to marry, when an extra-terrestrial force threatens to destroy the Earth, and the Silver Surfer seems to be the vanguard of destruction. Not bad, fairly exciting, but rather soulless.

**Four Rooms** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½** D: Allison Anders, Alexandre Rockwell, Robert Rodriguez, Quentin Tarantino. Starring Tim Roth, Antonio Banderas, Jennifer Beals, Paul Calderon, Sammi Davis, Amanda de Cadenet, Valeria Golino, Kathy Griffin, Marc Lawrence, Madonna, David Proval, Ione Skye, Quentin Tarantino, Lili Taylor, Marisa Tomei, Tamlyn Tomita, Alicia Witt, Lana McKissack, Danny Verduzco, Salma Hayek, Lawrence Bender. Like most four-part films, a mixed bag: Tim Roth plays a 'bell-hop' at an L.A. hotel, who, on New Year's Eve, has four incredible encounters at various rooms. 'The Missing Ingredient' is the pointless story of several witches (Madonna, Skye, Golino et al.) who need the sperm of a man in order to resurrect another witch. The second one ('The Wrong Man') is an improvement and quite funny, about Beals' troubles with her psychotic husband. The third episode ('The Misbehavers'), by Rodriguez, about two kids who are left alone by their parents and drive Roth half crazy is the best. It's remarkably well-edited (by the director) and ends with a hilarious climax. The fourth part ('The Man from Hollywood') is only so-so, a vanity product, written, directed by and starring Tarantino as a director who makes a most unusual bet with a friend. Bruce Willis has a cameo in that last episode. Quite obviously this hip production is a matter of taste. Fans of the directors will find it amusing.

**Four Skulls of Jonathan Drake, The** (1959, USA) **C-70m. \*\*½** D: Edward L. Cahn. Starring Eduard Franz, Valerie French, Grant Richards, Henry Daniell. Briskly paced, creepy little chiller about title character, who must contend with ancient curse placed on his family two hundred years ago. Not at all bad, but typically self-conscious 50s horror.

**1408** (2007, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mikael Hafström. Starring John Cusack, Samuel L. Jackson, Mary McCormack, Tony Shalhoub, Len Cariou. Title refers to a supposedly haunted hotel room in NYC that makes perfect final chapter for ghost-house writer Cusack, or so he thinks. The room turns out to be evil indeed and Cusack, a non-believer with a sad history is in for the ride of his lifetime. Well-made and acted, but with a script this predictable, the film only goes so far. Based on a short story by Stephen King, who seems to recycle ideas from many of his previous stories and films here (IT, SHINING, MISERY to name but a few). Unrated version runs 112m.

**4<sup>th</sup> Floor, The** (1999, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Josh Klausner. Starring Juliette Lewis, William Hurt, Shelley Duvall, Austin Pendleton, Tobin Bell, Robert Costanzo. Quite good chiller about Lewis, who prefers moving into her late aunt's apartment to living with her lover Hurt in a comfortable house. Soon the old lady on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor under her flat starts terrorizing her... Interesting variation of Polanski's brilliant horror drama THE TENANT, itself a dark, macabre paraphrase of Hitchcock's REAR WINDOW. Too predictable and simply told to really hit bull's-eye, but densely atmospheric and well-photographed, a good first feature for director Klausner.

**Four Weddings and a Funeral** (1994, GBR) **C-117m.** \*\*\* D: Mike Newell. Starring Hugh Grant, Andie MacDowell, Kristin Scott Thomas, Simon Callow, Rowan Atkinson, James Fleet, John Hannah. Grant plays a bachelor who suddenly starts doubting his attitude towards life when seemingly everyone of his friends is getting married. Entertaining, sharply observed comedy, an audience-pleaser.

**Foxy Brown** (1974, USA) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Jack Hill. Starring Pam Grier, Antonio Fargas, Peter Brown, Terry Carter, Katheryn Loder, Harry holcombe, Sid Haig, Juanita Brown. One of Grier's best 70s films, this blaxploitation classic features her as an avenging angel – again. After her policeman-lover has undergone facial surgery, he is still killed by the mob and Grier sets out to infiltrate drug syndicate headed by Loder. Trivial actioner is violent and well-paced, a guilty pleasure for fans. Written by the director.

**Frágiles** (2005, SPA) **C-97m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jaume Balagueró. Starring Calista Flockhart, Richard Roxburgh, Elena Anaya, Gemma Jones, Yasmin Murphy, Colin McFarlane. Chiller from the maker of [REC] (2007) about nurse Flockhart, who comes to work at a hospital that is about to be abandoned. One of the remaining children claims a girl is haunting the place, and she seems to 'live' on the already closed upper floor. Slightly contrived and pretentious ghost story, well-filmed, though Flockhart just doesn't seem right for the role. Those looking for chills won't be disappointed. Good score. Cowritten by the director. Also known as FRAGILE.

**Frailty** (2001, USA/GER) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Bill Paxton. Starring Bill Paxton, Matthew McConaughey, Powers Boothe, Matt O'Leary, Jeremy Sumpter, Luke Askew. Psycho drama with horror tones uses a frame narrative. Detective Boothe is looking for a serial killer, when McConaughey tells him an almost unbelievable story of how he grew up with his father Paxton, who turned into a religious fanatic and started killing 'demons' right in front of his kids. Starts well, with a good score (by Brian Tyler), but once the killing starts, the film bogs (and slows) down, and the suffering of the boys becomes almost unbearable to watch. Has a cult reputation, but the ending is really tacky (and so is Boothe's performance).

**Frankenhooker** (1990, USA) **C-78m.** \*½ D: Frank Henenlotter. Starring James Lorinz, Patty Mullen, Charlotte Helmkamp, Shirley Stoler, Louise Lasser. This splatter horror film by director Henelotter (BASKET CASE, BRAIN DAMAGE) is nothing more than a cheap BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR: After his girlfriend dies in a tragic accident with a lawnmower, young 'bio-electrician' Lorinz wants to revive her by using body parts of street hookers. Strains for laughs but is terribly unfunny. Uncut print runs 85 or 90m.

**Frankenstein** (1931, USA) **71m.** \*\*\*½ D: James Whale. Starring Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, John Boles, Boris Karloff, Edward Van Sloan. One of the great early horror films, this hasn't lost its charm over the decades. Classic story was adapted from Mary Shelley's novel about mad scientist who creates a deformed human from body parts of the dead. Doesn't really do the novel justice, but is still beautiful to watch. Excellent work by Clive and Karloff. Also shown in edited versions (the death of the little girl was removed from most prints). Followed by BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935), SON OF FRANKENSTEIN (1939) and GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN (1942), and an entirely new series by Hammer Films. Spoofed by Mel Brooks in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (1974) and remade at least seven times.

**Frankenstein** (2015, USA/GER) **C-89m.** \*½ D: Bernard Rose. Starring Xavier Samuel, Danny Huston, Carrie-Anne Moss, Tony Todd. Unfortunate misfire from a usually good director. Here, he brings his hand-held, immediate style to the adaptation of a classic novel. Updated to present-day America, an artificial human (Samuel) is created by scientists Huston and Moss in their lab. When he escapes, he wanders the streets aimlessly, and ultimately meets blind hobo Todd. Poorly scripted horror drama suffers from credibility issues throughout

(the monster's intellectual voice-over narration, when he has the mind of a child, the lynchmob sequence, the violent cops, the prostitute). It's violent, but unpleasant to watch. Too bad. Also spelled FRANK3N5T31N.

**Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed** (1969, GBR) **C-100m**. \*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Veronica Carlson, Freddie Jones, Simon Ward. Fifth in Hammer's FRANKENSTEIN series is fairly dramatic account of the ruthless Baron's attempts to transplant the brain of a colleague. He blackmails a young couple into helping him. Not bad, quite serious, but has very little momentum and plays out its finale much too slowly. Some liked it anyway. Followed by THE HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN (1970).

**Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell** (1974, GBR) **C-99m**. \*\*½ D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Shane Bryant, Madeline Smith, David Prowse, John Stratton, Bernard Lee, Janet Hargreaves, Peter Madden. Sixth and final FRANKENSTEIN movie from Hammer about a young surgeon (Bryant), who idolizes Dr. Frankenstein (Cushing) and meets him in an asylum where he is working on his latest creation. Slowly paced, but not bad, mainly for fans of the series and Cushing.

**Frankenweenie** (2012, USA) **B&W-87m**. \*\*\* D: Tim Burton. Starring (the voices of) Catherine O'Hara, Martin Short, Martin Landau, Charlie Tahan, Atticus Shaffer, Winona Ryder. Tim Burton's remake of his own 1984 short film of the same name expands and elaborates the original premise of a boy resurrecting his dog Frankenstein-style. Plot doesn't catch fire, but there's so much cleverness and abundant movie references that for movie buffs it's a delight from start to finish. Best thing is Danny Elfman's brilliant score, which pulls all stops.

**Franklyn** (2008, GBR/FRA) **C-98m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Gerald McMorrow. Starring Eva Green, Ryan Phillippe, Sam Riley, Bernard Hill, James Faulkner, Stephen Walters. Very ambitious science-fiction/psycho drama hybrid set in two parallel dimensions. In a futuristic London vigilante Phillippe is trying to hunt down somebody who kidnapped a 12-year-old girl, but is chased by a super-villain's henchmen. In reality, unhappy Green is turning her suicide attempts into an art project. In the final third, the stories and the worlds become one. Interesting concept, almost ruined by confusing plot-setup and pretentiously poetic narration. The apocalyptic design of futuristic London is great, but film is difficult to enjoy. Written by the director.

**Frantic** (1988, USA/FRA) **C-120m**. \*\*½ D: Roman Polanski. Starring Harrison Ford, Emmanuelle Seigner, Betty Buckley, John Mahoney, Jimmie Ray Weeks, Yorgo Voyagis, David Huddleston, Gérard Klein. An American doctor (Ford), visiting a congress in Paris, is baffled when suddenly his wife disappears from their hotel room while he is taking a shower. He finds out she has been kidnapped, and all because their suitcase was mixed up with another one at the airport. He sets out alone to find her at any cost, since the police are not of much help. Ford's excellent performance makes this tedious, overlong thriller worth watching, although it's never as exciting or thrilling as it pretends to be. One of Polanski's weaker films, written by himself and Gérard Brach. Hardly auspicious score by Ennio Morricone.

**Frati Rossi, I** (1988, ITA) **C-85m**. \*\* D: Gianni Martucci. Starring Lara Wendel, Gerardo Amato, Chuck Valenti, Malisa Longo. Slow, a bit confusing gothic horror set in the late 1930s. When beautiful Wendel weds wealthy Amato, she moves into his castle-like villa. Soon she starts wondering where he spends his evenings and just what the dungeon below is used for. Some atmosphere but direction is rather poor. Okay for horror fans, though film is not very gruesome. Lucio Fulci was somehow involved in the production of this movie, probably as a coproducer. Also known as THE RED MONKS.

**Frauen für Zellenblock 9** (1978, SUI) **C-78m.** \*\* D: Jess Franco. Starring Karine Gambier, Howard Vernon, Susan Hemingway, Aida Gouveia. W.I.P. exploitation about a group of young women who are brought to a prison camp run by Gambier and doctor Vernon. There they are tortured because they have knowledge of the revolutionaries. Watchable thanks to competent score and nicely restored picture quality, but otherwise this is as cheap as it gets. Lots of nudity, some torture. Also known as TROPICAL INFERNO, WOMEN FROM CELLBLOCK 9.

**Fräulein Doktor** (1968, ITA/YUG) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Alberto Lattuada. Starring Suzy Kendall, Kenneth More, Capucine, James Booth, Alexander Knox, Nigel Green, Giancarlo Giannini. Very well-produced war film (by Dino de Laurentiis) about the title character, a German spy played by Kendall, who accomplishes several missions against the English during World War One. Well-directed, fine score by Ennio Morricone. Photographed by Luigi Kuveiller. Same story filmed before in the U.S. and France.

**Fräulein Smillas Gespür für Schnee** (1997, GER/SWE/DAN) **C-121m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Bille August. Starring Julia Ormond, Gabriel Byrne, Robert Loggia, Richard Harris, Vanessa Redgrave, Mario Adorf. Ambitious but unsatisfying adaptation of Peter Høeg's bestseller about troubled snow expert Ormond, who investigates the death of a 6-year-old boy who fell off a roof - despite suffering from pathological vertigo. Capable cast keeps things bubbling but the film trips over plot holes that undermine the - at times - fine suspense. Still, an interesting and highly original thriller which poses the question whether Høeg's novel was adaptable in the first place. Titled SMILLA'S SENSE OF SNOW for film's U.S. release.

**Freaky Farley** (2008, USA) **C-83m.** \*½ D: Charles Roxburgh. Starring Matt Farley, Kevin McGee, Sharon Scalzo, Steff Deschenes. Independent feature sees itself as a direct descendant of late 70s/early 80s low-budget horror, but the pace and the acting is even worse. The filmmakers reportedly enjoyed the oddball characters of these films most, but the main character (Farley) is so cheesy and unconvincing, you don't care about his adventures with his new girlfriend, with whom he investigates a local slasher legend. Boring. The most exciting thing about it is that it was shot with a Super 16mm from the early 70s.

**Freaky Friday** (2003, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*\* D: Mark Waters. Starring Jamie Lee Curtis, Lindsay Lohan, Mark Harmon, Harold Gould, Chad Michael Murray, Stephen Tobolowsky, Christina Vidal, Mark Waters. Remake of the 1976 Jodie Foster body-switch comedy is entertaining: Therapist Curtis and her 15-year-old daughter Lohan cannot get along with each other anymore. A fortune cookie from a Chinese restaurant makes them switch their bodies - at the most inconvenient of times: Curtis is about to re-marry, and Lohan's rock band has a concert coming up. Can they play each other's roles - and learn from it? Curtis is great in this enjoyable comedy, based on a novel by Mary Rodgers.

**Freddy Vs. Jason** (2003, USA/CDN/ITA) **C-97m.** SCOPE \*\* D: Ronny Yu. Starring Robert Englund, Ken Kirzinger, Monica Keena, Jason Ritter, Kelly Rowland. Two famous killers from film history unite for this horror movie, but they could have done with a better plot. Freddy initially "needs" Jason to kill for him until he is strong enough to do some damage in kids' dreams. Ultimately they go against each other, as the title suggests. Lots of teen mayhem, little makes sense. Improves towards the end, when the pace gets faster and there is more action.

**Freeway** (1996, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*½ D: Matthew Bright. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Kiefer Sutherland, Brooke Shields, Wolfgang Bodison, Dan Hedaya, Amanda Plummer, Michael T. Weiss, Brittany Murphy. Teenager Witherspoon, whose parents have just been arrested for prostitution and possession of drugs, cuffs a social worker to the bed post and leaves in her stepfather's car for her grandmother. Along the way she meets the much-feared 'freeway

killer' (Sutherland). Witherspoon proves a tough cookie to crack for the psychopath. Interesting (to say the least) but uneven 90s version of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Witherspoon is up to the difficult role, but film wavers uncomfortably between drama and satire and is not very credible. Co-executive produced by Oliver Stone. Written by the director. Nice score by Danny Elfman.

**Freeze Me** (2000, JAP) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Takashi Ishii. Starring Harumi Inoue, Shingo Tsurumi, Kazuki Kitamura, Shunsuke Matsuoka, Naoto Takenaka. Stylish psycho drama from the director of *GONIN* (1995) about a young woman, who was raped five years ago and whose attackers have just found out where she now lives. The woman finds herself paralyzed by their sudden presence but then proceeds to take her revenge right in her apartment. A Japanese version of *DAY OF THE WOMAN / I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE* (1978), the woman's motivations aren't always clear and her actions logical. Still, has some powerful moments and good camerawork. Written and coproduced by the director. Also known as *FREEZER*.

**Freispiel** (1996, AUT) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Harald Sicheritz. Starring Alfred Dorfer, Lukas Resetarits, Roland Düringer. Surprisingly watchable comedy drama from the team that brought you *MUTTERTAG* about teacher (Dorfer) whose life is made hell by pop star Resetarits whom he has grown up with. Too self-conscious to really score a 'free game', and Austrian humor may not be to everyone's taste.

**French Lieutenant's Woman, The** (1981, GBR) **C-123m.** \*\*\* D: Karel Reisz. Starring Jeremy Irons, Meryl Streep, Hiltom McRae, Emily Morgan, Charlotte Mitchell, Lynsey Baxter, Liz Smith, David Warner. Exquisitely acted 19<sup>th</sup> century drama based on the John Fowles novel about Irons' infatuation with simple woman Streep, whose love with a married lieutenant has given her a questionable reputation. Nice recreation of the period, though low-key film's biggest asset are the performances. Beautiful cinematography by Freddie Francis. Scripted by Harold Pinter.

**Frenchman's Farm** (1987, AUS) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Ron Way. Starring Tracey Tainsh, David Reyne, Norman Kaye, John Meillon, Ray Barrett. Ambitious, perhaps, but mostly amateurish sci-fi thriller set in Australia, where a young woman finds herself transported back to WW2 times. She witnesses a murder and then is warped back into the present. Poorly acted, badly directed, although it does contain some atmospheric scenes. See for yourself. May have taken a few years to complete because all this looks a lot like late 70s/early 80s.

**Frenzy** (1972, GBR) **C-116m.** \*\*\* D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Jon Finch, Alec McCowen, Barry Foster, Billie Whitelaw, Anna Massey, Barbara Leigh-Hunt, Alfred Hitchcock. Good, not great Hitchcock (his next-to-last film) about a killer on the loose in London and unemployed Finch, who is falsely accused of his murders. Interesting, well-told story with some unusually adult elements for Hitchcock (although still miles from being as potent as those in *PSYCHO*). Kept from soaring by the distinct lack of an identifiable protagonist and leisurely pace, which Hitch slackens again and again for comic reasons. Script by Anthony Shaffer, based on the novel *Goodbye Picadilly, Farewell Leicester Square* by Arthur La Bern. Good (if not completely fitting, too boisterous) score by Ron Goodwin.

**Frequency** (2000, USA) **C-119m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Gregory Hoblit. Starring Dennis Quaid, James Caviezel, Shawn Doyle, Elizabeth Mitchell, Andre Braugher, Noah Emmerich. Frustrated policeman Caviezel inexplicably makes contact with 1969 and his dead father Quaid, using an old radio transmitter. By giving him information about his premature death he saves the fire fighter's life – and changes his own present by manipulating the past. He suddenly sees a chance to catch a serial killer, who started his murder spree back in the late 1960s. Exciting sci-fi thriller is eventually let down by too many plot contrivances but remains watchable (and thrilling) throughout. From the director of *FALLEN* (1998).

**Fresh Meat** (2012, NZL) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Danny Mulheron. Starring Temuera Morrison, Nicola Kawana, Hanna Tevita, Kate Elliott. Horror comedy set in a New Zealand suburb, about a family of four, who are suddenly taken hostage by a group of crazy criminals. It turns out the family isn't as innocent as they seem, with the mother's TV chef fame based on her delicious recipes with human flesh! Plot is indefensible, but some elements – mainly the sexy daughter – keep you watching.

**Friday Foster** (1975, USA) **C-90m. \*½** D: Arthur Marks. Starring Pam Grier, Yaphet Kotto, Godfrey Cambridge, Thalmus Rasulala, Eartha Kitt, Jim Backus, Scatman Crothers, Carl Weathers. Good cast in poor blaxploitation movie based on a comic strip. Grier plays a photographer who witnesses a shooting and goes on to investigate. Poorly constructed actioner with – ironically – little action. Has a catchy title tune, however.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>** (1980, USA) **C-95m. \*\*** D: Sean S. Cunningham. Starring Betsy Palmer, Adrienne King, Jeannine Taylor, Robbi Morgan, Kevin Bacon, Tom Savini. In 1958, a pair of teen lovers was killed by a maniac near Camp Crystal Lake. Twenty years later, the camp is reopened and just then someone starts hacking up innocent vacationers. Is it the same serial killer? Next to John Carpenter's HALLOWEEN (1978), another, if lesser, milestone in the horror genre. Too simplistic to really work, but nevertheless extremely popular and the starting point for a full film series (nine sequels until 2001!). Interesting as one of the very first teen horror movies, although Mario Bava's ANTEFATTO predates the slasher theme by nine years. The score, albeit being reminiscent of Bernard Herrmann's PSYCHO theme, is quite atmospheric. Watch this movie if you are a horror buff, avoid it, if you aren't. Special effects by Tom Savini.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>** (2009, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Marcus Nispel. Starring Jared Padalecki, Danielle Panabaker, Amanda Righetti, Travis Van Winkle, Derek Mears. Reboot of the horror series is not a remake of the first film but plays like one of the countless sequels, only with better production values. A group of teens go missing near Camp Crystal Lake, then another group arrives and meets Padalecki, who is looking for his lost sister. Then Jason kills them one by one. Emotionally stimulating it ain't, it's rather boring. Some suspense in the second half makes it an okay view. Produced by Michael Bay. Also shown at 106m.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>: The Final Chapter** (1984, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Joseph Zito. Starring Erich Anderson, Judie Aronson, Peter Barton, Kimberley Beck, Tom Everett, Crispin Glover, Corey Feldman. Fourth film in the horror franchise continues the plot right after Part 3, when Jason wakes up in hospital and goes after a group of teens in a nearby house. Little excitement in first hour, pace and suspense pick up considerably in the final twenty minutes, making this above par for the slasher genre. Some consider this the best in the series. Effects by Tom Savini are good.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> Part VI: Jason Lives** (1986, USA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Tom McLoughlin. Starring Thom Mathews, Jennifer Cooke. Standard plot has Jason wreak more havoc around Camp Crystal Lake. Above-average direction and some amusing bits make it watchable. For fans.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan** (1989, USA) **C-100m. \*½** D: Rob Hedden. Starring Kane Hodder, Jensen Daggett, Todd Shaffer, Tiffany Paulsen. Stupid sequel about the menacing killer attacking a school class aboard a cruise ship. Only the finale takes place in Manhattan. Poor acting, weak script, the FRIDAY franchise took a break after this film. Full uncut version is as of yet unreleased. Followed in 1993 by JASON GOES TO HELL: THE FINAL FRIDAY.

**Fried Green Tomatoes** (1991, USA) **C-130m. \*\*\*½** D: Jon Avnet. Starring Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson, Mary-Louise Parker, Cicely Tyson, Chris O'Donnell, Stan Shaw, Grace Zabriskie. Wonderful drama, based on Fannie Flagg's novel about frustrated

house wife Bates and her encounter with 82 year-old Tandy, who changes her life when she tells her a story about two women and their emancipation in a men's world in the 1930s. Typical Southern atmosphere characterizes this drama; well-acted, well-scripted by Flagg herself, this one is simultaneously funny and sad, meandering towards a tear-jerking conclusion. This was *Avnet's* impressive feature film debut.

**Friends With Money** (2006, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Nicole Holofcener. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Frances McDormand, Joan Cusack, Catherine Keener, Jason Isaacs, Greg Germann. Ambitious, perhaps, but unsuccessful character drama about 30-something Aniston, who makes a living cleaning houses, but has training as a teacher. Her life is contrasted with that of her (more successful) friends. Talky, unsatisfying, peters out without becoming anything it wants to be. Title is one of the worst in recent memory.

**Fright** (1971, GBR) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Peter Collinson. Starring Susan George, Honor Blackman, Ian Bannen, John Gregson, George Cole, Dennis Waterman, Tara Collinson. Quite good thriller about young babysitter George, who spends the night at Blackman's villa, unaware that there's mad husband Bannen on the loose planning to get revenge. Tense, well-acted B-movie, good for a few chills. Aka NIGHT LEGS.

**Frighteners, The** (1996, NZL/USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Peter Jackson. Starring Michael J. Fox, Trini Alvarado, Peter Dobson, John Astin, Jeffrey Combs, Dee Wallace Stone, Jeff Busey, Chi McBride, Jim Fyfe, Troy Evans, Julianna McCarthy. Effective horror comedy with an emphasis on black humor about 'psychic investigator' Fox, who is the only one in the little town of Fairwater who can see and speak with ghosts. He has had this gift ever since his wife died in an accident, where he was involved, too. Now he is facing a heart-crushing serial killer from hell. Inventive, well-produced (by Robert Zemeckis) thrill ride that's also highly entertaining. It could have used a little more serious horror.

**Frightmare** (1974, GBR) **C-86m. \*½** D: Pete Walker. Starring Rupert Davies, Sheila Keith, Deborah Fairfax, Paul Greenwood, Kim Butcher, David McGillivray, voice of Pete Walker. Bleak, off-putting British horror 'classic' about a cannibalistic couple (Davies and Keith) who resume their murderous ways after some 15 years in prison. Plot includes uneasy relationship between daughters Fairfax and Butcher. Some tense moments, convincing performances, but if the (relatively few) gore scenes won't disgust you, Walker's uninvolved, tired direction will. Truly depressing.

**Frightmare** (1982, USA) **C-86m. \*\*** D: Norman Thaddeus Vane. Starring Ferdy Mayne, Luca Bercovici, Nita Talbot, Leon Askin, Jennifer Starrett, Jeffrey Combs. Eccentric horror actor Mayne promises to return from the grave after his death, and indeed he does, when a couple of his fans steal the body from the crypt. They live to regret it. Poor plot setup, self-conscious humor almost destroy this horror film, which has some eerie, serious bits in the second half. Worth a quick look if you can find it. Lead actor Mayne also played the vampire in Roman Polanski's classic THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS (1967). Alternative titles: BODY SNATCHERS, THE HORROR STAR.

**Fright Night** (1985, USA) **C-106m. \*\*\*** D: Tom Holland. Starring Chris Sarandon, William Ragsdale, Amanda Bearse, Roddy McDowall, Stephen Geoffreys, Jonathan Stark, Dorothy Fielding, Art Evans. Effective horror film with a sense of humor. Sarandon witnesses his new neighbor making love to a woman who is dead the following morning. It seems a vampire has bought the house next door! Will old TV actor McDowell help? Nice updating of the old DRACULA story, with a sense of humor and a pair of terrific performances by Sarandon and McDowell. Good fun, with fine effects. Followed by a sequel in 1989. Remade in 2011.

**Frisson des Vampires, Le** (1970, FRA) **C-95m. BOMB** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Sandra Julien, Jean-Marie Durand, Jacques Robiolles, Michel Delahaye, Marie-Pierre Castel. Ultra low-

budget outing from French sex director Rollin has even less plot and an even deadlier pace than his previous films, *LE VIOL DU VAMPIRE* (1967) and *LA VAMPIRE NUE* (1969). A newly-wed couple travel to a castle to meet the bride's cousins. It turns out they are vampires with a harem of bloodsuckers. Cheesy, pretentious with lots of nudity and almost no violence at all. Psychedelic rock score is ultra-bad. What you get is an attempt at creating atmosphere (fog, colorful lighting) and Rollin's trademark before-sunrise coast-finale. Stay away unless you are a die-hard fan. English title: *THE SHIVER OF THE VAMPIRES* (among others).

**From Beyond** (1986, USA) **C-85m**. \*\*\* D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Jeffrey Combs, Barbara Crompton, Ted Sorel, Ken Foree, Carolyn Purdy-Gordon. Tongue-in-cheek, entertaining splatter horror, the follow-up to *RE-ANIMATOR*. Combs plays a scientist who with the help of Sorel has developed a machine that will allow them to catch a glimpse of a new dimension – a place full of terror and horror. Stylish, well-made and with a twisted sense of humor, just the thing genre fans are looking for. Not entirely successful due to some flaws in pacing but a sure pick for horror movie aficionados. Good, dramatic score by Richard Band. Director Gordon, Brian Yuzna and Dennis Paoli adapted a short story by H.P. Lovecraft.

**From Dusk Till Dawn** (1996, USA) **C-108m**. \*\*\* D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Harvey Keitel, George Clooney, Quentin Tarantino, Juliette Lewis, Salma Hayek, Cheech Marin, Tom Savini, Fred Williamson, John Saxon, Kelly Preston, Marc Lawrence, Michael Parks, Ernest Lui, Danny Trejo, Tito Larriva. Outrageous horror action comedy written by costar Quentin Tarantino about two criminal brothers on-the-lam who are heading for Mexico, where they are supposed to meet someone who can help them out of their precarious situation. In a shabby motel they kidnap reverend Keitel and his children. Together they drive off to a bizarre destination, a bar in the middle of nowhere called the 'Titty Twister'. If you've started wondering - this is where the horror comes in. Film abandons logic as soon as the characters cross the Mexican border, but that doesn't spoil the fun. Casting is brilliant: Clooney in his coolest role *ever*, special effects whiz Tom Savini as 'Mr Sex Machine', B-action movie star Fred Williamson as a tough vietnam vet, and Cheech Marin in three hilarious roles - to name but a few. This movie features the most comic-book-style bloodshed since Peter Jackson's *BRAINDEAD*. Stay away if your films have to be logical. Director and editor Rodriguez, Tarantino and Lawrence Bender executive produced the film. Followed by two direct-to-video sequels.

**From Dusk Till Dawn 2: Texas Blood Money** (1999, USA) **C-88m**. \*\*½ D: Scott Spiegel. Starring Robert Patrick, Bo Hopkins, Duane Whitaker, Muse Watson, Brett Harrelson, Raymond Cruz, Danny Trejo, James Parks, Tiffani-Amber Thiessen, Bruce Campbell, Scott Spiegel. Surprisingly well-made, effective sequel to the 1996 cult hit retains the action, gore and humor and really only lacks the stars and a tighter script. Patrick summons some crooks to get ready for a bank robbery in Mexico, then they stumble into a vampire motel and get knocked off one by one. Well-directed gorefest by the maker of *INTRUDER* (1989) should give fans their money's worth. Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez and Lawrence Bender were executive producers. Followed by *FROM DUSK TILL DAWN 3: THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER* (2000).

**From Dusk Till Dawn 3: The Hangman's Daughter** (2000, USA) **C-94m**. \*\*½ D: P.J. Pesce. Starring Marco Leonardi, Michael Parks, Temuera Morrison, Rebecca Gayheart, Ara Celi, Sonia Braga, Orlando Jones, Danny Trejo, P.J. Pesce. Conclusion of the trilogy is more like a prequel or remake as a group of turn-of-the-century banditos are on the run and end up in the vampire hellhole of the first movie. Plot setup takes as long as in the original, with lots of shoot-outs and action, then becomes exciting horror fare with potent effects, quite well

directed. Even includes real author Ambrose Bierce (Parks) as a character. From a story by Robert Rodriguez, who also executive produced with his pal Quentin Tarantino.

**From Hell** (2001, USA/CZE) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Albert and Allen Hughes. Starring Johnny Depp, Heather Graham, Ian Holm, Robbie Coltrane, Ian Richardson, Jason Flemyng, Katrin Cartlidge, Terence Harvey, Susan Lynch, Paul Rhys. Atmospheric retelling of the Jack the Ripper case, with Depp playing the (historical) police inspector, who must solve the brutal slayings of prostitutes in London's red-light district Whitechapel. Maybe a bit too predictable and lacking in suspense, but arresting camerawork, flashy direction and plot maintain a rhythm to the very end. Interesting reference is made to David Lynch's *THE ELEPHANT MAN* (1980).

**From Russia With Love** (1963, GBR) **C-115m. \*\*\*** D: Terence Young. Starring Sean Connery, Daniela Bianchi, Pedro Armendáriz, Lotte Lenya, Robert Shaw, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn, Martine Beswick, Ian Fleming, Terence Young. Worthy sequel to *DR. NO* (1962) with James Bond (Connery) assigned to steal Russian encryption device, which turns out to be a set-up by arch-enemy SPECTRE. Bianchi plays a Russian spy, who falls for 007. Less pretentious, more serious than other Bond films, but also less entertaining, this is more spy drama than action adventure. Director Young and editor Peter R. Hunt (director of the sixth Bond film) make the fight between Shaw and Connery (aboard the train) the highlight of the picture. Lenya gives her most famous performance. Armendáriz' last film, Llewelyn's first film as Q. Good score by John Barry. Followed by *GOLDFINGER* (1964).

**From the Dark** (2014, EIR) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Conor McMahon. Starring Niamh Algar, Stephen Cromwell, Ged Murray, Gerry O'Brien. Horror film set in the Irish countryside, where a young couple are forced to spend the night when their car breaks down. Little do they know that the local farmer dug up an ancient creature during the day, which now attacks by night. Survival horror is nothing fancy in terms of plot, but it's tense and suspenseful, and visually interesting. Recommended to buffs. Written by director McMahon (*STITCHES*, *DEAD MEAT*).

**From the Drain** (1967, CDN) **B&W-13m. n/r** D: David Cronenberg. Starring Mort Ritts, Stefan Nosko. The earliest surviving student film from famous David Cronenberg (made when he was 24) is unremarkable short film about two fully dressed men sitting in an empty bathtub discussing philosophical things. Set to atrocious classical guitar music, this won't appeal even to the most rabid Cronenberg films, as it could have been made by anyone. Not worth seeking out.

**Frontière(s)** (2007, FRA/SUI) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Xavier Gens. Starring Karina Testa, Aurélien Wiik, Patrick Ligardes, Maid Forget, Jean-Pierre Jorris. Horror thriller along the lines of *T.C.M.* (1974) about a group of juvenile delinquents who flee the burning suburbs of Paris and end up in a motel whose owners are a very special family. Violent, sadistic horror film is erratically written and directed and offers barely any suspense. Score has some merit. Some gory effects earned this an NC-17 rating. English title: *FRONTIER(S)*.

**Frosch mit der Maske, Der** (1959, GER/DAN) **B&W-90m. \*½** D: Harald Reinl. Starring Siegfried Lowitz, Joachim Fuchsberger, Eddi Arent. First of the long-running Edgar Wallace suspense thrillers is plodding and unexciting as inspector Lowitz and private detective Fuchsberger try to catch notorious criminal, whose syndicate is terrorizing London. Quite violent, with some stylish bits but hardly worth your time. Very successful though when originally released.

**Frostbiter: Wrath of the Wendigo** (1996, USA) **C-87m. \*½** D: Tom Chaney. Starring Ron Asheton, Lori Baker, Devlin Burton. Splatter movie comedy in the vein of *EVIL DEAD II*. Two drunk hunters accidentally (or: idiotically) resurrect a nordic demon, the Wendigo. The monster goes on to kill hunters at a remote cabin in the woods. You won't like this film,

unless you are a gorehound. Poorly made, seems like an amateur movie. Produced by Troma Films (you guessed it).

**Frozen** (2013, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee. Starring (the voices of) Kristen Bell, Josh Gad, Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff. Disney fairy tale set in (the fictional but clearly Norwegian) kingdom of Arendell, where two royal sisters grow up separated from each other, because one of them has a mystical gift of turning everything into ice with her touch. On coronation day, a fight between the two plunges the kingdom into an eternal winter... Rousing animated musical has some wonderful moments and songs, but plot could have been more developed. Inspired by the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale. Oscar winner for Best Animated Feature.

**Frustra e il Corpo, La** (1963, ITA/FRA) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Daliah Lavi, Christopher Lee, Tony Kendall, Isli Oberon, Harriet White, Dean Ardow, Alan Collins, Jacques Herlin. 'It's wonderful to see things being born, to see them born and to see them die.' Sadistic count Lee returns to his family's castle to claim his inheritance, but he is met with contempt by his relatives, who haven't forgotten that once he drove a servant girl to suicide. Lee, however, knows how to manipulate them, especially beautiful Lavi, until someone gets his revenge... Wonderfully atmospheric gothic horror tale is reminiscent of Roger Corman's Edgar Allan Poe adaptations and features fine performances by Lavi and Lee, an appropriately melodramatic score by Carlo Rustichelli, as well as Mario Bava's typically stylish direction. Bava also cowrote the screenplay. He directed under the pseudonym John M. Old. The English credits are all(!) pseudonyms. Photographed by Ubaldo Terzano. English titles: THE WHIP AND THE FLESH, THE VOICE BEYOND THE GRAVE, and WHAT!

**Fucking Amal** (1998, SWE/DAN) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Lukas Moodysson. Starring Alexandra Dahlström, Rebecka Liljeberg, Erica Carlson, Mathias Rust, Ralph Carlsson. Acclaimed teenage drama about just-turned-16 Liljeberg and her problems to integrate and find friends. She feels attracted to bored, seemingly experienced party girl Dahlström. Does this romance have a chance in their rural community of Amal? Authentic account of troubled teens by first-time director Moodysson. His script is slightly uneven and not completely convincing. English title: SHOW ME LOVE.

**Fukkatsu no Hi** (1980, JAP) **C-73m. \*\*½** D: Kinji Fukasaku. Starring Chuck Connors, Glenn Ford, Olivia Hussey, George Kennedy, Masao Kusakari, Edward James Olmos, Henry Silva, Bo Svenson, Robert Vaughn, Stephanie Faulkner, Sonny Chiba, Colin Fox. Star-studded production about a virus that wipes out human civilization, apart from several enclaves in Antarctica, where the virus cannot spread due to low temperatures. Basically a Japanese version of disaster movies that Hollywood specialized on in the 1970s. Truncated video version (on which this review is based) features interesting apocalyptic scenes but (obviously) choppy plot. Most stars are wasted. Original uncut print runs 155m., but is said not to be much better. Also shown at 108m. Based on a novel by Sakyo Komatsu. English titles: VIRUS, DAY OF RESURRECTION, THE END.

**Full Contact** (1992, HKG) **C-96m. \*\*** D: Ringo Lam. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Simon Yam, Ann Bridgewater, Anthony Wong. Confusing, violent action film about Chow's involvement with crime syndicate in Bangkok. A robbery they have planned goes awry, since bad-guy Yam double-crosses them. Then Chow comes back for revenge. This teaming up of director Lam and star Chow is a huge disappointment. Stylishly filmed, but plot is incomprehensible. Only redeeming feature is the final fight – with extensive use of slow-motion. German version is cut by five minutes.

**Full Metal Jacket** (1987, GBR/USA) **C-116m. \*\*\*** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Matthew Modine, Adam Baldwin, Vincent D'Onofrio, R. Lee Ermey, Dorian Harewood, Kevyn Major

Howard, Arliss Howard, Ed O’Ross, John Terry. Seven years after THE SHINING (1980) Kubrick returned to the helm with this anti-war satire about several soldiers who are trained (inhumanely) on Parris Island for the Vietnam War. Once at the front, the war strips them of the bit of humanity they have still left. Based on the novel by Gustav Hasford, Kubrick’s screenplay does not quite gel, the film remains a tad too cold, with Modine’s character not strong enough to keep the two halves (camp, war) together. Still, a powerful film for Kubrick who manages to make this both hilarious and suspenseful. Filmed in an aspect ratio of 1.37:1, matted to 1,85:1 for theatrical release.

**Full Monty, The** (1997, GBR/USA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Cattaneo. Starring Robert Carlyle, Mark Addy, William Snape, Steve Huison, Tom Wilkinson, Paul Barber, Hugo Speer. You might ask yourself what’s so good about a film about a group of unemployed British men who decide to copy the Chippendales and get rich by stripping in front of local women. The narrative is not always on target and the script works too little drama into the plot, and yet this comedy drama is oddly touching and amusing. Housewives may find it most entertaining, although comments on the bad economic situation in and around Sheffield are spare. Oscar-winner for Best Original Music (Comedy or Musical).

**Full Moon High** (1981, USA) **C-93m. R D:** Larry Cohen. Starring Adam Arkin, Roz Kelly, Ed McMahon, Joanne Nail, Alan Arkin, John Blyth Barrymore, Pat Morita. Atrocious, unfunny horror comedy about college student Arkin, who is bitten by a wolf in Transsylvania and turns into a werewolf, freaking out the people at his old high school. There were some really good werewolf movies at the time (WOLFEN, HOWLING), this one deserves to be forgotten. Obnoxious fare from someone who has made interesting B-movies such as IT’S ALIVE or GOD TOLD ME TO.

**Fun** (1993, USA) **C/B&W-103m. \*\*\* D:** Rafal Zielinski. Starring Alicia Witt, Renee Humphrey, William R. Moses, Leslie Hope, Ania Suli. Two teenage girls (Witt and Humphrey) kill an elderly woman for no apparent reason. In prison a newspaper journalist (Moses) and a psychologist (Hope) try to find access to the girls and explain their motives. Compelling, thought-provoking drama seeks the reasons for the terrible deed in the girls’ upbringing, but also topicalizes the incredibly strong bond between them. Witt gives a sensational performance. Produced by the director. Similar in theme to Peter Jackson’s HEAVENLY CREATURES, which was made in 1994.

**Funérale á Los Angeles** (1973, FRA) **C-104m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jacques Deray. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Ann-Margret, Roy Scheider, Angie Dickinson, Georgia Engel, Michel Constantin, Umberto Orsini, Ted de Corsia, John Hillerman, Alex Rocco, Talia Shire. Good cast in anemic actioner about French hitman Trintignant’s mission to kill businessman and his subsequent chasing by killer Scheider. Poorly paced, but remains an interesting film because it was made by a French director in the U.S. (notice some sidekicks at American culture). Cowritten by Deray (LA PISCINE). Americanized score by Michel Legrand. Alternative title: UN HOMME EST MORT. Released in the U.S. as THE OUTSIDE MAN.

**Funhouse, The** (1981, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Tobe Hooper. Starring Elizabeth Berridge, Cooper Huckabee, Miles Chapin, Largo Woodruff, Sylvia Miles, William Finley, Kevin Conway. Another film propagating director Hooper’s family values. Berridge plays a teenager who visits a carnival with some of her oversexed, pot-smoking friends and meets some immoral (and deformed) characters as they decide to spend the night in the funhouse. Nice lighting effects, some eerie sequences... but not enough plot. Surprisingly tame effort from the director of THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE is not bad but could have used a tighter structure. Hooper went on to make POLTERGEIST.

**Funky Monkey** (2004, USA/GER) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Harry Basil. Starring Matthew Modine, Roma Downey, Seth Adkins, Pat Finn, Taylor Negron, Fred Ward, Jeffrey Tambor, Bodhi Elfman. Modine plays a monkey trainer, whose chimp is about to be taken away from his for experiments. He kidnaps the talented primate and finds refuge at youngster Adkins' place. Exactly what you expect from monkey comedies: Some crude humor, but mostly inoffensive.

**Funny Games** (1997, AUT) **C-108m.** ☑ D: Michael Haneke. Starring Ulrich Mühe, Susanne Lothar, Arno Frisch, Frank Giering, Wolfgang Glück. Two polite young men enter the life of a family vacationing somewhere in the countryside and plunge them into a sea of violence, which to them is just a game. Totally pointless, controversial drama tortures its audience with shocking depictions of violence, without being suspenseful, intelligent, or *anything* else. Haneke's direction is minimalistic, some scenes go on for minutes without cuts. Reminiscent in many ways of *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*, which at least *commented* on the increasing violence in our society. Haneke (*BENNY'S VIDEO*) just shows the violence per se, not why it is committed and what the characters think about it. One may argue that violence is not rational, but what is the point of making an irrational film based on this premise?

**Furious Slaughter** (1972, HGK/TIW) **C-88m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Ting Shan-Si. Starring (Jimmy) Wang Yu, Shirley Chan, Sally Chan, Kwok Shao Pao, Lam Kei. Well-produced eastern about a suave stranger (Wang Yu), who singlehandedly embarrasses a crime syndicate and attempts to free two innocent women from one of their brothels. Direction, photography, score all rise above the plot. A film where the parts are greater than the whole; ultra-cool Wang Yu is really something to see. German version cut by 2 minutes. Original title: *TIAN WANG QUAN*. Alternative English title: *ROYAL FIST*. Title song is called 'Super Dragon', which may also be a one-time title of the film. Followed by a sequel, *BLOODY STRUGGLE*.

**Fury, The** (1978, USA) **C-118m.** \*\*½ D: Brian De Palma. Starring Kirk Douglas, John Cassavetes, Carrie Snodgrass, Amy Irving, Fiona Lewis, Andrew Stevens, Charles Durning, Gordon Jump, Dennis Franz. Douglas is looking for his son (Stevens), who has been abducted by Cassavetes in order to exploit his ESP-powers. A similarly talented young girl (Irving) may be of help to him. Poorly paced script (by John Harris, whose novel this film is based on) makes this film a chore to watch, offset at times by some stylish bits. Quite violent, but nothing special. Film debut of Daryl Hannah.

**Fußgänger, Der** (1973, GER/SUI/ISR) **C-97m.** \*\*\*½ D: Maximilian Schell. Starring Gustav Rudolf Sellner, Maximilian Schell, Gila von Weitershausen, Walter Kohut, Christian Kohlund, Peggy Ashcroft, Lil Dagover, Elisabeth Bergner. Remarkably mature drama about wealthy industrialist Sellner, who is about to be uncovered as a Nazi war criminal by tabloid reporters. Film subtly chronicles his feelings, his conscience, painting a credible portrait of a broken man. Excellent, moving script by director Schell himself, who casts himself as Sellner's recently deceased son. Downbeat but a must-see. Winner of the Golden Globe for Best Foreign Film and also nominated for the Oscar. Schell, who coscripted and coproduced, directed *DER RICHTER UND SEIN HENKER* (1976) next. English title: *THE PEDESTRIAN*.

**Future-Kill** (1985, USA) **C-89m.** ☑ D: Ronald W. Moore. Starring Edwin Neal, Marilyn Burns, Gabriel Folse, Wade Reese, Barton Faulks. Terrible science-fiction wannabe about a few dudes who get mixed up with a band of outlaws led by a mean guy called Splatter. All this supposedly happens in a post-apocalyptic city, but all we get is some make-up and costumes. Dialogue is especially stupid. Avoid at all costs. Also known as *SPLATTER, NIGHT OF THE ALIEN*.

**Future War 198x** (1982, JAP) **C-120m.** \*\* D: Tomoharu Katsumata, Toshio Masuda. Animated epic about situation leading up to major crisis between U.S.A. and Russia

and the ensuing nuclear war that will destroy the Earth. Muddled script revels in battle details without making a point and neglects characterization entirely. Worth a look perhaps – for war fanatics – but effect of this two-hour film is numbing. Animation is only so-so.

**Futureworld** (1976, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** Richard T. Heffron. Starring Peter Fonda, Blythe Danner, Arthur Hill, Yul Brynner, Stuart Margolin. Low-budget but interesting sequel to Michael Crichton's *WESTWORLD* (1973) sends reporters Fonda and Danner to holiday resort of the future, where visitors can live a no-holds-barred way of life (including sex and violence). Soon Fonda takes a look behind the scenes and uncovers a sinister conspiracy. Plot is sometimes illogical but story is good, intriguing fare for sci-fi fans, though not as good as its predecessor. Danner gets to be a bit too much at times. Followed by the short-lived TV series 'Beyond Westworld'.

**Gake no ue no Ponyo** (2008, JAP) **C-105m. \*\*\*½ D:** Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Yuria Nara, Hiroki Doi, Jôji Tokoro, Tomoko Yamaguchi, Yuki Amami. A 5-year-old boy rescues a goldfish which got stuck in a glass jar, not knowing that it is a princess from an underwater kingdom, whose sorcerer father is planning on initiating an ocean age. The goldfish has magical powers and ultimately turns into a little girl, plunging (literally!) the boy and his mother, a nurse at an old-people's home, into a fantastic adventure. Simple but beautiful, colorfully animated, touching story by anime genius Miyazaki, wonderfully scored by Joe Hisaishi. Not Miyazaki's greatest, but as irresistible as any of his later films. Also has a slight *TOTORO* touch. Written, executive produced and co-edited by the 67-year-old Miyazaki. English title: *PONYO ON A CLIFF BY THE SEA*, *PONYO ON THE CLIFF*, and simply *PONYO*.

**Galaxina** (1980, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*½ D:** William Sachs. Starring Stephen Macht, Avery Schreiber, J.D. Hinton, Dorothy Stratten. Thoroughly trashy, barely funny sci-fi spoof about a police spaceship with a very special crew member, sexy android Galaxina (played by Playmate Stratten). Rest of plot not worth mentioning. Stratten's last film (at age 20), she was murdered before film's premiere.

**Galaxy of Terror** (1981, USA) **C-82m. \*\* D:** Bruce D. Clark. Starring Edward Albert, Erin Moran, Ray Walston, Bernard Behrens, Zalman King, Robert Englund, Taaffe O'Connell, Sid Haig, Grace Zabriskie, Jack Blessing, Mary Ellen O'Neill. What a cast, what a movie. Wild science-fiction horror film, modeled after Ridley Scott's *ALIEN*, about a rescue team who wants to wipe out the monster that was responsible for the death of several astronauts. Violent, gory, even sexy, wastes no time at the beginning, but then gets stuck in routine plot. Sci-fi effects are dated but gore effects are first-rate. Buffs are advised to have a look at this (if you can get hold of an uncut print). It's incredible how fast aliens can disrobe you ;-). Roger Corman coproduced, James Cameron was second unit director (rehearsing for *ALIENS*, no doubt) and did the nice production design. Actor Bill Paxton did the set decoration (he later costarred in Cameron's *TITANIC*). Alternative title: *MINDWARP: AN INFINITY OF TERROR*.

**Galaxy Quest** (1999, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Dean Parisot. Starring Tim Allen, Sigourney Weaver, Alan Rickman, Tony Shalhoub, Sam Rockwell, Daryl Mitchell, Enrico Colantoni. The actors of a science-fiction television series from the 1980s – now spending their time at fan conventions – are suddenly asked for help by extra-terrestrials, who believe their space adventures to be real. The tired crew turns out to be more resourceful than expected. Nice idea, good performances but lacks a few extra-laughs to make up for the occasional lulls. Allen's TV series *Home Improvement* was funnier.

**Gambit** (2012, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Michael Hoffman. Starring Colin Firth, Cameron Diaz, Alan Rickman, Tom Courtenay, Cloris Leachman. Tame, mildly funny remake of the

1966 crime comedy about art curator Firth, who plans on getting his revenge on mean boss Rickman by making him buy a fake Monet painting, 'discovered' in a Texas trailer owned by cowgirl Diaz. Complications ensue. Scripted by Joel & Ethan Coen, but there's no real edge to it.

**Game, The** (1997, USA) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** David Fincher. Starring Michael Douglas, Sean Penn, Deborah Kara Unger, James Rebhorn, Peter Donat, Carroll Baker, Anna Katarina, Armin Müller-Stahl. Successful but stressed banker (Douglas) is given a unique birthday present by his brother (Penn). It is the invitation to a 'game', organised by a special company, which puts him in the most complicated, puzzling situations. Soon, however, the game seems to turn serious, and Douglas sees himself running for his life. Premise is intriguing (buying an adventure) and exciting first half doesn't give you time to think the plot over, but when the action slows down later, you'll realize how completely incredible and illogical this film is. Good score by Howard Shore. Director Fincher's 3rd film, following ALIEN<sup>3</sup> and SE7EN.

**Game of Death** (1978, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Clouse. Starring Bruce Lee, Gig Young, Hugh O'Brian, Dean Jagger, Colleen Camp, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Chuck Norris, Bob Wall, Tony Leung. Lee plays an actor who denies cooperation with a syndicate and soon finds himself under attack. Martial arts legend Lee died in 1973 before film was completed, doubles were used five years later to finish the production. Most of the times Lee is off-screen. The showdown, however, features him in all his power and ferocity. Samo Hung (alias Hung Kim Po) plays Wall's opponent in the ring. He is also credited as martial arts director. Produced by Raymond Chow. U.S. version runs 102m., scenes may have been deleted from 93m. German TV version. Followed by GAME OF DEATH II.

**Game of Death II** (1980, HMK) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ng See-Yuen. Starring Bruce Lee, Tong Lung, Huang Cheng-Li, Roy Horan, Roy Chiao. Lee 'plays' the same character as in GAME OF DEATH, but in fact his scenes are just left-overs from ENTER THE DRAGON. In this violent eastern he is 'killed' after about 35m., but all there is are some close-ups of him, which are integrated in the scenes. After he is killed, his brother seeks vengeance. The action, choreographed by Yuen Wo-Ping (TAI-CHI, BLACK MASK), is very good in this minimally plotted eastern. Produced by Raymond Chow.

**Games** (1967, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Curtis Harrington. Starring Simone Signoret, James Caan, Katharine Ross, Don Stroud, Kent Smith, Estelle Winwood. Highly interesting puzzler about well-to-do but bored young couple Ross and Caan, who take in seemingly helpless, physically weak saleswoman Signoret. The enigmatic elderly lady seems to develop a special influence on naïve Ross... is she playing a game with them? Psycho thriller is well-made and keeps you guessing. A sleeper. Director Harrington also receives story credit.

**Gangs of New York** (2002, USA) **C-166m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Martin Scorsese. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Day-Lewis, Cameron Diaz, Jim Broadbent, John C. Reilly, Henry Thomas, Liam Neeson, Brendan Gleeson, David Hemmings, Barbara Bouchet, Martin Scorsese. Revenge drama set in New York City of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. DiCaprio's father is killed in warfare between rivalling gangs, and the boy grows up with the wish to take revenge on the murderer Day-Lewis. The man is feared and has great political power – using it to make propaganda against Irish immigrants and Africans. Longish but worthwhile, especially because of Day-Lewis' brilliant performance (as Bill the Butcher) and Scorsese's feel for the time period, which excuse the rather simple, familiar plotline. Cowritten by Steven Zaillian. Photographed by Michael Ballhaus, edited by Thelma Schoonmaker.

**Garde à Vue** (1981, FRA) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Miller. Starring Lino Ventura, Michel Serrault, Romy Schneider, Guy Marchand. Subtle drama about notary Serrault who is

summoned to the police headquarters on New Year's Eve because he is the prime suspect in a murder. As the evening progresses (and midnight approaches) he more and more loses himself in lies and threatens to break entirely when his wife turns up surprisingly. Fine performances by Ventura (as the chief inspector) and Serrault, who gives another brilliant performance. Miller went on to make the fascinating MORTELLE RANDONNEE next.

**Garden State** (2004, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Zach Braff. Starring Zach Braff, Natalie Portman, Peter Sarsgaard, Ian Holm, Alex Burns, Ron Leibman. Debut feature of television's *Scrubs* guy Braff, who also penned the screenplay. His story about a twenty-something loser, who comes back to his hometown for the funeral of his mother, is fresh, witty and incredibly funny. He soon realizes that most of his problems were created by his psychiatrist dad, and he meets lots of odd-ball characters, such as equally disoriented Portman, who he falls in love with. A winner, aptly showcases the talent of its star. Executive produced by Danny DeVito.

**Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties** (2006, USA/GER) **C-86m. \*\* D:** Tim Hill. Starring Breckin Meyer, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Billy Connolly, Ian Abercrombie, Roger Rees, voices of Bill Murray, Tim Curry, Bob Hoskins, Sharon Osbourne, Richard E. Grant, Vinnie Jones, Rhys Ifans, narrated by Roscoe Lee Browne. Not-bad children's movie about cartoonist Jim Davis' lasagne-loving cat, who we see in his second big-screen adventure following a 2004 adaptation. Here, Garfield's owner Meyer follows his girlfriend Hewitt to London, where the cat gets mixed up with an aristocratic feline, who looks just like him. And, wouldn't you know it, there's an evil guy (Connolly), who wants to trick "his highness" out of a huge inheritance (ARISTOCATS, anybody?). Derivative, innocuous, but not unfunny, small fry will go for it.

**Gariba no Uchu Ryoko** (1965, JAP) **C-78m. \*\* D:** Masao Kuroda, Sanae Yamamoto. Starring (the voices of) Herb Duncan, Robert Harter, Darla Hood (English version). A lonely street urchin meets an aged Dr Gulliver, whose latest, greatest project involved flying to the stars! When they embark on the journey together, they soon find themselves in the middle of an intergalactic war. Time has not been kind to this animated children's movie. Not bad as such, but mainly interesting today as being one of the great Hayao Miyazaki's first credits (as in-between animator). English title: GULLIVER'S TRAVELS BEYOND THE MOON.

**Garras de Lorelei, Las** (1973, SPA) **C-85m. \*\* D:** Amando de Ossorio. Starring Tony Kendall, Helga Liné, Silvia Tortosa, Josefina Jartin, Loreta (Loli) Tovar. A village on the banks of the Rhine River is terrorized by a monstrous creature that may have something to do with the legend of the Loreley, as some believe. Hunter Kendall is hired to protect school of girls from the grasps of the deadly killer. Some nasty effects may make this interesting for gore fans, but plot (using elements from *Die Nibelungen*) and pace remain standard. English titles: LORELEI'S GRASP, GRASP OF THE LORELEI, and WHEN THE SCREAMING STOPS.

**Gaslight** (1944, USA) **114m. \*\*\*½ D:** George Cukor. Starring Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten, Dame May Whitty, Angela Lansbury. Bergman suffers a trauma when her aunt is strangled but decides to move back into her old London house, when she falls in love with Boyer. Soon her mind is playing tricks on her... is she going insane? Rock-solid storytelling, good period flavor, excellent performances, a classic chiller, which owes more than a bit to the British "damsel-in-distress" gothic horror melodramas of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Bergman won an Oscar. Based on the play 'Angel Street' by Patrick Hamilton. Filmed before in 1940 and later in 1947.

**Gas! –Or- It Became Necessary to Destroy the World in Order to Save It.** (1971, USA) **C-78m. \*\* D:** Roger Corman. Starring Robert Corff, Elaine Giftos, Tally Coppola (=Talia Shire), Ben Vereen, Cindy Williams, George Armitage, Bud Cort, Country Joe McDonald. Pretty demented cult film satire about a virus or gas that kills everyone in the world over 25. A

group of young people first celebrate, then become increasingly disillusioned. Interesting concept, but this is a hippie culture movie, with lots of inept comedy and a plot that goes nowhere. The premise is the only science-fiction here. Written and coproduced by George Armitage. Also known as GAS-S-S-S.

**Gaspards, Les** (1973, FRA/BEL) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Pierre Tchernia. Starring Michel Serrault, Michel Galabru, Charles Denner, Philippe Noiret, Gérard Depardieu, Jean Carmet. Bookshop owner Serrault discovers a secret society living in the catacombs of Paris when he goes looking for his missing daughter. Mild satire on urbanization is quite funny, with some hilarious scenes; top French cast has fun in this comedy coscripted by René Goscinny of *Astérix* fame. Photographed by Jean Tournier. English title: THE HOLES.

**Gate, The** (1987, CDN/USA) **C-86m.** \*\*\* D: Tibor Takacs. Starring Stephen Dorff, Christa Denton, Louis Tripp, Kelly Rowan, Jennifer Irwin. Entertaining creature feature along the lines of GREMLINS (1984) and CRITTERS (1986). Two boys discover a hole in their backyard and accidentally summon pint-sized creatures from another dimension. As their parents are away for the weekend, they must try to fend off the invasion together with the teenage sister and her friends. Solid B-movie with good stop-motion effects. Surprisingly violent and gory, originally rated PG-13! Followed by a sequel.

**Gattaca** (1997, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Andrew Niccol. Starring Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman, Jude Law, Gore Vidal, Loren Dean, Alan Arkin, Xander Berkeley, Blair Underwood, Ernest Borgnine, Elias Koteas. Intelligent science-fiction drama set in the near future where genetically perfect babies so-called 'Valid' are born. An imperfect 'In-Valid' (Hawke) has taken over the identity of a 'Valid' (Law) and works now in Gattaca in order to fulfill his dream - a flight to the stars. However, in a society with total control, it is difficult to keep up the charade. Stylish production design (Jan Roelfs), smooth music score (Michael Nyman), good performances. Remains interesting, if never terribly rousing.

**Gatti Rossi in un Labirinto di Vetro** (1975, ITA/SPA) **C-92m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring John Richardson, Martine Brochard, Ines Pellegrini, Andrés Mejuto, Mirta Miller, Daniele Vargas, Georges Rigaud, Raf Baldassarre. Typical Italian thriller about a tourist group in Barcelona, who one-by-one fall victim to an eyeball-gouger. Who is the mad killer? Poorly constructed, poorly acted whodunit is enlivened by some colorful camerawork but generally a disappointment. Even giallo fans will find this hardly worthwhile. Score by Bruno Nicolai. Also known as THE SECRET KILLER, EYEBALL, THE DEVIL'S EYE, THE EYE, and WIDE-EYED IN THE DARK.

**Gatto a Nove Code, Il** (1971, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-112m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Karl Malden, James Franciscus, Catherine Spaak, Pier Paolo Capponi, Horst Frank, Rada Rassimov, Aldo Reggiani, Werner Pochath. THE CAT O'NINE TAILS (English title) was Dario Argento's second feature film and stands today as one of his weakest. A typical murder mystery in the giallo-tradition about blind man Malden, who teams up with reporter Franciscus to solve a murder committed at a genetics research clinic. Less stylish, less outré than Argento's later work. Ennio Morricone's haunting score is best thing about it. Written by the director.

**Gatto dagli Occhi di Giada, Il** (1976, ITA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Antonio Bido. Starring Corrado Pani, Paolo Tedesco, Franco Citti, Fernando Cerulli, Giuseppe Addobbati, Gianfranco Bullo. Good imitation of Dario Argento's PROFONDO ROSSO (right down to the Goblin-like score) about a young actress (Tedesco) who interrupts a murderer at work and is soon stalked by him. When other people die, she decides to investigate the case with a friend (Pani). Mid-section drags a little, but stylish direction and well-staged murders compensate. Director Bido

(SOLAMENTE NERO) also cowrote the screenplay. English title: THE CAT'S VICTIM. Released in the U.S. as WATCH ME WHEN I KILL.

**Gatto nel Cervello, Un** (1990, ITA) **C-87m.** Ⓜ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Lucio Fulci, David L. Thompson, Jeffrey Kennedy, Brett Halsey, Sacha Darwin. In one of his last films, Fulci turns the camera on himself and (fictionally) examines his life. He plays a film director who is plagued by nightmares – all due to the splatter orgies in his movies. Clips from Fulci's later films are interspersed, to no avail. An absolutely terrible mess, only for Fulci's most fervent admirers. English titles: NIGHTMARE CONCERT and A CAT IN THE BRAIN.

**Gatto Nero, Il** (1980, ITA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Patrick Magee, Mimsy Farmer, David Warbeck, Al Cliver, Dagmar Lassander. Interesting variation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Black Cat*: Photographer Farmer comes to small British town to photograph ruins, finds more interest in recent murders which were all obviously committed by a black cat! The creature's owner (Magee), an old weirdo, conducts experiments in the cemetery trying to record the voices of the dead. Then Scotland Yard cop Warbeck arrives. Underrated Fulci horror, with some stylish flourishes, but never really involving. Good music by Pino Donnagio. English title: THE BLACK CAT.

**Gatto Nero, Il** (1990, ITA) **C-89m.** Ⓜ D: Lewis Coates (=Luigi Cozzi). Starring Florence Guerin, Urbano Barberini, Caroline Munro, Brett Halsey, Luisa Maneri. Amateurish attempt at completing Dario Argento's 'Three Mothers'-trilogy: A filmteam plans to make a movie about the 'Mother of Tears', but it turns out she is not in favor of it. Nightmares and hallucinations plague the woman who is supposed to play her. Pretentious and simply terrible. 15 minutes of this nonsense is already enough. English title: THE BLACK CAT, although this has nothing to do with Edgar Allan Poe.

**Gauntlet, The** (1977, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Sondra Locke, Pat Hingle, William Prince, Bill McKinney, Mara Corday. Action nonsense with Eastwood (who else?) as unshaved cop who has to escort prostitute Locke from Las Vegas to Phoenix, where she is supposed to testify in court. Strangely enough, the police seem to be sabotaging Eastwood's assignment. Solidly filmed, typical 70s action film with an episodic plot and too much talk. Only fans will like it.

**Gebissen Wird Nur Nachts** (1971, GER) **C-101m. \*½** D: Freddie Francis. Starring Betty Williams (=Pia Degermark), Thomas Hunter, Yvor Murillo, Ingrid van Bergen, Joachim Kemmer, Ferdy Mayne. Low-brow vampire spoof, mostly inspired by Polanski's 1967 FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS, made by British cinematographer-turned-director Francis with a largely German cast and crew. Hollywood star Williams inherits a castle in Transylvania and is confronted with her vampiric grandmother, a nymphomaniac. The emphasis is on visual gags and puns ("May I drive my stake into you?"). Tries hard to be frivolous, but comes off as obnoxious. Only has some value as a curio. Filmed in English. English title: THE VAMPIRE HAPPENING.

**Gedo Senki** (2006, JAP) **C-115m. \*\*\*\*½** D: Goro Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Junichi Okada, Aoi Teshima, Bunta Sugawara, Yûko Tanaka, Teruyuki Kagawa, Jun Fubuki. This Studio Ghibli production was famous Hayao Miyazaki's son Goro's first feature film. He takes us into an awe-inspiring fantasy world, where a troubled prince finds a companion in an archmage. Together they confront an evil wizard, who intends to achieve immortality. Part of the plot are some dragons and a girl, who's lost her parents. Beautifully animated, with incredible detail and breathtaking scenery, film's slow-moving, enigmatic plot is one of its drawbacks, as some things are never fully explained. Still, creates a mind-expanding, atmospheric fantasy world in the tradition of the best anime. Fine score by Tamiya Terajima.

Based on the third Earthsea novel by Ursula K. Le Guin. The first two novels were filmed for television as EARTHSEA (2004). English title: TALES FROM EARTHSEA.

**Gendarme de St. Tropez, Le** (1964, FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D : Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Geneviève Grad, Michel Galabru, Jen Lefebvre, Christian Marin, Guy Grosso, Claude Piéplu, Gabriele Tinti. Dated but amusing beach comedy about inspecteur de Funès who is promoted and appointed new chief of police in coastal metropole St. Tropez. His strict, uncompromising way turns the local policemen into effective gendarmes. Meanwhile, his daughter (Grad) is turning into a young lady, causing her father much chagrin. The first film in the GENDARME-series has more plot than its sequels; it's a great time capsule, a piece of 60s nostalgia. Opening sequence is in black-and-white. Followed by five sequels, starting with LE GENDARME A NEW YORK.

**Gendarme a New York, Le** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Geneviève Grad, Michel Galabru, Christian Marin, Jean Lefebvre, Guy Grosso, Michel Modo, Billy Kearns, Dominique Zardi. Sequel to original box-office success takes the gendarmes to New York, where they attend an international police congress. Cruchot (de Funès) has troubles hiding his daughter (Grad), who was a stowaway on the plane to the States. Another one-man-show by de Funès, the culture-shock plot is old-fashioned and too episodic. Followed by LE GENDARME SE MARIE in 1968.

**Gendarme Se Marie, Le** (1968, FRA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Claude Gensac, Michel Galabru, Jean Lefebvre. Weakest entry (the third) in the GENDARME series, with grimacing inspector de Funès and his escapades as he is trying to protect St. Tropez from a tourist invasion and gets married along the way. Followed by LE GENDARME EN BALADE.

**Gendarme en Balade, Le** (1970, FRA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Michel Galabru, Claude Gensac, Guy Grosso, Jean Lefebvre, Yves Vincent. The gendarmes are suddenly retired but cannot get accustomed to their quiet new life, so they return to St. Tropez, get mixed up with hippies and run from the new police force. Comedy starts great, then gets lost in episodes, where the protagonists meet many characters of their earlier films. Followed by LE GENDARME ET LES EXTRA-TERRESTRES in 1978.

**Gendarme et les Extra-Terrestres, Le** (1978, FRA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Michel Galabru, Maurice Risch, Jean-Pierre Rambal, Guy Grosso, Michel Modo, France Rumilly, Maria Mauban. The Gendarme returns in this spoof of Spielberg's CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, set in St. Tropez, where the local police force is gradually being substituted by alien look-alikes. One of the funniest in the series, but not without slow spots. For fans of the French comedians. De Funès also cowrote the screenplay. Followed by LE GENDARME ET LES GENDARMETTES.

**Gendarme et les Gendarmettes, Le** (1982, FRA) **C-99m. \*\*\*** D : Jean Girault, Tony Aboyantz. Starring Louis de Funès, Michel Galabru, Maurice Risch, Guy Grosso, Michel Modo, Claude Gensac. The sixth and final installment in the popular comedy series has the gendarmes move into new headquarters. The arrival of four young policewomen (gendarmettes) distracts the men enormously, leading to chaos all over St. Tropez. Amusing comedy has more plot than the other sequels. Director Girault died during the production, leading to his replacement by Aboyantz. Sad to say, this was also Louis de Funès' final film appearance, he died of a heart attack shortly after this was released. English title was, tellingly, NEVER PLAY CLEVER AGAIN.

**General, The** (1998, EIR) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Boorman. Starring Brendan Gleeson, Jon Voight, Adrian Dunbar, Sean McGinley, Maria Doyle Kennedy, Angeline Ball, Jim Sheridan. Boorman also produced and wrote this character study about Dublin original

Gleeson, who considers being a criminal an honorable job. His loves, his robberies, and his quarrels with police inspector Voight are described in this film. Sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sometimes only adding to the running time. Too episodic despite being well-made. This is certainly no ONE UPON A TIME IN IRELAND. Also shown at 124m.

**General's Daughter, The** (1999, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Simon West. Starring John Travolta, Madeleine Stowe, James Cromwell, Timonthy Hutton, Leslie Stefanson, Daniel von Bargen, Clarence Williams III, James Woods, John Frankenheimer. Well-made thriller drama set at a military base, where secret investigator Travolta researches the killing of the general's daughter and finds involvement where he did not expect it. Good photography, score lift thriller above average, but story (based on Nelson DeMille's best-selling novel) could have been more compact and compelling. Good cast.

**Genio, Due Compari, Un Pollo, Il** (1975, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Damiano Damiani. Starring Terence Hill, Miou-Miou, Robert Charlebois, Patrick McGoohan, Klaus Kinski, Raimund Harmstorf, Rik Battaglia, Mario Brega. Amusing, playful comedy western, a sort-of sequel to MIO NOME E NESSUNO (1973). Hill returns as the mischievous title character and fools all kinds of 'serious' characters, including Kinski and Harmstorf. Quite entertaining, if overlong. Good score by Ennio Morricone. Rumor has it that Sergio Leone codirected this film. English titles: THE GENIUS and NOBODY IS THE GREATEST (a translation of the German NOBODY IST DER GRÖSSTE).

**Gentleman d'Epsom, Le** (1962, FRA/ITA) **88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gilles Grangier. Starring Jean Gabin, Madeleine Robinson, Paul Frankeur, Frank Villeur, Jean Lefebvre, Louis de Funès. Jean Gabin gives a commanding performance as the title character, a self-professed horse race expert, who always loses at the tracks but manages to keep his head above the water by talking others into betting on the wrong horse (and keeping the entrusted money for himself). This comedy drama is a little aimless, but connoisseurs will savor Michel Legrand's fine score and Louis de Funès terrific performance. The comic genius excels in his small role as a choleric restaurant owner. Director Grangier also coscripted.

**Geometria** (1987, MEX) **C-6m. n/r D:** Guillermo del Toro. Starring Fernando Garcia Marin, Guadalupe del Toro. Director del Toro's second short film pays tribute to Fulci, Bava, Argento and THE EXORCIST (1973) as a student summons a demon to stop having to learn geometry. Blue/red lighting is most interesting aspect. Filmed in Italian with del Toro himself providing all the dialogue.

**Geomeun Sajedeul** (2015, KOR/ITA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jang Jae-hyun. Starring Kang Dong-won, Kim Byeong-ok, Kim Eui-sung, Kim Yun-seok. Interesting, well-made EXORCIST variation set in Seoul where two priests are getting ready to perform an exorcism ritual on a comatose girl. First half is a bit draggy, but second half compensates with an effective finale. English title: THE PRIESTS.

**Getaway** (2013, USA/BUL) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Courtney Solomon. Starring Ethan Hawke, Selena Gomez, Jon Voight. Fast-paced action movie about former race driver Hawke, who is forced to follow the instructions of a criminal mastermind, who is holding his wife hostage. Hawke enters a tuned-up Ford Shelby and wreaks havoc on the streets of Sofia, Bulgaria. Basically one long, adrenaline-pumped Ford commercial, the performances and the plot are below average, at least it's over fairly soon.

**Getaway, The** (1972, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sam Peckinpah. Starring Steve McQueen, Ali McGraw, Ben Johnson, Sally Struthers, Al Lettieri, Slim Pickens, Richard Bright, Bo Hopkins. Pessimistic action drama about criminal McQueen, who plans another robbery immediately after being released. When he is double-crossed, he must run for his life with lover and wife McGraw. Dark, tragic, even cruel drama that pays its depth with a slow pace.

A remarkable film, based on the novel by Jim Thompson (script written by Thompson and Walter Hill). Score by Quincy Jones, cinematography by Lucien Ballard. James Garner has a an unrecognizable cameo driving past in a car. Remade in 1994.

**Get Him to the Greek** (2010, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*½ D:** Nicholas Stoller. Starring Jonah Hill, Russell Brand, Elisabeth Moss, Rose Byrne, Lars Ulrich, Pink, Kurt Loder, Christina Aguilera, Colm Meaney. Low-brow comedy about Hill, who works for a music producer and gets the job to bring eccentric British star Brand to a show in L.A. The five days till the show turn into a wild ride, with sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. Comedy runs hot and cold, but doesn't completely hold up. Hill is funny.

**Get Out** (2017, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Jordan Peele. Starring Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams, Catherine Keener, Bradley Whitford, Caleb Landry Jones, Lil Rel Williams. Highly-touted but generally just fairly good horror mystery about young couple Kaluuya and Williams, who spend the weekend at her parents' country estate. The fact that Kaluuya is black causes some unease, especially when it turns out that the parents have very conventional attitudes and black servants. It turns eerie, when the staff starts behaving strangely and Williams' mother Keener, a psychotherapist, tricks him into a hypnosis. Leisurely paced, builds to a revelation that is quite shocking but not really surprising. The comic relief provided by Lil Rel Williams, as Kaluuya's friend is actually the best thing about the film. A box-office smash.

**Get Over It** (2001, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Tommy O'Haver. Starring Kirsten Dunst, Ben Foster, Melissa Sagemiller, Sisqó, Shane West, Colin Hanks, Swoosie Kurtz, Ed Begley Jr., Martin Short, Carmen Electra, Coolio. Foster is dumped by his high-school girlfriend, which leaves him devastated. He plans to audition for a role in Short's Shakespeare adaptation in order to be close to her and fails to realize that Dunst has the hots for him (but why?). Starts okay, then becomes more and more annoying. Dunst is given nothing to do, her role is undemanding.

**Geu-Rim-Ja Sal-in** (2009, KOR) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Park Dae-min. Starring Hwang Jeong-min, Oh Dal-su. Amusing crime comedy set in the early 20th century, where a medical student hires a private detective to find out who murdered the son of a prominent politician. He can't go to the police because he has already used the found body for his anatomical exercises. Nice score (by now trademark of most recent Korean films), direction, but plot is not fast-paced enough. Has been labeled a Korean Sherlock Holmes. English title: PRIVATE EYE.

**G-Force** (2009, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Hoyt Yeatman. Starring Bill Nighy, Will Arnett, Zach Galifianakis, Kelli Garner, and the voices of Nicolas Cage, Sam Rockwell, Jon Favreau, Penélope Cruz, Steve Buscemi. The exact opposite of Pixar's UP (2009), a razzle-dazzle action adventure about a crew of guinea pig secret agents, who infiltrate Nighy's mansion to prove he's plotting to rule the world with an army of household appliances. Too bad they get ousted and must use their skills in real life. Funny, exciting nonsense, but the 3D effects are astounding – beating UP (2009) easily. Without 3D the film would probably only rate \*\*\*½.

**Ghibli et le Mystère Miyazaki** (2005, FRA) **C-52m. n/r D:** Yves Montmayeur. Featuring Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, Joe Hisaishi, Toshio Suzuki, Goro Miyazaki, Jean Giraud (=Moebius), Yumi Tamai. Documentary about the legendary studio Ghibli, featuring interviews with all the key figures in the animation studio's genesis. We even get a look inside the Ghibli Museum and are led to places that were the inspirations for the movies. At the end, the master himself, Miyazaki, speaks with one of his influences, Jean 'Moebius' Giraud. Highly insightful documentary for those familiar with Ghibli films.

**Ghost** (1990, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\* D:** Jerry Zucker. Starring Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, Whoopi Goldberg, Tony Goldwyn, Rick Aviles, Vincent Schiavelli. Pleasant fantasy drama about the killing of banker Swayze and his return as a ghost to his wife, whom he tries to warn of the man who murdered him. Self-professed medium Goldberg (great comic relief part) is the only one who can hear him. Longish but romantic and generally well-done. Goldberg won a Best Supporting Actress Oscar.

**Ghost and the Darkness, The** (1996, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Stephen Hopkins. Starring Michael Douglas, Val Kilmer, Tom Wilkinson, John Kani, Bernard Hill, Brian McCardie, Henry Cele, Om Puri. Adventure spectacle set in 1896 Africa, where Irish architect Kilmer attempts to build a bridge in five months. However, he has not reckoned with the superstition of the crew, who are terrified when two giant lions repeatedly attack the camp. Are they mystical creatures? Game-hunter Douglas wants to bring an end to the rumors. Grand score, sweeping photography but a screenplay that resorts to a one-dimensional lion hunt and only suggests a deeper meaning. Written by William Goldman.

**Ghost Busters** (1984, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ivan Reitman. Starring Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis, Rick Moranis, Annie Potts, William Atherton, Ernie Hudson. Amusing box-office hit is carried by its likable cast. Unemployed scientists Aykroyd, Murray and Ramis establish a ghostbuster service in New York City and must contend with an invasion of supernatural entities on top of Weaver's penthouse! Well-made, funny, a quintessential 80s fantasy comedy. Followed by a sequel in 1989. Remade in 2016.

**Ghostbusters II** (1989, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ivan Reitman. Starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis, Rick Moranis, Ernie Hudson, Annie Potts, Peter MacNicol, Cheech Marin. Sequel to GHOST BUSTERS (1984) suffers from comparison to the original. Ever since the destruction orgy of the first movie, the Ghostbusters have been out of business. When there is another surge of ghostly appearances, they get their jobs back. Weaver, now with a toddler, is in trouble again. If it wasn't for Murray's adlibs and the other likable characters, it would be pretty weak.

**Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai** (1999, USA/FRA/JAP/GER) **C-116m. \*\*\* D:** Jim Jarmusch. Starring Forest Whitaker, John Tormey, Cliff Gorman, Dennis Liu, Frank Minucci, Richard Portnow, Tricia Vessey, Henry Silva. Victor Argo. Meditative, engrossing character study about simple-minded hitman Whitaker, who lives exclusively by the code of the Samurai, and converses with small-time crook Tormey, his 'master', by a carrier pigeon. Off-beat, original, even funny Jarmusch concoction, with a charismatic lead performance by Whitaker (and a scary turn by Henry Silva). A little slight plotwise, like most of Jarmusch's movies, but achieves a kind of hypnotic quality that will make you forget time. Written by the director, who includes references to Jean-Pierre Melville's LE SAMOURAI and Akira Kurosawa's RASHOMON (and not to forget, 'The Simpsons'). Photographed by Robby Müller.

**Ghost Fever** (1987, USA) **C-86m. \*½ D:** Alan Smithee (=Lee Madden). Starring Sherman Hemsley, Luis Avalos, Jennifer Rhodes, Deborah Benson, Diana Brookes, Joe Frazier, Pepper Martin. Cheap, inept horror comedy about two policemen who investigate strange occurrences in a mansion that they know from their childhood. It turns out that it is inhabited by ghosts. No wonder director Madden had his name removed from this turkey. Hemsley and Avalos do generate some laughs though.

**Ghostkeeper** (1981, CDN) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Jim Makichuk. Starring Riva Spier, Murray Ord, Sheri McFadden, Georgie Collins, Les Kimber, Billy Grove, John MacMillan. Weird little horror chiller, set in wintry Canada, about a trio of vacationers, who get lost with their

snowmobiles, save themselves into hotel-like mansion in the middle of nowhere. The only person living there is a strange old woman. What is her purpose there? And is there someone (*something?*) else in the house? Atmospheric exercise in suspense, not without faults, but generally well-done. Creepy score by Paul Zaza. Collins, as the old lady, gives a chilling performance. Film has interesting parallels to Stanley Kubrick's SHINING (1980).

**Ghosts of Girlfriends Past** (2009, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Mark Waters. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Garner, Michael Douglas, Emma Stone, Breckin Meyer, Lacey Chabert, Robert Forster, Anne Archer. Womanizer McConaughey, a successful photographer (and lover) of fashion models, travels to his brother's wedding only to meet Garner, his former love interest. He has become a cynical ladykiller and his remarks threaten to ruin the wedding. Then his dead uncle Douglas appears and takes him A CHRISTMAS CAROL – style into the past, the present and the future. Too contrived at the beginning, but manages to draw you in emotionally. Has nice settings and a great performance by Douglas. From the director of JUST LIKE HEAVEN (2005) and THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (2008).

**Ghosts of Mars** (2001, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Carpenter. Starring Natasha Henstridge, Ice Cube, Jason Statham, Clea DuVall, Pam Grier, Joanna Cassidy, Doug McGrath, Robert Carradine. Commander Henstridge returns from a prison colony on Mars and recounts the events that happened there. When arriving there to pick up an ultra-violent criminal (Ice Cube), they meet nothing but desolation. It turns out the inhabitants are possessed by a strange force, which has turned them into Zombie-like savages. A typical Carpenter movie: solidly filmed, even exciting, but rather dumb. Horror fans (and those of the director) should get what they expect. Ice Cube sleepwalks through his role.

**Ghosts of Mississippi** (1996, USA) **C-130m. \*\*\* D:** Rob Reiner. Starring Alec Baldwin, Whoopi Goldberg, James Woods, Craig T. Nelson, Susana Thompson, Lucas Black, William H. Macy, Terry O'Quinn, Virginia Madsen, Bonnie Bartlett, Wayne Rogers, Diane Ladd. Good drama about lawyer Baldwin, who reopens a case which lies 25 years in the past in an attempt to prove that racist Woods killed Goldberg's husband, a civil rights activist. In two 1963 trials Woods was found not guilty, despite all evidence pointed against him. Long, and sometimes too predictable and conventional, but compelling and credible nevertheless, especially thanks to fine performances. Released in the U.K. as GHOSTS FROM THE PAST.

**Ghost Son** (2006, ITA/SAF/GBR/SPA) **C-97m. \*\*\*½ D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Laura Harring, John Hannah, Pete Postlethwaite, Coralina Cataldi-Tassoni, Mosa Kaiser. Second of Lamberto Bava's theatrical comeback movies (after 14 years of TV work) is a chilling ghost story set in South Africa about Harring, who moves in with her lover Hannah on his farm. The natives tell her everything around her, even objects are alive. When Hannah dies in a car accident, she at first can't let go of his memory, then his presence seems to return somehow, especially when she realizes she is pregnant with his son. Takes a few bizarre, tasteless twists, but this quiet chiller is solidly filmed, with a competent score. Harring, who spends the entire film without a bra is a sight for sore eyes. Story by Bava, who also cowrote the screenplay.

**Ghost Story** (1981, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Irvin. Starring Fred Astaire, Melvyn Douglas, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., John Houseman, Craig Wasson, Patricia Neal, Alice Krige, Ken Olin. Chiller based on the Peter Straub novel about four old gentlemen, who share a 50-year-old secret. One of their sons is murdered, and Wasson investigates. It seems a ghost from their past is haunting them. Not that suspenseful, but it's nice to see a cast of oldtimers giving their best. Astaire's, Douglas' and Fairbanks' last theatrical appearance. Photographed by Jack Cardiff. Fine score by Philippe Sarde.

**Ghost Town** (2008, USA) **C-102m**. \*\*½ D: David Koepp. Starring Greg Kinnear, Ricky Gervais, Téa Leoni, Dana Ivey, Alan Ruck. Agreeable romantic fantasy comedy: When anti-social dentist Gervais dies during a routine operation and is revived he can suddenly see ghosts in Manhattan, and they all have unfinished business, especially suave Kinnear, whose widow lives in Gervais' apartment building. Some funny moments kudos to Brit Gervais, but script is paper thin and doesn't fully exploit its potential. Kinnear is fine.

**Ghost World** (2001, USA/GBR/GER) **C-111m**. \*\*½ D: Terry Zwigoff. Starring Thelma Blair, Scarlett Johansson, Steve Buscemi, Brad Renfro, Illeana Douglas, Bob Balaban, Stacey Travis, Bruce Glover, Teri Garr. Zwigoff's follow-up to the acclaimed biography CRUMB (1994) is an off-beat teen drama about two outsiders, Birch and Johansson, who have just finished high school and are looking for a job. They make the acquaintance of record collector Buscemi, a thirty-something geek, and Birch makes it her cause to help him find a girlfriend. Script is a bit unfocused and aimless like its main characters, but there are some funny bits and good performances. Based on a graphic novel by Daniel Clowes. Coproduced by John Malkovich.

**Ghost Writer, The** (2010, GBR/FRA/GER) **C-128m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roman Polanski. Starring Ewan McGregor, Pierce Brosnan, Olivia Williams, James Belushi, Kim Cattrall, Timothy Hutton, Eli Wallach, Tom Wilkinson. Director Polanski keeps making engrossing films even in the twilight stage of his career. Aided immeasurably by the excellent score by Alexandre Desplat, film deals with ghostwriter Ewan McGregor, who takes up the job of writing former British prime minister Pierce Brosnan's memoirs after the first ghostwriter commits suicide. This interesting reference to THE TENANT (1976) is not elaborated any further, as movie plays out more realistically like Polanski's FRANTIC (1988), with nice settings and strong supporting characters. Not a bull's-eye, with less-than-brisk pacing, but well-worth watching. Interesting and engrossing throughout.

**Ghoul, The** (1975, GBR) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Freddie Francis. Starring Peter Cushing, John Hurt, Alexandra Bastedo, Gwen Watford, Veronica Carlson, Steward Bevan. During a car race to Land's End, a young woman and her driver get stuck in foggy marshland. She stumbles into a strange house, whose landlord (Cushing) may be waiting for fresh human flesh! Typically bizarre, nonsensical but chilling horror with a trivial but fast-paced plot. Cushing is excellent. Script should have been better, which non-horror fans will consider a liability.

**Ghoulies** (1985, USA) **C-81m**. \*\* D: Luca Bercovici. Starring Peter Lapis, Lisa Pelikan, Michael Des Barres, Jack Nance, Peter Risch. Horror comedy about Lapis and Pelikan, a couple who inherit a house and with it the title creatures. Seems like a parody of GREMLINS, only its attempts at humor are laughable. Watchable for some good special effects. Charles Band executive produced. Followed by three sequels.

**Giallo** (2009, ITA/USA) **C-92m**. \*½ D: Dario Argento. Starring Adrien Brody, Emmanuelle Seigner, Elsa Pataky, Robert Miano, Silvia Spross, Byron Deidra. Troubled police detective Brody is approached by Seigner, whose sister has been kidnapped by a serial killer in Turin. Together they try to find him, before he kills the young fashion model. Utterly conventional, twist-free thriller from a masterful director. Some expected gore, but plot offers no suspense or excitement, even little action. The screenplay (by Jim Agnew, Sean Keller and Argento himself) has pacing issues that are partly offset by a good score, but the ending completely ruins it. There are faint echoes of SAW and Argento's earlier films, but not enough to maintain interest. Not an homage to the 1970s horror subgenre of the giallo, but a throwback to the IL CARTAIO (2004) days. This is now clearly Argento's worst film. Trivia note: Byron Deidra is an anagram. English title: YELLOW.

**Giallo a Venezia** (1979, ITA) **C-91m**. \*\* D: Mario Landi. Starring Leonora Fani, Gianni Dei, Jeff Blynn, Mariangela Giordano, Vassili Karis. Notorious thriller uses the mystery formula to

deliver a sex-and-crime story about inspector Blynn, who investigates brutal murder of two lovers. In flashbacks we learn that their relationship was characterized by sexual perversion and degradation. Gratuitous sex scenes abound, exceedingly violent, but hardly suspenseful and poorly structured. Worth a look for fans but not the cult shocker they may expect. English titles: GORE IN VENICE, MYSTERY IN VENICE, THRILLER IN VENICE.

**Giant** (1956, USA) **C-201m. \*\*\*½ D:** George Stevens. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean, Carol Baker, Jane Withers, Chill Wills, Mercedes McCambridge, Dennis Hopper, Sal Mineo, Rod Taylor, Judith Evelyn. Grand Hollywood epic from the 1950s about free-minded Maryland beauty Taylor, who marries cattle-baron Hudson and moves to his ranch in rural Texas. It's tough for her to adjust to new situation, especially since his sister considers her competition for the rule and Hudson himself is a stubborn, old-fashioned man. Family saga spanning 25 years is really unmissable. Stevens' direction is masterful in the way he makes subtle statements about the characters. Dean (in his final screen role, for which he was Oscar-nominated) plays an impressively negative character (note the shadows that frequently conceal parts of his face). Minor flaws: unconvincing aging makeup, an abundance of anti-climactic scenes. Based on Edna Ferber's novel. Film received ten Academy Award nominations and won only for Best Director.

**Giardino dei Finzi-Contini, Il** (1971, ITA/GER) **C-95m. \*\*\*½ D:** Vittorio de Sica. Starring Lino Capolicchio, Dominique Sanda, Fabio Testi, Helmut Berger, Romolo Valli. Quiet, melancholy drama about rich Jewish family, who ignores the events taking place during World War Two until they themselves are affected. Top photography paints their garden like Paradise, from which they are finally expelled. Well-acted drama is not a typical Anti-Fascist statement but looks at the effects of Fascism on a very personal level. Based on a novel by Giorgio Bassani. Oscar-winner for Best Foreign Film. English title: THE GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS.

**Gift, The** (2000, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\* D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Cate Blanchett, Giovanni Ribisi, Keanu Reeves, Katie Holmes, Greg Kinnear, Hilary Swank, Michael Jeter, Kim Dickens, Gary Cole, Rosemary Harris, J.K. Simmons, Danny Elfman. Atmospheric drama set in misty, dark Georgia, where widowed mother Blanchett makes a living with tarot readings for her neighbors. When a girl disappears, the father asks the clairvoyant for help and indeed she soon has visions of a very frightening kind. Eerie, creepy chiller is buoyed by Blanchett's excellent performance but may be too weird and bizarre for most tastes. Plot is slightly overlong, but authentic atmosphere makes this work all the way. One of horror director Raimi's best films. Good score by Christopher Young (although sometimes too reminiscent of Carter Burwell's work for the Coen brothers). Written by Billy Bob Thornton and Tom Epperson.

**Gift, The** (2015, USA/AUS) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Joel Edgerton. Starring Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall, Joel Edgerton, Allison Tolman. Career-driven Bateman moves from Chicago back to his hometown in California with his wife. Once there he meets an old schoolfriend (Edgerton, also writer/director), who proceeds to pry himself into their lives – for reasons specified later in the film. Engrossing thriller drama holds your attention, but becomes slightly too manipulative and mean-spirited. At least it transfers the anxieties of the main characters seamlessly to the viewer – be it male or female – although the male ones will have a hard time dealing with them.

**G.I. Jane** (1997, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Demi Moore, Viggo Mortensen, Anne Bancroft, Scott Wilson, Jason Beghe, Daniel Von Bargaen. Moore stars as a head-strong feamle soldier, determined to pass the tough Navy S.E.A.Ls training – as the first woman ever. Typically well-filmed for director Scott, but glorification of the army may make this unacceptable for pacifists. Moore's second career-killer after STRIPTEASE.

**Gimlet** (1995, SPA) **C-90m**. \*\*½ D: José Luis Acosta. Starring Angela Molina, Viggo Mortensen, Abel Folk, Pep Cruz. Competently made psycho-thriller about young bar owner Molina's crazy admirer, who sends human hearts as a proof of his deep affection. Interesting, to say the least, but second-rate script fails to exploit the potential of the premise. The absurd ending further downs it. Gimlet was (according to Molina) Philip Marlowe's favorite long drink.

**Ginga-Tetsudo no Yoru** (1985, JAP) **C-113m**. \*\*½ D: Gisaburo Sugii. Starring (the voices of) Mayumi Tanaka, Chika Sakamoto, Junko Hori. Interesting animated feature based on an unfinished novel by Kenji Miyazawa. Two cat characters with Italian names, both outsiders in their school class, spend the night together on a mysterious train that seems to go for a ride through the galaxy, with the last stop in heaven. Fantasy not just for kids has okay animation but it's *very* slowly paced, with the camera endlessly detailing trivial actions. Subject matter has earned this a minor cult movie reputation. Worth checking out. Remade in 2006. English title: NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD.

**Gingerbread Man, The** (1998, USA) **C-114m**. \*\*½ D: Robert Altman. Starring Kenneth Branagh, Embeth Davidtz, Robert Downey, Jr., Daryl Hannah, Tom Berenger, Famke Janssen, Mae Whitman, Jesse James, Robert Duvall. A divorced lawyer (Branagh) has an affair with a waitress (Davidtz) and offers to help her against her crazy father (Duvall). In court they manage to put him away into a clinic, but he escapes and makes life hell for the stressed, overanxious lawyer. Well-acted, well-scored film lives up to its classification as a thriller thanks to Altman's breathless direction, but it's still hard to overlook the utter implausibility of the story. Written by best-selling novelist John Grisham.

**Ginger Snaps** (2000, CDN/USA) **C-110m**. \*\*\* D: John Fawcett. Starring Emily Perkins, Katharine Isabelle, Kris Lemche, Mimi Rogers, Jesse Moss, voice of Lucy Lawless. Original take on werewolf movies about weird sisters Perkins and Isabelle, whose morbid doings have turned them into outsiders. One full moon night, Isabelle is attacked by a ferocious beast, a werewolf obviously, since Ginger is slowly changing into a wolf. Stylish, exciting horror film is too hysterical at times and overlong (it has some redundant scenes), but nicely different from other genre films. An interesting companion piece to THE COMPANY OF WOLVES (1984). Followed by a sequel and a prequel in 2004.

**Ginger Snaps: Unleashed** (2004, CDN) **C-94m**. \*\*\* D: Brett Sullivan. Starring Emily Perkins, Brendan Fletcher, Katharine Isabelle, Tatiana Maslany, Susan Adam, Janet Kidder, David McNally. Good sequel to GINGER SNAPS (2000) follows Perkins' exploits after the original movie, as she checks into a rehab clinic for young women. She tries to control her body's urge to transform into a werewolf. She befriends an odd comic-book addict (stunningly played by Maslany) and finally realizes that she is being hunted by another werewolf, who wants to mate with her. Perkins is fine again, and setting, partly an abandoned asylum, is atmospheric. The werewolf make-up is second-rate, though, like in the first movie. Maslany was an incredible 19 when this was filmed, her character must be one of the most interesting in werewolf (horror?) history. Followed by GINGER SNAPS BACK: THE BEGINNING. Also known as GINGER SNAPS 2.

**Ginger Snaps Back: The Beginning** (2004, CDN) **C-94m**. \*\*½ D: Grant Harvey. Starring Katharine Isabelle, Emily Perkins, Nathaniel Arcand, JR Bourne, Hugh Dillon, Adrien Dorval, Brendan Fletcher. David La Haye. GINGER SNAPS 3 (alternative title) is a prequel of sorts, set in 19th century Canada, where the two sisters wander through the wintry wilderness and stumble into a fort, which is being fortified against an unknown evil – probably werewolves. Almost like a remake, and this is film's problem. It's almost as good as the original(s), but

the sense of déjà vu takes away most of the suspense. Still, stylish and imaginative, a must for series fans.

**Giornata Nera per L'Ariete** (1971, ITA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Luigi Bazzoni. Starring Franco Nero, Silvia Monti, Wolfgang Preiss, Ira Fürstenberg, Edmund Purdom, Renato Romano. Fairly interesting crime thriller ('giallo'), based on the novel by D. M. Devine, about journalist Nero, who suffers from alcohol abuse and gets drawn into a murder mystery, where he himself is one of the prime suspects. He sets out to investigate. Quite well-directed, kudos to star-cinematographer Vittorio Storaro, whose exceptional spacial style makes the thriller worth watching. Score by Ennio Morricone. Still, nothing to get excited about. For giallo lovers. English titles: THE FIFTH CORD and EVIL FINGERS.

**Giorni dell'Ira, I** (1967, ITA/GER) **C-114m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Tonino Valerii. Starring Giuliano Gemma, Lee van Cleef, Christa Linder, Lukas Ammann, Walter Rilla, Ennio Balbo, Andrea Bosis, Pepe Calva, Yvonne Sanson, Franco Balducci. Above-average spaghetti western about young man (Gemma) who keeps being picked upon by citizens of peaceful, bourgeois town of Clinton, Arizona, until a stranger (van Cleef) shows up who changes the naive man's life by making him a gunfighter. Good direction, fine timing of Riz Ortolani's score (kudos to editor Franco Fraticelli, who worked on most of Dario Argento's horror films), but director Valerii concentrates too much on the - badly paced - plot than on gunplay or machismo. An adaptation of a novel by Ron Barker, which explains the aimless mid-section of the film. Beginning and end are best parts. English titles: DAY OF ANGER, and DAYS OF WRATH.

**Giorno del Cobra, II** (1980, ITA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Franco Nero, Sybil Danning, William Berger, Mickey Knox, Ennio Girolami, Massimo Vanni, Romano Puppo, Enzo G. Castellari, Michele Soavi. Mostly boring actioner about private detective Nero (nicknamed 'Cobra'), who is kind of a cheap Italian Mike Hammer imitation. He travels from the States to Italy to nail a crime boss. In the meantime, he is also trying to come to terms with his little son. Unexceptional, slowly paced, tame, only for die-hard Nero fans. Story cowritten by Aldo Lado. English title: DAY OF THE COBRA.

**Giorno Prima, II** (1987, ITA/FRA/CDN/USA) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Giuliano Montaldo. Starring Ben Gazzara, Kate Nelligan, Kate Reid, Burt Lancaster, Ingrid Thulin, Erland Josephson, Cyrielle Claire, William Berger, Andréa Ferréol, Flavio Bucci. Interesting psycho drama about fifteen strangers, who agree to take part in an experiment which is supposed to test underground shelter designed to protect mankind from nuclear holocaust. Will the group withstand the psychological pressure? Script presents stereotypical characters and dialogues but still manages to make interesting points. Worth a look, even so many years after the end of the Cold War. Score by Ennio Morricone. International title: CONTROL.

**Girl, Interrupted** (1999, USA) **C-127m.** \*\*½ D: James Mangold. Starring Winona Ryder, Angelina Jolie, Clea DuVall, Brittany Murphy, Elisabeth Moss, Jared Leto, Jeffrey Tambor, Vanessa Redgrave, Whoopi Goldberg. Ryder plays a disoriented 18-year-old, whose latest suicide attempt brings her into a mental institution, where, among fellow problem children, she begins to discover herself. Well-made, well-acted (and overlong) drama has unfortunately a very unrealistic feel about it; maybe they should have made it without any stars. It simply seems phony. Based on the autobiographical book by Susanna Kaysen, cowritten by director Mangold (COPLAND, HEAVY). Jolie won an Oscar for her demented performance.

**Girl on the Train, The** (2016, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D: Tate Taylor. Starring Emily Blunt, Haley Bennett, Rebecca Ferguson, Justin Theroux, Luke Evans, Edgar Ramirez, Lisa Kudrow. Fascinating mystery drama about mentally imbalanced Blunt, who suffers from bouts of alcohol abuse and increasingly dreams herself into the lives of her ex-husband and his new

family. When their babysitter goes missing, she recalls seeing something suspicious and becomes detective - and suspect. Unusual film is more art-house drama than mainstream thriller, also because of some striking directorial touches and lush cinematography. The plot, based on the novel by Paula Hawkins, is a bit uneven but fascinating all the way. Excellent performances.

**Girl with All the Gifts, The** (2016, GBR/USA) **C-111m. \*\*½ D:** Colm McCarthy. Starring Gemma Arterton, Glenn Close, Sennia Nanua, Paddy Considine. Unusual zombie horror begins in a military facility where children born as 'hungries' are educated by teacher Arterton and studied by scientist Close. When the perimeter is breached, a group of survivors goes on the run, with a potentially dangerous but highly intelligent zombie kid in tow. Quite violent and effective, with some impressively apocalyptic architecture, but runs out of ideas too soon. Written by Mike Carey, based on his novel. Filmed in an aspect ratio of 2.00:1.

**Girl with a Pearl Earring** (2003, GBR/USA/LUX) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Webber. Starring Colin Firth, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Wilkinson, Judy Parfitt, Cillian Murphy, Essie Davis, Joanna Scanlan. Interesting depiction of every day life in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, focusing on shy chambermaid Johansson's employment in the house of (later-to-be) famous painter Vermeer and their mutual but hesitant infatuation. Low-key, almost detached drama has many beautiful images and moments. Good photography by Eduardo Serra. Based on the novel by Tracy Chevalier.

**Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, The** (2011, USA/SWE/NOR) **C-158m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Fincher. Starring Daniel Craig, Rooney Mara, Christopher Plummer, Stellan Skarsgard, Steven Berkoff, Robin Wright, Joely Richardson, Goran Visnjic. Adaptation of the Stieg Larsson bestseller is good crime fare. Craig plays a journalist convinced for libel, who is called to the north of Sweden to write a biography about industrialist Plummer. What the latter is most interested in is the mysterious disappearance of his niece in the 1960s. Craig then starts an investigation that will delve deep into the family history. A second plot strand focuses on cunning researcher Mara, a skinny, tattooed and pierced outsider, who will ultimately lend a hand in shedding light on the mystery. Steven Zaillian's script merely scratches the surface of the complex novel, which may be why the story never achieves an emotional impact. The score (by Trent Reznor) keeps things bubbling, though. Filmed before in 2009 (in Sweden), along with two sequels.

**Giubbe Rosse** (1974, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Joe D'Amato. Starring Fabio Testi, Guido Mannari, Lionel Stander, Roberto Undari, Lars Bloch, Lynne Frederick. Western drama set in turn-of-the-century Canada. After struggling to set up the premise, film follows Mountie Testi's attempts to catch criminal Mannari, who has kidnapped his son Bloch. Beautiful location work, good score (by Carlo Rustichelli), an unusual film for director/photographer/cowriter D'Amato. Plot is hardly involving, however. Wintry setting is reminiscent of Sergio Corbucci's famous spaghetti western *IL GRANDE SILENZIO* (1968). In terms of plot this one is more similar to Lucio Fulci's *ZANNA BIANCA* adventures based on Jack London's *White Fang*. Also known as *CORMACK OF THE MOUNTIES*, *RED COAT* and *ROYAL MOUNTED POLICE*.

**Giulietta degli Spiriti** (1965, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-137m. \*\*\*½ D:** Federico Fellini. Starring Giulietta Masina, Sandra Milo, Mario Pisu, Valentina Cortese, Valeska Gert, Sylva Koscina, George Ardisson, Marilù Tolo. Marvelous surreal drama (some call it fantasy) about aging Masina's growing suspicion that her husband Pisu is cheating on her. She dreams herself / finds herself drawn into a fantasy world, where the weirdest of people influence her. Brilliantly directed, visually astounding delight by one of cinema's most extravagant auteurs.

Fellini's images are at times bizarre, eerie, beautiful and even haunting. Stunning art direction / set decoration, outré costumes add to film's uniqueness. This was Fellini's first color movie and it shows in his playful experimenting with what becomes possible. Score by Nino Rota (directed by Carlo Savina). The director went on to make HISTOIRES EXTRAORDINAIRES (1968); the project he focused on in between (circa 1965-1967, screenplay titled *Il Viaggio di G. Mastorna*) was unfortunately never realized; it could have marked another highpoint in Fellini's dealing with the supernatural. English title: JULIET OF THE SPIRITS.

**Giustiziere della Terra Perduta, Il** (1983, ITA/USA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: David Worth, Fred Williamson. Starring Robert Ginty, Persis Khambatta, Donald Pleasence, Fred Williamson, Harrison Muller Sr. Quite cheesy but not bad MAD MAX 2 rip-off set in the wastelands of the future where motorcyclist Ginty becomes the only hope for rebels fighting against futuristic society led by Pleasence. Direction is quite good and first half has some interesting sets and ideas, but film bogs down almost completely in the second one. English titles: WARRIOR OF THE LOST WORLD, MAD RIDER.

**Giver, The** (2014, USA) **C/B&W-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Phillip Noyce. Starring Jeff Bridges, Meryl Streep, Brenton Thwaites, Alexander Skarsgard, Katie Holmes, Odeya Rush. Cameron Monaghan, Taylor Swift. Interesting science-fiction drama set in a futuristic society that has eliminated all emotions, be they positive or negative. Teenager Thwaites has been selected to receive some memories that are handed down from generation to generation by the Giver (Bridges). The emotions he receives along with them turn his world upside down and make him a threat to the authorities. Sci-fi with touches of LOGAN'S RUN (1976) has a powerful humanistic, life-affirming message without being preachy. Film is also especially well-cast. Based on a book by Lois Lowry.

**Gladiator** (2000, USA) **C-155m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ridley Scott. Starring Russell Crowe, Joaquin Phoenix, Connie Nielsen, Oliver Reed, Richard Harris, Derek Jacobi, Djimon Hounsou, David Schofield, John Shrapnel, Tomas Arana, Ralph Möller, Spencer Treat Clarke, David Hemmings. Powerful action epic set 180 A.D. about a victorious warrior for the Roman forces (Crowe), who is cheated out of becoming emperor by Phoenix, the son of the dying Caesar. When his family is killed he seeks vengeance on the villain, becoming a feared gladiator. Simple story formula is overcome by rip-roaring action sequences and a compelling performance by Crowe. Slightly overlong but still very entertaining (and quite bloody). A box-office smash, Oscar winner for Best Picture and Best Actor (Crowe). Reed's last film.

**Gli Fumavano le Colt... Lo Chiamavano Camposanto** (1971, ITA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring Gianni Garko, William Berger, Chris Chittell, John Fordyce. Occasionally funny comedy western about two 'gentlemen cowboys', who come to defend their father's honour. Gunslinger Garko wants to get his personal revenge on local tyrant, when another shootist (Berger) shows up. Loosely structured plot, but script (by E.B. Clucher né Enzo Barboni) has some nice ideas. Fine, memorable score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: THEY CALL HIM CEMETERY, BULLET FOR A STRANGER.

**Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III, A** (2012, USA) **C-86m. \*½** D: Roman Coppola. Starring Charlie Sheen, Jason Schwartzman, Bill Murray, Patricia Arquette, Katheryn Winnick, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Angela Lindvall, Stephen Dorff, Colleen Camp. Partly surreal comedy about Sheen, seemingly playing himself or his alter ego from the TV hit series *Two and a Half Men*. When he is dumped by his girlfriend, his life comes apart at the seams and we get to endure his inner turmoil that manifests itself in crazy situations. Talky, boring

misfire was director Coppola's second feature after the stylish CQ (2001), but it wasn't worth the wait. Only thing remotely appealing is the easy listening score.

**Glory Stompers, The** (1968, USA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Anthony M. Lanza. Starring Dennis Hopper, Jody McCrea, Jock Mahoney, Casey Kasem, Lindsay Crosby, Randee Lynne Jensen. Biker picture with all the intensity and violence: Hopper and his troupe club a biker almost to death and abduct his girlfriend. Not very stimulating, but a cult movie among bikers, understandably. If this is your cup of tea, tune in. At least director Lanza does a good editing job.

**Go-Between, The** (1970, GBR) **C-118m. \*\*\*½** D: Joseph Losey. Starring Julie Christie, Alan Bates, Margaret Leighton, Michael Redgrave, Dominic Guard, Michael Gough, Edward Fox. Sublime cast in atmospheric period piece about a rich family spending their summer in Norfolk, where a 13-year-old becomes a witness of (and messenger for) the love affair between aristocratic Christie and farmer Bates. Top script by Harold Pinter, adapting a novel by L.P. Hartley. Fine score by Michel Legrand, memorable, evocative settings. Winner of the Golden Palm at Cannes.

**God** (2002, NOR) **C/B&W-80m. \*\*½** D: Johnny Markussen. Starring David Allen, Thomas Eirheim, Ronny Fagereng, Stig Rune Haugen, Edgar Wilde. Experimental drama about Allen, who is the new inmate in an insane asylum. He tries to oppose authority by proclaiming himself God, but is there any way out of the madness? Plot is second-rate and seems like a reread of ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST (1975) – with less-than-stellar acting – but experimental animated sequences are quite good and make this no-budget film interesting. Written by first-time director Markussen.

**Goddess of 1967, The** (2002, AUS) **C-118m. \*\*\*** D: Clara Law. Starring Rosa Byrne, Rikiya Kurokawa, Nicholas Hope, Elise McCredie, Tim Richards. A Japanese twen travels to Australia to buy the love of his life, a 1967 Citroen DS (=déesse, meaning goddess). Upon his arrival he learns that the owner has killed himself and his wife. Their daughter is looked after by a troubled 17-year-old blind girl, who persuades him to drive her across the continent. In flashbacks we learn her story and find out that she is actually a broken soul. Artful direction and superb cinematography make this road movie drama a treat, though it tends to overlength and pretentious dialogue. Winner of several festival prizes. Cowritten by director Law.

**Godfather, The** (1972, USA) **C-175m. \*\*\*½** D: Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, Richard Castellano, John Cazale, Diane Keaton, Talia Shire, Robert Duvall, Sterling Hayden, John Marley, Richard Conte, Al Lettieri, Abe Vigoda, Al Martino, Alex Rocco. Sweeping saga about an Italian family in the U.S., led by patriarch Brando, who have built up their existence on organised crime. Mario Puzo's story extremely well-told by a master filmmaker. Long and not always compelling but hypnotic and revved up by stylish depictions of violence. Score by Nino Rota is brilliant. Oscars were awarded for Best Picture, Best Actor (Brando) and Best Screenplay.

**Godfather Part II, The** (1974, USA) **C-200m. \*\*\*\*** D: Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Al Pacino, Robert Duvall, Diane Keaton, Robert De Niro, John Cazale, Talia Shire, Lee Strasberg, Michael V. Gazzo, G.D. Spradlin, Bruno Kirby, Jr., John Aprea, Morgana King, Mariana Hill, Troy Donahue, Joe Spinell, Abe Vigoda, Fay Spain, Harry Dean Stanton, Danny Aiello, Roger Corman, James Caan. Sequel to the above is perhaps Coppola's masterpiece. Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) has taken over from his deceased father and is the new Don. Flashback sequences contrast his life with the one of his father (De Niro) in his early days before World War One. Languid drama, masterful in all compartments. Oscar-winner for Best Picture, Best Director, Screenplay, Supporting Actor (De Niro), Score, and Art Direction/Set Decoration.

**God of Gamblers Returns** (1994, HGK) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Wong Jing. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Tony Leung, Cheung Man, Charles Heung. Sequel to GOD OF GAMBLERS (1989) with title character Chow having set up a peaceful, anonymous existence. A gambling rival has found his hideout, however, and when he kills Chow's pregnant wife, it's time for revenge. Uneven, at times confusing thriller comedy with potent, well-directed action sequences that unfortunately lose out to silly comic relief. Original 126m. version also available. Also known as THE RETURN OF THE GOD OF GAMBLERS, GOD OF GAMBLERS 2.

**God of Killers** (1981, HGK) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Ann Hui. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Dave Brodett, Cherie Chung, Lo Lih, Cora Miao. A Vietnamese refugee comes to Hong Kong and soon learns that life is hard in the new country. As he sees his dreams shattered, he turns to a life of crime. Talky, not interesting crime drama that some (distributors, presumably) labeled an action movie. The ending is the best part of this slack film. An early appearance by Chow, made several years before his breakthrough in John Woo's classics. Also known as THE STORY OF WOO VIET, or WOO YUET'S STORY.

**Godsend, The** (1980, GBR) **C-86m. BOMB** D: Gabrielle Beaumont. Starring Cyd Hayman, Malcolm Stoddard, Patrick Barr, Joanne Boorman, Angela Pleasence. Dull thriller about a couple with six children, who is visited by a mysterious woman one day. The stranger gives birth to a girl and disappears. The couple adopts the baby, not knowing that it is evil. They live to regret it. Mean-spirited movie is completely unappealing. Not even for horror fans. Based on the novel by Bernard Taylor.

**God Told Me To** (1977, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Larry Cohen. Starring Tony Lo Bianco, Deborah Raffin, Sandy Dennis, Sylvia Sidney, Sam Levene, Richard Lynch. Unusual, highly interesting horror thriller about cop Lo Bianco's investigations concerning mass murders committed by ordinary people who claim that "God told them to". Intriguing but unfortunately also uneven script by the director. Worth comparing to Dario Argento's SUSPIRIA (released that same year) and Roman Polanski's ROSEMARY'S BABY. Also known as DEMON.

**Godzilla** (1998, USA) **C-140m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Roland Emmerich. Starring Matthew Broderick, Jean Reno, Maria Pitillo, Hank Azaria, Kevin Dunn, Michael Lerner, Harry Shearer, Bodhi Elfman. Big, loud blockbuster (did you expect anything else from Emmerich?) takes the Japanese cult movie monster Godzilla (aka Gajira) and sends it to New York City, where it destroys everything in the way. Scientist Broderick might be clever enough to stop it. Bombastic movie takes pleasure in destruction and is about as subtle as a dumbbell. A definite improvement over the hilariously dumb INDEPENDENCE DAY (1996), especially in the second half, which manages to create some suspense. Owes more than a bit to JURASSIC PARK (1993), however.

**Godzilla** (2014, USA/JAP) **C-123m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Gareth Edwards. Starring Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Elizabeth Olsen, Bryan Cranston, Ken Watanabe, Juliette Binoche, David Strathairn. Yet another remake of the legendary monster movies has some breathtaking visual effects, but plot never once catches fire: Taylor-Johnson's father is a Godzilla expert, and when something underground awakens, he travels to Japan to help him figure out what. It turns out Godzilla is sorely needed to battle another monster that is sending out a mating call. Visually arresting, but the main character is dull and entire film suffers.

**Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah** (1991, JPN) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Kazuki Omori. Starring Kosuke Toyohara, Anna Nakagawa, Megumi Odaka, Katsuhiko Sasaki, Chuck Wilson. Another entry (the 23<sup>rd</sup>, or so) in the long running sci-fi action film series concerns time travellers from the future, who predict that Godzilla will destroy Japan. They decide to eliminate the mutant right after its birth in 1944. Another monster, three-headed Ghidorah (or Ghidra), joins the proceedings, wreaking havoc in the present. Action galore after a relatively complicated

story set-up, good effects, some effective editing will satisfy fans. Obviously inspired by TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY. Contains one funny reference to Steven Spielberg.

**Godzilla vs. the Cosmic Monster** (1974, JAP) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*½D:** Jun Fukuda. Starring Masaaki Daimon, Kazuya Aoyama, Reiko Tajima, Barbara Lynn, Akihiko Hirata. One of the better Japanese monster movies, this one has Godzilla (Gojira in Japanese) go against a nearly invincible metal duplication of himself. Lots of loud action almost overcomes naive plot, but special effects are still quite lame. Aka GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA, and GODZILLA VS. THE BIONIC MONSTER.

**Goin' South** (1978, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jack Nicholson. Starring Jack Nicholson, Mary Steenburgen, Christopher Lloyd, John Belushi. Profane western comedy about an outlaw (Nicholson) who marries a spinster (Steenburgen) in order to escape being hanged for horse-theft. Funny complications ensue. It's a matter of taste whether you like Nicholson's sardonic performance but John Belushi's small role (his film debut) is a real scream.

**Gokung** (2016, KOR/JAP) **C-156m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Na Hong-jin. Starring Jun Kunimura, Hwang Jun-min, Chun Woo-hee. Partly absorbing horror drama set in a rural community, where a Japanese eremite living in the woods may have something to do with strange series of murders and suicides. A policeman starts to investigate, but soon his own daughter becomes possessed. Technically well-made and well-scored, but plot makes barely any progress and remains vague. English title: THE WAILING.

**Gokudô Sengokushi: Fudô** (1996, JAP) **C-98m. D:** Takashi Miike. Starring Shosuke Tanahara, Kenji Takano, Marie Jinno, Tamaki Kenmochi. Totally absurd gangster thriller about Tanihara's quest to destroy his father's Yakuza organization. He was traumatized in his childhood when he witnessed his own brother's execution by his father! He enlists the help of school friends (some 6 years old!) to kill his father's killers. Excessively violent (for no reason), explicitly sexual (perversely so) and totally plodding in the breaks between the film's action scenes. An unnerving experience that you might not want to sit through. If this is cult, then more like Jess Franco's films are (Miike makes films at Franco's old rate). Based on a novel by Hitoshi Tanimura. Followed by a video sequel. English title: FUDOH: A NEW GENERATION.

**Gold** (1974, GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Peter R. Hunt. Starring Roger Moore, Susannah York, Ray Milland, Bradford Dillman, John Gielgud, John Hussey. Moore, right after his debut as James Bond in LIVE AND LET DIE (1973), stars in this slowly paced drama about goldmining and a conspiracy to raise the gold price – even if it costs the lives of some miners. Made by the one-time Bond filmmaker Peter R. Hunt (ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE), this lacks action, style and verve but remains watchable. The final action montage is terrific (kudos to former editor Hunt). A soap opera has more plot, though. Based on Wilbur Smith's novel *Goldmine*. Score by Elmer Bernstein. Released in the States as THE GREAT GOLD CONSPIRACY.

**Gold Connection** (1968, HGK) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Siu Kwai. Starring Philip Ko, Han Kwok Choi, Wie Liet, Luk Chien. When four friends find gold bars on the bottom of the sea and one of them decides to keep them, smugglers are soon after the men. Lots of violent action, very little plot. Direction is not bad though. German credits state that Bruce Lee is in the cast, which is simply not true.

**Golden Compass, The** (2007, USA/GBR) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Chris Weitz. Starring Nicole Kidman, Daniel Craig, Dakota Blue Richards, Ben Walker, Tom Courtenay, Sam Elliott, Christopher Lee, Eva Green, Derek Jacobi, the voices of Freddie Highmore, Ian McKellen, Ian McShane, Kristin Scott Thomas, Kathy Bates. Flawed adaptation of the first of the Dark Material novels by Philip Pullman, this one introduces us to heroine Richards, whose uncle

Craig has found a way to communicate with, maybe even travel to, parallel universe linked to theirs by dust. She lives in a world, where everyone's soul is following their owners in the form of animals, called 'demons'. Entrusted with the title device that enables her to see the truth, the girl travels to the North Pole – a place where children have been mysteriously disappearing to. Plot by director Weitz is hardly involving, big names, big budget keeps you watching. A kind of cross between HARRY POTTER and NARNIA. May be more meaningful to those who have read the novels. Craig is barely in it. Followed by THE SUBTLE KNIFE (2009).

**GoldenEye** (1995, GBR/USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Michael Campbell. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Sean Bean, Izabella Scorupco, Famke Janssen, Joe Don Baker, Judi Dench, Robbie Coltrane, Tchény Karyo, Gottfried John, Alan Cumming, Desmond Llewelyn, Samantha Bond, Minnie Driver, Martin Campbell. Disappointing return of the Bond franchise after a six-year hiatus. Brosnan gets a superbly directed introduction in his first Bond movie, but plot – circling around a Russian general's attempt to use super-weapon in space – is derivative and hardly memorable. Some explosive action stunts and humor involving Q make it worthwhile, but the Bond feeling is almost completely gone. Monty Norman's legendary theme appears once during the film, for little more than a minute. Followed by TOMORROW NEVER DIES.

**Goldengirl** (1979, USA) **C-104m. \*\*½ D** Joseph Sargent. Starring Susan Anton, James Coburn, Curd Jürgens, Leslie Caron, Robert Culp, James A. Watson Jr., Harry Guardino, Michael Lerner, Bob Beamon. Sports drama about blond track runner Anton, who is shooting to stardom and preparing for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, where she is a contender for 3 gold medals, after being trained for years by her foster father and physician Jürgens. Coburn plays their marketing manager and hesitant love interest. Second-rate drama is kept afloat by the good performances, especially Jürgens'. It's an interesting, albeit rarely seen time capsule, too. Based on a novel by Peter Lovesey. Ironically, American athletes would later boycott the 1980 Olympics.

**Golden Needles** (1974, USA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Robert Clouse. Starring Joe Don Baker, Elizabeth Ashley, Jim Kelly, Burgess Meredith, Ann Sothorn. B-action movie set in Hong Kong about golden statuette which has seven needles implanted, which, if applied to a human, will restore his youth. Baker is tough and film is well-paced, with a straight-forward plot, but does not go beyond its premise. Aka THE CHASE FOR THE GOLDEN NEEDLES.

**Golden Triangle, The** (1980, HGK/THA) **C-73m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Rome Bunnag, Wu Ma. Starring Lo Lieh, Metanee Sombat, Nee Tien, Fong Tien. Rather fast-paced actioner about two cops (one a former alcoholic) who go undercover to bust drug syndicate operating in the 'Golden Triangle' of Southeast Asia. Lots of fights, shoot-outs, quite well-directed but plot is trivial. Film may be slightly better in uncut 92m. version. Probably filmed around 1975. Also known as BURMA CONNECTION.

**Golden Voyage of Sinbad, The** (1974, GBR) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Gordon Hessler. Starring John Phillip Law, Caroline Munro, Tom Baker, Douglas Wilmer, Robert Shaw. Exciting fantasy adventure about sea-farer Sinbad and his crew, who go on a quest to solve the mystery behind a golden tablet. Lots of monsters, good effects, well-paced script, enjoyable for kids and adults alike. Not quite in the realm of 7<sup>TH</sup> VOYAGE OF SINBAD, still one of the best of its kind. Coproduced and cowritten by Ray Harryhausen. Followed by SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER in 1977.

**Goldfinger** (1964, GBR) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Guy Hamilton. Starring Sean Connery, Gert Fröbe, Honor Blackman, Shirley Eaton, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Burt Kwouk, Harold Sakata, Desmond Llewelyn. Third James Bond adventure pits the secret agent against Auric Goldfinger, a wealthy businessman with a faible for gold - especially that inside high-security Fort Knox. Classic formula still fresh at that time, Fröbe is a menacing villain. Lacks the

dynamite action and exotic locations that made other films of the series to hits but compensates this drawback with suspense. Usually considered to be one of the best James Bond films. Good variations of the title tune and the James Bond theme.

**Golem, Wie Er in die Welt Kam, Der** (1920, GER) **C-89m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Wegener, Carl Boese. Starring Paul Wegener, Albert Steinrück, Lyda Salmonova, Ernst Deutsch. Hans Stürm. Expressionistic silent film classic, based on an ancient Jewish legend. The Jewish community in a city is denounced by the emperor, and in reaction to this, an old rabbi builds the Golem, a mud creature, which turns alive by magic. Impressive photography by Karl Freund. Influenced many later monster films, most notably FRANKENSTEIN (1931). A 16-year-old Edgar G. Ulmer worked on the set. Filmed before as DER GOLEM by Wegener in 1915. A restored version was aired on German TV in early 2002.

**Golgo 13: Kûron no Kobi** (1977, JAP) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Yukio Noda. Starring Sonny Chiba, Chia Lun, Etsuko Shihomi, Emi Shindo, Elaine Sung, Dana. Crime thriller about charismatic assassin Duke Togo aka Golgo 13, who goes after a drug syndicate in Japan, Hong Kong and Macao. Some stylish directorial touches, but terribly uneven plot, though Chiba makes all the difference as quiet but tense, super-cool killer. He would have made a formidable Bond villain at the time. Based on a comic by Takao Saitô, this is a sequel to GOLGO 13 (1973) and was followed by the animated THE PROFESSIONAL: GOLGO 13 (1983). Also known as THE KOWLOON ASSIGNMENT.

**Goliath e la Schiava Ribelle** (1963, ITA/FRA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Mario Caiano. Starring Gordon Scott, Ombretta Colli, Massimo Serato, Mimmo Palmara, Gabriele Antonini, Lea Krugher (=Lander). Tedious sword-and-sandal movie about strongman Goliath (Scott), who plays an important role in political decisions involving Persians and Greeks. Talky film does not hold your interest. Alfonso Brescia was assistant director. English titles: ARROW OF THE AVENGER, GOLIATH AND THE REBEL SLAVE, THE TYRANT OF LYDIA AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES.

**Gone Baby Gone** (2007, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ben Affleck. Starring Casey Affleck, Michelle Monaghan, Morgan Freeman, Ed Harris, Amy Madigan, Mark Margolis. Affleck's directorial debut is an unusual crime drama about a child disappearance. Two professional searchers, Affleck and Monaghan try to shed light on the mystery, cooperating with policemen Freeman and Harris. Works in fits and starts, an interesting story to watch, ultimately made worthwhile by Harry Gregson-Williams' fine score. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

**Gone Girl** (2014, USA) **C-149m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** David Fincher. Starring Ben Affleck, Rosamund Pike, Neil Patrick Harris, Tyler Perry, Carrie Coon, Kim Dickens. Low-key mystery drama about couple Affleck and Pike, who live in suburban Missouri. When she inexplicably goes missing, he slowly becomes a prime suspect in a possible murder case. However, that's not the end of the story. Interesting plot may work better if you don't guess the twists, by the end it seems utterly fabricated. Too bad. Scripted by Gillian Flynn, based on her novel.

**Gone With the Wind** (1939, USA) **C-234m. \*\*\*\* D:** Victor Fleming. Starring Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard, Olivia De Havilland, Hattie McDaniel, Thomas Mitchell, Barbara O'Neil, Evelyn Keyes, Ann Rutherford, George Reeves, Jackie Moran, Yakima Canutt. Magnificent Civil War epic, perhaps the greatest color film ever made. Leigh plays a cunning, headstrong Southern Belle, who finds her happiness constantly foiled. Her big love Howard marries his cousin and gentleman Gable is too alike. Film follows Leigh's passion for life and her land for almost four hours and brilliantly manages to entice the audience with top-notch storytelling. Fine direction (in part by uncredited George Cukor and Sam Wood), brilliant cinematography by Ernest Haller, rousing Max Steiner score, meticulously produced by

David O. Selznick, one of the biggest films of all time. The look of it, as well as the story, seem completely timeless. Excellent cast, with Leigh, De Havilland and McDaniel particular stand-outs. Winner of 10 Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Actress. Based on the novel by Margaret Mitchell.

**Gonin** (1997, JAP) **C-111m.** \*\* D: Takeshi Kitano. Starring 'Beat' Takeshi. Violent gangster movie about five men who conspire to steal Yakuza money. This leads to countless shoot-outs - but no point. Cult star Takeshi is certainly not a story-teller. This film is saved by a stylish approach and good direction.

**Good Against Evil** (1977, USA) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Paul Wendkos. Starring Dack Rambo, Elyssa Davalos, Richard Lynch, Dan O'Herlihy, John Harkins, Kim Catrall. Old Hammer pro Jimmy Sangster wrote this not-bad horror movie that was produced as a pilot for a TV series that was never made. Back in the 1950s a group of devil worshippers led by Lynch impregnated a woman and then stole her baby. Now in the 1970s the baby has grown up to be pretty Davalos, who knows nothing of her destiny. Starts like the sequel to ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968) and ends like THE EXORCIST (1973). It's fairly well-paced but loses most of its appeal in the second half. Solid score by Lalo Schifrin.

**Good Day to Die Hard, A** (2013, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: John Moore. Starring Bruce Willis, Jai Courtney, Sebastian Koch, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Cole Hauser. Fifth DIE HARD movie is an action fantasy just like the previous one, LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD (2007). McClane goes to Moscow in search of his son, who is trying to rescue a witness to a trial against a prominent politician. Stereotypes abound, and a surprisingly lacklustre plot, but some of the action scenes are a wow, especially the orgy of destruction through the streets of Moscow. About as clever as THE EXPENDABLES, but also fairly entertaining.

**Good German, The** (2006, USA/GER) **B&W-107m.** \*\*½ D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring George Clooney, Cate Blanchett, Tobey Maguire, Beau Bridges, Leland Orser, Tony Curran, Christian Oliver. Crime drama set in 1945 Berlin. The war has just ended and reporter Clooney is called to the Allied conference in Potsdam, where Berlin and Europe's fate will be decided. Then he gets mixed up in the disappearance of a mathematician and the appearance of his wife Blanchett, who once had an affair with Clooney and now wants to flee the country. Drama with atmospheric CASABLANCA-like stylistics (in black-and-white, no less) undermines itself with its vague plot, which includes some odd comic bits and exaggerated violence. Aspect ratio of 1.37 : 1 retains the old pre-1950s cinema format.

**Good Girl, The** (2002, USA/GER/NED) **C-93m.** \*\*\* D: Miguel Arteta. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Jake Gyllenhaal, John C. Reilly, Tim Blake Nelson, Mike White, Zooey Deschanel, Roxanne Hart. Telling slice-of-life about a frustrated 30-year-old woman (Aniston), whose life seems at a dead-end, with pot-smoking husband Reilly and her supermarket job. Then she meets a considerably younger man (Gyllenhaal), equally troubled, and falls in love. This, however, makes her problems even worse. Believable character-driven drama, written by co-star White.

**Good Shepherd, The** (2006, USA) **C-167m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Robert De Niro. Starring Matt Damon, Angelina Jolie, Alec Baldwin Tammy Blanchard, Billy Crudup, Robert De Niro, Keir Dullea, Michael Gambon, Martina Gedeck, William Hurt, Timothy Hutton, Joe Pesci, John Turturro. Glossy biography of the founder of the CIA (Damon) follows him from his special involvement in WW2 to the Cuba Crisis of the early 1960s. His private life (with wife Jolie) is also examined. Overlong, but beautifully photographed, with immaculate art direction and production design, which makes up for what it's lacking in storytelling. Francis Ford Coppola was among the executive producers.

**Good Morning... and Goodbye!** (1967, USA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: Russ Meyer. Starring Toby Adler, Alaina Capri, Karen Ciral, Haji, Tom Howland, Stuart Lancaster. Sub-par Russ Meyer movie, this one is much too talky and has surprisingly little nudity. Eleven characters' lives are examined, most with sexual problems/desires, all of this in typical rural/farm setting. Adler is unhappy with impotent husband Lancaster, who changes when he meets sorceress Haji in the forest. For Meyer completists, who might rate this slightly higher. His photography, direction and editing show competence. Also known as *CONFESSIONS OF A SEXY SUPERVIXEN*, and *THE LUST SEEKERS*.

**Good Son, The** (1993, USA) **C-87m.** D: Joseph Ruben. Starring Macaulay Culkin, Elijah Wood, Wendy Crewson, David Morse, Daniel Hugh Kelly. Wood has just lost his mother and moves in with cousin Culkin, when his father goes on a business trip, but soon realizes that his relative is an evil boy, who may even have killed his little brother. Child-star Culkin's only thriller is stupid and improbable. Film suggests that children can be *very evil*, but doesn't care to think about why. The finale is unbearable. Avoid at all costs. Ruben (director of *THE STEPFATHER*) has really strange ideas about American families.

**Good Will Hunting** (1997, USA) **C-126m.** \*\*\* D: Gus Van Sant. Starring Robin Williams, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Stellan Skarsgard, Minnie Driver, Casey Affleck. Aimless young delinquent Will Hunting (Damon) is discovered to be a genius, but rather prefers to be left alone. He rejects all therapists until he meets a psychologist (Williams) who manages to get access to his thoughts and feelings. Williams is fine as usual (he won a Best Supporting Actor Oscar) but Damon doesn't seem to be up to the difficult role. His character remains superficial, though this may be part of Hunting's personality. Still, drama is well-directed and compelling all the way, even if it is dramatically flawed. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Good Year, A** (2006, USA) **C-118m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Ridley Scott. Starring Russell Crowe, Albert Finney, Freddie Highmore, Archie Panjabi, Ali Rhodes, Tom Hollander, Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, Jacques Herlin. In a reteaming with director Scott (*GLADIATOR*), Crowe plays a ruthless businessman, who is whisked away from the stockmarket to rural France, where he must claim his inheritance, a winery replete with vineyards, which was left to him by uncle Finney. At first he just wants to sell it, later he changes his mind. Expectedly offers you beautiful pictures of the French countryside, but story is predictable and surprises are limited. A slight disappointment. Based on the novel by Peter Mayle.

**Goonies, The** (1985, USA) **C-114m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Richard Donner. Starring Sean Astin, Josh Brolin, Jeff Cohen, Corey Feldman, Kerri Green, Martha Plimpton, Ke Huy Quan (Jonathan Ke Quan), John Matuszak, Robert Davi, Joe Pantoliano, Anne Ramsey, Curtis Hanson, Richard Donner. Now-classic kids' adventure produced by Steven Spielberg. A group of kids who call themselves the 'Goonies' find a treasure map and follow the clues to a giant subterranean maze that may harbor huge pirate treasure. However, some escaped convicts (Ramsey's bumbling family) get in the way. Lightning paced, funny, exciting, although it's also occasionally mean-spirited and thrives too much on violence. Written by Chris Columbus, though script and direction have the Spielberg stamp all over them. Sean Astin's first theatrical film, for which he won the Young Artist Award; he would later appear as Sam in *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* trilogy.

**Gorgon, The** (1964, GBR) **C-83m.** \*\*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Richard Pasco, Barbara Shelley, Michael Goodliffe, Sally Nesbitt. Stylish Hammer horror film from one of the studio's best directors, set in old Germany, where a witch (the only one remaining of originally three!) is said to roam the forest and turn those to stone who lay eyes on her, Medusa-style. Can Lee shed a light on this mystery? Colorful gothic

chiller, with beautiful matte paintings and some fine, hammy performances. The (wrongly referenced) Gorgon from mythology has had appearances in several other feature films.

**Gosford Park** (2001, USA/GBR) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Altman. Starring Maggie Smith, Michael Gambon, Kristin Scott Thomas, Camilla Rutherford, Charles Dance, Jeremy Northam, Bob Balaban, James Wilby, Ryan Phillippe, Stephen Fry, Kelly Macdonald, Clive Owen, Helen Mirren, Eileen Atkins, Emily Watson, Alan Bates, Derek Jacobi, Richard E. Grant. Elegant drama set in the early 1930s about a gathering at a noble villa, where characters show their faults and weaknesses and murder is just around the corner. Adds up to very little in terms of plot, but production design is meticulous and the acting flawless. Overlong but well-directed by old master Altman. Oscar winner for Best Screenplay.

**Gota de Sangre Para Morir Amando, Una** (1973, SPA/FRA) **C-103m. \*½ D:** Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Sue Lyon, Chris Mitchum, Jean Sorel, Ramón Pons, Charly Bravo, Alfredo Alba, David Carpenter, Fabián Conde. Unabashed rip-off of Kubrick's classic *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* (1971). Lyon plays a murderous nurse, who is interested in doctor Sorel's anti-violence experiments. Aimless youth Mitchum (terrible) also figures in this story. Very little originality and a total lack of plot kill this one. Only cult movie buffs will savor parallels (sets, entire sequences) to the infinitely better Kubrick film. What's more, it's only a very distant cousin to the giallo. Also known as *CLOCKWORK TERROR*, *MURDER IN A BLUE WORLD*, and *TO LOVE, PERHAPS TO DIE*.

**Grabbers** (2012, GBR/EIR) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jon Wright. Starring Richard Coyle, Ruth Bradley, Russell Tovey, Lalor Roddy. Okay science-fiction horror comedy about an Irish seaside community that is invaded by alien creatures. New policewoman Bradley is at first put off by the men's alcohol habit, then realizes that it's exactly what keeps the aliens from sucking their blood. Rather slow start, but picks up in the second half, with good CGI effects.

**Graduate, The** (1967, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Mike Nichols. Starring Anne Bancroft, Dustin Hoffman, Katharine Ross, Murray Hamilton, William Daniels, Elizabeth Wilson, Brian Avery, Norman Fell, Mike Farrell, Richard Dreyfuss. Exceptional comedy drama starring Hoffman (in his second film appearance) as a timid, naïve college graduate who begins an affair with Bancroft, who could be his mother. However, he is really in love with her daughter Ross. Funny, touching, superbly acted – a modern classic. Excellent score by Simon & Garfunkel. Based on the novel by Charles Webb.

**Graduation Day** (1981, USA) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Herb Freed. Starring Christopher George, Patch Mackenzie, E. Danny Murphy, E.J. Peaker, Michael Pataki, Linnea Quigley. Typical early 80s slasher movie about a killer that stalks college students around graduation time. The reason may be the death of a girl athlete who collapsed during a race. Several suspects are introduced in tired plot. Has some minor cult status due to inclusion of rock music sequences, but all in all, it's just barely okay.

**Gran Amor del Conde Drácula, El** (1973, SPA) **C-76m. \*\* D:** Javier Aguirre. Starring Paul Naschy, Haydée Politoff, Rosanna Yanni, Ingrid Garbo, Mirta Miller, Víctor Alcázar. Rather tired Euro-horror flick about several travelers, whose coach breaks down near the infamous Volgo Pass in Transsylvania. They seek refuge in a nearby castle – and guess who comes to greet them?! Naschy, who sleepwalks through his role as Dracula, is no match for Christopher Lee. Some good special effects and a nice score (by Carmelo A. Bernaola) make this bearable. Uncut print runs longer. English titles: *DRACULA'S GREAT LOVE*, *COUNT DRACULA'S GREAT(EST) LOVE*, *CEMETERY GIRLS*, *CEMETERY TRAMPS*, *DRACULA'S VIRGIN LOVERS*, and *VAMPIRE PLAYGIRLS*.

**Grand Budapest Hotel, The** (2014, USA/GER) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Wes Anderson. Starring Ralph Fiennes, F. Murray Abraham, Mathieu Amalric, Adrien Brody, Willem Dafoe, Jeff Goldblum, Harvey Keitel, Jude Law, Bill Murray, Edward Norton, Saoirse Ronan, Jason Schwartzman, Tilda Swinton, Tom Wilkinson. Amusing, typical Wes Anderson comedy about a concierge (Fiennes) at a huge old hotel in the 1930s, whose story is told in flashbacks through the eyes of a lobby boy. A ladies' man, if there ever was one, Fiennes inherits a painting from a late widow and is framed for her murder by angry relatives. Irresistible cast overcomes storytelling flaws... it has great sets and period flavor, too. Inspired by the works of Stefan Zweig, an Austrian novelist. Filmed in a 'flat' aspect ratio of 1.37:1

**Grand Day Out with Wallace and Gromit, A** (1989, GBR) **C-23m. n/r D:** Nick Park. Starring (the voice of) Peter Sallis. First Wallace and Gromit cartoon about the bumbling inventor and his dog, who run out of cheese and decide to go to the moon, which is made of cheese (isn't it?). Filled with funny ideas and good clay animation, this was director Park's graduation project. Followed by WALLACE AND GROMIT IN THE WRONG TROUSERS (1993) and WALLAE AND GROMIT IN A CLOSE SHAVE (1995).

**Grande Attacco, Il** (1977, ITA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Humphrey Longan (=Umberto Lenzi). Starring Helmut Berger, Samantha Eggar, Giuliano Gemma, John Huston, Stacy Keach, Ray Lovelock, Aldo Massasso, Venantino Venantini, Edwige Fenech, Henry Fonda, Rik Battaglia, Guy Doleman, Andrea Bosis, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Michele Soavi. Incredible cast in quite ambitious war movie recounts the major events in World War Two from the perspective of several characters: A Jewish actress (Eggar), a British correspondent (Huston), a German general (Keach), a British soldier/father (Gemma) and an American general (Fonda), who ultimately learns that having one son is better than having none. Stars are wasted, of course, in somewhat hurried plot development (which leaves you wanting), but generally not-bad (if a little unmotivated) war drama. U.S. version is narrated by Orson Welles. Reportedly uses footage from Lenzi's LA LEGIONE DEI DANNATI (1969). Alternative titles: BATTLE FORCE, THE BATTLE OF THE MARETH LINE, THE BIGGEST BATTLE, THE GREAT BATTLE, THE GREATEST BATTLE.

**Grande Bouffe, La** (1973, FRA/ITA) **C-128m. \*\*\*½ D:** Marco Ferreri. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Michel Piccoli, Philippe Noiret, Ugo Tognazzi, Andréa Ferréol. Four middle-aged men, all of them successful in life, gather at a villa and want to eat themselves to death. Teacher Ferréol is so fascinated by this, she joins them and becomes their lover. A scandal when originally released; a profane, overtly sexual, no-holds-barred examination of four characters who feel they have nowhere left to go. This is the ultimate film about excess. Excellent direction by Ferreri (also cowriter), brilliantly acted by the leads (who carry their own first names in the movie). Memorable theme by Philippe Sarde. Originally rated X by the MPAA, later modified to NC-17. Alternative titles: BLOW-OUT, LA GRANDE ABBUFFATA.

**Grande Colpo dei 7 Uomini d'Oro, Il** (1966, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Marco Vicario. Starring Rossana Podestà, Philippe Leroy, Gastone Moschin, Maurice Poli, Manuel Zarzo, Gabriele Tinti, Enrico Maria Salerno, Jacques Herlin, Ennio Balbo. The success of 7 UOMINI D'ORO (SEVEN GOLDEN MEN) prompted this sequel, where the professor and his crew of criminals are caught in the act of stealing and must kidnap a Latin American dictator to avoid punishment. Leisurely paced heist comedy with lots of gadgets, even more outré than the original, with Podestà an absolute knock-out, even more ravishing than in the first film. Her seductive performance alone makes this a must-see. Armando Trovajoli's near-similar score is an asset, too. English title: THE SEVEN GOLDEN MEN STRIKE AGAIN.

**Grande Duello, Il** (1972, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Giancarlo Santi. Starring Lee Van Cleef, Horst Frank, Alberto Dentice, Marc Mazza, Jess Hahn, Klaus Grünberg. Interesting

Van Cleef western about escaped convict Dentice, who's wanted for killing the patriarch of the Saxon family. Marshal Van Cleef tries to track him down, but the young man is causing quite a commotion in his hometown. The Saxon family members (Frank, Grünberg) show an interest, too, as Dentice may be the only one knowing the whereabouts of a silver mine. Beautifully shot western with an interesting script by Ernesto Gastaldi will satisfy genre fans, although this is not really compelling enough. Good score by Luis Enríquez Bacalov, which was reused by Quentin Tarantino for KILL BILL VOL.1 (2003). Director Santi was assistant director for Leone in IL BUONO... and C'ERA UNA VOLTA... and in the stylish western DA UOMO A UOMO (1968). English titles: THE GRAND DUEL, THE BIG SHOWDOWN, STORM RIDER, and HELL'S FIGHTERS.

**Grandes Familles, Les** (1958, FRA) **94m.** \*\*\* D: Denys de la Patellière. Starring Jean Gabin, Jean Desailly, Pierre Brasseur, Bernard Blier, Jean Murat, Emmanuelle Riva. Sublime French drama about patriarch Gabin and his attempt to exercise control over his family, which ends in a tragedy. Fine cast, elegant b&w photography by Louis Page. Heavy-going at times and emotionally uninvolved (like most French dramas of that time) but worth the effort to hang on. More likely to appeal to cineastes than to ordinary movie-goers. Based on a Maurice Rouat novel. Released in the U.S. as THE POSSESSORS.

**Grande Silenzio, Il** (1968, ITA/FRA) **C-105m.** \*\*\* D: Sergio Corbucci. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Klaus Kinski, Frank Wolff, Luigi Pistilli, Mario Brega, Carlo D'Angelo, Marisa Merlini, Maria Mizar, Marisa Sally, Raf Baldassarre, Spartaco Conversi, Remo de Angelis, Mirella Pamphili, Vonetta McGee. Unusual, pessimistic spaghetti western, considered to be one of the best of the genre: Mute gunslinger Silenzio (Trintignant), powered by a need for revenge, fights a one-man battle against ruthless bounty hunters (among them Klaus Kinski) who kill so-called outlaws, farmers who have stolen food because the winter has been hard. Director Corbucci, who receives story credit and also cowrote the screenplay, paints a bleak picture of the West. The heroes have human weaknesses, the villains are cold-blooded and cunning. This violent western is not as elaborately plotted or directed as, for example, Sergio Leone's classics but ultimately worth watching for its disregard of established western clichés. The wintry setting contributes to the film's unique atmosphere. Fine score by Ennio Morricone. French original title: LE GRAND SILENCE. English title: THE GREAT SILENCE.

**Grandes Vacances, Les** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-84m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Claude Gensac, Oliver de Funès. Erratic comedy about school principal de Funès, whose son has problems in English. Promptly he sends him to Scotland during the summer holidays. The boy, however, lets someone else go in his place just to be able to enjoy his holidays with his friends. Lots of funny situations cannot camouflage a one-note plot. Nevertheless, this was the most successful French film of 1967. Much of the same cast later reappeared in JO.

**Grande Vadrouille, La** (1966, FRA/GBR) **C-101m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Gérard Oury. Starring Bourvil, Louis de Funès, Terry-Thomas, Claudio Brook, Andréa Parisy, Colette Brosset, Mike Marshall, Benno Sterzenbach, Marie Dubois, Guy Grosso, Michel Modo, Paul Préboist, Sieghardt Rupp. Funny war-time comedy about three British soldiers (led by Terry-Thomas), whose plane is shot down right over Nazi-occupied Paris. Bourvil and de Funès help them to get back to the British lines. Turbulent, fast-paced entertainment, with some laugh-out-loud gags. French original version runs 122m. with some extensive subtitling in English/German dialogues. English title: DON'T LOOK NOW... WE'RE BEING SHOT AT / WE'VE BEEN SHOT AT).

**Grand Hotel** (1932, USA) **113m.** \*\*\*\* D: Edmund Goulding. Starring Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, Lionel Barrymore, John Barrymore, Wallace Beery. Superb, perfectly plotted drama about five people who reside at the same grand hotel and the effect their meeting

has on their lives. Gorgeous Garbo and Crawford are surrounded by a fine cast. Unforgettable film is as contemporary as it was all these years ago.

**Grand Piano** (2013, SPA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Eugenio Mira. Starring Elijah Wood, John Cusack, Kerry Bishé, Tamsin Egerton, Allen Leech, Dee Wallace. Concert pianist Wood returns to the stage after a five-year hiatus. He is supposed to play his mentor and teacher's grand piano, but stage fright is making it hard for him to focus. On stage, he finds instructions on his notes telling him to play without a mistake or his wife will die. Why is someone blackmailing him in the awkwardest of moments? Bland thriller isn't a good mystery like you would expect from Spanish films of late. The ending is a let-down.

**Grand Restaurant, Le** (1966, FRA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jaques Besnard. Starring Louis de Funès, Bernard Blier, Maria-Rosa Rodriguez, Venantino Venantini, Roger Caccia, Juan Ramírez, Folco Lulli, Guy Grosso, Michel Modo, Paul Préboist, Olivier de Funès. Mildly entertaining comedy about tyrannical restaurant owner de Funès, who gets involved in the kidnapping of a South American president. Likable French actors try their best with episodic script (which de Funès cowrote). Blier would later be questioning de Funès as a commissaire again in the classic *JO* (1971). Also known as *THE BIG RESTAURANT, WHAT'S COOKING IN PARIS?*

**Grand Theft Parsons** (2003, USA/GBR) **C-88m. \*\*** D: David Caffrey. Starring Johnny Knoxville, Christina Applegate, Marley Shelton, Michael Shannon, Robert Forster, Gabriel Macht. When (real-life) country rock pioneer Gram Parsons dies of an overdose, Knoxville, his road manager, must fulfil his promise to burn him among the Joshua Trees in Nevada. For that matter he steals his coffin with hippie Shannon's funeral car. Not the mad-cap comedy that this sounds like, much too self-conscious and inappropriately scored. Black humor does results in a few chuckles. The real Phil Kaufman appears at the end coming out of the police station.

**Grass is Greener, The** (1960, GBR) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Stanley Donen. Starring Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, Robert Mitchum, Jean Simmons. Grant and Kerr play a British Lord and Lady, who allow tourist to visit their castle to be able to maintain it. Enter American tourist Mitchum, an oil millionaire, who starts wooing Kerr. A love triangle (between four people, including Simmons) ensues. Mild comedy, light entertainment.

**Grave** (2016, FRA/BEL) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Julia Ducourneau. Starring Garance Marillier, Ella Rumpf, Rabah Nait Oufella, Laurent Lucas, Joana Preiss. Shy, young Marillier starts at the same vet's school as her sister. At first the vegetarian is repelled by all the flesh and the disgusting initiation rituals forced upon her, but then develops a sick fascination, which transforms her entirely. Radical coming-of-age tale is often difficult to watch and slightly uneven, but always interesting, often fascinating. Maintains a powerful aura throughout. Good use of music. The director also scripted. English title: *RAW*.

**Grave, The** (1996, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Jonas Pate. Starring Craig Sheffer, Gabrielle Anwar, Josh Charles, Donal Logue, Keith David, John Diel, Giovanni Ribisi, Anthony Michael Hall, Max Perlich, Eric Roberts. Nice little thriller that went pretty unnoticed when originally released, despite interesting cast. Sheffer plays a prison inmate who hears about a treasure hidden in a grave and decides to break out with colleague Charles to dig it up. Low-budgeter with enough ideas to sustain feature length.

**Grave Encounters** (2011, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: The Vicious Brothers. Starring Ben Wilkinson, Sean Rogerson, Ashleigh Gyzko. Another 'found-footage' horror film, this one is basically modelled after *[REC]*. A TV crew lock themselves into an abandoned psychiatric hospital for the latest episode of their show *Grave Encounters*. At first it's a major disappointment, but

then the spirits pay them a visit. Makes good use of the eerie location – a la SESSION 9 – but there are no surprises in the plot. It also goes on too long. Followed by a sequel.

**Gravity** (2013, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Alfonso Cuarón. Starring Sandra Bullock, George Clooney, voice of Ed Harris. Modern-day disaster thriller set in space. Bullock and Clooney are on a space walk near the ISS when space debris causes chaos and forces them to go to great lengths to save themselves. Can they make it back to the station with oxygen waning? Impressive story of survival has a perfect setting, with Earth a stunningly beautiful backdrop. Kudos to director Cuarón, who also scripted this nailbiter with his son Jonás. Calls to mind (but does not exploit) numerous sci-fi classics such as 2001, ALIEN, PLANET OF THE APES, ... Flawless photography by Emmanuel Lubezki. Nominated for 10 Academy Awards.

**Gray Lady Down** (1978, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** David Greene. Starring Charlton Heston, David Carradine, Stacy Keach, Ned Beatty, Stephen McHattie, Ronny Cox, Dorian Harewood, Christopher Reeve, Charles Cyphers, William Bryant. Disaster thriller, produced by Walter Mirisch. Heston is captain of huge nuclear submarine, which has a crash with a ship and sinks to a depth of 1,400 ft., ending up on a kind of slope that can make it sink even further. If it does, the pressure will make the ship burst. Keach and Carradine are key figures in the rescue operation. Fairly good stuff for fans of such stories. Based on the novel *Event 1000* by David Lavalley. Quite good score by Jerry Fielding. Reeve's film debut, released 8 months before SUPERMAN (1978).

**Great American Chase, The** (1979, USA) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Chuck Jones, Phil Monroe. Somewhat disappointing compilation of shorts featuring the beloved Looney Tunes characters Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig and others. Takes a long time for the first laugh. Just OK. The second BUGS BUNNY movie, following BUGS BUNNY SUPERSTAR (1975). Followed by THE LOONEY, LOONEY, LOONEY BUGS BUNNY MOVIE (1981). Video title: THE BUGS BUNNY/ROAD RUNNER MOVIE.

**Greatest Story Ever Told, The** (1965, USA) **C-197m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** George Stevens. Starring Max von Sydow, Carroll Baker, Pat Boone, Victor Buono, José Ferrer, Van Heflin, Charlton Heston, Martin Landau, Angela Lansbury, David McCallum, Roddy McDowall, Dorothy McGuire, Sal Mineo, Donald Pleasence, Sidney Poitier, Claude Rains, Telly Savalas, John Wayne, Shelley Winters, Ed Wynn, Robert Blake, Robert Loggia. Quite possibly the ultimate biblical or Roman epic ever produced: The life and times of Jesus Christ (played by Max von Sydow), the central story to the Christian faith. This film contains one of the most lavish, most magnificent color photography ever! Stevens' direction is awe-inspiring, showing as much respect as possible. Von Sydow's performance is perfect. Flaws include too many cameo appearances by stars (in minor, unimportant roles) and film's sheer length. One of the last truly epic epics produced. Trivia notes: Director Stevens (GIANT) was assisted (or replaced, in part) by David Lean and Jean Negulesco. Cinematographer William C. Mellor died during the production, he was replaced by Loyal Griggs (THE TEN COMMANDMENTS). Originally released at 260m., film was later cut down as short as 141m. This was filmed in Ultra Panavision 70, with an aspect ratio of 2.75:1.

**Great Expectations** (1998, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alfonso Cuarón. Starring Ethan Hawke, Gwyneth Paltrow, Anne Bancroft, Chris Cooper, Hank Azaria, Robert De Niro, Josh Mostel, Kim Dickens, Nell Campbell, Stephen Spinella. Beautiful, titillating adaptation of the literature classic by Charles Dickens about a young orphan, whose childhood turns out to be the basis for his later fame - and unhappiness. Fine cinematography and production design, story frame remains intact despite the updating of the plot to the 1990s. Hawke, as the main character, is excellent and receives fine support from the whole cast. The opening twenty

minutes are especially magical (with that eye-opening fountain scene!). From the director of the excellent A LITTLE PRINCESS.

**Great Gatsby, The** (2013, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Baz Luhrmann. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, Carey Mulligan, Joel Edgerton, Isla Fisher. Decadent filmization of the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel told from the point of view of aspiring novelist/stockbroker Maguire, who finds himself fascinated by the persona and lifestyle of his neighbor, super-rich J. Gatsby (DiCaprio). Great costumes and period flavor almost rendered invalid by anachronistic rap/pop score and staccato editing. The overly indulgent color scheme makes this seem almost like a comic book. The minimal plot also really doesn't justify film's overlength. A matter of taste, like most of Luhrmann's films.

**Great Mouse Detective, The** (1986, USA) **C-73m. \*\*½ D:** Ron Clements, Burny Mattinson, David Michener, John Musker. Starring (the voices of) Vincent Price, Barrie Ingham, Val Bettin, Susanne Pollatschek, Candy Candido, Basil Rathbone. Just okay Disney cartoon is essentially a Sherlock Holmes spoof. Young (mouse) girl whose father has been kidnapped asks title character for help. Some funny bits, but story fails to convince. The bad guy (voiced by Price) is too obnoxious. Ten writers are credited for adapting the novel *Basil of Baker Street*. Rathbone's voice was added posthumously (the well-known actor had died in 1967). Score by Henry Mancini. Re-issued as THE ADVENTURES OF THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE.

**Great Race, The** (1965, USA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Blake Edwards. Starring Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis, Natalie Wood, Peter Falk, Keenan Wynn, Arthur O'Connell, Vivian Vance. After the first two PINK PANTHER films, director Edwards turned to this big, generally enjoyable comedy about a 20,000 mile car race from New York to Paris. Evil professor Lemmon and his bumbling assistant Falk intend to outdo playboy Curtis and try to sabotage him at every turn. Feminist Wood, a reporter who competes in the race herself, plays the love interest. Starts well but bogs down, especially towards the end as the episodes begin to lose steam. Lemmon and Falk are a great team, though, in this attempt at epic comedy. It's just not consistently funny. Good score by Henry Mancini. Won an Oscar for Best Effects. Dedicated to Mr Laurel and Mr Hardy!

**Green Card** (1990, AUS/FRA) **C-110m. \*\*½ D:** Peter Weir. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Andie Mac-Dowell, Bebe Neuwirth, Gregg Edelman, Robert Prosky, Jessy Keosian, Ann Wedgeworth, Ethan Phillips, Mary Louise Wilson, Lois Smith, Simon Jones. Charming, funny romantic comedy about Frenchman Depardieu, who marries MacDowell in order to get the Green Card. When immigration authorities realize that they may not have married out of love, they must spend some time together. Needless to say, they slowly fall in love with each other. Film is occasionally hilarious (thanks to Depardieu's performance), but overlong and not really credible. Best watched in a melancholy mood. Weir also scripted and produced.

**Green Inferno, The** (2013, USA/CHL) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Eli Roth. Starring Lorenza Izzo, Ariel Levy, Daryl Sabara, Kirby Bliss Blanton, Magda Apanowicz, Sky Ferreira, Nicolás Martínez, Aaron Burns, Ignacia Allamand. Writer-director Roth (KNOCK KNOCK) pays homage to Italian cannibal exploitation films of the 1970s and 1980s with this gory adventure thriller. Student Izzo reluctantly joins a group of activists who want to stop bulldozers that are about to destroy a native tribe in the Peruvian rainforest. This trip ultimately turns into a bloody nightmare. Sat on the shelf for two years, but it's well-directed, well-edited and has a good score. Film is actually quite compelling and nowhere near as gratuitous as CANNIBAL FEROX (1981) or CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (1980).

**Green Mile, The** (1999, USA) **C-189m. \*\*½ D:** Frank Darabont. Starring Tom Hanks, David Morse, Bonnie Hunt, Michael Clarke Duncan, James Cromwell, Michael Jeter, Graham Greene, Doug Hutchison, Sam Rockwell, Harry Dean Stanton, William Sadler. Languid

adaptation of Stephen King's multi-part novel about prison guard Hanks, who does his duty in the death tract, which houses criminals destined for the electric chair. One day a new inmate arrives, a black giant (Duncan), charged with double murder. It turns out the simple-minded, gentle man has a special gift, one that might change Hanks' life forever. Apart from Duncan's excellent performance, film is rather unspectacular and more than once steals compassion from the viewer. Various subplots (including the frame narration) are rather meaningless. One wonders if the story couldn't have been told in two hours instead of more than three. Director Darabont fared much better with the similar THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION.

**Green Room, The** (2015, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jeremy Saulnier. Starring Anton Yelchin, Joe Cole, Alia Shawcat, Callum Turner, David W. Thompson, Macon Blair, Imogen Poots, Patrick Stewart. Acclaimed horror thriller from the director of BLUE RUIN (2013) had a long festival run but fails to impress me. A punk rock band accepts a gig in a remote location. When they realize it's mostly frequented by neo-Nazis, they become witnesses to a murder and must fear for their lives, locked into a room on owner Patrick's premises. Thriller has a somewhat pessimistic tone throughout and wavers between drama and survival horror. The dialogues, especially those in the latter half of the film, give it a pretentious feel, which ultimately makes the film unconvincing. Written by the director.

**Greetings** (1968, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\*** D: Brian De Palma. Starring Jonathan Warden, Robert De Niro, Gerrit Graham, Richard Hamilton, Megan McCormick, Allen Garfield. One of Brian De Palma and Robert De Niro's first feature films is acclaimed study of alternative 60s youth in New York City. Episodic, funny, witty, endowed with a unique kind of spirit. Themes include the Vietnam War, the Kennedy assassination, sex, dating, and so forth. A time capsule, perhaps old-fashioned, but worth watching nevertheless. The first film to be rated X by the MPAA. Followed by HI, MOM! (1970).

**Greta – Haus Ohne Männer** (1977, SUI/GER/USA) **C-94m. \*½** D: Jess Franco. Starring Dyanne Thorne, Tania Busselier, Eric Falk, Lina Romay, Jess Franco. Thorne's third appearance as ILSA, made outside the franchise, in Europe by none other than exploitation icon Jess Franco. This time our buxom heroine(?) runs a jungle camp for women. Young Busselier wants to infiltrate the camp with the help of a doctor (Franco himself) to find out what happened to her sister. Gratuitous nudity and violence pervade this kinky, tedious mess, but what did you expect from sleaze-master Franco? Alternative titles: GRETA THE TORTURER, GRETA, THE MAD BUTCHER, GRETA, THE SADIST, ILSA: ABSOLUTE POWER, and ILSA, THE WICKED WARDEN.

**Grey Gardens** (1975, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*½** D: Ellen Hovde, Albert Maysles, David Maysles, Muffie Meyer. Featuring Edith Bouvier Beale, Edith B. Beale Jr. Controversial documentary by David and Albert Maysles, who filmed the Bouvier-Beales, mother and daughter – and interestingly, also the aunt and cousin of Jackie Onassis – in their run-down, derelict villa. The two women are shown reminiscing, discussing every-day matters, simply surviving in a world they are out of touch with. Intriguing to some degree, especially for psychologists, but filmmakers approach is blunt, even sensationalistic. A cult film for some, this one is certainly a time document, predating the reality TV era by more than twenty years. May also have been an influence on Lars von Trier's Dogma manifesto, since this was mostly filmed with a hand camera.

**Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes** (1984, GBR) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Hugh Hudson. Starring Ralph Richardson, Ian Holm, James Fox, Christopher Lambert, Andie MacDowell (her voice dubbed by Glenn Close), Cheryl Campbell, Ian Charleson, Nigel Davenport. After countless Tarzan action movies producers decided to tackle Edgar Rice

Burroughs' novel seriously, placing the emphasis on drama not action. Film follows the birth of Tarzan (né John Clayton) in the jungle, his growing-up among a group of apes and his eventual discovery by Belgian zoologist Holm, who brings him back to his English family. Filmed on a grand scale, impressive jungle scenes are later undermined by Tarzan's clash with civilization, which could have used more social satire. Nice job, this turned French actor Lambert into an international star. At the same time, this was, sad to say, Richardson's last film appearance. Adaptation by Robert Towne (using a pseudonym) and Michael Austin was nominated for an Academy Award. Photographed by John Alcott.

**Gritos en la Noche** (1962, SPA/FRA) **B&W-83m**. \*\*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring Howard Vernon, Conrado San Martín, Diana Lorys, Perla Cristal. Something is amiss in rural Spanish village. A sinister doctor is abducting nightclub dancers to operate on them, hoping to restore his disfigured daughter's face. One of Franco's best-known, most popular films is at times atmospheric, even startlingly expressionistic chiller with a jazzy, bizarre score. Quite good, although certainly influenced by French 'classic' LES YEUX SANS VISAGE (1959) and Mario Bava's LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO (1961). Followed by several ORLOFF movies. Also known as CRIES IN THE NIGHT, AWFUL DR. ORLOF(F).

**Grosse Pointe Blank** (1997, USA) **C-107m**. \*\*½ D: George Armitage. Starring John Cusack, Minnie Driver, Alan Arkin, Dan Aykroyd, Joan Cusack, Hank Azaria, Jenna Elfman. Professional hitman Cusack must visit Detroit for his new assignment *and* for a high school reunion, which brings him together with his old love Driver, whom he left ten years ago. Amusing, if a little uneasy combination of thriller, black comedy and romance, buoyed by some likable performances. Quite violent towards the end. Cowritten and coproduced by leading actor Cusack.

**Grotesque, The** (1995, GBR) **C-100m**. \*\*½ D: John-Paul Davidson. Starring Alan Bates, Theresa Russell, Sting, Lena Headley, Jim Carter, Anna Massey, Trudie Styler, Maria Aitken, James Fleet, Steven Mackintosh, John Mills. Well-filmed oddity about a strange aristocratic family, whose new butler (Sting) is less harmless than it may seem. Atmospheric, well-acted but ultimately vague. A matter of taste. Patrick McGrath scripted, from his own novel.

**Ground Zero** (1973, USA) **C-72m**. \*½ D: James T. Flocker. Starring Ron Casteel, Melvin Belli, David Button. Totally forgettable actioner about some terrorists who place a nuclear bomb on top of the Golden Gate bridge, intending to free some fellow criminals and asking a large sum of money. Extremely cheap, unappealing thriller. Only novelty: Showdown is filmed on top of the bridge, James Bond only made it there in the 1980s (A VIEW TO A KILL).

**Grown Ups** (2010, USA) **C-102m**. \*\*½ D: Dennis Dugan. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Chris Rock, David Spade, Rob Schneider, Salma Hayek, Maria Bello, Steve Buscemi, Tim Meadows. Five high-school buddies reunite when their old basketball coach passes away. They spend some time together in an old summer house, which leads to some truly funny, some rather silly situations. Comedy sounds like it cannot fail, but some jokes are duds. Best ones come from James. Followed by a sequel in 2013.

**Grown Ups 2** (2013, USA) **C-101m**. \*\*\* D: Dennis Dugan. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Chris Rock, David Spade, Salma Hayek, Maria Bello, Nick Swardson, Steve Buscemi, Jon Lovitz, Shaquille O'Neal. Sequel to GROWN UPS (2010) reunites the four friends on the last day of school before the summer holidays. They spend the day together, creating all kinds of hysterical situations, then get in a fight with a group of college kids. Indefensible in terms of plot, and some gags are below the waistline and unfunny, but some scenes are truly hilarious – especially the ones involving bus driver Swardson. Clearly a matter of taste.

**Grudge, The** (2004, USA/JAP/GER) **C-92m**. \*\*½ D: Takashi Shimizu. Starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, Jason Behr, William Mapother, Clea DuVall, KaDee Strickland, Grace Zabriskie, Bill

Pullman, Rosa Blasi, Ted Raimi, Ryo Ishibashi. Remake of the director's own JU-ON: THE GRUDGE (2003) maintains the setting of Tokyo and places American Gellar in danger as she is called to a household upon which there rests a curse. Can she figure out the mystery? Not as convincing as the original, but still quite creepy and unsettling. Coproduced by Sam Raimi. Followed by a sequel in 2006.

**Grüne Bogenschütze, Der** (1961, GER) **95m.** \*\* D: Jürgen Roland. Starring Klaus-Jürgen Wussow, Karin Dor, Gert Fröbe, Heinz Weiss, Wolfgang Völz, Eddi Arent. Fair Edgar Wallace thriller about a green archer who's killing off the cast in a mysterious castle owned by American(!) Fröbe, whose over-the-top, vicious performance makes the film worth watching. What a title for a black-and-white movie! English title: THE GREEN ARCHER.

**Guappi, I** (1974, ITA) **C-122m.** \*\*\*½ D: Pasquale Squitieri. Starring Claudia Cardinale, Franco Nero, Fabio Testi, Lina Polito, Raymond Pellegrin, Rita Forzano. Ambitious historical drama about lawyer Nero, who returns to his hometown of Naples only to find his old district dominated by the Guappi family, one of the mafia's long arms. Former friend Testi is the patriarch, and soon his mistress Cardinale finds herself drawn to the man who could bring about her lover's downfall. Long, talky, uneven, but flavorful, earnestly acted and with an excellent score by Franco and Gigi Campanino. Uncut version might run as long as 130m. English title: BLOOD BROTHERS.

**Guardian, The** (1990, USA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: William Friedkin. Starring Jenny Seagrove, Dwier Brown, Carey Lowell, Brad Hall, Miguel Ferrer, Xander Berkeley. Friedkin's return to the horror genre 17 years after THE EXORCIST is a disappointing supernatural thriller about an evil nanny (Seagrove) who feeds babies to a strange tree in the forest. Will married couple Brown and Lowell find out before she sacrifices their kid too? Film gets dumber and dumber until the blood-drenched climax. Friedkin's good direction makes the movie endurable. Based on Dan Greenburg's novel *The Nanny*. Cowritten by the director.

**Guardians of the Galaxy** (2014, USA/GBR) **C-121m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: James Gunn. Starring Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Dave Bautista, Michael Rooker, Djimon Hounsou, John C. Reilly, Glenn Close, Benicio del Toro, Stan Lee, voices of Vin Diesel, Bradley Cooper. Sci-fi blockbuster that has 'mockbuster' written all over it. As a kid Pratt was abducted into space, now he is a slacker/bounty hunter who happens to come into possession of a powerful orb. Immediately everybody is after him, including tough mercenary Saldana, a sly raccoon and his monosyllabic sidekick, a tree. Disappointingly standard fare, with a two-penny script. Introducing this sci-fi comedy with a mother dying of cancer is shabby. Even the cheap emotion this was bound to reap at the end doesn't work. Give us THE ICE PIRATES instead!

**Guardie e Ladri** (1951, ITA) **99m.** \*\* D: Mario Monicelli, Steno. Starring Totò, Aldo Fabrizi, Rossana Podestà, William Tubbs. Totò and Fabrizi battle it out as thief and policeman in this mild, nostalgic comedy. Not much plot, film depends entirely on the popularity and likability of its stars. Mario Bava was responsible for the cinematography. Produced by Dino de Laurentiis and Carlo Ponti. English title: COPS AND ROBBERS.

**Guarding Tess** (1994, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Hugh Wilson. Starring Shirley MacLaine, Nicholas Cage, Austin Pendleton, Edward Albert, James Rebhorn, Richard Griffiths. Likable, well-acted comedy drama about former first-lady MacLaine and her antics that drive her bodyguard Cage almost to insanity. The two stars carry this film with fine performances, and a twist in the second half even provides some suspense.

**Guerra del Fuoco – Ironmaster, La** (1982, ITA/FRA) **C-99m.** \*½ D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Sam Pasco, Elvire Audray, George Eastman, Pamela Prati, Jacques Herlin, William Berger, Ottaviano Dell'Acqua. A caveman (Eastman) is cast out of his tribe after committing a crime, but returns with a sword after a volcanic eruption has shown him how to make metal. He

becomes the leader of the tribe and a true tyrant, but young Pasco tries to overthrow him. Preposterous, cheap actioner, probably influenced by Annaud's GUERRE DU FEU (1981). Score by the de Angelis brothers is not bad, neither are some of the ape costumes. British video version was cut by 11 minutes. English title is simply IRONMASTER.

**Guerre du Feu, La** (1981, FRA/CDN/USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jean-Jacques Annaud. Starring Everett McGill, Ron Perlman, Nameer El-Kadi, Rae Dawn Chong, Gary Schwartz. Exceptional film set on prehistoric Earth, where mankind is struggling to get and keep fire, which is paramount for survival in the wilderness. A movie without intelligible dialogue (special language was created by Anthony Burgess) that uses an excellent score (by Philippe Sarde) and magnificent location photography (by Claude Agostini) to delight the audience. A little uneven perhaps, but it may play even better (and be more fascinating) on the big screen. Based on the novel by J.H. Rosny Sr, screenplay written by Gérard Brach. Filmed in Scotland, Canada and Kenya. English title: QUEST FOR FIRE.

**Guerrieri dell'Anno 2072, I** (1983, ITA) **C-89m.** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Jared Martin, Howard Ross, Fred Williamson, Claudio Cassinelli, Al Cliver, Donald O'Brien. Yes, Old Splatterhand Fulci also made one science-fiction film in his career, and an ultra-cheesy one at that. Martin plays a famous star, who is forced to appear in deadly TV show, where he must fight against modern gladiators on motorbikes. The writers obviously saw ROLLERBALL (1975) and PRIX DU DANGER (1982), and read the Stephen King novel that was made into RUNNING MAN four years later. This one has low production values and is sometimes hilariously bad. Avoid it, unless you are a Fulci freak. Score by Riz Ortolani. Also known as FIGHTING CENTURIONS, THE NEW GLADIATORS, ROME 2072 A.D. and WARRIORS OF THE YEAR 2072.

**Guest, The** (2014, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D Adam Wingard. Starring Dan Stevens, Maika Monroe, Leland Orser, Brendan Meyer, Sheila Kelley, Lance Reddick. Wanna-be cult movie from the director of YOU'RE NEXT (2011) about a soldier (Stevens), who comes to a grieving family claiming to have known their dead son. He starts manipulating everybody until the military police finally track him down. Watchable but becomes ridiculous, especially when it desperately tries to copy Nicolas Windig Refn's DRIVE (2011) and ONLY GOD FORGIVES (2013). It just doesn't have the brains or cinematic expertise. What's more, the characters are all stereotypes.

**Guinea Pig** (1985, JAP) **C-42m. n/r** D: Satoru Ogura. No cast credited. Abysmal torture reel made on video (and for video) amateurishly depicts the ordeal of an anonymous woman as she is tortured viciously by several men. No dialogue, no plot, this has been referred to as 'snuff', but nothing in the movie is real. This anti-movie was incredibly followed by some five sequels. Also known as GINI PIGGU.

**Guisi** (2006, TIW) **C-108m. \*\*\*** D: Su Chao-Bin. Starring Chang Chen, Chang Chun-Ning, Chen Bo-lin, Yosuke Eguchi, Barbie Hsu, Kevin S. Smith. Intriguing mix of horror and sci-fi themes about a team of scientists who have captured the ghost of a little boy. Together with a tough police sergeant they want to find out why the little boy's spirit cannot rest. Smoothly made horror film offers an interesting explanation for ghosts and invents anti-gravity with the help of a Menger Sponge (mathematicians will know what this is). Another stunningly professional film from Asia, stylishly made and superbly scored. English title: SILK.

**Gunan il Guerriero** (1982, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Frank Shannon (=Franco Prosperi). Starring Peter McCoy (=Pietro Torrisi), Sabrina Siani, Malisa Longo, Emilio Messina. Blatant CONAN THE BARBARIAN rip-off about twin brothers, whose family is slaughtered when they were babies. Now, some twenty years later, they must decide who is the chosen one to defend their tribe. Pretty laughable actioner has entire sequences in slow-motion, which

makes it quite funny. Watchable on a curio-basis. English titles: GUNAN, KING OF THE BARBARIANS, and THE INVINCIBLE BARBARIAN.

**Gun Shy** (2000, USA) **C-101m**. Ⓜ D: Eric Blakeney. Starring Liam Neeson, Oliver Platt, José Zuniga, Michael DeLorenzo, Andrew Lauer, Richard Schiff, Sandra Bullock. Off-putting, irritating mess of a movie that wants to be off-beat at any price. Neeson plays a neurotic agent assigned to bust crime syndicate run by Platt. Lots of pseudo-hip characters cross his path. PULP FICTION it ain't. Bullock, who has a small role as a nurse, also produced the film.

**Gurotesuku** (2009, JAP) **C-73m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Kôji Shiraishi. Starring Hiroaki Kawatsure, Tsugumi Nagasawa, Shigeo Ôsako. THE COLLECTOR (1965) for the torture porn generation, a mindless flesh and bone show about a psychopath who abducts a young couple and tortures, humiliates and mutilates them in his torture chamber. Tasteless, even sickening, without a psychological aspect or a point. English title: GROTESQUE.

**Gwoemul** (2006, KOR) **C-120m**. \*\*\* D: Bong Joon-ho. Starring Song Kang-ho, Byeon Hie-bong, Park Hae-il, Bae Du-na, Ko Ah-sung, Scott Wilson. Korean box-office smash about a sea monster spawned by spilled chemicals, which terrorizes the population of a major city. A little girl is kidnapped by the creature, and her father, a dreamer, makes it his personal plight to find her. He is assisted by his (unusual) family. Script is not completely logical, but film is exciting, entertaining and keeps you posted until the very end. English title: THE HOST.

**Habitación de Fermat, La** (2007, SPA) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Luis Piedrahita, Rodrigo Sopena. Starring Aleja Sauras, Elena Ballesteros, Lluís Homar, Santi Millán, Federico Luppi. Spanish mystery with shades of MURDER BY DEATH (1976). Four strangers, all math specialists, are invited by an anonymous stranger to a remote warehouse, where they expect to be asked to solve the biggest enigma of all time. It turns out that they must solve mathematical riddles by the minute, or else the walls are closing in on them! What connects them all, and who has a grudge on them? Doesn't really hit bull's-eye, but is intriguing enough to make time fly by. English title: FERMAT'S ROOM.

**Habitante Incierto, El** (2004, SPA) **C-109m**. \*\*\* D: Guillem Morales. Starring Andoni Gracia, Monica Lopez, Francesc Garrido. Intriguing psycho thriller about architect Gracia, who suffers from a recent break-up and now resides alone in his house. One night a stranger rings and asks to make a phone call. When he disappears, Gracia thinks he's gone, but suddenly he can hear noises in the house. Is it the stranger? A tad too long, but intriguing, especially after the twist. English title: THE UNINVITED GUEST.

**Habitat** (1997, CDN/NED) **C-103m**. \*½ D: René Daalder. Starring Tchéky Karyo, Alice Krige, Balthazar Getty, Laura Harris, Kenneth Welsh. Almost completely worthless science-fiction fantasy set in the near future (with the ozone layer being destroyed) about scientist Karyo and his experiments in his basement. He is eventually turned into a swarm of particles and his son Getty doesn't care one bit. He rather amuses himself with his sports teacher's daughter Harris. Pointless, poorly written by the director. Made for video.

**Hacha para la Luna de Miel, Una** (1969, SPA/ITA) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Stephen Forsyth, Dagmar Lassander, Laura Betti, Gérard Tichy, Femi Benussi, Alan Collins. 'A woman should only live until her wedding night; love once, and then die.' Bizarre, enigmatic horror thriller about psychopathic fashion designer Forsyth who kills brides-to-be, the reason for which is linked to the tragic death of his parents when he was a boy. Creatively directed and photographed by Bava, who presents his personal version of PSYCHO (he also co-wrote the screenplay); this is one of his most poetic films. Highlighted by some beautiful and creepy sequences, although insane, illogical narrative lessens the effect of this stylish horror drama. Not completely successful (and not for all tastes) but a must for followers of the director. Melancholy score by Sante Maria Romitelli. Set in Paris.

Note: That's Bava's own I TRE VOLTI DELLA PAURA (BLACK SABBATH) Forsyth is watching on TV. Italian title: IL ROSSO SEGNO DELLA FOLLIA. English title: HATCHET FOR THE HONEYMOON. Also shown at 93m.

**Haebyeoneuro Gada** (2000, KOR) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Kim In Soo. Starring Kim Hyun-Jung, Yang Dong-Kun, Lee Seung-Chae, Lee Jeong-Jin, Lee Hyung-Kyoon. Not-bad but derivative and poorly acted slasher movie about a group of young people, who know each other from an internet chatroom and decide to spend a weekend at the sea together. Little do they know that there's a psycho killer among them. Not badly made, but having seen this dozens of times before you fail to get excited. International title: BLOODY BEACH.

**Haine** (1980, FRA) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Dominique Goult. Starring Klaus Kinski, Maria Schneider, Patrice Melennec, Evelyne Bouix, Katia Tchenko. Crime drama, or psycho drama, about motorbiker Kinski, who passes through a town where a child has recently been killed in a hit-and-run accident. He gets mixed up with young mother Schneider, whose boyfriend starts using him as a scapegoat for bottled-up aggressions. Interesting, with its contained setting and small-town premise, but plot isn't very believable or satisfying. Kinski, in a rare role as a victim, is given very little to do. Written by the director. Also known as LE CREDO DE LA VIOLENCE and KILLER-TRUCK.

**Hairspray** (1988, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: John Waters. Starring Sonny Bono, Ruth Brown, Divine, Debbie Harry, Ricki Lake, Jerry Stiller, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Mink Stole, Pia Zadora, John Waters. Cult satire by John Waters (tame for his standards) set in the time of the Rock'n'Roll craze of the early 1960s. Lake is chubby teen who makes it to stardom on Baltimore TV show, Divine plays her sleazy suburban housewife-mother. Perhaps more watchable for people who lived through this time, but only funny moments are really Divine's and John Waters' scenes (he plays a wacky psychiatrist). Written by the director, whose first movie this was since the 1981 POLYESTER.

**Half a Loaf of Kung Fu!** (1979, HGC) **C-98m.** \*½ D: Chen Chi-Hwa. Starring Jackie Chan, Lung Juen-Er, James Tien, Li Hai-Lung, Kum Kong, Kim Chung-Lan, Miao Tien, Ma Yu-Lung, Li Ching-Luen, Shih Tien. Kung Fu comedy about young fighter (Chan) who seeks for a job as a bodyguard and is hired to protect a valuable jewel, the 'Evergreen Jade'. Already episodic plot is made even more uninteresting by pointless comic scenes. Chan, who also choreographed, is appealing though, and you'll certainly admire his artistry in the final fight (if you last that long). Executive produced by Lo Wei.

**Hallow, The** (2015, EIR/GBR/USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Corin Hardy. Starring Joseph Mawle, Bojana Novokovic, Michael McElhatton, Michael Smiley. Unrelenting, creepy horror film set in the Irish countryside, where 'tree doctor' Mawle moves with his wife and baby to do some work in the forests. When he makes the discovery of an infectious fungus, things take a turn for the worse, with the neighbor warning him against the 'Hallow', mysterious, malevolent creatures. Well-made horror with some truly frightening effects. Co-written by director Hardy, whose feature debut this was. Also known as THE WOODS.

**Halloween** (1978, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John Carpenter. Starring Donald Pleasance, Jamie Lee Curtis, Nancy Loomis, P.J. Soles, Charles Cyphers, Kyle Richards. Carpenter's follow-up to ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 (1976) features more of the same brooding, menacing atmosphere as a serial killer escapes from an insane asylum and goes on a rampage, hacking up innocent teenagers on Halloween. An exercise in suspense, rather simplistic plotwise, but scary and unrelenting. Carpenter's excellent score is among the best in this genre. One of the first slasher films. Followed by several sequels.

**Halloween II** (1981, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Rick Rosenthal. Starring Donald Pleasance, Jamie Lee Curtis, Charles Cyphers, Jeffrey Kramer, Lance Guest, Ana Alicia, Dana Carvey. First

sequel features more of the same, taking off right where the original HALLOWEEN ended. It's still October 31<sup>st</sup>, and Mike Myers is still hacking up the locals. Not as consequent as the first film, this sequel hits its stride rather late but delivers some good shocks. Also offers an explanation for Mike Myers' obsession with murdering Curtis. Cowritten by Carpenter. Carvey's film debut.

**Halloween III: Season of the Witch** (1982, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Tommy Lee Wallace. Starring Tom Atkins, Stacey Nelkin, Dan O'Herlihy, Ralph Strait, Michael Currie. Ambitious but still rather silly horror film, no relation at all to the first two HALLOWEEN films. Doctor Atkins investigates the killing of one of his patients and discovers that a big company has invented a device to kill millions of people on Halloween. Good production values make this watchable. In Part 4 the killer from the original returns, so Michael Myers obviously turned out to be a better franchise. Usually shown in cut versions.

**Halloween 4: The Return of Michael Myers** (1988, USA) **C-88m. BOMB D:** Dwight H. Little. Starring Donald Pleasence, Ellie Cornell, Danielle Harris, George P. Wilbur. Just as terrible as the other sequels to John Carpenter's classic HALLOWEEN. Maniacal killer Michael Myers returns and wants to kill his niece on Halloween. Technically OK but plot is illogical and the ending is simply atrocious.

**Halloween 5** (1989, USA) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Dominique Othenin-Girard. Starring Donald Pleasence, Ellie Cornell, Danielle Harris, Wendy Kaplan. Superfluous sequel is pure slash-and-stalk fare as the killer Myers is after his niece again. Better shot and directed than most of the other sequels, but it's also rather cruel – and dull plotwise. Some prints are subtitled THE REVENGE OF MICHAEL MYERS.

**Halloween H2O** (1998, USA) **C-85m. SCOPE BOMB D:** Steve Miner. Starring Jamie Lee Curtis, Adam Arkin, Josh Hartnett, Michelle Williams, Janet Leigh, LL Cool J. Idiomatic, illogical continuation of the horror series initiated by John Carpenter's 1978 horror hit HALLOWEEN ignores the other sequels and describes what happens twenty years after the first murders. Curtis is using a new identity to forget about the terrible events in her past. However, this Halloween someone is coming to get her (*why?*). Subplot about some high school kids who are slaughtered by Mike Myers shows that it was really the success of the SCREAM films that drove the producers to film another sequel to HALLOWEEN (A scene from SCREAM 2 is shown briefly on a TV set in the movie). This one is so bad it doesn't even make good use of Carpenter's original theme. Low-point in the careers of Leigh and Curtis (mother and daughter in real life).

**Halloween: Resurrection** (2002, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE BOMB D:** Rick Rosenthal. Starring Jamie Lee Curtis, Brad Loree, Busta Rhymes, Bianca Kajlich, Sean Patrick Thomas, Tyra Banks, Rick Rosenthal. The director of the first sequel to HALLOWEEN (1978) tries his hand at this 8<sup>th</sup> film of the series but fails miserably. Pointless fare from start to finish wastes a bland-looking Curtis in prologue, then dispatches some teenage victims, who spend the night in Michael Myers' childhood home. Tries to be modern and hip, but plot is completely worthless.

**Halloween** (2007, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Rob Zombie. Starring Scout Taylor-Crompton, Malcolm McDowell, Tyler Mane, Daeg Faerch, Sheri Moon Zombie, Richard Lynch, Udo Kier, Danny Trejo, Bill Moseley, Sybil Danning, Sid Haig, Brad Dourif. Ambitious remake of the original HALLOWEEN (1978) starts with the dysfunctional upbringing of Michael Myers, which led to his becoming a psychopath and murdering his family. Years later he escapes his asylum and goes back to find the last remaining family member. Can his therapist Dr. Loomis stop him in time? Quite long, but effectively edited slasher movie. Director's cut runs a few minutes longer. Followed by a sequel in 2009.

**Hamiltons, The** (2006, USA) **C-86m**. \*½ D: Mitchell Altieri, Phil Flores. Starring Cory Knauf, Samuel Child, Joseph McKelheer, Mackenzie Firgens. Cheap, pretentious horror drama made on a shoestring budget follows a family of twenty-somethings, who have recently lost their parents and obviously trap and kill unsuspecting people they chance to meet. They move quite often – obviously – and change their surname every time. Pointless, witless, uninteresting. Followed by a sequel, **THE THOMPSONS**, in 2012.

**Hamlet** (1948, GBR) **153m**. \*\*\*\* D: Laurence Olivier. Starring Laurence Olivier, Eileen Herlie, Basil Sidney, Felix Aylmer, Jean Simmons, Stanley Holloway, Peter Cushing, Esmond Knight. The ultimate Shakespeare adaptation, with Olivier playing the melancholy Danish Prince, who learns that the sudden death of his father was actually murder committed by his immediate successor, Hamlet's own uncle. Brilliant character study, focussing on the young man's inner conflict whether to act or leave the murderers to their fate. Superbly directed and photographed (by Desmond Dickinson); Olivier delivers an unfor-gettable performance. Oscar-winner for Best Film (as the first British film), Best Actor, Art Direction-Set Decoration and Costumes. A young Christopher Lee is also in the cast. Filmed again in 1969 (by Tony Richardson), 1990 (by Franco Zefirelli) and 1996 (by Kenneth Branagh).

**Hamlet** (1990, USA/ITA) **C-135m**. \*\*\* D: Franco Zefirelli. Starring Mel Gibson, Glenn Close, Alan Bates, Paul Scofield, Ian Holm, Helena Bonham-Carter, Stephen Dillane, Nathaniel Parker, John McEnery, Pete Postlethwaite. Edited but nevertheless good adaptation of the famous play, with Gibson surprisingly compelling as the melancholy Prince of Denmark. Well-acted by the entire cast. Zefirelli's third Shakespeare adaptation after **ROMEO AND JULIET** and **OTELLO**. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Hamlet** (1996, USA/GBR) **C-242m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Kenneth Branagh. Starring Kenneth Branagh, Julie Christie, Derek Jacobi, Kate Winslet, Rufus Sewell, Richard Briers, Brian Blessed, Gérard Depardieu, Charlton Heston, Rosemary Harris, Jack Lemmon, Billy Crystal, Robin Williams, Richard Attenborough, Nicholas Farrell, John Gielgud, John Mills, Judi Dench. Fourth film version of Shakespeare's most famous play, not counting several theme-related movies, who are just based on the text. Branagh, who has done well with **HENRY V.**, **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**, brings Hamlet gloriously to the screen. Not always compelling due to the film's overlength, but a must-see nevertheless for its production values. Does not come close to Laurence Olivier's version, which was shot in black-and-white and captured the Danish Prince's melancholy mood much better. Branagh is sometimes too aggressive as the main character. Well-acted by the whole cast. Shot in 70mm Panavision Super 70.

**Hana-Bi** (1997, JAP) **C-107m**. \*\*½ D: Takeshi Kitano. Starring 'Beat' Takeshi Kitano, Kayoko Kishimoto, Ren Osugi. Tetsu Watanabe. Cop drama by one of Japan's most important filmmakers, about Kitano, who must come to terms with his dying wife and a friend's murder. He bottles up his emotions until he decides to rob a bank. Ultra-violent, stylized drama is poorly timed and clearly a vanity product for its director and star. It's not cool, as so many said, it's merely cold. Some loved this film nonetheless. English title: **FIREWORKS**.

**Hancock** (2008, USA) **C-92m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Peter Berg. Starring Will Smith, Charlize Theron, Jason Bateman, Jae Head, Eddie Marsan, David Matthey, Michael Mann. Will Smith plays the title character, a superhero with qualities much like Superman, who is suffering from a burn-out syndrome. He'd rather spend his days drinking than doing something useful. Then he meets PR manager Bateman, who tries to improve his image in the public. Fast-paced, funny movie that's unfortunately a film without a soul. The emotional crescendo in the end seems fake. Still, Smith fans and action fans will get their kicks out of the star's performance and the over-the-top effects. Michael Mann and James Lassiter coproduced with star Smith.

**Hand, The** (1981, USA) **C-104m.** \*½ D: Oliver Stone. Starring Michael Caine, Andrea Marcovicci, Annie McEnroe, Bruce McGill, Oliver Stone. Comic book artist Caine's right hand gets severed in a car accident and returns to haunt its owner strangling some people along the way. The film that almost killed director Stone's career (he didn't make a film for the next five years). Probably the worst film ever featuring three Oscar-winners: Stone, composer James Horner and Michael Caine, whose hairdo is another reason not to watch this movie. Written by Stone, based on a novel by Mark Brandel.

**Handmaid's Tale, The** (1989, USA/GER) **C-108m.** \*\*½ D: Volker Schlöndorff. Starring Natasha Richardson, Robert Duvall, Faye Dunaway, Aidan Quinn, Elizabeth McGovern, Victoria Tennant, Blanche Baker, Traci Lind. Overly sober adaptation of Margaret Atwood's novel about a future society where most women are infertile and those who can bear babies are singled out and brainwashed. Fertile Richardson becomes the handmaid of Duvall, a powerful army official, whose infertile and frustrated wife Dunaway is highly suspicious of the strong-willed woman. Schlöndorff's direction is fine, but Harold Pinter's adaptation moves at a slow pace and never hits bull's-eye.

**Hand of Death** (1976, HGK) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Woo. Starring Dorian Tan, James Tien, Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Chu Ching, Chen Juan-Lung. One of John Woo and Jackie Chan's first films is an unexceptional eastern about young Shaolin fighter (Tan) appointed by his master to kill a monk who has switched sides. In the course of the plot, the fighter is aided by two friends (Tien and Jackie Chan). Martial-arts sequences are well-filmed but not outstanding. Badly paced plot is major liability film can't shake off. Woo also wrote the screenplay and plays a minor part. Samo Hung choreographed the action.

**Hands of the Ripper** (1971, GBR) **C-85m.** \*\*½ D: Peter Sasdy. Starring Eric Porter, Angharad Rees, Jane Marrow, Keith Bell, Derek Godfrey, Charles Lamb. Quite passable horror thriller, inspired by the killings of Jack the Ripper in 19<sup>th</sup> century London. Freudian doctor Porter intends to help and perhaps cure young girl, who has witnessed the murder of her mother by Jack the Ripper. It turns out that the girl is suffering from a deadly kind of schizophrenia. Interesting, quite well-made but unfortunately never exciting or thrilling. Includes some very violent scenes. Produced by Hammer Films.

**Hangar 18** (1980, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: James L. Conway. Starring Darren McGavin, Robert Vaughn, Gary Collins, James Hampton, Joseph Campanella. Okay sci-fi drama about the space shuttle encountering a UFO, which crashes in the desert when it collides with a satellite. The government wants to keep it a secret and examine the spaceship in the title hangar, but the original astronauts, now charged with blowing their mission, start to investigate. Earnest, elaborately scored, but suffers from budgetary restrictions, which make it look like TV fare.

**Hanging Up** (2000, USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Diane Keaton. Starring Meg Ryan, Diane Keaton, Lisa Kudrow, Walter Matthau, Adam Arkin, Cloris Leachman. Ryan, Keaton and Kudrow play three sisters(!), whose senile father Matthau may not be around for very much longer, and Ryan is the only daughter willing to take a commitment. Rather annoying, incredible comedy drama is worthwhile thanks to Matthau's wonderful performance, his last. Written by Nora and Delia Ephron, based on the latter's novel.

**Hangman's Curse** (2003, USA) **C-106m.** \*½ D: Rafal Zielinski. Starring David Keith, Mel Harris, Leighton Meester, Douglas Smith, Jake Richardson, William R. Moses, Frank Peretti. Shoddy mystery based on a series of novels by Frank Peretti. Keith and his family investigate mysterious phenomena for the FBI, are called to action in a school, where the ghost of a former student who hanged himself is causing other students to die. Overlong, poorly acted;

seems like a failed pilot for a TV series. A disappointment from the director of FUN (1994). Also known as THE VERITAS PROJECT: HANGMAN'S CURSE.

**Hangover, The** (2009, USA/GER) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Todd Phillips. Starring Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms, Zach Galafaniakis, Justin Bartha, Heather Graham, Jeffrey Tambor, Mike Tyson, Mike Epps, Todd Phillips. Quite funny one-joke comedy about four friends who go to Las Vegas to party two days before Bartha's wedding. A collective blackout leads to a considerable hangover on the next morning – and they have no idea why there is a baby in the hotel suite and a tiger in the bathroom! Together they set out to find the missing bridegroom. Some laughs, best enjoyed in (male) company. Slide show over end credits is best part. Also shown at 99m.

**Hangover Part III, The** (2013, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Todd Phillips. Starring Bradley Cooper, Zach Galifianakis, Ed Helms, Justin Bartha, Ken Jeong, John Goodman, Heather Graham, Jeffrey Tambor, Mike Epps. Fairly funny sequel about the four friends, who try to help Galifianakis out of his childish, bi-polar problems. It turns out crime boss Goodman wants them to get back gold bars stolen by Jeong. Pretty lightweight and rather funny, if you can excuse the silliness of the plot.

**Hanna** (2011, GBR/USA/GER) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Joe Wright. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Eric Bana, Cate Blanchett. Thriller about a sixteen-year-old girl (Ronan) who has been raised in the wilderness by her father (Bana), an ex-CIA agent, who has also taught her martial arts and turned her into a little killing machine. Now the time has come to send her out into the big world, where CIA agent Blanchett has an interest in tracking her down. Film is off to a poor, unrealistic start and never warms up to you but it's typically well-directed by Wright, which provides some momentum.

**Hannibal** (2001, USA) **C-131m. \*\*½ D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Julianne Moore, Giancarlo Giannini, Gary Oldman, Ray Liotta, Frankie Faison, Ennio Coltorti, Francesca Neri, Zeljko Ivanek, Mark Margolis. Flawed sequel to THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, also based on the novel by Thomas Harris. Special agent Starling (Moore) is still working for the FBI, although the search for Hannibal 'the Cannibal' Lecter (Hopkins) has petered out. Disfigured victim Oldman, however, is intent as ever on tracing the intelligent criminal, and inspector Giannini may have just discovered him in Florence, Italy. Murders, gory killings are to follow. Attempt at creating a film as subtly frightening as the 1991 original is doomed to fail, because scriptwriters David Mamet and Steven Zaillian omit any psychological battles between the stars, which were the drawing card of the prequel. Basically a story well-told – but grows increasingly implausible, especially in the second half. Hopkins is brilliant, however, and should be the only reason to watch this film. Disgusting scenes towards the end are sure to turn the stomachs of the squeamish inside out.

... **hanno cambiato faccia** (1971, ITA) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Corrado Farina. Starring Adolfo Celi, Geraldine Hooper, Giuliano Disperati, Francesca Modigliani. Terminally odd horror drama about simple employee Disperati, who one day is called to the villa of his boss (Celi). There he learns that the man's name is really Giovanni Nosferatu(!) and that he is controlling most industries and businesses worldwide. Ambitious but unfortunately also pretentious drama, a misfired parable on the dangers of technology, this cannot really be put into the horror category. One-of-a-kind film is worth seeking out only for real cult movie fetishists. From the director of the pop-art mystery BABA YAGA (1973). English titles: THEY HAVE CHANGED THEIR FACE, THEY'VE CHANGED FACES.

**Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters** (2013, USA/GER) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Tommy Wirkula. Starring Jeremy Renner, Gemma Arterton, Famke Janssen, Peter Stormare. Typical B-movie fodder (the one that used to be a hit in rental stores) offers a premise, not a plot. The title

characters have grown up to be professional witch hunters. Their talent comes in handy, when a village is under the attack of several witches, who may be gathering for a sabbath. The effects are quite gory, but story is substandard and rather stupid. Written by the director.

**Hansel e Gretel** (1990, ITA) **C-90m.** D: Giovanni Simonelli. Starring Elisabete Pimenta Boaretto, Lucia Prato, Maurice Poli, Paul Muller. No trace of the Grimm Brothers in this cheap, unconvincing horror film. Children are kidnapped by a crime syndicate who sell their organs. Two dead children return from the grave to take revenge. Tasteless, pretentious, avoid at all costs, even if veteran Lucio Fulci is said to have directed parts of it. Some truly repulsive gore in this one.

**Happening, The** (2008, USA/IND) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Zooey Deschanel, John Leguizamo, Ashlyn Sanchez, Betty Buckley, Spencer Breslin, voice of M. Night Shyamalan. Apocalyptic thriller about science teacher Wahlberg, who is dazzled when people start killing themselves without apparant motive in Central Park, then the virus-like epidemic spreads to other north-eastern states as well. Wahlberg goes on the run with his girlfriend Deschanel, friend Leguizamo and his daughter Sanchez. Irresistible concept unfortunately goes completely awry in second half, when film makes fun of itself and becomes improbable and unexciting. Another miss by Shyamalan, who also scripted and produced the movie.

**Happiness** (1998, USA) **C-139m.** \*\*½ D: Todd Solondz. Starring Jane Adams, Elizabeth Ahsley, Dylan Baker, Lara Flynn Boyle, Ben Gazzara, Jared Harris, Philip Seymour Hofman, Louise Lasser, Jon Lovitz. The ordinary lives of several people are portrayed in this satirical drama by the maker of WELCOME TO THE DOLLHOUSE. They have problems everyone has but doesn't want to speak about. For example, the son of a psychiatrist (and child molester) is desperate that he hasn't "come" yet and Daddy wants to lend a hand(!), a young woman (the shrink's sister-in-law) is terrified to hear that her ex-lover has committed suicide, and a successful writer inspires her fat neighbor to terrorize other women on the phone with his sexual fantasies (for that reason he is being treated by the psychiatrist) etc.. It's all about sex and *unhappiness*, and the first half of this (obviously overlong) picture is scented with an air of brilliance, but in the second half the episodes about the different characters peter out without a satisfactory conclusion (although it's doubtful whether there is any possible, since all this is true-to-life). Fatally overlong and very much a matter of taste, but worth a look for those who loved director Solondz' debut film (which ran 87m.).

**Happy Feet** (2006, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*** D: George Miller. Starring (the voices of) Elijah Wood, Brittany Murphy, Robin Williams, Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Hugo Weaving, Miriam Margolyes, Anthony LaPaglia, Steve Irwin. On the icy continent of Antarctica, an adolescent penguin is grieved to find that he cannot sing. His incredible tap-dancing skills, however, are quite useless, until... After the pig-movie *BABE* (1995), director Miller (yes, the man who made *MAD MAX*) gives us a movie about a tap-dancing penguin, who makes his moves to (terrible) medleys of classic pop songs. Weak story-wise, film tries to come alive in contrived action set-pieces, to little avail. Hard to believe this took the Best Animated Feature Oscar.

**Happy, Texas** (1999, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Mark Illsley. Starring Jeremy Northam, Steve Zahn, William H. Macy, Ally Walker, Illeana Douglas, M.C. Gainey, Ron Perlman, Mark Illsley. Three convicts manage to escape from prison, and two of them (Zahn, Northam) steal a trailer and wind up in rural community of Happy, Texas, where the owners of the trailer are expected. The criminals are thus mistaken for two homosexual kiddie talent trainers, which forces

them to play the roles at least for several days – or so they think. Funny crime comedy has a great cast and a good score, it's well worth watching despite some minor contrivances.

**Hard Boiled** (1992, HGK) **C-127m. \*\*\*** D: John Woo. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Tony Leung, Teresa Mo, Philip Chan, Cheung Jue-Luh, Anthony Wong, Bowie Lam. Perhaps the most furious action thriller ever made: Two cops, one working undercover, fight a violent battle against a triad syndicate. Stylish direction (slow-motion à la Peckinpah) ignites fireworks for the senses. Story (by Woo) drowns in perfect, never-before-seen action sequences. Woo, who has a cameo as a bartender, also coedited the picture.

**Hard Candy** (2005, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Slade. Starring Patrick Wilson, Ellen Page, Sandra Oh, Jennifer Holmes (=Odessa Rae). Incredibly intense (albeit manipulative) psycho thriller about professional photographer Wilson, who meets 14-year-old internet acquaintance Page, takes her home with dubious motives. However, she intends *him* to be *her* victim. So intense at times, it's painful to watch (especially for men). Not without merit, but goes on longer than it should, and mostly for the sake of making you wince. Excellent performances. Written by Brian Nelson. The title is internet slang for under-age girls.

**Hard Day's Night, A** (1964, GBR) **91m. \*\*\*\*** D: Richard Lester. Starring John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Wilfred Brambell, Norman Rossington, John Junkins, Victor Spinetti, Anna Quayle. The Beatles' first film is a light-hearted, enjoyable comedy about the busy life of a pop group. Not much plotwise but ingeniously done, featuring many priceless hit songs. The filmmaker's concept may seem simple at first but is phenomenally successful, showing (as Lester himself put it) 'the explosion of youth as a power'. A sensation, now as then. Ringo and Paul's grandfather (Brambell) have the best scenes. Cut for U.S. release. Followed by HELP!

**Hard Eight** (1997, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Paul Thomas Anderson. Starring Philip Baker Hall, John C. Reilly, Gwyneth Paltrow, Samuel L. Jackson, Philip Seymour Hoffman. An elderly man (Hall) picks up a broke loser (Reilly) at a café and teaches him how to 'make a living' in casinos without having much money at one's disposal. The two men become friends, though it's unclear for a long time why Hall has given Reilly a chance to lead a better life. Calm, elegant drama, with Paltrow and Jackson lending fine support. Score and soundtrack add to the atmosphere. Set in Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Hard Rain** (1998, USA/JAP/GER/GBR/NOR) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mikael Salomon. Starring Morgan Freeman, Christian Slater, Randy Quaid, Minnie Driver, Ed Asner, Michael Goorjian, Mark Rolston, Richard Dysart, Betty White. A town is evacuated after a sudden flood and armoured car guard Slater has to protect \$3 million from the greedy fingers of criminal Freeman and his gang. While the streets and houses are filling with water, the two are playing a tough cat-and-mouse game. Highly improbable premise is overcome by an effective last third. Thriller rates \*\* at the beginning and \*\*\* at the end. The direction appropriately keeps things at a quick pace. Action fans won't be disappointed. Slater coproduced.

**Hard Ticket to Hawaii** (1987, USA) **C-96m. \*½** D: Andy Sidaris. Starring Ronn Moss, Dona Speir, Hope Marie Carlton, Harold Diamond, Rodrigo Obregón. Sequel to MALIBU EXPRESS (1985) is in exactly the same vein, putting two busty blondes in danger, as they must contend with a drug syndicate and a killer snake. Some violent bits, but atrociously acted. Another relic from the golden age of video stores. Followed by PICASSO TRIGGER (1988).

**Hardware** (1990, GBR) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Richard Stanley. Starring Dylan McDermott, Stacy Travis, John Lynch, William Hootkins, Iggy Pop, Lemmy. In the post-apocalyptic future, presented à la MAD MAX, only through a red-tinted lens, a scavenger finds metal parts of a

robot. When McDermott and his girlfriend Travis put it together, they find out that it is quite deadly. Poor storytelling hampers this film greatly, it becomes better in second half, when there's more action. Visually interesting debut feature from Stanley (DUST DEVIL). Based on the story 'Shok', but there are also elements of Tarkovsky's STALKER (1979) and many other sci-fi films. Score by Simon Boswell.

**Hard Way, The** (1991, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Badham. Starring Michael J. Fox, James Woods, Stephen Lang, Annabella Sciorra, John Capodice, Luis Guzmán, LL Cool J, Delroy Lindo, Penny Marshall, Christina Ricci. Fairly entertaining action comedy about movie star Fox, who joins cynical, violent cop Woods for a few days, hoping that he can get some experience for his next film role. Woods is after a serial killer, which makes it tough going for the actor. Contrived, overlong, but not bad, with Woods' foul-mouthed performance a real treat. Coproduced by Rob Cohen.

**Harlequin** (1980, AUS) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Simon Wincer. Starring Robert Powell, David Hemmings, Carmen Duncan, Broderick Crawford, David Hough. Intriguing supernatural thriller about politician Hemmings, whose son is dying of leukemia. Enter faith healer Powell, who not only cures the boy but also turns his wife's head. Is he a charlatan or a real magician? Despite some illogical parts this remains a well-scripted chiller, with a fine Brian May score. Everett De Roche's screenplay makes reference to famous Russian Czar advisor Rasputin. Also known as DARK FORCES, THE MINISTER'S MAGICIAN.

**Harper** (1966, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jack Smight. Starring Paul Newman, Lauren Bacall, Julie Harris, Shelley Winters, Robert Wagner, Janet Leigh, Arthur Hill, Pamela Tiffin, Robert Webber, Strother Martin, Harold Gould. Stellar cast in an adaptation of Chandler contemporary Ross Macdonald's *The Moving Target*. Newman plays a private eye who is hired by rich lady Bacall to trace her husband. He encounters strange characters on his search and becomes involved in a kidnapping scheme. Pulp fiction thriller is an indelible time capsule of the sixties but fails to evoke much interest with its plot. Good photography by Conrad Hall. Followed by a sequel, THE DROWNING POOL, ten years later.

**Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone** (2001, GBR/USA) **C-152m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Chris Columbus. Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Fiona Shaw, Richard Griffiths, Ian Hart, Vern Troyer, John Hurt, Julie Walters, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, John Cleese, Alan Rickman. First of J.K. Rowling's incredibly successful Harry Potter stories is brought to the big screen in grand style. Plot follows Harry from his foster parents to the Hogwarts school of magic, where he makes new friends and has to pass his first big test when he suspects evil-doings in one of the teachers (Rickman). Adaptation leaves some things desired (especially to those who have read the book) and overlength may make it difficult for impatient kids, although this is not for very small ones anyway. Still, an enjoyable, effective film. Also known as HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE. Followed by HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS (2002).

**Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets** (2002, GBR/USA/GER) **C-157m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Chris Columbus. Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Richard Harris, Maggie Smith, Robbie Coltrane, Kenneth Branagh, Alan Rickman, Jason Isaacs, Julie Walters, Miriam Margolyes, John Cleese. Second installment in the HARRY POTTER series shows Harry's second year at Hogwarts, where he investigates mysterious events surrounding the Chamber of Secrets. Several new characters are introduced, but plot remains too episodic, almost like a video game. Good effects. Score by John Williams. Followed by HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN (2004).

**Hart's War** (2002, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gregory Hoblit. Starring Bruce Willis, Colin Farrell, Terrence Howard, Cole Hauser, Marcel Iures, Linus Roache. Months before the end

of World War Two, an American lieutenant is captured by the Germans and brought to a prison camp led by Nazi lures. There he meets Colonel Willis, the U.S. officer with the highest rank. When two black pilots are captured and brought to the camp, racism among the prisoners leads to murder. Engrossing war film is a court-room drama at its core. First half of the film is a little aimless but final third is compelling stuff. A well-acted film, especially by lures, who's frighteningly good. Based upon the novel by John Katzenbach.

**Harvest, The** (2013, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** John McNaughton. Starring Samantha Morton, Michael Shannon, Natasha Calis, Charlie Tahan, Peter Fonda. Captivating drama (not a horror film, despite HENRY director McNaughton) about an adolescent girl, who moves in with her grandparents and befriends a young, wheelchairbound boy next door, who's home-schooled and medically treated by his doctor-mother and nurse-father. Their friendship is not accepted by his restrictive parents – for a shocking reason. Some contrivances, but generally an engrossing view. McNaughton's first theatrical film since 2001. Also known as CAN'T COME OUT TO PLAY.

**Hatari!** (1962, USA) **C-157m. \*\*\* D:** Howard Hawks. Starring John Wayne, Hardy Krüger, Elsa Martinelli, Red Buttons, Gérard Blain, Bruce Cabot, Michèle Girardon. Loose, relaxed African adventure from director/producer Hawks. Wayne plays leader of Safari hunters, who must accept female photographer Martinelli in their round, which leads to jealousy and romantic entanglements. Pretty much contrived and too long really without much of a plot, but cast handles material well and film is never boring. Title yell means 'Danger!'. Elaborate score by Henry Mancini.

**Hateful Eight, The** (2015, USA) **C-187m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Kurt Russell, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Walton Goggins, Demian Bichir, Tim Roth, Michael Madsen, Bruce Dern, James Parks, Zoe Bell, Channing Tatum. Tarantino's 8th film (as a director) is a throwback to his RESERVOIR DOGS and PULP FICTION days, and a welcome one at that. Set in the Wild West during a blizzard, film languidly tells the story of bounty hunter Russell, who brings murderer Leigh to be hanged in a nearby town, but is forced to make a stop in a tavern when the storm gets too strong. Fellow passenger Jackson is just one of seven strangers the bounty hunter becomes highly suspicious of, and it turns out that indeed there is a conspiracy. Filmed in grand Ultra Panavision 70, the widest picture ever used in Hollywood (the last time in 1966), but despite some wintry outdoor shots, most of the action is confined to inside the stagecoach or the tavern, making this quite stagey. Nonetheless, an intriguing western, with great dialogue and a terrific performance by Jackson (though only Leigh was nominated for an Oscar). Fine, Golden Globe-winning score by Ennio Morricone is almost too underplayed.

**Hatsujô Kateikyôshi: Sensei no Aijiru** (2003, JAP) **C-90m. \*½ D:** Mitsuru Meike. Starring Emi Kuroda, Yukijiro Hotaru, Takshi Ito. Japanese sex movie with comic touches, a so-called Pink Eiga, about a young woman, who is shot in the head but survives with an insatiable lust for sex. The bullet is stuck in her brain, and what's more, she is also carrying a replica of George W. Bush's index finger with her, courtesy of the guy who shot her! Appeals to some primal instincts, but has nothing to do with a serious movie. May owe a bit to the classic DEEP THROAT (1972). English title: THE GLAMOROUS LIFE OF SACHIKO HANAI.

**Haunted, The** (1979, USA) **C-81m. \*½ D:** Michael A. DeGaetano. Starring Aldo Ray, Virginia Mayo, Ann Michelle, Paul Vincenzo. Pretty laughable horror oddity set in a ghost town where the past is coming back to haunt the small community. A century ago, an Indian woman was accused of witchcraft and now she may have come back for revenge. Poorly directed movie stretches out scenes to achieve this feeble running time. If seeing naked Indians on horses is your cup of tea, tune in. Also known as THE GLASS CAGE.

**Haunted** (1995, GBR) **C-108m.** \*\* D: Lewis Gilbert. Starring Aidan Quinn, Kate Beckinsale, John Gielgud, Anna Massey, Alexander Andrews, Alex Lowe. In the 1920s psychologist Quinn takes an interest in the (alleged) haunting of a South England mansion, and travels there, hoping to be able to give the owners mental support, because he does not believe in nonsense such as ghosts. He falls in love with a young woman (Beckinsale) who lives at the old estate with her two brothers and her aunt. Supernatural chiller builds (and builds and builds) suspense but, apart from a few chills, keeps the viewer groping in the dark for too long. The conclusion is extremely unsatisfying and undermines the film's logical plot, which is too bad because the production values are good and the cinematography (by Tony Pierce Roberts) atmospheric. Based on James Herbert's novel. Massey appeared in the similar *THE GROTESQUE* (1995).

**Hauter** (2013, USA) **C-96m.** \*\* D: Vincenzo Natali. Starring Abigail Breslin, Samantha Weinstein, Stephen McHattie, David Hewlett, Michelle Nolden, Peter Outerbridge. Anemic horror chiller about 80s teenager Breslin, who realizes that she is caught in a time loop, living through the same dreary Sunday with her family again and again, unable to leave as there is a thick fog outside. It turns out she has been dead(!) for quite some time, and the person(?) responsible doesn't want her to investigate. Mixes elements of *CORALINE* and *THE OTHERS*, but Breslin's terrified character soon loses its credibility. It's terribly slow, too.

**Haunting, The** (1963, USA) **B&W-112m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Robert Wise. Starring Julie Harris, Claire Bloom, Richard Johnson, Russ Tamblyn, Lois Maxwell. Psycho horror drama about paranormal investigator Johnson, who gathers several people at Hill House, which has a history of mysterious deaths and is said to be haunted. Clairvoyant Bloom and sceptic Tamblyn are among the supporting cast, but the main character is actually mentally unstable Harris, who comes undone in the gothic setting. Beautiful black-and-white photography is only redeeming feature in lengthy, talky drama with hammy performances. Has the reputation of a classic (among non-horror fans), but there is no suspense, few chills and a particularly weak ending. Voice-over narration also only works at the beginning. Based on the novel by Shirley Jackson. Remade in 1999.

**Haunting, The** (1999, USA) **C-113m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jan de Bont. Starring Lily Taylor, Liam Neeson, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Owen Wilson, Bruce Dern, Virginia Madsen, Todd Field, Michael Cavanaugh. Scientist Neeson gathers three research subjects at a castle, pretending to study their sleeping problems. In fact, he wants to study their behavior in situations that create fear. Little does he expect the house to be haunted, and Taylor soon starts to have strange visions. Well-made chiller is good for over an hour, then falls apart as Taylor battles the evil spirit and suspense is forgotten. An okay view, with an impressive setting. Loosely based on the novel *The Haunting of Hill House* by Shirley Jackson, which was filmed before in 1963. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. Samuel Z. Arkoff and Steven Spielberg were among the executive producers.

**Hauts** (1977, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*\* D: Herb Freed. Starring May Britt, Cameron Mitchell, Aldo Ray, William Gray Espy, Ben Hammer, E.J. André, Kendall Jackson, Susan Nohr. A rural village is terrified when a killer stalks innocent victims and stabs them using a pair of scissors. Sexually repressed Britt, a local farmwoman, may be the next victim, but will her uncle Mitchell be there to help? Ambitious, chilling psycho drama in the guise of a slasher movie plays its cards in the last third, when some intriguing twists leads the story to a surprising conclusion. Uneven, but stay with it! Has cult film possibilities. Cowritten by director Freed (*BEYOND EVIL*).

**Hauru No Ugoku Shiro** (2004, JAP) **C-119m.** \*\*\*½ D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Jane Alan, Christian Bale, Lauren Bacall, Billy Crystal, Blythe Danner, Jean Simmons, Emily

Mortimer (English version). Miyazaki's follow-up to SPIRITED AWAY (2001) is another astounding, awe-inspiring fantasy epic. A little girl, working for a hatmaker, is saved from lecherous soldiers by a mysterious magician, and when she is cursed by an evil witch, turning her into an old woman, she seeks refuge at his moving castle. Soon she learns that the magician is a troubled soul himself and that the world is on the brink of a terrible war. Wonderfully animated, superbly scored extravaganza that even manages to work in a criticism of technology and war. Filled with interesting characters and marvelous twists, a must. Based on a novel by Diana Wynne Jones. English title: HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE.

**Hausu** (1977, JAP) **C-88m**. \*½ D: Nobuhiko Ôbayashi. Starring Kimiko Ikegami, Miki Jinbo, Kumiko Ohba, Ai Matsubara. Very experimental horror comedy about a group of girls, who decide to spend the summer holidays in a mansion in the country, not knowing that it is haunted. Filled with often annoying special effects, it's loud, colourful and campy. Give it a shot if you like cult movies, but the plot is childish. It was written by a 13-year-old. English title: HOUSE.

**Haute Tension** (2003, FRA) **C-91m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Alexandre Aja. Starring Cécile De France, Maiwenn Le Besco, Philippe Nahon, Franck Khalfoun. Nihilistic horror thriller about a young girl, who intends to spend the weekend studying at a friend's place (a farmhouse in the middle of nowhere). However, soon after her arrival, the family is brutally slaughtered by a maniac and the girl has to use her wits to survive. Exercise in suspense and horror plays like an homage to the slasher pics of the early 80s (even the score is similar), but it too often misleads you and ultimately lacks any point whatsoever. After tying your stomach in knots for an hour, film makes an illogical twist and becomes totally absurd. For fans of over-the-top gore only. Director Aja went on to make the HILLS HAVE EYES remake in 2006. English titles: HIGH TENSION, and SWITCHBLADE ROMANCE.

**Hayanbang** (2002, KOR) **C-94m**. \*\*½ D: Lim Chang-jae. Starring Jeong Jun-ho, Lee Eun-ju, Kim Ji-yu, Kye Seong-Yong. Don't let the illogical international title UNBORN BUT FORGOTTEN steer you away from this quite creepy film about a reporter who investigates a mysterious website of an abortion clinic, which kills its visitors within two weeks. Another paraphrase of RINGU (1998), well-scored and chilling, but plot loses its focus too often. Also known as WHITE ROOM.

**H-Bomb** (1971, HGK) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Philip Chalong. Starring Christopher Mitchum, Olivia Hussey. Big James Bond-like production about a stolen bomb and CIA agent Mitchum's attempts to stop the villains. Hussey plays the love interest (her father is one of the key figures in the affair). Lots of action and explosions, some martial arts sequences, some nudity, all with unmistakable 70s flair. Barely released but not bad. Produced by Raymond Chow. Also known as GREAT FRIDAY and OPERATION ALPHA.

**H2S** (1969, ITA) **C-81m**. \*½ D: Roberto Faenza. Starring Denis Gilmore, Carole André, Lionel Stander, Franco Valobra, Paolo Poli. Terminally weird comedy set in a futuristic university, where student Gilmore becomes a pawn in a revolution and runs away to a snowy mountain with André. Plays like performance art hippie style, it seems to be about technical control over our lives and the need to break free. Unusual score by Ennio Morricone. From the director of COPKILLER (1983). Title refers to sulphuric acid.

**Head Above Water** (1996, USA) **C-92m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Jim Wilson. Starring Harvey Keitel, Cameron Diaz, Craig Sheffer, Billy Zane, Shay Duffin. Remake of a Norwegian film (HODET OVER VANNET), with Cameron Diaz in one of her first starring roles. She plays a young woman married to a judge (Keitel) who is visited by her ex-lover (Zane) on their island one day. When she finds him dead the next morning, they plan to dispose of him in the sea, since

no one would believe their story. Comedy thriller grows more improbable with each new story twist. Watchable at times, but otherwise pretty idiotic.

**Headshot** (2016, INES) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Kim Stamboel, Timo Tjahjanto. Starring Iko Uwais, Sunny Pang, Chelsea Islan, Julie Estelle. After a critical head injury Uwais is nursed back to health by benevolent nurse Islan. What he doesn't know is that evil crime boss Pang has escaped from prison and is looking for him. Quite slickly-made actioner is extremely violent, with series of action scenes that seemingly exist only for their own sake. Improves somewhat in the second half, when the characters' motivations become apparent. Written by codirector Tjahjanto.

**Heartbreakers** (2001, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: David Mirkin. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Ray Liotta, Jason Lee, Anne Bancroft, Jeffrey Jones, Gene Hackman, Nora Dunn, Carrie Fisher, David Mirkin. Completely contrived, artificial Hollywood comedy about mother-daughter team Weaver/Hewitt, who make a fortune ripping off sex-hungry men. Their latest victim is chain-smoking billionaire Hackman. And there is also mafia-type Liotta waiting to settle a score. Weaver is enjoyable, but plot twists are stultifying and film's length preposterous.

**Heartbreak Kid, The** (2007, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Bobby and Peter Farrelly. Starring Ben Stiller, Malin Akerman, Michelle Monaghan, Jerry Stiller, Rob Corddry, Carlos Mencia, Scott Wilson, Eva Longoria. Contrived but undeniably funny comedy about San Francisco sports store owner Stiller, who at 40 still hasn't married or had a date for a few years. Then he meets and falls in love with blonde Akerman – and marries her without really knowing her. Then during their honeymoon in Mexico he realizes his big mistake, as there is cute Monaghan, who seems to be so much more like him. Stiller is fun to watch, and there are some really laugh-out-loud situations. From the directors of *THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY* (1998). Based on a short story by Bruce Jay Friedman, which was also the basis for a 1972 movie with the same title, scripted by Neil Simon.

**Heart Is Deceitful Above All Things, The** (2004, USA/GBR/FRA/JAP) **C-98m. Ⓜ** D: Asia Argento. Starring Asia Argento, Jimmy Bennett, Kip Pardue, Ornella Muti, Dylan Sprouse, Cole Sprouse, Peter Fonda, Marilyn Manson, Jeremy Sisto, Michael Pitt, Winona Ryder. This movie is *unwatchable* above all things. Director-actress Argento casts herself as a trailer-trash mother in this, her second feature. She wins a custody battle to take her son home from his foster parents, then subjects him to all kinds of (unspeakable) abuse. The boy suffers through the entire movie and so will you. One wonders why so many decent actors signed on for this script. Based on short stories by J.T. LeRoy. Score includes work by Kim Gordon (Sonic Youth) and Billy Corgan.

**Hearts in Atlantis** (2001, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Scott Hicks. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Anton Yelchin, Hope Davis, Mika Boreem, David Morse. After the death of his childhood friends, Morse recalls his past and the magical summer in which he turned eleven years and made the acquaintance of a mysterious but friendly elderly man (Hopkins). Another one of writer Stephen King's childhood reminiscences (set in 1960), film has stylish directorial touches and beautiful photography but sentimental, tear-jerking conclusion is not at all justified by plot, which seems overly familiar and simple. You keep waiting for a twist that never comes. And the frame narrative is rather pointless here. King's novel was adapted by William Goldman. Cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski died during production, his work was finished by Emmanuel Lubezki and Allen Daviau.

**Heat** (1972, USA) **C-100m. \*\*\*½** D: Paul Morrissey. Starring Joe Dallesandro, Sylvia Miles, Andrea Feldman, Pat Ast, Ray Vestal. A film from Andy Warhol's Factory, following *FLESH* (1968) and *TRASH* (1970), this is a take on *SUNSET BLVD.* (1950) as former child star

Dallesandro is washed up in sleazy motel, starts an affair with aging blonde actress Miles. Lots of low-life characters populate this raw, unpretentious drama. Some sloppy acting lessens film's effect. Like everything associated with Warhol, this has a cult following.

**Heathers** (1989, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Michael Lehmann. Starring Winona Ryder, Christian Slater, Shannen Doherty, Lianne Falk, Kim Walker, Renée Estevez. Black teen comedy – a cult item – about Ryder, who hangs out with the three most popular girls in her high school (all called Heather!) and then meets cool guy Slater, who turns out to be a sociopath that doesn't shy away from murder and pulls her along. After the slew of teen movies from the 80s, this was quite a shock for audiences, hence its cult status, despite some pacing issues and stilted dialogue.

**Heavenly Creatures** (1994, NZL/GBR) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Melanie Lynskey, Kate Winslet, Sarah Peirse, Diane Kent, Clive Merrison, Simon O'Connor, Jed Brophy, Elizabeth Moody, Peter Jackson. Director Jackson's follow-up to the splatter film BRAINDEAD is a fascinating psycho drama based on a real case in the 1950s about the friendship of two New Zealand girls, who flee into a fantasy world of their own, being misunderstood by their parents and teachers. Their uncompromising love for each other ends in a catastrophe, which is clear from the very beginning. Superbly acted, well-filmed, unusual drama loses momentum in the second half (slowing down almost completely), but delivers a harrowing conclusion. Another show of talent from director Jackson (especially his interpretation of emotions in faces!). He has a brief cameo as a bum. The character played by Winslet (her film debut) later wrote bestselling novels as Anne Perry. Also shown at 99m.

**Heavy** (1996, USA) **C-105m. \*\*½ D:** James Mangold. Starring Pruitt Taylor Vince, Liv Tyler, Shelley Winters, Deborah Harry, Jeo Grifasi, Evan Dando. Low-key, downbeat, but occasionally effective character study about fat, unattractive cook Vince and his infatuation with Tyler, a beautiful young teen, who comes to work at his mother's restaurant in the middle of nowhere. Interesting to watch, but not outstanding and slowly paced. A surprisingly mature role for young Tyler.

**Heavy Traffic** (1973, USA) **C-76m. \*\*\* D:** Ralph Bakshi. Intelligent, brilliantly creative animated feature from the maker of FRITZ THE CAT circles around the life of an animation artist, who feels he's as undecided as a pinball and imagines himself to live an exciting life as a mack. While this film is a must for animation buffs, others may find it too graphic and ordinary.

**Hebi Musume to Hakuhatsuma** (1968, JAP) **B&W-85m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Noriaki Yuasa. Starring Tadashi Date, Mariko Fukuhara, Yuko Hamada. An orphan girl is finally adopted by a family, but her initial joy is soon undermined by the family's dark secret. Her new mother is an amnesiac since a car accident left her with a head injury, her father is a scientist specialized in snakes, and then there's the mysterious step-sister, who must be kept a secret. Interesting fantasy unfolds slowly, when the 'shock' scenes finally happen, they are rather poorly done. The acting is also substandard. English title: THE SNAKE GIRL AND THE SILVER-HAIRED WITCH.

**Hebi no Michi** (1998, JAP) **C-85m. \*\* D:** Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Shô Aikawa, Teruyuki Kagawa, Shirô Shimomoto. Director Kurosawa's follow-up to the excellent KYUA / CURE (1997) is a down-beat psycho drama about a man's frantic quest for revenge for his daughter's murder. He abducts and tortures two Yakuza suspects, being aided by a physics teacher whose motivations are unclear. Confusing plot is difficult to access or even understand, which hampers proceedings, even makes the movie tiresome and pretentious

at times. Watch if you are a fan of the director. Filmed back-to-back with the similarly themed KUMO NO HITOMI / EYES OF THE SPIDER. English title: SERPENT'S PATH.

**Heisei Tanuki Gassen Pompoko** (1994, JAP) **C-119m. \*\*\* D:** Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Kokondei Shinchou, Makoto Nonomura, Yuriko Ishida, Norihei Miki, Nijiko Kiyokawa. Humorous yet sentimental look back at Japan of the 1960s, and its urban development that destroyed many forests. Story centers around a tribe of raccoons, who use their transforming skills to stop the destruction of their habitat. Slightly episodic fantasy drama contains some stunningly creative animation, especially in the transformation scenes. With its countless references to local folklore, this may speak most eloquently to Japanese audiences. Produced by Studio Ghibli. From the director of the acclaimed HOTARU NO HAKA (GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES). English titles: POM POKO, and THE RACCOON WAR.

**Helen of Troy** (1955, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Wise. Starring Rossana Podesta, Stanley Baker, Brigitte Bardot, Jacques Sernas, Cedric Hardwicke, Harry Andrews. Lavishly filmed spectacle about title character, who flees from Sparta with Paris, causing war between the cities of Sparta and Troy. Good, violent battle scenes, dramatic monumental score by Max Steiner, but script wears film down. One should have tried to add something new to the familiar story, or at least regard it from different aspects. Podesta is beautiful as Helen, however, and Bardot's supporting role will interest her fans.

**Hellbound: Hellraiser II** (1988, GBR) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** Tony Randel. Starring Clare Higgins, Ashley Laurence, Kenneth Cranham, Imogen Boorman, Sean Chapman, William Hope, Doug Bradley. Sequel to Clive Barker's horror hit HELLRAISER (1987) continues story of Laurence, whose stepmother manages to get herself resurrected by a maniacal doctor, with the cenobite horde in tow. Some time later, the movie takes us right into hell. Even more unpleasant than its predecessor, with an uneven plot, but convincing make-up effects will titillate the dedicated. Pretty much the epitome of splatter punk, set to a booming Christopher Young soundtrack. Barker executive produced. R-rated version runs 97m.

**Hellboy** (2004, USA) **C-132m. \*\*\* D:** Guillermo del Toro. Starring Ron Perlman, John Hurt, Selma Blair, Rupert Evans, Karel Roden, Jeffrey Tambor, Guillermo del Toro, Mike Mignola. Explosive, entertaining comic book adaptation about the title character (Perlman), who is summoned from hell by Rasputin-like Roden to do evil deeds during WW2. He is saved by Hurt, who then begins leading a secret CIA branch dealing with the supernatural – with super-strong Hellboy a powerful weapon. If only the guy weren't so down-to-earth at times... Well-produced horror/fantasy actioner works because of its appealing (even funny) main character. The action is astounding. Del Toro (CRONOS, MIMIC) scripted, based on Mike Mignola's comic book series, but it also owes a bit to H.P. Lovecraft. Original theatrical version ran 125m. and was rated PG-13. Sequel to follow in 2008.

**Hell in the Pacific** (1968, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Boorman. Starring Lee Marvin, Toshiro Mifune. After POINT BLANK director Boorman continues to be innovative: In 1944, American soldier Marvin finds himself stranded on a remote island in the Pacific, which is inhabited by equally lost Japanese officer Mifune. Soon each is trying to get the upper hand, and it seems they are acting out their personal world war. Little dialogue, rampant symbolism and grand photography (by Conrad Hall) in a film that speaks through its pictures. Remarkable, if not terribly exciting or suspenseful. Score by Lalo Schifrin.

**Hellions** (2015, CDN) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Bruce McDonald. Starring Chloe Rose, Robert Patrick, Rossif Sutherland. Teen girl learns of an unwanted pregnancy on Halloween and spends the evening home alone. When some strange kids knock on her, she is plunged into a nightmare. Horror movie starts conventional, then takes a sharp left and becomes mostly surreal. The film actually becomes creepy and effective in the second half, with a convincing

lead actress. Not everything gels, and the ending undermines it a little, but generally a nice view for horror fans. From the director of PONTYPOOL (2008).

**Hello Mary Lou: Prom Night II** (1987, CDN) **C-96m. \*\*½ D:** Bruce Pittman. Starring Michael Ironside, Wendy Lyon, Justin Louis, Lisa Schrage, Richard Monette, Terri Hawkes. Thirty years after the accidental burning of the prom queen, the lady returns from the grave to possess beautiful teenager Lyon. Some nasty killings ensue. This sequel really only has the principal theme in common with the first film. It's well-directed, well-filmed to make up for some plot deficiencies. Movie references range from THE EXORCIST (1973) and CARRIE (1976) to the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET movies. Recommended to buffs. Also known as THE HAUNTING OF HAMILTON HIGH. Followed by two more sequels.

**Hell or High Water** (2016, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Mackenzie. Starring Chris Pine, Ben Foster, Jeff Bridges, Gil Birmingham. Modern-day western set in Texas, where two brothers (Pine, Foster) reunite to rob several banks, the reason for which having to do with their late mother's ranch. Weary Marshall Bridges and his partner Birmingham try to anticipate their moves. Languid, downbeat but engrossing crime drama with great performances and fine cinematography. Good score by Nick Cave. Written by Taylor Sheridan, who has a cameo as a cattle-driving cowboy.

**Hellraiser** (1987, GBR) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Clive Barker. Starring Andrew Robinson, Clare Higgins, Ashley Laurence, Sean Chapman, Oliver Smith, Robert Hines, Doug Bradley. Horror novelist Clive Barker's directorial debut is a splatter movie milestone. Robinson moves into his missing brother's house with his family, unknowing that the sibling is waiting upstairs in a skeletal state, waiting for fresh blood ever since he opened the gate to hell with a magical cube. Gruesome, serious horror will probably put you off your dinner, but no horror fan should complain. Barker also scripted, from his novel *The Hellbound Heart*. Followed by quite a lot of sequels, starting with HELLBOUND: HELLRAISER II (1988).

**Hell Squad** (1985, USA) **C-87m. \*\* D:** Kenneth Hartford. Starring Bainbridge Scott, Glen Hartford, Tina Lederman, Marvin Miller, William Bryant. Poorly directed action adventure about several Las Vegas showgirls, who go into military training to carry out mission to free an American ambassador's son from Arab terrorists. Mostly gratuitous, but nudity, general outrageousness may keep you watching. Also known as COMMANDO GIRLS, COMMANDO SQUAD.

**Hell Up in Harlem** (1973, USA) **C-94m. \*\* D:** Larry Cohen. Starring Fred Williamson, Julius Harris, Gloria Hendry, Margaret Avery, D'Urville Martin, Tony King, James Dixon, Mindi Miller. Sequel to BLACK CAESAR (1973) is faster, possibly more violent but also more sloppily plotted. Williamson, as a kind of black GODFATHER goes after a rival black gangster who is pacting with the police. Lots of shoot-outs to satisfy genre fans. Director Cohen's fluid style makes this watchable, although at the end you might wonder what this was all about.

**Help!** (1965, GBR) **C-95m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Lester. Starring John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Leo McKern, Eleanor Bron, Victor Spinetti, Roy Kinnear, Patrick Cargill, Alfie Bass. Follow-up to A HARD DAY'S NIGHT features the same mad-cap humor, paired with the Beatles' hit songs. In the film Ringo is pursued by a strange sect who want to retrieve a sacrificial ring, - which the drummer simply can't get off his finger! Unfortunately, this semi-spoof of James Bond films is rather incoherent and interrupted by too few performances by the band. Still, in many ways this comedy is a predecessor to music video clips and thus artistically important.

**Henry & June** (1990, GBR/FRA) **C-136m. \*\*\* D:** Philip Kaufman. Starring Fred Ward, Uma Thurman, Maria de Medeiros, Richard E. Grant, Kevin Spacey, Juan Luis Bunuel, Brigitte Lahaie, Maurice Escargot (=Gary Oldman). Moody, absorbing drama set in 1931 Paris,

detailing the literary and sexual encounters between Henry Miller (Ward) and Anais Nin (de Medeiros). Nin and especially Henry's lascivious wife June (Thurman) inspire him to write *Tropic of Cancer*. Good period flavor, smooth direction and photography. Ward is miscast, though, and Grant (as Nin's husband) struggles with an American accent. Thurman, who was barely twenty at the time, is excellent. Director Kaufman adapted Anais Nin's book with his wife Rose. The first film to be rated NC-17 by the MPAA.

**Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer** (1986, USA) **C-82m**. \*\*\*½ D: John McNaughton. Starring Michael Rooker, Tom Towles, Tracy Arnold. Near-brilliant movie follows the life of serial killer Henry, his daily routine, his violent outbursts, and the relationship to his roommates Towles and Arnold. A grittily realistic, at times incredibly tense film; this psycho drama / character study is unlike all other films about serial killers. A must-see, with a disturbing, brilliant score. Due to controversial subject matter and presentation, this film remained unreleased for several years. Based on the life of serial killer Henry Lee Lucas. First film by director McNaughton (MAD DOG AND GLORY, WILD THINGS) Followed by a sequel in 1998.

**Her** (2013, USA) **C-126m**. \*\*\* D: Spike Jonze. Starring Joaquin Phoenix, Amy Adams, Rooney Mara, Olivia Wilde, Chris Pratt, voices of Scarlett Johansson, Brian Cox. Another outstanding Spike Jonze fantasy set in the near future about letter-writer Phoenix who is still suffering from a break-up and leads a lonely existence. Then he purchases a new operating system (voiced by Johansson), who becomes his constant companion. They fall in love(!) and even have (virtual) sex with each other. Science-fiction fantasy offers some expected touches of Jonze brilliance (his script won the Oscar), but the movie is slightly episodic and overlong, not to mention rather downbeat. Superb score by Arcade Fire.

**Hercules** (1983, ITA/USA) **C-98m**. \*\* D: Lewis Coates (=Luigi Cozzi). Starring Lou Ferrigno, Brad Harris, Sybil Danning, Rossana Podestà, Ingrid Anderson, Mirella D'Angelo, William Berger, John (Gianni) Garko, Claudio Cassinelli, Raf Baldassare. Overblown, admittedly ambitious but rather cheap fantasy epic detailing the exploits of Hercules, son of Zeus, as countless sword-and-sandal epics did in the early 1960s. Ferrigno is a dumb muscleman (in the tradition of Reg Park) trying to free an abducted princess. Juvenile but watchable, with really a lot of special effects. Kids might like it. Produced by Menahem Golan. Followed by a sequel.

**Hercules** (1997, USA) **C-92m**. \*\*½ D: Ron Clements, John Musker. Starring (the voices of) Tate Donovan, Josh Keaton, Roger Bart, Danny DeVito, James Woods, Bobcat Goldthwait, Matt Frewer, Rip Torn, Samantha Eggar, Hal Holbrook, Amanda Plummer, Jim Cummings, narrated by Charlton Heston. Painfully anachronistic Disney version of the Greek myth about demi-god Hercules' plight on Earth. Everything about the characters (the lingo, the gesticulating) is modern-day, and you may find this as off-putting as in *ROMEO + JULIET* (1996) or *A KNIGHT'S TALE* (2001). It's typically well-animated (and well-cast), though.

**Hercules in New York** (1970, USA) **C-97m**. \*½ D: Arthur Allan Seidelman. Starring Arnold Stang, Arnold Strong (=Arnold Schwarzenegger), Taina Elg, James Karen, Deborah Loomis. Hercules (Schwarzenegger) is sent to New York City by his father Zeus and gets mixed up with all kinds of criminals and idiots. Action comedy isn't really funny and doesn't sustain feature length, but it does have some trash appeal and features a friendly, charismatic, 22-year-old Arnold Schwarzenegger in his movie debut (though his real breakthrough as *CONAN THE BARBARIAN* was still 12 years off). Shown at various running times, from 75m. to 97m., most common version seems to run 91m. Also known as *HERCULES GOES BANANAS* and *HERCULES – THE MOVIE*.

**Here Comes the Boom** (2012, USA) **C-105m**. \*\*½ D: Frank Coraci. Starring Kevin James, Salma Hayek, Henry Winkler, Greg Germann, Gary Valentine, Bas Rutten. A bit contrived

comedy with serious undertones about biology teacher James, who's lost interest in his job, but is more than ready to help out music teacher Winkler, whose class is about to be cancelled due to budgetary limitations. Then he has the idea to raise the money by competing in mixed-martial-arts fights and finds an instructor in Rutten. James is engaging (as usual), but the script is by-the-numbers and leaves many threads unexplored, going for the easy way out only. Enjoyable to some degree but not really very funny.

**Héritier, L'** (1973, FRA/ITA) **C-107m.** \*\* D: Philippe Labro. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Carla Gravina, Jean Rochefort, Charles Denner, Jean Desailly, Jean Martin, Maurice Garrel, Pierre Grasset, Maureen Kerwin, Philippe Labro. Ambitious but slow, ponderous drama (a would-be political thriller) about womanizer, playboy Belmondo, who comes to France to claim his inheritance. His father has left him an industrial empire. He tries to adapt to a new lifestyle and must face a possible assassination. A relatively little-known Bébél movie, and rightfully so. Never hits its stride, though basic premise is interesting and cast is good. English title: THE INHERITOR.

**Hero** (2002, HGK/CHI) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Zhang Yimou. Starring Jet Li, Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, Zhang Ziyi, Chen Daoming, Donnie Yen. In ancient China a nameless warrior comes with great news: he has defeated the three most feared assassins and thus safeguarded the life of the ruler. He is invited by the despot to tell his story – but is it true? Visually astounding, highly aesthetic martial arts epic that often resembles a ballet. Unfortunately, the story is not as compelling as one would like it to be, despite some references to Akira Kurosawa's classic RASHOMON (1950). Watch this one for the intoxicating direction and photography (by Christopher Doyle). The fine score features violin solos and fiddling by Itzhak Perlman. Choreography by Ching Siu-Tung.

**Heroic Trio, The** (1992, HGK) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Johnny To, Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Anita Mui, Maggie Cheung, Damian Lau, Anthony Wong Chau-Sang. Hong Kong fantasy actioner spreads mayhem in a big city, where infant boys are being abducted by an evil being hoping to control future emperor. Plot is almost impossible to follow at times, some excellent action set-pieces (directed by Ching Siu-Tung) make it worthwhile for genre fans. Original version may run 104m. Followed by a sequel.

**Heroic Trio 2** (1993, HGK) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Ching Siu-Tung, Johnny To. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Anita Mui, Maggie Cheung, Damian Lau, Anthony Wong Chau-Sang, Takeshi Kaneshiro. In a post-nuclear metropolis the Heroic Trio unites, as evil Wong is controlling the (short) water supply in order to take over the city. Kinetic fantasy action, well-made but unfortunately unevenly plotted. Hong Kong action film fans might boost the rating by half a star.

**Hexen bis aufs Blut Gequält** (1970, GER) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Armstrong, Adrian Hoven. Starring Herbert Lom, Olivera Vuco, Herbert Fux, Michael Maien, Ingeborg Schöner, Reggie Nalder, Adrian Hoven. Notable example of Euro sleaze, this cult classic focuses on the sadistic side of medieval witchhunts. Kier is an apprentice to witchfinder general Lom, who is about to end cruel witch hunter Nalder's exploits in a little German village. Gruesome, potent horror film won't shy away from showing a person's tongue ripped out (missing from most prints). Sloppy editing, acting distract, but direction is competent and score not bad. Lom and especially Nalder are good in their sadistic roles. Co-director, producer and co-writer Hoven followed this with HEXEN GESCHÄNDET UND ZU TODE GEQUÄLT (1972). Also known as MARK OF THE DEVIL.

**Hibernatus** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Edouard Molinaro. Starring Louis de Funès, Claude Gensac, Bernard Alane, Olivier de Funès, Eliette Demay, Martine Kelly, Jacques Legras, Pascale Lazotti, Claude Piéplu, Paul Preboist, Yves Vincent, Michel Lonsdale. A frozen

male body is found at the north pole. Upon thawing, the man awakes thinking it is 1905. It turns out businessman de Funès' wife is the man's granddaughter, so they refurbish the house in turn-of-the-century fashion and transfer him to France. Weak script, coauthored by de Funès himself, makes this one of his less enjoyable outings. Jean-Bernard Luc's play, on which this is based, may have been critical of society, but as a comedy this material just isn't funny enough. Preboist steals the film as idiotic butler. Editing is above average. Score by Georges Delerue. Olivier is Louis' son.

**Hidalgo** (2004, USA) **C-136m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joe Johnston. Starring Viggo Mortensen, Zuleikha Robinson, Omar Sharif, Louise Lambert, Adam Alexi-Malle, C. Thomas Howell, Malcolm McDowell. Well-produced adventure about weary cowboy Mortensen, who in 1890 leaves a declining West for Arabia to take part in the longest, most grueling horse-race on the globe. Will he stand a chance with his mustang Hidalgo? Performances, including a nice turn by Sharif, and excellent cinematography are assets of this predictable but generally well-made film.

**Hidden, The** (1987, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Jack Sholder. Starring Kyle MacLachlan, Michael Nouri, Claudia Christian, Clarence Felder, Clu Gulager. Intelligent sci-fi thriller combines ideas from ALIEN (1979) and THE TERMINATOR (1984): A slug-like alien is moving from human to human (orally!), making the body invulnerable. Cop Nouri is baffled when he gets a new serial killer every day. His new partner, FBI agent MacLachlan knows more about the deadly organism. Well-paced, well-made horror has become a cult favorite. Written by Jim Kouf (as Bob Hunt). Followed by a sequel in 1994.

**Hideous Kinky** (1998, GBR/FRA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gillies MacKinnon. Starring Kate Winslet, Said Taghmaoui, Bella Riza, Carrie Mullan. The true story of Esther Freud (granddaughter of Sigmund's), who has abandoned her husband and traveled to Morocco with her two young daughters in order to search for spiritual enlightenment. Good acting, fine location work, interesting drama. Also known as MARRAKESH.

**High Fidelity** (2000, USA) **C-114m. \*\*\* D:** Stephen Frears. Starring John Cusack, Iben Hjejle, Todd Louiso, Jack Black, Lisa Bonet, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Joan Cusack, Tim Robbins, Lili Taylor, Sara Gilbert, Bruce Springsteen. Likable comedy drama about the pains of relationships, told in a flash-back style by record shop owner Cusack, who has just been dumped by his girlfriend Hjejle, which triggers his memories about loves lost and basically where to go from here. Amusing and at times also warm and real, an interesting cross between SMOKE (1995) and ALMOST FAMOUS (2000). Cowritten and coproduced by the star Cusack, whose direct addresses to the audience actually work better than in most other films of this kind. Based on the novel by Nick Hornby. Beverly D'Angelo and Harold Ramis are featured in deleted scenes on the DVD version.

**Highlander** (1986, GBR) **C-116m. \*\*½ D:** Russell Mulcahy. Starring Christopher Lambert, Rosanne Hart, Clancy Brown, Sean Connery, Beatie Edny, Alan North. Flashy fantasy action about 16<sup>th</sup> century Scottish warrior, whose immortality transports him into 20<sup>th</sup> century New York, where he prepares for a showdown with the last of his kind, ultra-violent giant Brown. Fast-paced and effective, told in flashbacks on impressive locations, but also rather trivial and ridiculous, especially in the second half. Slightly overlong, but still has a minor cult following; it spawned three sequels and two television series. Songs by cult band Queen. Cowritten by Gregory Widen (THE PROPHECY), whose first screen credit this was.

**High Noon** (1952, USA) **84m. \*\*\*\* D:** Fred Zinnemann. Starring Gary Cooper, Thomas Mitchell, Lloyd Bridges, Katy Jurado, Grace Kelly, Otto Kruger, Lon Chaney, Henry Morgan, Lee van Cleef. Classic western with Cooper a marshal in a small town who - on his wedding and retirement day - receives news that an old nemesis is coming to seek revenge. He tries

to get support from the local townspeople but has to realize that no one is willing to take a stand. He is even abandoned by his own wife Kelly. Superb screenplay, dramaturgy (in real-time!). Written by Carl Foreman, based on the story *The Tin Star* by John W. Cunningham. Cooper won an Oscar, and so did the title song, score and editing. Typically American direction does without zoom lens (in contrast to all the spaghetti westerns).

**High Plains Drifter** (1973, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Verna Bloom, Marianna Hill, Mitch Ryan, Jack Ging, Billy Curtis, Geoffrey Lewis. Eastwood's second directorial effort mostly retreads the "Man With No Name" formula, as he rides into town of Lago, where he is soon asked to help defending the town against soon-to-be-released gunslingers who have sworn revenge. Will he help? Laid-back performance by Eastwood in a western that is interesting throughout. Script by Ernest Tidyman.

**High-Rise** (2015, GBR/BEL) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ben Wheatley. Starring Tom Hiddleston, Jeremy Irons, Sienna Miller, Luke Evans, Elisabeth Moss, James Purefoy, Keeley Hawes. Doctor Hiddleston moves into a skyscraper in what looks like a retro-futuristic England. The high-rise, of which several exist, is based on a social hierarchy meaning that poor people live on the lower floors, and richer ones higher up. Architect Irons resides in the penthouse at the top, but tension is growing among the residents and there may be a revolution in the air. Intriguing design mixes style from the 60s and 70s with futuristic elements, unfortunately the plot remains cold. A curio, not for every taste, based on the novel by J.G. Ballard. Good score by Clint Mansell.

**High Wind in Jamaica, A** (1965, GBR) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Alexander Mackendrick. Starring Anthony Quinn, James Coburn, Dennis Price, Lila Kendrova, Nigel Davenport, Isabel Dean, Kenneth J. Warren, Ben Carruthers, Gert Fröbe, Brian Phelan, Deborah Baxter. Extraordinary adventure, based on the acclaimed novel by Richard Hughes. On their way to England from Jamaica, six British children are captured by pirates and forced to accompany them on their vessel. With no one to look after them, benevolent Captain Quinn and his sinister sidekick Coburn are at a loss. The kids soon adapt to the barbaric life at sea. However, tragedy strikes unexpected. Rarely seen gem by the director of *LADYKILLERS* (1955) and *DON'T MAKE WAVES* (1967). Cinematography and lighting are brilliant (by Douglas Slocombe, in CinemaScope), Mackendrick's direction is magnificent, the score by Larry Adler is sweeping. Highly recommended for family viewing, though subject matter also subtly touches adult themes. Unavailable for many years, film deserves to be rediscovered. Similar in theme to William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, which was filmed in 1963 (in black-and-white).

**Hills Have Eyes, The** (1977, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring Susan Lanier, Robert Houston, Martin Speer, Dee Wallace, Russ Grieve, Michael Berryman. Wes Craven's breakthrough shocker and first critical success is notorious horror movie about a family who lose their way and end up stranded in the middle of a desert, which was once a site for nuclear testing. Who or what is hiding in the hills, ready to attack? Despite not being very clever, Craven's script is hardly redundant, and everything seems shockingly real. Violent, dramatic, thrilling, one of Craven's early best. Probably inspired by Tobe Hooper's *THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE*, and it's a worthy clone. Craven also edited the picture. Trivia question: What was the other movie of 1977 that featured a similarly violent dog attack? Followed by a sequel in 1985. Remade in 2006.

**Hills Have Eyes, The** (2006, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Alexandre Aja. Starring Aaron Stanford, Kathleen Quinlan, Ted Levine, Dan Byrd, Emilie de Ravin, Tom Bower, Michael Bailey Smith, Vinessa Shaw, Robert Joy, Billy Drago. So-so remake of the Wes Craven classic about a family of campers, whose car breaks down in the middle of the desert, where human

mutants are waiting for nightfall... Starts with a bang but draws out proceedings unnecessarily until the first attack. With few novelties in the plot, film remains unremarkable until the last twenty minutes, which are actually exciting – and extremely gruesome and gory. Like with Aja's previous movie, HAUTE TENSION (2003), the director never releases the tension here. Good location filming (in Morocco), in appropriate widescreen. Horror freaks should give it a look. Wes Craven coproduced. Followed by a sequel itself.

**Hills Have Eyes, Part II, The** (1985, USA/GBR) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Wes Craven. Starring Tamara Stafford, Kevin Spirtas, John Bloom, Colleen Riley, Michael Berryman, Robert Houston. Stupid, unnecessary sequel to the 1977 hit has some moto-cross racers traveling through the desert. Their bus breaks down and soon they must defend themselves against the band of mutants of the first film. This horror movie seems more like a rehash than a sequel, with some flashback scenes from the original film. Despite being an obvious rip-off, it manages to establish an atmosphere of menace (kudos to director Craven) and refreshes your memory of Part One. For Craven fans and those who liked the first movie.

**Hi-Lo Country, The** (1998, USA/GBR/GER) **C-114m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Stephen Frears. Starring Woody Harrelson, Billy Crudup, Cole Hauser, Enrique Castillo, Darren E. Burrows, Sam Elliott, Patricia Arquette, Penelope Cruz, John Diehl. Neo-western drama set in the post-WW2 years, based on the novel by Max Evans. Crudup and Harrelson are two cowboys, who both fall in love with Arquette, the wife of local big shot Elliott. Marvelous photography (by Oliver Stapleton), rousing score by Carter Burwell, but plot is trite and overlong. Harrelson and Crudup seem like minor characters in LEGENDS OF THE FALL. Good performances topped by Elliott's bad guy.

**Hindenburg, The** (1975, USA) **C-125m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Wise. Starring George C. Scott, Anne Bancroft, William Atherton, Roy Thinnes, Gig Young, Burgess Meredith, Charles Durning, Rene Auberjonois, Peter Donat, Alan Oppenheimer, Stephen Elliott, William Sylvester, Joe Turkel. First-rate disaster thriller is different from the decade's other blockbusters (AIRPORT, THE TOWERING INFERNO) but scores in all compartments. Film chronicles the last voyage of the famous zeppelin The Hindenburg, with a possible plot to sabotage its arrival. George C. Scott is convincing as the sleuth on-board the ship, he is surrounded by an excellent supporting cast. Veteran director Wise's surehanded direction gives film a boost. The finale (using authentic newsreel footage, and thus in black-and-white) is especially exciting. Beware of inferior prints in fullscreen and edited form. Based on M.M. Mooney's novel. Photographed by Robert Surtees. Director Wise also produced. Won a Special Achievement Academy Award for Visual Effects, it was nominated in three other categories.

**Hiroku Kaibyô-den** (1969, JAP) **C-82m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Tokuzô Tanaka. Starring Kôjirô Hongô, Naomi Kobayashi, Mitsuyo Kamei, Jun Fujikawa. Eerie Japanese ghost story set in the Samurai era, where the greed and aggression of a lord leads to the haunting of his mansion by a ghost cat who turns into a female vampire. Atmospheric, very well-photographed horror film unfortunately fails to involve you on an emotional level. Its pace is leaden, and the story itself not really engrossing. Some striking images. English title of this quite rare movie is THE HAUNTED CASTLE.

**Histoires Extraordinaires** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-121m.** \*\*\* D: Roger Vadim, Louis Malle, Federico Fellini. Starring Brigitte Bardot, Alain Delon, Jane Fonda, Terence Stamp, James Robertson Justice, Peter Fonda, Umberto D'Orsi, voice of Maurice Ronet, narrated by Vincent Price. Artful treatment of stories by Edgar Allen Poe. Three unconnected segments look at obsessions and inner demons. The first tale, by Vadim, features Fonda as a cruel,

decadent countess who causes her cousin's demise and lives to regret it. The second one by Louis Malle is about soldier and med student Delon, who is haunted by a doppelganger that destroys his life. The third and most acclaimed, by Fellini, called 'Toby Dammit', follows down-and-out actor Stamp as he goes through a surreal awards ceremony in Italy. Fellini's tour de force direction is both dizzying and bizarre; he borrowed the main motif of the ghostly child from Mario Bava's 1966 OPERAZIONE PAURA. All three stories were realized with great great creativity and artistic freedom. Despite the Poe connection, there is little horror in them, but rather psychoses and unexplained phenomena. English title: SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

**History of Violence, A** (2005, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Viggo Mortensen, Maria Bello, Ed Harris, William Hurt, Ashton Holmes, Peter MacNeill, Stephen McHattie. Family father Mortensen lives a peaceful life in a rural town until one night he is forced to defend himself and his coworkers at the diner when two murderers threaten their lives. The headlines he gets attract the attention of the Philadelphia mob and force him to come to terms with his past. Deliberately paced little movie draws you in quietly, provides some jolts of violence, but lets you (and itself) down a little bit in the second half. Still, a very-well acted, interesting thriller from cult director Cronenberg, based on the graphic novel by John Wagner and Vince Locke. Score by Howard Shore still seems to echo his work for THE LORD OF THE RINGS.

**Hit, The** (1984, GBR) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Stephen Frears. Starring John Hurt, Terence Stamp, Tim Roth, Laura del Sol, Bill Hunter, Fernando Rey, Jim Broadbent. Cool, aloof British take on the gangster movie genre follows Stamp to Spain, where he intends to hide out from fellow criminals he testified against in court. Ten years later he is discovered by two hitmen (Hurt, Roth), who must take him to Paris, France. Film has an interesting storyline but remains too self-conscious, too unfocused to excite. The actors can't be faulted. Excellent guitar solos by Paco de Lucía, title theme by Eric Clapton. Roth's first theatrical film.

**Hit and Run** (2012, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Dax Shepard, David Palmer. Starring Dax Shepard, Kristen Bell, Bradley Cooper, Tom Arnold, Kristen Chenoweth, Michael Rosenbaum, David Koechner, Beau Bridges. Sometimes funny action comedy about Shepard, who enjoys life in witness protection, then leaves home to drive his girlfriend to a job interview, which triggers all kinds of crazy events, including a chance for criminal Cooper to get his revenge. Watchable and quite entertaining, but stereotype characters and inadequate acting by writer and co-director Shepard make this a mixed bag.

**Hitch** (2005, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Andy Tennant. Starring Will Smith, Eva Mendes, Kevin James, Amber Valletta, Julie Ann Emery, Robinne Lee, Nathan Lee Graham, Adam Arkin, Michael Rapaport. Smith's job is to help men conquer their dream dates. His latest client, overweight, self-conscious James, is hopelessly in love with seemingly out-of-reach bombshell Valletta. Then Hitch falls in love himself – with beautiful, independent journalist Mendes. Romantic comedy works thanks to surehanded direction by Tennant and a powerhouse performance by Smith. However, it's James who gets the most laughs. Undermined somewhat by superfluous final 15 minutes.

**Hitcher, The** (1986, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Harmon. Starring C. Thomas Howell, Rutger Hauer, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Jeffrey DeMunn, John M. Jackson. Tense action thriller about naïve driver Howell, who picks up psychopath Hauer from the street one night, finds himself in a cat-and-mouse game, as he cannot shake the maniac off. Hauer's performance – reminiscent of his role in BLADE RUNNER (1982) – is impressive, and the atmosphere oppressive. A thriller with cult appeal and fine photography by John Seale. Written by Eric Red (NEAR DARK). Followed by a video sequel in 2003.

**Hitchhike to Hell** (1968, USA) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Irvin Berwick. Starring Robert Gribbin, Dorothy Bennett, John Harmon, Russell Johnson. Gribbin picks up runaway kids and kills them because of a mother complex. Quite gruesome B-thriller is strangely watchable, despite wooden performances and unimaginative direction. Aka KIDNAPPED CO-ED.

**Hitman's Bodyguard, The** (2017, USA/CHI/BUL/NED) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Patrick Hughes. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Samuel L. Jackson, Elodie Yung, Gary Oldman, Richard E. Grant, Salma Hayek, Joaquim de Almeida. Raucously funny action comedy about former CIA agent Reynolds, who's keeping a low profile every since losing a client. His ex-girlfriend Yung needs his help in transporting dangerous criminal Jackson to Amsterdam to testify against dictator Oldman, who is trying to stop them with all means. Engaging chases, riveting car stunts, but what makes this really work is the teaming of Reynolds and Jackson, who are both extremely funny. Cuts loose deliciously in the finale. Just don't take it too seriously, *motherfucker!*

**Hjaelp, Jeg Er En Fisk** (2000, DAN/GER/EIR) **C-80m. \*\*½ D:** Stefan Fjeldmark, Michael Hegner, Gerg Manwaring. Starring (the voices of) Alan Rickman, Terry Jones (English version), Ulf Piilgard, Paprika Steen, Ghita Norby. Average animated feature about some kids, who stumble into ship of an old experimenting professor. When a little girl is accidentally transformed into a fish and thrown into the ocean, her brother and a friend also undergo this transformation to find and bring her back. However, the antidote has been poured over some other sea creatures, who now aspire to overthrow humans. Sounds a little weird and it is. Overbearing score and worthless songs among film's drawbacks. The animation is quite good. English titles: HELP I'M A FISH, A FISH TALE.

**Ho!** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Enrico. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Joanna Shimkus, Raymond Bussières, Paul Crauchet, Sydney Chaplin, Dominique Zardi. Lackluster crime drama, typical José Giovanni fare, based on his novel. Belmondo plays the title character, a small-time crook who serves as a driver in several heists. Then he gets caught, spends time in prison, escapes in a funny prank and tries to become a master criminal himself. Shimkus plays a supermodel, his love interest. Marginally interesting film, with lots of Parisian streets realism. Alain Delon has a cameo at the airport.

**Hobbit, The** (2012, USA/NZL) **C-169m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage, Ian Holm, Elijah Wood, Hugo Weaving, Cate Blanchett, Christopher Lee, Andy Serkis, Benedict Cumberbatch. Long-awaited prequel to the LORD OF THE RINGS movies completely captures the trilogy's tone, even the actors don't seem to have aged. Frodo's grandfather Bilbo (Freeman) tells of his adventure with Gandalf and the thirteen dwarves, who sought to defeat the dragon Smaug. A long journey, to be sure, with director Jackson obviously trying to please die-hard fans of the novel, sacrificing the pace and more dynamic plot and character development, but with so much love going into detail, who's to argue? Stunning special effects highlight this fantasy action thriller (however, was an action thriller Tolkien's intention?). It takes almost two hours to fully hit its stride, with the Gollum scenes the stand-out, and the following battle the most rousing part. The first movie to be released at 48fps, which is twice the usual frame rate. Followed by two sequels in 2013 and 2014, which conclude the story. Script cowritten by Guillermo del Toro, who was set to direct at one point.

**Hobbit, The: The Desolation of Smaug** (2013, USA/NZL) **C-161m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage, Ken Stott, James Nesbitt, Benedict Cumberbatch, Orlando Bloom, Evangeline Lilly, Lee Pace, Cate Blanchett, Stephen Fry. Middle-part of the HOBBIT trilogy almost feels like the ending. The dwarves and Bilbo have passed the Misty Mountains and are now ready to walk through spider-infested Mirkwood. At the end of their journey, still sleeping, is the creature they came to defeat,

the ferocious dragon Smaug. First half is often lazy, esoteric, but once it comes alive in down-the-river action set-piece with Legolas, it never lets up. A rollercoaster ride of a movie, with stunning digital effects, and quite a lot of dark scenes and suspense, too! Great gothic sets add to film's atmosphere.

**Hoboken Hollow** (2005, USA) **C-98m.** D: Glen Stephens. Starring Jason Connery, C. Thomas Howell, Randy Spelling, Mark Holton, Rogelio T. Ramos, Jonathan Fraser, Lin Shaye, Michael Madsen, Dennis Hopper, Robert Carradine, Dedee Pfeiffer. Another attempt to cash in on the TCM revival, this one is heavy-handed trash. A drifter (vietnam vet, no less) gets confronted with backwoods family who hire workers they later use for stocking up on meat. Grisly stuff, ruined by ridiculous voice-over narration. Some good actors wasted in this. Written by the director, coproduced by Anthony Michael Hall.

**Hodet Over Vannet** (1993, NOR) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Nils Gaup. Starring Lene Elise Bergum, Svein Roger Karlsen, Morten Abel, Reidar Sorensen, Jon Skolmen. Thriller about Bergum, who gets a surprise visit from an ex-lover on a remote island. In the morning he is dead – was it an accident? Will she be able to conceal the body from her friends? Quite enjoyable, with lots of twists. Its success led Hollywood to remake this as *HEAD ABOVE WATER* (1996).

**Hôhokekyo Tonari no Yamada-kun** (1999, JAP) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Yuki Asaoka, Toru Masuoka, Masako Araki, Naomi Uno, Akiko Yano. Departure from traditional animation techniques for Studio Ghibli, this stylistically interesting movie was their first 100% digital movie (though it doesn't really show). Basically a satire on Japanese suburban life, focusing on the Yamadas, whose life is portrayed through short vignettes, with mostly comic outcome. Funny, with some stylistic flourishes, to be sure, but episodic structure lessens effect. In the English version the father is spoken by James Belushi. English title: *MY NEIGHBORS THE YAMADAS*.

**Hole, The** (2001, GBR) **C-102m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Nick Hamm. Starring Thora Birch, Desmond Harrington, Daniel Brocklebank, Laurence Fox, Keira Knightley, Embeth Davidtz. Four teenagers from an elite boarding school decide to deliberately miss a school trip by hiding in an underground bunker. After three days, a friend is supposed to pick them up again, but he doesn't turn up and the hatch is locked. Psycho thriller is not your usual teenage horror fare, it has an interesting narrative and is loaded with twists until the (lukewarm) finale. Refreshing script is based on the novel *After the Hole* by Guy Burt.

**Hole, The** (2009, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Joe Dante. Starring Chris Massoglia, Haley Bennett, Nathan Gamble, Teri Polo, Bruce Dern. After moving to a new house, two brothers discover a seemingly bottomless pit in their garage. Once the hatch is opened, it releases the ghost of a girl. Can the kids clear up the mystery? Not-bad mystery horror suffers from having teen protagonists. It's too scary to be a kids' adventure, and too tame to be horror. Still, worth a look.

**Holes** (2003, USA) **C-117m.** \*\*½ D: Andrew Davis. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Jon Voight, Tim Blake Nelson, Shia LaBeouf, Eartha Kitt, Patricia Arquette. Adaptation of the acclaimed novel for young adults by Louis Sachar, written by the author. A juvenile delinquent gets sent to a brat camp, where the children are digging holes in the desert – to build their character. Later the boy finds out that they may be looking for something valuable. More drama than adventure, film has a strange TV movie air about it, some good casting helps, but it never rises above the mire.

**Holiday, The** (2006, USA) **C-138m.** \*\*½ D: Nancy Meyers. Starring Cameron Diaz, Kate Winslet, Jude Law, Jack Black, Eli Wallach, Edward Burns, Rufus Sewell, James Franco, Dustin Hoffman, Lindsay Lohan. Fairly entertaining romantic comedy about two young women (Diaz and Winslet), who are frustrated for different reasons and decide to exchange houses

for a few days over Christmas. Diaz has just separated from her philandering husband, and Winslet is unhappily in love. Can this change of place do any good? Long, but never really boring, thanks to engaging star performances (whose roles are pretty contrived, though). Score by Hans Zimmer.

**Hölle von Macao, Die** (1967, GER/FRA/ITA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Hill. Starring Robert Stack, Elke Sommer, Nancy Kwan, Christian Marquand. Fair adventure thriller set in the Far East about photographer Stack, who is given an amulet by a chance acquaintance. It turns out several groups are after it, as it may lead them to a secret treasure. Cute Sommer (mostly bra-less) becomes his love interest. Not too slowly paced, fairly well acted and amusing. English title: THE PEKING MEDAILLON, and THE CORRUPT ONES.

**Hollow Man** (2000, USA) **C-112m. \*\* D:** Paul Verhoeven. Starring Elisabeth Shue, Kevin Bacon, Josh Brolin, Kim Dickens, Greg Grunberg, Joey Slotnick, William Devane. Brilliant scientist Bacon has found a serum that will render him invisible, and is willing to try it out. His colleagues are sceptical: Will he use his invisibility on them? Rather simply plotted, one-note science-fiction thriller, mostly set in one big laboratory. Pace quickens for razzle-dazzle finale, but otherwise this is utterly ordinary. A disappointment from Verhoeven. Score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers** (1988, USA) **C-75m. \*\* D:** Fred Olen Ray. Starring Gunnar Hansen, Linnea Quigley, Jay Richardson, Jimmy Williams. Pretty demented cult horror comedy about a private detective who goes looking for a runaway girl, then stumbles across a cult that worships chainsaws and prostitutes who dismember their clients. Low on laughs, pretty silly. Some gore. Hansen is famous for his role as Leatherface in TCM.

**Hollywoodland** (2006, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Allen Coulter. Starring Adrien Brody, Ben Affleck, Diane Lane, Ted Atherton, Robin Tunney, Molly Parker, Bob Hoskins. Long but engrossing tale set in 1950s Hollywood, where Superman actor George Reeves (Affleck) is found dead in his suburban house. Low-grade private eye Brody is hired by the star's mother, who won't believe that it was suicide. Good performances, impressive production design, film takes a while to reach its conclusion but it's well worth the wait. Good performances, fine score by Marcelo Zarvos.

**Hollywood or Bust** (1956, USA) **C-90m. \*\* D:** Frank Tashlin. Starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Pat Crowley, Anita Ekberg. Martin and Lewis have to share the first prize of a huge prize draw, a shiny red cabriolet, and decide to go to Hollywood, where Lewis intends to meet his idol, sex bomb Anita Ekberg. Movie seems endless, doesn't offer enough laughs and Martin is obviously annoyed in his 16<sup>th</sup> and last film with Lewis. For die-hard fans, although the movie is generally hard to dislike. Filmed in semi-widescreen VistaVision.

**Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher, The** (1979, USA) **C-71m. ½ D:** Wolfgang Schmidt (=Ray Dennis Steckler). Starring Pierre Agostino, Chuck Alford, Carolyn Brandt, Forrest Duke. Bottom-of-the-barrel movie tries to capitalize on success of Martin Scorsese's classic TAXI DRIVER (1978). Photographer of nude models Agostino feels compelled to strangle the posing women. At the same time, a woman starts slicing up bums. Dumb voice-overs, cheap effects, amateurish direction, this one kills itself off early on. Followed by a sequel in 1986! Also known as THE MODEL KILLER.

**Holocaust 2000** (1977, ITA/GBR) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Alberto de Martino. Starring Kirk Douglas, Simon Ward, Agostina Belli, Anthony Quayle, Virginia McKenna, Spiros Focás, Ivo Garrani, Alexander Knox, Adolfo Celi. B-horror is not as stupid as it sounds. Industrial tycoon Douglas is about to inaugurate huge underwater nuke station, when he notices more and more signs that point towards doomsday. Is the apocalypse near? Douglas is compelling, plot is too often second-rate. Still, quite gripping (like the director's L'ANTICRISTO), for genre

fans (mind: the helicopter effect came *before* the one in DAWN OF THE DEAD!). Score by Ennio Morricone. Alternative titles: RAIN OF FIRE, THE CHOSEN.

**Hombre del Gran Río, El** (1982, SPA/COL) **C-74m**. \*½ D: Alfred S. Brell (=Aldo Sambrell), Miguel Angel Rincón. Starring Kapax, María Bauza, Albert Reed, Aldo Sambrell. Dreary romance set in the Amazon wilderness, where a woman is picked up by a native after surviving a plane crash. He brings her to his tribe and they fall in love. Hardly any violence (unless there is some in a longer version), extremely sloppy camerawork, this is pure boredom. Also titled MUNDO VERDE and KAPAX DEL AMAZONAS.

**Home Alone 3** (1997, USA) **C-102m**. \*\* D: Raja Gosnell. Starring Alex D. Linz, Olek Krupa, Rya Kihlstedt, Lenny Von Dohlen, Scarlett Johansson. Fairly entertaining but pointless sequel is almost like a remake of the first film. This one offers more painful gags, as a cocky nine-year-old defends his absent family's house against criminals who want to steal a formula, which is in the boy's possession. Written and coproduced by John Hughes.

**Home Fries** (1998, USA) **C-93m**. \*\* D: Dean Parisot. Starring Drew Barrymore, Catherine O'Hara, Luke Wilson, Jake Busey, Shelley Duvall, Lanny Flaherty, Daryl Mitchell. Blackish romantic comedy about pregnant girl (Barrymore) working in a fast food restaurant, who is devastated when she hears of the death of her (married) lover and father of the unborn child. It turns out he was scared to death (literally!) by his stepsons, one of whom (Wilson) she falls in love with! Certainly unusual, but not funny enough and even annoying, especially in the portrayal of Wilson's family. The ending is a mess. Barrymore is lovely and gives the film a boost. Written by the author of some "X-Files" episodes, coproduced by Lawrence Kasdan.

**Home Movie** (2001, USA) **C-65m**. \*\* D: Chris Smith. Largely disappointing documentary features different American families and their eccentric homes: A houseboat on a crocodile bayou, a cat's home, an underground bunker and former rocketbase, an isolated Hawaiian treehouse and an all-electric, remote-controlled house. After the five-minute introduction, you'll ask yourself what's left to say. Some interest, some giggles, much too conventional stuff from Michael Moore's former assistant.

**Homme de Rio, L'** (1964, FRA/ITA) **C-112m**. \*\*\* D: Philippe de Broca. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Françoise Dorléac, Jean Servais, Roger Dumas, Adolfo Celi. Quintessential Belmondo movie hasn't aged well, but still very interesting to watch. He plays a free-wheeling soldier who's on an 8-day leave, but just then his girlfriend is abducted and the search leads him to Rio de Janeiro, where he has one crazy adventure after the next. Count how many times he gets wet! Time capsule with interesting views of Rio suffers from rather slow pace, which was improved in the film's sequel, the even crazier LES TRIBULATIONS D'UN CHINOIS EN CHINE (1965). Score by Georges Delerue. The script was nominated for an Oscar! English title: THAT MAN FROM RIO.

**Homme et une Femme, Un** (1966, FRA) **C-102m**. \*\*\*½ D: Claude Lelouch. Starring Anouk Aimée, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Pierre Barouh, Valérie Lagrange. As the title suggests, this is a simple but utterly charming romance about Aimée and Trintignant, who fall in love with each other despite having only recently lost their partners. The stars are well-matched, Lelouch's direction and cinematography is first-rate. Memorable score by Francis Lai. Oscar-winner for Best Foreign Film and Best Original Screenplay. Lelouch (who also cowrote the script) reworked this in ANOTHER MAN, ANOTHER CHANCE. English title: A MAN AND A WOMAN. Followed by a sequel in 1986.

**Homme Orchestre, L'** (1969, FRA) **C-77m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Serge Korber. Starring Louis de Funès, Noëlle Adam, Olivier de Funès, Puck Adams, Paul Preboist. After HIBERNATUS Louis de Funès made a second film with his son Olivier. This time they are cast as uncle and

nephew, who run a dance academy and are about to go on a world tour with their new show. The pretty dancers, however, have also other things on their minds, like men, but strict choreographer de Funès keeps an eye on them day and night. Thin plot had to be stretched out with elaborate dance scenes, even at this running time. What makes this recommendable is some wonderful sets and costumes, which make it an essential 1969 time capsule. Stylish photography by Jean Rabier (Claude Chabrol's regular cinematographer). Louis' fans will like this comedy anyway, the French comedian even gets to sing and dance! Based on an original story by Geza von Radvanyi (L'ETRANGE DESIR DE MONSIEUR BARD).

**Homme Qui Me Plait, Un** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-107m**. \*\*\* D: Claude Lelouch. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Annie Girardot, Maria Pia Conte, Marcel Bozzuffi, Farrah Fawcett, Peter Bergman, Richard Basehart. Engrossing drama about relationships, a typical Lelouch. This time he charts the romance between film composer Belmondo and actress Girardot, as they are shooting a movie in Los Angeles. Both are more or less happily married at home in Europe. Their fling takes them from L.A. to Las Vegas, New Orleans and New York. Some great observations both in the characters and the setting, this strikes several chords. The stars are magnetic, the free-wheeling attitude of a holiday can be felt here. Also known as A MAN I LIKE, LOVE IS A FUNNY THING, and AGAIN, A LOVE STORY.

**Honey, I Shrunk the Kids** (1989, USA) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Joe Johnston. Starring Rick Moranis, Matt Frewer, Marcia Strassman, Kristine Sutherland. Disney adventure comedy about scientist Moranis, whose latest invention shrinks his and his neighbour Frewer's kids to smaller than ant-size, and when he accidentally dumps them into the trash, they have to make their way back to the house through the backyard that is now like a jungle to them. Entertaining family fare, with some neat effects. Followed by a sequel. Score by James Horner. Director Johnston's feature debut. Story by Stuart Gordon and Brian Yuzna!

**Honeymoon** (2014, USA) **C-87m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Leigh Janiak. Starring Rose Leslie, Harry Treadaway, Ben Huber, Hanna Brown. Good horror chiller about a couple on their honeymoon, who want to spend a few days in an old cottage by a lake. The two are madly in love, but a nighttime sleepwalk in the forest leaves the woman eerily changed. What's gotten into her? Convincing set-up, well-acted, keeps you guessing until the very end – which is where the movie falters, unfortunately. Nice undertones of FRIDAY 13<sup>TH</sup>, BAY OF BLOOD, and another movie, whose title would reveal too much about the plot. Cowritten by the director.

**Honeymoon Killers, The** (1969, USA) **108m**. \*\*\* D: Leonard Kastle. Starring Shirley Stoler, Tony Lo Bianco, Mary Jane Higby, Eleanor Adams. Stark true crime drama, based on the "Lonely Hearts" case of the early 1960s. Corpulent nurse Stoler falls in love with Latin lover Lo Bianco, who makes a living cheating widows out of their fortune. Her cold-bloodedness and his dumbness lead into a tragedy of the highest order. Simple but engrossing tale of a destructive love, with scenes that will go right under your skin. A cult film and deservedly so. Originally begun by Martin Scorsese. Some portions of the film were directed by Donald Volkman. Also shown at 115m. Remade as PROFUNDO CARMESI (DEEP CRIMSON) in 1996.

**Honogurai Mizu No Soko Kara** (2002, JAP) **C-101m**. \*\*½ D: Hideo Nakata. Starring Hitomi Kuroki, Rio Kanno, Mirei Oguchi, Asami Mizukawa, Fumiyo Kohinata. Horror chiller from the creator of the RINGU series, and like these movies based on a novel by Kôji Suzuki. Kuroki is going through a divorce, which troubles her, throws her off-balance. With her daughter she moves into a new apartment, into a new life, but soon is plunged into terror when there are moisture spots forming on the ceiling and the ghost of a missing girl starts haunting them. Interesting chiller recalls the horror of apartment buildings and empty corridors created in other films and adds shocks of its own, but generally remains too low-key and awfully slowly

paced, which has the effect that it makes the build-up seem calculated. Not quite as successful as Nakata's RINGU (1998) but still worthwhile for fans. Hollywood remake followed in 2005. English title: DARK WATER.

**Hoodwinked!** (2006, USA) **C-80m. \*\*\*** D: Cory Edwards, Todd Edwards, Tony Leech. Starring (the voices of) Anne Hathaway, Glenn Close, James Belushi, Patrick Warburton, Anthony Anderson, David Ogden Stiers, Xzibit, Chazz Palmintieri, Andy Dick, Cory Edwards. Computer-animated spin on classic Grimm's fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*. You think you figured what happened with the little girl, her granny, the wolf and the woodsman? Think again. Here, the (grizzly) police and (frog) detective Nicky Flippers investigate and the four 'suspects' come up with four quite different stories. It all comes down to finding out who is the recipe thief (aka goodie bandit) of late. RASHOMON (1950) it ain't, but a funny, eventful, action-filled comedy, with quite a lot of gags aimed at adults. The first independently produced computer animated movie.

**Hoodwinked Too! Hood Vs. Evil** (2011, USA) **C-86m. \*\*½** D: Mike Disa. Starring (the voices of) Hayden Panettiere, Glenn Close, Cheech Marin, Patrick Warburton, Joan Cusack, Tommy Chong. Sequel to the funny HOODWINKED! (2006) cannot live up to it, even though all of the funny characters return. In this story, someone is trying to find the secret ingredient to a muffin that will give you superpowers. Some amusing vignettes, but lacks the edge and irreverence of the first film

**Hook** (1991, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams, Julia Roberts, Bob Hoskins, Maggie Smith, Caroline Goodall, Phil Collins, Gwyneth Paltrow, Glenn Close, Carrie Fisher, George Lucas. Spielberg's first real children's movie after E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (1982) is partly charming, mostly gargantuan new spin on the famous Peter Pan story by J.M. Barrie. Williams slowly learns that he is actually the Boy Who Never Grows Up – grown-up to be a stressed business manager and neglectful family father. When his nemesis Captain Hook abducts his children, he has to remember his past existence and go back to Neverland to rescue them. Intelligent twisting of plot elements of the original story (including nods to the 1953 Disney version), though Spielberg more than once undermines this exquisitely designed film by his typical overindulgence, and also unnecessarily draws out the ending. Good cast enjoying themselves.

**Hope Floats** (1998, USA) **C-114m. \*\*½** D: Forest Whitaker. Starring Sandra Bullock, Harry Connick, Jr., Gena Rowlands, May Whitman, Michael Paré, Cameron Finley, Kathy Najimy. Bullock is devastated when her husband confesses in a TV show to have an affair with her best friend. She decides to move to her Mum (Rowlands) to the country, which turns out to be a bad choice because she has a hard time finding acceptance there, and her inability to cope with the situation leads to the estrangement of her little daughter (Whitman). However, there's also new love to be found. Likably performed, especially by the lovely Rowlands, but without a serious point. You'll keep waiting for something to happen, until the film is over.

**Hopscotch** (1980, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Ronald Neame. Starring Walter Matthau, Glenda Jackson, Sam Waterston, Herbert Lom, Allan Cuthbertson. Amusing comedy about CIA agent Matthau, who quits his job because he can't deal with his new boss Beatty. He travels to Austria and threatens to publish his memoirs. Matthau is great, but plot is lackluster. Based on a novel by Brian Garfield.

**Hora Fria, La** **\*\*½**

**Horloger de Saint-Paul, L'** (1974, FRA) **C-105m. \*\*\*½** D: Bertrand Tavernier. Starring Philippe Noiret, Jean Rochefort, Jacques Denis, Yves Alfonso, Julien Bertheau. Impressive feature directing debut by Tavernier about clockmaker (horloger) Noiret, who is devastated to learn

that his son is wanted for murder. Thoughtful, intelligent examination of the effects of a crime on a personal level. Tavenier also coscripted, based on the novel by Georges Simenon. Score by Philippe Sarde. English titles: THE CLOCKMAKER, THE WATCHMAKER OF ST. PAUL. **Horns** (2013, USA/CDN) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alexandre Aja. Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Juno Temple, Max Minghella, Joe Anderson, James Remar, Kathleen Quinlan, Heather Graham, David Morse. Fantasy horror about radio host Radcliffe, who everyone believes has killed his beloved girlfriend. He is desperate to prove his innocence, when one day devilish horns start growing on his forehead! Not everyone can see them, and it gives him strange gifts. Quite outrageous premise, plot remains interesting despite some silly detours and somewhat stupid characters. It's certainly good-looking and well-acted, gory and sexy, too! Give it a shot. Based on the novel by Joe Hill (Stephen King's son).

**Horrible High Heels** (1996, HGK) **C-100m. \*\*** D: Chow Cheng. Starring Billy Chow, Fui-On Shing, Dick Wei. Ultra-violent trash opus about a young woman, who is disquieted when her uncle disappears - and shocked when she finds out that his skin may have been used for making shoes! Action scenes are well-directed, the rest of the mise-en-scene is not always accurate. Exploitative use of sex and gore, though film remains watchable (if you exclude two rather disgusting rape scenes). Plot is uneven, but at least it's there.

**Horrible Way To Die** (2010, USA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Adam Wingard. Starring AJ Bowen, Amy Seimetz, Joe Swanberg, Brandon Carroll, Lane Hughes. Anemic thriller drama about an escaped serial killer, who may or may not be targeting his ex-lover Seimetz. Unusual structure and style, story moves forward and backward, camera goes in and out of focus, but what throws this completely off balance is boring scenes that just don't end, like the AlCAnon sessions that Seimetz is attending. Unexciting and flat.

**Horror** (1963, ITA/SPA) **88m. \*\*½** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Joan Hills, Helga Liné, Richard Davis, Francisco Morán, Gérard Tichy. Typical Italian gothic horror melodrama, in plot and tone very close to Roger Corman's Poe adaptations (the writer's "House of Usher", "Berenice" and "Premature Burial" in particular). Shortly before her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, Hills returns to her father's castle only to learn that he is dead. What terrible secret is her brother hiding from her? Chiller starts well, then bogs down in the second half. Still, a must for aficionados of the genre. Good, dramatic score by Carlo Franci. Written by Bruno Corbucci, Giovanni Grimaldi and Natividad Zaro. From the director of ROMA COME CHICAGO. Aka THE BLANCHEVILLE MONSTER.

**Horror Express** (1973, SPA/GBR) **C-88m. \*\*\*** D: Eugenio Martín. Starring Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Alberto de Mendoza, Silvia Tortosa, Julio Pena, Angel del Pozo, Helga Liné, Georges Rigaud, Telly Savalas. Thrilling Euro-horror, one of the best of its time. British anthropologist Lee discovers a prehistoric (extra-terrestrial?) creature in the Siberian ice, and boards a Russian express train with it. Little does he know that the creature is alive – and starts finding its victims among the passengers and the crew. Not for the squeamish! Intricate plot owes a bit to the classic THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD (1951) but features interesting characters (Lee and Cushing as heroes in the best British tradition, Savalas as a sadistic Cossack soldier), colorful cinematography by Alejandro Ulloa and a good score by John Cacavas. Also known as PANICO EN EL TRANSIBERIANO (in Spain) and PANIC IN THE TRANSSIBERIAN EXPRESS.

**Horror Hospital** (1973, GBR) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Anthony Balch. Starring Michael Gough, Robin Askwith, Vanessa Shaw, Ellen Pollock, Dennis Price, Kurt Christian, Barbara Wendy. Teens Askwith and Shaw meet on the train and find out they are both going to a holiday resort run by doctor Gough, but title leaves no doubt about the true nature of his clinic. Very Seventies, very British horror thriller with outrageous effects, hilarious fare for B-movie cultists. Final

film for cowriter/director Balch, who collaborated with William S. Burroughs in the 1960s. Alternative titles: DOCTOR BLOODBATH, COMPUTER KILLERS.

**Horror Safari** (1982, ITA) **C-94m.** Ⓜ D: Alan Birkinshaw. Starring Stuart Whitman, Edmund Purdom, Woody Strode, Laura Gemser, Glynis Barber, Harold Sakata. Whitman leads safari into the (Philippine) jungle to find a gold treasure hidden by Japanese soldiers during the second world war. Poorly directed trash with an over-elaborate score is a big bore. Only for those who want to see Strode play the guitar in the jungle. Also known as SAFARI SENZA RITORNO and INVADERS OF THE LOST GOLD.

**Horrors of the Black Museum** (1959, GBR) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Arthur Crabtree. Starring Michael Gough, June Cunningham, Graham Curnow, Shirley Anne Field. Gough brings conviction to his role as crazed writer, who owns a torture museum (the 'black museum') and sends his hypnotised assistant out to kill his adversaries. Some effective scenes, but sluggish plot takes away most of film's steam. Fine color cinematography by Desmond Dickinson (in CinemaScope). Interesting for buffs, because it's rather fierce for its time. Originally shown at 95m. Also known as CRIME IN THE MUSEUM OF HORRORS.

**Horsehead** (2014, FRA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Romain Basset. Starring Lilly-Fleur Pointeaux, Catriona MacColl, Murray Head, Gala Besson, Vernon Dobtcheff, Philippe Nahon. Stylish Euro-horror about young Pointeaux, who returns home when her grandmother dies. She has a difficult relationship with her mother MacColl, which worsens, when she contracts a fever and starts having lucid dreams about her and strange rituals involving a figure with a horsehead. Well-photographed exercise in style cannot fully shake off a pretentious aura, also due to some second-rate performances. Still, well worth a look for Euro horror aficionados. Filmed in English. Also known as FEVER.

**Horsemen** (2009, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Jonas Akerlund. Starring Dennis Quaid, Ziyi Zhang, Lou Taylor Pucci, Clifton Collins Jr., Patrick Fugit, Eric Balfour, Peter Stormare. Quaid is appealing as a stressed-out cop, who is still chewing hard on the death of his wife, which left him and his sons in shock. He is assigned to investigate murders, which seem to have been committed by four killers, and with biblical references abound, it seems that they are impersonating the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Is the world's end really nearing? Good mystery plot with unusual, wintry setting and expectedly flashy, stylish direction by video-clip director Akerlund (SPUN). Unfortunately, movie turns sour in second half, when some unlikely, silly twists and ideas steer it right down a cliff, giving evidence of post-production tampering. For horror fans. Went straight to video in many countries. Coproduced by Michael Bay. Also known as HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE.

**Horse Whisperer, The** (1998, USA) **C-169m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Robert Redford. Starring Robert Redford, Kristin Scott Thomas. Smoothly handled adaptation of Nicholas Evans' bestseller about title figure (Redford) who is asked by Scott Thomas to therapize her daughter and her horse, who both have been traumatized in a riding accident. Extraordinarily beautiful photography and smooth direction make this one a winner, though it could have been a bit shorter.

**Horton Hears a Who!** (2008, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\*** D: Jimmy Hayward, Steve Martino. Starring (the voices of) Jim Carrey, Steve Carell, Carol Burnett, Will Arnett, Seth Rogen, Dan Fogler, Isla Fisher, Jonah Hill. Charming animated film version of the Dr Seuss book about a curious elephant, who hears a cry for help that comes from a grain of dust. In fact, there is an entire race of creatures living on it. Horton, the elephant, makes it his quest to find a safe place for them, but finds hostility in a conservative kangaroo. Cute animation that teaches us to look at things in perspective. Jim Carrey is the voice for the elephant, *not* the mayor, even if that

character's grimacing and gesticulating would suggest it. Executive produced by Chris Wedge (ICE AGE, ROBOTS).

**Hoshi no Koe** (2002, JAP) **C-24m. n/r** D: Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Mika Shinohara, Makoto Shinkai. Outstanding second short movie by Shinkai includes many themes and elements found in his later movies. A teenage girl signs up for a space academy and is sent into space, which means that she is putting time and distance between her and her love interest. Her dangerous voyage takes her beyond the solar system, and the text messages take longer and longer to reach him. Heart-felt story of an unfulfilled love, also offers exciting science-fiction action. It's more a poem than a real story, but Shinkai's style is so visually stunning and the music so haunting (by Tenmon) that you are completely immersed. English title: VOICES OF A DISTANT STAR.

**Hoshi o ou Kodomo** (2011, JAP) **C-116m. \*\*\*\*** D: Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Hisaku Kanemoto, Miyu Irino, Takeshi Maeda. Another masterpiece from the director of THE PLACE PROMISED IN OUR EARLY DAYS and 5 CENTIMETERS PER SECOND. A young girl experiments with a device left to her by her late father and manages to contact a being from Agartha, a kind of unspoiled paradise below our world. The warrior saves her from a Quetzal Coatl, a creature that protects Agartha's gates. Together with a new teacher, who's also lost a loved one, she travels to that netherworld, where reportedly the dead can be brought back to life. Hugely impressive animated epic takes you on an exhilarating journey to fantastic settings populated with the most amazing creatures, all the while spinning its philosophical subtext of loss, life and love. Deeply moving fantasy adventure mixes elements of virtually every Ghibli / Hayao Miyazaki movie with high adventure a la PLANET OF THE APES. It starts like KIKI, has creatures like MONONOKE and TOTORO, landscapes like NAUSICAA and LAPUTA... a must-see, for anyone, not just animation buffs. English titles: CHILDREN WHO CHASE LOST VOICES FROM DEEP BELOW, and JOURNEY TO AGARTHA.

**Hospital Massacre** (1981, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Boaz Davidson. Starring Barbie Benton, Charles Lucia, Jon Van Ness, John Warner Williams, Den Suries. Terror-filled slasher movie set at a hospital, where a maniac disguised as a doctor kills patients and crew. All this seems to be linked to the killing of a child 18 years before. Not-bad horror thriller along the lines of HALLOWEEN (1978), stretches its suspense scenes a little and is hardly logical, but has an unsettling SUSPIRIA-like score and is technically okay. Oddly deserted hospital is a drawback in terms of logic but not atmosphere. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Alternative titles: X-RAY, WARD 13, and BE MY VALENTINE, OR ELSE...

**Host, The** (2013, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*½** D: Andrew Niccol. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Diane Kruger, Max Irons, William Hurt. Science-fiction drama for the TWILIGHT crowd, adapted from Stephanie Meyer's novel. The Earth has been taken over by aliens who inhabit our bodies, which is noticeable on the different eyes. Ronan plays a girl who fights an alien life form trying to take over her body and sets out to find the last remaining group of humans in some desert caves, giving herself silly voice-over instructions. Talky, not interesting at all, doesn't feel right from the beginning. Barely any action.

**Hostage** (2005, USA/GER) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Florent Emilio Siri. Starring Bruce Willis, Kevin Pollak, Jimmy Bennett, Michelle Horn, Ben Foster, Jonathan Tucker, Marshall Allman, Serena Scott Thomas, Kim Coates. When Willis fouls up things as the LAPD's hostage negotiator, he relocates and becomes a small-town sheriff. Soon, however, a hostile household takeover demands that he takes action. And then things get out of control. Exciting, stylish action thriller, unfortunately marred by several plot contrivances and a mean-spirited attitude. It's also extremely violent, for no reason at all. Based on a novel by Richard Crais.

**Hostel** (2005, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Eli Roth. Starring Jay Hernandez, Derek Richardson, Eythor Gudjonsson, Barbara Nedeljakova, Jan Vlasák, Takashi Miike, Eli Roth. Another brainless horror movie from the maker of *CABIN FEVER* (2002). Hernandez and friends are on a trip through Europe, enjoying sex and drugs in Amsterdam, when they are lured to a small Slovakian village hoping to get more of the same. The hostel seems too good to be true: Sexy girls everywhere! However, they soon must realize it's just a set-up for a different kind of carnal activity. Some tense moments in this thriller, but apart from the usual t&a and gross-out gore, there is hardly any suspense or logic behind it all. Executive produced by Quentin Tarantino, Boaz Yakin and Scott Spiegel. Filmed in the Czech Republic.

**Hotaru no Haka** (1988, JAP) **C-92m. \*\*\*½** D: Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Tsutomu Tatsumi, Ayano Shiraishi, Yoshiko Shinohara, Akemi Yamaguchi. Profoundly touching drama set in a Japanese village close to the end of WW2. During an air raid an adolescent boy and his little sister flee to a shelter. Their mother gets injured severely, and the two children must fend for themselves. Their father being at war, they face the hardest of times, with help from relatives quickly withdrawn. Focuses almost entirely on the fate of its main characters and exposes us to a shattering private tragedy. Beautiful, poetic film that will be difficult to forget. Superb score by Michio Mamiya. Based on the novel by Akiyuki Nosaka, adapted by the director. A Studio Ghibli movie. Remade in 2005 as a live-action feature for Japanese television. English titles: *GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES*, *TOMBSTONE OF THE FIREFLIES*.

**Hotel Transylvania** (2012, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Genndy Tartakovsky. Starring (the voices of) Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Andy Samberg, Selena Gomez, Fran Drescher, Steve Buscemi, David Spade, Jon Lovitz. Just okay animated box-office hit about a secret hotel run by Dracula himself, which is a refuge for all kinds of monsters of film history. Story centers around his 118-year-old daughter, who feels old enough to go out into the evil human world. Enter 21-year-old American tourist, who stumbles into this crazy resort without a clue. Well-animated, fairly funny, but story should have been more compelling.

**Hot Enough for June** (1964, GBR) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Ralph Thomas. Starring Dirk Bogarde, Sylva Koscina, Robert Morley, Leo McKern, Roger Delgado. Time has not been very kind to this attempted James Bond parody. Bogarde plays an unemployed writer who is unwittingly hired by the secret service and sent to Czechoslovakia, where he is supposed to get a secret message from another spy. Almost no action at all, a mild spoof. Only notable for being shot (almost entirely) in pre-revolution Prague. Based on Lionel Davidson's novel *Night of Wenceslas*. Beware 77m. version. Also known as *AGENT 008 ¾*, and *AGENT 8 ¾*.

**Hot Fuzz** (2007, GBR/FRA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Edgar Wright. Starring Simon Pegg, Martin Freeman, Timothy Dalton, Jim Broadbent, Paddy Considine, Bill Nighy, Billie Whitelaw, Nick Frost, Edward Woodward, Steve Coogan. Pretty demented action comedy from the team that brought you *SHAUN OF THE DEAD* (2004). Pegg plays an over-ambitious policeman who is transferred to a rural community, where his antics are not at all welcome. Film then turns from comedy to murder mystery and then delivers a crazy 30-minute action finale that will knock you out of your socks. Uneven, to state the obvious, with dynamic, flashy editing that becomes irritating after a while. Excellent special make-up effects. Peter Jackson appears unbilled as the Santa that stabs through Pegg's hand and Cate Blanchett is also unrecognizable as Pegg's masked C.S.I. ex-girlfriend. Pegg coscripted with the director.

**Hot Millions** (1968, GBR/USA) **C-106m. \*\*½** D: Eric Till. Starring Peter Ustinov, Maggie Smith, Karl Malden, Bob Newhart, Robert Morley, Cesar Romero. Con-artist Ustinov is released from prison after years and finds that computers have become an important business factor. He uses computer expert Morley's résumé to get hired by Malden's wealthy international company and proceeds to trick them out of a lot of money. Mildly plotted

farfical comedy is old-fashioned in the negative sense of the word. Ustinov barely keeps it on track. Not really a heist comedy, as some might believe. Written by Ustinov and Ira Wallach, who also scripted the cult hit DON'T MAKE WAVES (1967).

**Hot Spot, The** (1990, USA) **C-130m**. \*\* D: Dennis Hopper. Starring Don Johnson, Virginia Madsen, Jennifer Connelly, Charles Martin Smith, William Sadler, Jerry Hardin, Barry Corbin, Jack Nance. Neo-noir thriller about drifter Johnson, who comes to a small town and begins a relationship with both his employer's wife *and* his "secretary". His dark plans are slowly disclosed, – *too* slowly for this film to be exciting or suspenseful. Poorly handled by Hopper, only saving grace of this supposedly steamy movie are some sex scenes and a fine Blues score. 'Static' is the best way to describe this thriller, based on Charles Williams' novel *Hell Hath No Fury*, written in 1952.

**Hottarake no Shima – Haruka to Maho no Kagami** (2009, JAP) **C-93m**. \*\*½ D: Shinsuke Sato. Starring (the voice of) Haruka Ayase. Computer-animated fantasy about a 16-year-old student, who remembers a mirror her late mother once gave her. She finds out that forgotten things are collected by strange creatures and follows them into their world. She joins a scavenger and learns that the ruler of the world, called the Baron, may have her mirror and use it for evil purposes. Plotline and design are more reminiscent of a Super Mario game or the movie ROBOTS (2005), but film picks up in the final third, when it manages to deliver an emotional finale. Children may be fascinated.

**Hot, the Cool and the Vicious, The** (1978, HGK) **C-86m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*D: Lee Tso-Nam. Starring Wang Don, Tan Tao Liang, Tommy Lee. Well-plotted eastern about a fighter appointed to chief-of-police by a wealthy (and corrupt) artist and his son. When a stranger arrives, things get more complicated because he is said to be a killer. Well-directed eastern makes use of classic eastern ingredients but its real asset are the interesting characters.

**Hot Touch, The** (1982, CDN/USA) **C-93m**. \*½ D: Roger Vadim. Starring Wayne Rogers, Marie-France Pisier, Lloyd Bochner, Samantha Eggar, Patrick Macnee, Melvyn Douglas. Pretty dreary crime drama set in the world of art auctions and dealings. Rogers is a world-class artist in forgery, making millions by copying old master paintings. However, his dealings with Macnee are about to be detected. Almost completely without interest if it wasn't for that cast (including Douglas in his last film).

**Hot Tub Time Machine** (2010, USA) **C-101m**. \*\*½ D: Steve Pink. Starring John Cusack, Rob Corddry, Craig Robinson, Crispin Glover, Chevy Chase. Low-brow comedy about four high-school buddies who make a nostalgia trip to one of their favorite holiday destinations of their heyday, only to find out that the place, a wintersport hotel, has become rundown and shabby. Then they enter the hot tub on the veranda and are transported back into the mid-1980s. Can they influence their lives by acting differently a la BACK TO THE FUTURE? Some gross-out gags, some laughs, mostly for male audiences.

**Hot Tub Time Machine 2** (2015, USA) **C-99m**. \*\* D: Steve Pink. Starring Rob Corddry, Craig Robinson, Clarke Duke, Adam Scott, Chevy Chase, John Cusack. Sequel to the 2010 comedy offers more of the same low-brow, tasteless comedy. The guys intend to travel back in time to prevent Corddry being shot in the scrotum, but accidentally travel into the future, where they have all kinds of weird adventures. Less original, with some gross, even painful gags. For fans of the first movie.

**Hound of the Baskervilles, The** (1959, GBR) **C-87m**. \*\*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, André Morell, Christopher Lee, Marla Landi, David Oxley, Francis De Wolff. Formidable Arthur Conan Doyle adaptation about master sleuth Sherlock Holmes (Cushing), who is called to investigate possible family curse in and around a mansion on the moors.

Fast-paced, intelligent script, good lighting and use of color; one of the best Hammer productions. One of approximately 20 adaptations of this story!

**Hours, The** (2002, USA) **C-115m. \*\*\*½ D:** Stephen Daldry. Starring Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore, Meryl Streep, Stephen Dillane, Miranda Richardson, John C. Reilly, Toni Collette, Ed Harris, Claire Danes, Jeff Daniels, Eileen Atkins. Exceptional film, based on the Pulitzer-Prize-winning novel by Michael Cunningham. Writer Virginia Woolf (Kidman) is on the brink of suicide as she is writing her famous *Mrs. Dalloway* (1923). In the early 1950s a troubled housewife (Moore), whose thoughts seem impenetrable, is reading that book. The third plot strand unfolds much like *Mrs. Dalloway*, with lonely Streep preparing a party for her artist-friend Harris, who is dying of AIDS. Intelligent, thoughtful, thorough drama with first-rate cast carries a tremendous emotional impact. Daldry's excellent direction seamlessly combines the three narrative levels. Perfect score by Philip Glass. Adapted by David Hare. Kidman won a Best Actress Oscar, although her role is quite small.

**House at the End of the Street, The** (2012, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Mark Tonderai. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Max Thieriot, Elisabeth Shue, Gil Bellows. By-the-numbers thriller, in which HUNGER GAMES star Lawrence plays a teenage girl, who befriends next-door neighbour Thieriot, whose family was slaughtered by his sister years ago. Little does she know that he is keeping someone hidden in the basement of the house and she may be in imminent danger. Pretty stupid, Lawrence is wasting herself in a mundane role, but her physique provides some attraction. About as derivative as its title.

**Housebound** (2014, NZL) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gerard Johnstone. Starring Morgana O'Reilly, Cameron Rhodes, Ryan Lampp, Bruce Hopkins. Uneven horror comedy about a young delinquent (O'Reilly), who is sentenced to house arrest at her mother's home. She must not leave the house and is terrified, when noises start coming from the basement. With a cop assigned to her case, she finds out that the house used to be an asylum for young women. None too interesting thriller improves completely in the final third, when the emphasis is more on comedy – and gore. Nice reference to Wes Craven's THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS (1991). Written by the director.

**House of Last Things** (2013, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE BOMB D:** Michael Bartlett. Starring Lindsey Haun, Blake Berris, RJ Mitte, Randy Schulman. Outlandish, incomprehensible mystery about a troubled couple, who travel to Italy and leave their house to Haun, who is supposed to look after it. Haun brings her stupid boyfriend and retarded brother along, and soon golf balls and yellow balloons(!) start appearing in the house and other mysterious things happen. It is all related to a golf course from the early 50s!? You somehow wish this all made sense in DONNIE DARKO terms, but it doesn't. You are left frustrated with repetitive scenes and no explanation for the goings-on. Avoid.

**House of 1000 Corpses** (2003, USA) **C-89m. \*½ D:** Rob Zombie. Starring Sid Haig, Bill Moseley, Sheri Moon, Karen Black, Chris Hardwick, Erin Daniels, Jennifer Jostyn, Rainn Wilson, Michael J. Pollard. Rock musician Rob Zombie (né Cummings) turns writer-director for this TCM-imitation where four travelling youngsters enter Captain Spaulding's Museum of Monsters and Madmen and end up on the dessert platter of none other than local legend Dr Satan. Starts okay, with creative video-style cutting, but soon it becomes clear that this movie offers only a freak show which is off-putting instead of frightening. Disintegrates completely in final third. Filmed in 2000. Followed by THE DEVIL'S REJECTS (2005).

**House of 1,000 Dolls** (1967, GBR/SPA/GER) **C-90m. SCOPE ½ D:** Jeremy Summers. Starring George Nader, Vincent Price, Martha Hyer, Anne Smyrner, Herbert Fux, Wolfgang Kieling, Sancho Garcia. Atrocious plot singlehandedly falls artistically acceptable crime melodrama

about sinister artist Price, who abducts young women and puts them into a brothel. Released in the U.S. at 83m.

**House of Seven Corpses, The** (1974, USA) **C-90m.** Ⓜ D: Paul Harrison. Starring John Ireland, Faith Domergue, John Carradine, Carole Wells. Abysmal horror film that looks like a TV movie and is atrociously directed. A film shoot at a cursed mansion turns into a nightmare for everyone involved, including the audience.

**House of the Devil, The** (2009, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Ti West. Starring Jocelin Donahue, Tom Noonan, Mary Woronov, Dee Wallace. Weak horror film set in the 1980s. A college student applies for a babysitting job and spends a night in an old mansion in the country. If it wasn't for the title and the information about satanic cults at the very beginning, we'd be wondering what this is all about. The trivial, endless scenes and absence of score almost make it seem amateurish. It builds for more than an hour(!) to a bloody climax. No surprises or creativity here. Written by director West (CABIN FEVER 2, V/H/S).

**House of Usher, The** (1960, USA) **C-85m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Roger Corman. Starring Vincent Price, Mark Damon, Myrna Fahey, Harry Ellerbe. Atmospheric, dramatic horror film, the first of Corman's eight Edgar Allan Poe adaptations. When Damon arrives at Price's castle in the middle of a wasteland to take his bride away, he is taken aback by mysterious going-ons. It seems the whole family is doomed and his lover is destined to die soon. Holds up quite well, despite being a little draggy sometimes. Also known as THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER. Followed by PIT AND THE PENDULUM.

**House of Whiplash** (1974, GBR) **C-102m.** \*½ D: Pete Walker. Starring Barbara Markham, Patrick Barr, Ray Brooks, Ann Michelle, Sheila Keith, Dorothy Gordon, Pete Walker. A young fashion model is abducted to a private, secret institution, a prison for misbehaving young girls. Warden Markham and her husband, blind ex-judge Barr run the place and will kill anyone not abiding by their rules. Unappealing horror thriller that like most of director Walker's films has not a single touch of style. Bleak stuff. Director Walker (FRIGHTMARE) also produced. Reissued as PHOTOGRAPHER'S MODELS.

**House of Yes, The** (1997, USA) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Mark S. Waters. Starring Parker Posey, Josh Hamilton, Tori Spelling, Freddie Prinze Jr., Geneviève Bujold, Rachael Leigh Cook. Oddity about Hamilton, who brings his fiancée Spelling to his family's estate and meets the fury of his twin sister Posey, who is obsessed with being like Jackie Kennedy. She even likes reenacting JFK's execution! However, she's not the only crackpot in her family. Black comedy heads nowhere really, some good performances (especially Posey's) are film's only assets. Based on a stage play by Wendy MacLeod.

**House on Haunted Hill** (1958, USA) **75m.** \*\*\* D: William Castle. Starring Vincent Price, Carol Ohmart, Richard Long, Alan Marshal, Carolyn Craig, Elisha Cook Jr., Julie Mitchum. Producer-director William Castle's most famous project turns out to be a perfect vehicle for Vincent Price. He plays a millionaire, who invites five strangers to his mansion, promising them \$10,000 each if they survive the night in the haunted house. Amusing, at times scary, good fun. Perhaps a bit too naïve and simple but horror buffs should delight.

**House on Haunted Hill** (1999, USA) **C-96m.** \*½ D: William Malone. Starring Geoffrey Rush, Famke Janssen, Taye Diggs, Peter Gallagher, Chris Kattan, Ali Larter, Bridgette Wilson, Max Perlich, Jeffrey Combs, Lisa Loeb. Remake of the 1958 William Castle classic is standard 90s horror schlock. Billionaire Rush invites several people to his awe-inspiring mansion and tells them that whoever survives the night in the haunted house will get a million dollars. Lots of (digital) effects, little logic, lackluster plot, this one is saved by a spirited performance by Geoffrey Rush, who does a marvellous parody of the great Vincent Price, star of the 1958 version.

**Howards End** (1992, GBR) **C-140m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** James Ivory. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson, James Wilby, Prunella Scales, Simon Callow. E.M. Forster's classic novel of the clash of different social classes is assuredly brought to the screen by experienced filmmaker Ivory. A young woman (Thompson) unknowingly inherits a country house from Mrs. Wilcox (Redgrave), whose husband (Hopkins) later takes her as his wife. Excellent cast, formidable realisation. Oscar winner for Best Actress (Thompson), Best Screenplay and Art Direction-Set Decoration.

**How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days** (2003, USA/GER) **C-116m. \*\* D:** Donald Petrie. Starring Kate Hudson, Matthew McConaughey, Kathryn Hahn, Annie Parisse, Adam Goldberg, Thomas Lennon, Michael Michele, Bebe Neuwirth. Romantic comedy about two journalists Hudson and McConaughey, who hook up for different reasons: He wants to prove that he can make any girl fall in love with him in 10 days, she is out to dump one within that period. Likability of the stars is stretched too much at times in this contrivance.

**How to Lose Friends & Alienate People** (2008, GBR) **C-110m. \*\* D:** Robert B. Weide. Starring Simon Pegg, Kirsten Dunst, Jeff Bridges, Megan Fox, Danny Huston, Gillian Anderson, Thandie Newton, Miriam Margolyes. British reporter Pegg gets the chance to work for Bridges' celebrity magazine in New York, but finds he is making enemies everywhere with his rude attitude. The only one who might like him is troubled Dunst. Romantic dramedy has some funny bits but misfires due to miscasting of Pegg. He has no chemistry with Dunst, who's wonderful as always. This ain't no ELIZABETHTOWN (2005), although the rest of the cast is good. Based on the bestseller by Toby Young.

**How to Murder Your Wife** (1965, USA) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Quine. Starring Jack Lemmon, Virna Lisi, Terry-Thomas, Eddie Mayehoff, Claire Trevor. Funny comedy about comic strip artist and bachelor Lemmon, who finds himself married to Italian sex bomb Lisi after having spent a night drinking. This is where the film's title comes in. A little overlong, but cast makes up for occasional lulls.

**How to Steal a Million** (1966, GBR/USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** William Wyler. Starring Audrey Hepburn, Peter O'Toole, Eli Wallach, Hugh Griffith, Charles Boyer, Jacques Marin. Quintessential 60s caper comedy: Hepburn's father Griffith has been fooling the art world with his elaborate forgeries, but when an expert is about to examine one of his 'masterpieces', it becomes his daughter's job to steal the sculpture before the hoax is discovered. O'Toole, a gentleman thief, becomes her partner in crime. Colorful, entertaining piece of fluff might be considered overlong, but its charm makes it outstanding. Hepburn and O'Toole are a formidable couple, and Wyler's direction is simply excellent. Sumptuous production design. Good score by a young John Williams.

**How to Train Your Dragon** (2010, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Dean DeBlois, Chris Sanders. Starring (the voices of) Jay Baruchel, Gerard Butler, Craig Ferguson, America Ferrera, Jonah Hill. Entertaining, well-animated fantasy film from Dreamworks about a young boy, who befriends a mysterious dragon, despite the fact that most of the vikings he lives with despise them. Plot is only okay, but the action is breathtaking and fairly amusing.

**H6: Diario de un Asesino** (2005, SPA) **C-92m. D:** Martín Garido Barón. Starring Fernando Acaso, María José Bausá, Antonio Mayans. Acaso has just been released from prison for the spontaneous murder of his girlfriend 15 years ago and moves into the derelict little hotel he inherited from his aunt. He then painstakingly prepares a torture room, where he lures prostitutes to torture, rape and ultimately dismember. Completely pointless, misogynistic movie, with narration coming from different characters out of the blue, a dead-pan, inappropriately normal performance by Acaso, and the classical music audible throughout is probably supposed to lend the film the air of a classic. Makes reference to the famous

French serial killer Landru, but stay away anyway. English title: H6: DIARY OF A SERIAL KILLER.

**Hudson Hawk** (1991, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Lehmann. Starring Bruce Willis, Danny Aiello, Andie MacDowell, James Coburn, Richard E. Grant, Sandra Bernard, David Caruso, Frank Stallone, narrated by William Conrad. Master cat-burglar Hudson Hawk (Willis) is released from prison and immediately gets ready to steal some valuable art exposés by Leonardo Da Vinci. It turns out that a mad couple (Grant, Bernard) are hoping to activate an ancient machine that turns lead into gold. Fairly well-made, well-produced action comedy features Willis in good form, but film is overdone, even annoying at times. For fans of Willis, who also receives co-story credit here. Photographed by Dante Spinotti.

**Hudsucker Proxy, The** (1994, USA) **C-111m.** \*\*\*\* D: Joel Coen. Starring Tim Robbins, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Paul Newman, Charles Durning, John Mahoney, Jim True, Bill Cobbs, Bruce Campbell, Peter Gallagher, Thom Noble, Steve Buscemi, Anna Nicole Smith, Sam Raimi, Jon Polito, Karl Mundt (=John Goodman). The Coens' follow-up to BARTON FINK (1991) is an ingenious satire, a retro-fantasy that rivals Terry Gilliam's BRAZIL (1985). In 1958 a naïve hayseed (Robbins) comes to New York City to find a job and unwittingly becomes president of a huge company, Hudsucker Industries, for reasons only known to the chairmen and the right hand (Newman) of the former boss (who committed suicide by jumping out of the window on the 45<sup>th</sup> floor, that is 45<sup>th</sup> if you count the mezzanine). Brilliant art direction/set decoration, breathtaking production design on the whole, inimitably stylish direction and photography, this is one of the Coens' most extravagant pictures. The timing in the last ten minutes is absolutely extraordinary! Performances are flawless, except perhaps for Leigh's, whose character should have been more fleshed out (her parody of a Katherine Hepburn-ish reporter is great, though). Carter Burwell provides one of his most haunting scores, including elements of Mozart, Bizet, and using Aram Khachaturyan's memorable tune from his ballet as a recurring theme (you may recognise the melody from Stanley Kubrick's SPARTACUS (1960) and the television series 'The Onedin Line'). This was the Coen brothers' first film without cinematographer Barry Sonnenfeld, but his replacement Roger Deakins is no less masterful. For their next film, FARGO (1996), the writer-director-producer duo would adjust their course a bit and go back to their BLOOD SIMPLE (1984) roots. THE HUDSUCKER PROXY (1994), cowritten by the Coens and their pal Sam Raimi, contains a lot of references to other cult films (among them, an especially satisfying one to Ridley Scott's BLADE RUNNER (1982)). A must for their followers, its reputation should soar in the future.

**8 Femmes** (2002, FRA/ITA) **C-111m.** \*\* D: Francois Ozon. Starring Danielle Darrieux, Catherine Deneuve, Isabelle Huppert, Emmanuelle Béart, Fanny Ardant, Virginie Ledoyen, Ludivine Sagnier, Firmine Richard, Dominique Lamure. Eight women gather at a country house and are baffled to find the only man in the house (Lamure) murdered in his bed. As they are cut off from the outside world by the abundant snow, they decide to solve the crime themselves. What sounds like an interesting whodunit (with the some of the greatest French actresses involved) is undermined by completely unmotivated, unnecessary musical numbers (sung by the actresses). Deliberately colorful production is also much too stagey (it is based on a play by Robert Thomas). A matter of taste, I immensely disliked its artificial art-house flair. One of the songs is by Gene Kelly. English title: 8 WOMEN.

**Human Centipede (First Sequence), The** (2009, NED) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Tom Six. Starring Dieter Laser, Ashley C. Williams, Ashlynn Yennie, Akihiro Kitamura. Exploitation meets torture porn in this Dutch horror film. Evil doctor Laser abducts people to his remote villa in order to conduct experiments which are supposed lead to the title creature, a sequence of three

people whose mouths and anuses are stitched together. Pretty gross idea almost overcome by Laser's outrageous, even frightening turn as the (Nazi?) doctor. Plot doesn't offer much, but at least it's solidly filmed. Followed by two sequels. Written by director Six.

**Human Duplicators, The** (1965, USA/ITA) **C-80m.** \*\*½ D: Hugo Grimaldi. Starring George Nader, Dolores Faith, Richard Kiel, George Macready. Interesting blend of spy and science-fiction movies about special agent Nader, who is assigned to investigate mysterious disappearances among noted scientists. The viewer knows from the beginning that extra-terrestrials are replacing them one by one. Not bad, only a little stuffy. Nader would later play a secret agent in several Jerry Cotton adaptations. Also known as SPACE AGENT K1 and JAWS OF THE ALIEN.

**"Human" Factor, The** (1975, GBR) **C-95m.** \*½ D: Edward Dmytryk. Starring George Kennedy, John Mills, Raf Vallone, Arthur Franz, Rita Tushingham, Barry Sullivan. Kennedy plays an American scientist in Naples, Italy, who is busy working for a secret NATO project concerning a war simulation. When his family is brutally killed by terrorists, he sets out to find the killers and avenge the death of his beloved wife and kids. Lumbering DEATH WISH-like thriller concentrates too much on Kennedy's grief and the chases are not too exciting either. Film's glorification of computers is laughable today. Score by Ennio Morricone is quite good (though repeated too often).

**Humanoids from the Deep** (1980, USA) **C-80m.** \*\*½ D: Barbara Peeters. Starring Doug McClure, Ann Turkel, Vic Morrow, Cindy Weintraub. Fairly good Roger Corman-produced B-movie: A seaside community is terrorized by the title monsters, mutated sea creatures, which kill the populace and rape the women. Too cheap, even amateurish at times, but the pace is swift and the gore keeps on coming. Film was finished by Jimmy T. Murakami, after Peeters complained about the misogynist content. Fine score by James Horner. Remade for TV in 1996. Some prints carry the title MONSTER.

**Hunger, The** (1983, GBR) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D: Tony Scott.** Starring Catherine Deneuve, David Bowie, Susan Sarandon, Cliff De Young, Beth Ehlers, Dan Hedaya, Willem Dafoe. Visually stunning, hypnotic horror film about a pair of vampires (Deneuve and Bowie), who have set their eyes (and fangs) on doctor Sarandon. The scientist is probing into the phenomenon of accelerated aging, and Bowie, who's aging unnaturally fast, is in desperate need for a cure. Aesthetic, well-scored, well-cast cult horror movie shows unusual compassion for its monsters (like Anne Rice's INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE (1994), which is equally enticing). Auspicious movie debut by Tony Scott, brother of Ridley Scott, whose BLADE RUNNER (1982) may also have been an influence on this. Based on the novel by Whitley Strieber (WOLFEN).

**Hunger Games, The** (2012, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Gary Ross.** Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Stanley Tucci, Woody Harrelson, Donald Sutherland, Lenny Kravitz. Good science-fiction action movie based on the novels by Suzanne Collins. In the near future, mankind is divided into districts, with most of the people living in 19<sup>th</sup> century conditions working hard and barely getting by. The upper class feasts their eyes on the title contest, a 'game', where two teenagers from each of the twelve districts are sent into a battle area (forest terrain) in a fight to the death... only one can be the winner. Poor Lawrence volunteers when her sister is chosen and becomes one of the favourites. What sounds like a RUNNING MAN / THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME variation stays fairly original, as it avoids common trappings and clichés, and most importantly, is really exciting at times. Overlength doesn't weigh it down at all. You need to adjust to hectic camerawork, though. Good score by James Newton Howard.

**Hunger Games, The: Catching Fire** (2013, USA) **C-146m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Francis Lawrence. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Woody Harrelson, Stanley Tucci, Donald Sutherland, Lenny Kravitz, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Jeffrey Wright, Amanda Plummer, Jena Malone, Toby Jones. Sequel to THE HUNGER GAMES (2012): The heroes of the first movie have settled down in their hometown and are about to go on a tour through all the other districts. The president (Sutherland) is afraid that Lawrence might spark a revolution and tries to control her public appearances. When things get out of hand, he simply stages another battle to the death with winners of all previous Hunger Games. Heavy-going for more than an hour, without any action and suspense, then it improves slightly, but still feels like a rehash of the first movie. There are some obvious flaws in the adaptation from the original novel. Malone (SUCKER PUNCH) almost steals the film. Followed by THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY (2014/2015).

**Hunger Games, The: Mockingjay - Part 1** (2014, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Francis Lawrence. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Woody Harrelson, Donald Sutherland, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Julianne Moore, Stanley Tucci. Ponderous, talky sequel is actually the first part of the finale. Lawrence has by now become a type of suffering, depressive Frodo in a quest to free the world. She has joined the rebels and reluctantly agrees to be used as a figurehead of the revolution. The Capitol reacts by bombing the other districts and using Hutcherson as a pawn against her. Only for die-hard fans of the series, it's lacking action, suspense and a sense of adventure completely. Followed by Part 2 in 2015.

**Hungry Wives** (1972, USA) **C-90m. \*\*** D: George A. Romero. Starring Jan White, Ray Laine, Ann Muffly, Joedda McClain, Bill Thunhurst, Bill Hinzman. One of Romero's rarest films is a drama, not a horror film or sex film as the titles might have you believe. Housewife White is bored with her life and starts getting increasingly frightening dreams. Then someone introduces her to witchcraft. Is she going insane? There's also a potential lover around. Suburban drama, rather dated, but Romero fans will savor his trademark social commentary and directorial style. Also shown at 104m. and 130m.(!), which cannot really be an improvement. Retitled SEASON OF THE WITCH for video, also known as JACK'S WIFE.

**Hunting List** (1996, HGK) **C-88m. \*\*** D: Yin-Ping Chu. Cast unknown. Two long-time friends, one of whom an undercover cop, work as hitmen for a triad organisation which deals with drugs. Action thriller is not very distinguished plotwise and quite uneven, but does not take itself as an excuse for showing excessive violence. The effects are overdone, though. Remains watchable because the score is quite good and the leads are charismatic. The final shoot-out recreates the showdown from TRUE ROMANCE.

**Hurricane** (1979, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*½** D: Jan Troell. Starring Mia Farrow, Jason Robards, Max von Sydow, Trevor Howard, Dayton Ka'ne, James Keach, Timothy Bottoms. Completely misfired attempt at remaking the 1937 classic HURRICANE. In the 1920s Farrow travels to Samoa, where her father Robards is in charge. She falls in love with a local tribesman, with tragic results. A picture postcard from Samoa (photographed by Sven Nykvist), but does not at all sustain feature length. Don't mistake this for a disaster movie (even the climactic storm is rather ridiculous). Score by Nino Rota, produced by Dino de Laurentiis. Retitled FORBIDDEN PARADISE.

**Hurt Locker, The** (2008, USA) **C-131m. \*\*\*** D: Kathryn Bigelow. Starring Jeremy Renner, Anthony Mackie, Brian Geraghty, Guy Pearce, Ralph Fiennes, David Morse, Evangeline Lilly. Oscar-winning war drama set in Iraq, where a special bomb disarming squad goes about their day-to-day business. Renner plays a daredevil, who's new to the team and displays unconventional methods. He is soon drawn into the country's strife emotionally. Powerful,

engrossing, tense film uses an almost documentarian approach and delivers. Later undermines itself a little with artificial plot twist about the Iraqi boy, but generally a mature film with a strong statement, winner of 6 Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director (the first for a woman), beating out Bigelow's ex-husband's AVATAR (2009).

**Hush** (1998, USA) **C-95m**. \*½ D: Jonathan Darby. Starring Jessica Lange, Gwyneth Paltrow, Johnathon Schaech, Nina Foch, Debi Mazar, David Thornton, Hal Holbrook. Paltrow and Schaech, two New Yorkers in love decide to marry when she is pregnant, and Paltrow insists they move to his mother's estate in the country, which turns out to be a mistake. His widowed mother is a neurotic monster, who plots to destroy their luck. Audience manipulation on the level of THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE, with offensively incredible plot development. Good production values go completely overboard in absolutely stupid finale. Lange tries hard to be neurotic, but with this script she only comes across as annoying.

**Hyn Huet Ching Nin** (2002, HGK) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Pou-Soi Cheang. Starring Bernard Chow, Niki Chow, Chi Kui Chow, Winnie Leung. Hong Kong horror about a police man who donates blood to two people, a psychotic young woman and a cancer patient. Then the latter starts haunting them, and almost drives the young woman completely crazy. Less effective than your average Japanese chiller, this tries to be fast-paced, but the plot is hare-brained. International title: NEW BLOOD.

**Hyôryû-gai** (2000, JAP) **C-103m**. \*½ D: Takashi Miike. Starring Teah, Michelle Reis, Patricia Manterola, Mitsuhiro Oikawa, Koji Kikkawa, Ren Osugi. One of Japanese cult director Miike's action (over-)indulgences, this has been dubbed a remake of TRUE ROMANCE (1993), but expect nothing of the like. A Brazilian gangster and his Chinese broad are chased by police and mafia organizations. They need money to escape to China. Some stylish violence cannot overcome poor pace and total lack of character development. If computer-animated cockfights are your cup of tea, then tune in. English titles: CITY OF LOST SOULS, CITY OF LAST SOULS, CITY OF STRANGERS, THE HAZARD CITY.

**Hysteria** (1964, GBR) **85m**. \*\*½ D: Freddie Francis. Starring Robert Webber, Lelia Goldoni, Maurice Denham, Jennifer Jayne. OK suspenser about amnesiac Webber who is invited to a penthouse by an un-known benefactor, where he starts hearing strange voices. Is he going mad? Indifferently done, there is nothing extraordinary about this thriller from the Hammer studios. Some good scenes make it worthwhile.

**Hysteria** (1997, CDN/GBR) **C-102m**. \*\*½ D: René Daalder. Starring Patrick McGoohan, Amanda Plummer, Michael Maloney, Emmanuelle Vaugier, Lorne Brass, Sam Stone. Strange, hardly released psycho drama by writer/director Daalder (MASSACRE AT CENTRAL HIGH). Maloney plays a psychiatrist who falls in love with one of his patients (Vaugier) and travels to mad scientist McGoohan's clinic, where he wants to heal her. It turns out McGoohan is conducting weird experiments with his clients, turning the mansion into a madhouse. Wild plot doesn't make much sense, but Daalder's direction is fine, making this almost fascinating. Seems like it was cowritten by Alejandro Jodorowsky. Not for all tastes. The director also contributed to the score.

**I Am a Hero** (2015, JAP) **C-127m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Shinsuke Sato. Starring Masami Nagasawa, Kasumi Arimura, Mihoh Suzuki. Effective, gory zombie horror with an unlikely hero. Manga artist Nagasawa is in his mid-thirties and stuck in his job without any career prospects. Even his girlfriend is giving him a hard time. Just then a zombie epidemic breaks out and the hesitant man has to take a stand in his life for the first time. Takes its cue from classics like DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978), even throws in some memorable zombie characters, this is violent and well-made horror fare with good effects.

**I Am Legend** (2007, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Francis Lawrence. Starring Will Smith, Alice Braga, Charlie Tahan, Salli Richardson, Willow Smith, Emma Thompson. Third film version of Richard Matheson's novel about a research scientist (Smith) who is the only one immune to epidemic which wipes out mankind and turns most survivors into vampiric creatures that can only survive in darkness. By day Smith roams New York City with his dog looking for other survivors. Intriguing, almost pessimistic apocalyptic horror film with impressive special effects. Previously filmed as *L'ULTIMO UOMO DELLA TERRA / THE LAST MAN ON EARTH* (1964) with Vincent Price and *THE OMEGA MAN* (1971) with Charlton Heston. Score by James Newton Howard. Also shown with an alternate ending.

**I Am Not a Serial Killer** (2016, USA/EIR) **C-103m. \*\*½** D: Billy O'Brien. Starring Max Records, Christopher Lloyd, Laura Fraser, Karl Geary. Character study with supernatural elements about an estranged teenager who works for his mother's funeral business. Just when he suspects he might become a serial killer one day, a real murder series starts in town. Starts interesting, bogs down immensely in second half, but delivers an effective finale. A mixed bag, but just a tad too bleak. Nice turn by veteran Lloyd.

**Ibis Rouge, L'** (1975, FRA) **C-80m. \*\*\*½** D: Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Michel Serrault, Michel Galabru, Michel Simon. Absurd, funny, typically anarchic Mocky satire about a psychopathic moron (Serrault), who feels compelled to strangle women, ever since a fly landed on the décolletée of his piano teacher when he was a boy. Michel Galabru plays an indebted salesman, who by chance learns the murderer's identity. Central setting of the film is a Greek restaurant, whose owner is a sleazy cut-throat. Deliciously weird characters, intriguing plot complications, and a twisted sense of humor make this one a winner from start to finish. Written by Mocky, based on the novel by N.N.

**Ice Age** (2002, USA) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: Chris Wedge, Carlos Saldanha. Starring the voices of Ray Romano, John Leguizamo, Denis Leary, Goran Visnjic. Episodic adventure set during the Ice Age (some 20,000 years ago) about a sloth and a mammoth who make friends and join forces in saving a human baby from a horde of sabre-tooth tigers. Over-the-top cartoon-like action prevails in this nicely computer-animated kids' movie, which has some very funny scenes, however. Uneven but enjoyable.

**Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs** (2009, USA) **C-94m. \*\*½** D: Carlos Saldanha, Mike Thurmeier. Starring (the voices of) Ray Romano, John Leguizamo, Denis Leary, Queen Latifah, Simon Pegg, Seann William Scott, Chris Wedge. Third ICE AGE movie puts the now-familiar characters in great danger as they crash into a dinosaur valley, where Sid has been abducted by an angry mom because he hatched some dino eggs. It's Manny, his pregnant wife, and two opossums to the rescue. Conventional plot almost fails to spark an interest, but adventure story has its appeal. Also released in 3-D, although the film doesn't look as if it was made for this technique. Also known as ICE AGE 3.

**Ice Pirates, The** (1984, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Stewart Raffill. Starring Robert Urich, Mary Crosby, Michael D. Roberts, Anjelica Huston, John Matuszak, Ron Perlman, John Carradine. Low brow sci-fi comedy follows a group of space pirates, who go on an adventure trip with a princess. STAR WARS spoof has some funny scenes, but this was somehow better in the 1980s. Has a minor cult following.

**Ice Storm, The** (1997, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½** D: Ang Lee. Starring Kevin Kline, Joan Allen, Sigourney Weaver, Elijah Wood, Christina Ricci. Director Lee wanders Chabrol territory in this excellent drama based on the novel by Rick Moody. In 1973 America, whose mind is still occupied by Watergate and Nixon, tragic events shake the lives of two middle-class families. Kline is having an affair with neighbor and friend Weaver to forget about problems with his frustrated wife Allen. Their children, left alone with their own worries, are about to discover

sex as a means of becoming independent from their parents. Lee makes everything right in this absorbing tale, which climaxes in the title catastrophe. Appropriately low-key, sensitively handled period piece. Weaver is especially good in a stylish role. Sexual awakening of the teenagers is explored, perhaps, in too much detail.

**Ichijo Sayuri: Nureta Yokujo** (1972, JAP) **C-69m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Tatsumi Kumashiro. Starring Sayuri Ichijo, Hiroko Isayama, Kazuko Shirakawa. Sex movie about a famous stripper (Ichijo, who plays herself), who has plans to retire from this type of prostitution and a colleague wants to be like her. Some unusual (but pointless) directorial touches don't do anything to relieve you of your boredom. Also known as SAYURI, THE STRIPPER.

**Ich Seh, Ich Seh** (2014, AUT) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Veronika Franz, Severin Fiala. Starring Lukas Schwarz, Elias Schwarz, Susanne Wuest. Quietly disturbing psycho drama from Austria: Two identical twin brothers roam the fields and forests around their house. When their psychotic single mother returns from the hospital after facial surgery, their relationship is put to a test, and the cruelties soon escalate. Is she really their mother? Some nice touches, although the story seems to have been fabricated around the (admittedly interesting) final twist – probably the idea the filmmakers started out with. It's also rather mean-spirited and not really creepy or suspenseful. Worth a look for lovers of dark cinema. English title: GOODNIGHT MOMMY.

**I... comme Icare** (1979, FRA) **C-127m. \*\*\*\* D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Yves Montand, Michel Etcheverry, Jacqueline Staup, Georges Staquet, Roland Blanche, Jacques Sereys, Didier Sauvegrain, Jean Negroni, Roger Planchon, Michel Albertini, Brigitte Lahaie. One year after the French President's assassination, attorney general Montand reassesses the seemingly solved case and discovers several clues that hint toward a conspiracy. Superb political thriller, with parallels to the assassination of John F. Kennedy, is riveting from start to finish. Montand is perfect as a man obsessed with finding out the truth. Excellent score by Ennio Morricone. One of the best political thrillers ever made, with the final 15 minutes particularly stunning. Written and produced by director Verneuil (PEUR SUR LA VILLE).

**I Could Never Be Your Woman** (2007, USA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Amy Heckerling. Starring Michelle Pfeiffer, Paul Rudd, Saoirse Ronan, Stacey Dash, Fred Willard, Jon Lovitz, Sarah Alexander, Tracey Ullman. Watchable romantic comedy about 40-year-old TV producer Pfeiffer, who falls in love with Rudd, 29-year-old star of her show. Can such a relationship work? Lead characters are outdone by supporting cast. Ronan, in her film debut, is excellent, Lovitz funny as usual.

**Identikit** (1974, ITA) **C-102m. \*\* D:** Giuseppe Patroni Griffi. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Ian Bannen, Guido Mannari, Mona Washbourne, Luigi Squarzina, Andy Warhol. Not uninteresting psycho drama about a psychotic, forty-ish woman (Taylor) who leaves her home in Germany and travels 'south' to Italy, where she has many bizarre encounters. In flash forwards, we find out about a police investigation dealing with her possible murder. Rather heavy-handed stuff, with Liz in one of her poor acting choices of the 70s, although she was apparently influenced by her divorce from Richard Burton here; how intriguing if she had really felt that way at the time. From the director of ADDIO, FRATELLO CRUDELE / 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE (1970), based on the Muriel Spark novel. Photographed by Vittorio Storaro. Also known as THE DRIVER'S SEAT, and more aptly, PSYCHOTIC.

**Identity** (2003, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\* D:** James Mangold. Starring John Cusack, Ray Liotta, Amanda Peet, John Hawkes, Alfred Molina, Clea DuVall, John C. McGinley, William Lee Scott, Jake Busey, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Rebecca De Mornay. One rainy night, several unrelated strangers are holed up in a motel in the middle of nowhere, with flooded streets making it impossible to get out. Then, one after the other, these people are killed off... by whom or

what? Thriller has a ridiculous plot and a twist near the end which tries to make the illogical work, but overall dullness prevails. The narrative structure is the only interesting thing about this one.

**Idioterne** (1998, DAN/SWE/NOR/FRA/ITA/GER) **C-117m. \*\*** D: Lars von Trier. Starring Bodil Jorgensen, Jens Albinus, Anne Louise Hassing, Troels Lyby, Nikolaj Lie Kaas, Henrik Prip, Luis Mesonero, voice of Lars von Trier. Originally titled **DOGMA #2: THE IDIOTS**, this unconventional satire by Danish mastermind Lars von Trier is the second film that conforms entirely to a 1995 pamphlet issued by von Trier and several other filmmakers that declares special effects, costumes and elaborate camera perspectives obsolete, in order to achieve the highest possible degree of immediacy in the filmmaking process. Story concerns a group of people, who live in a villa in a small Danish town pretending to be mentally retarded. They mock at society, try to make money out of everything and generally enjoy themselves when they can do what they like. The point of the film may be social criticism, but it takes far too long to get there, and without an apparent structure in the script, this soon becomes tedious. Film has its moments, is well-acted and sometimes even hilarious, but also unpleasasant and disturbing at some points. No touch of genius here, a major disappointment from the director of such masterpieces as **THE ELEMENT OF CRIME**, **MEDEA**, **EUROPA**, **RIGET** and **BREAKING THE WAVES**.

**I Dismember Mama** (1974, USA) **C-85m. \*½** D: Paul Leder. Starring Zoey Hall, Geri Reischl, Joanne Moore Jordan, Greg Mullavy, Marlene Tracy, Rosella Olsen. Mean-spirited psycho drama about mental patient Hall, who hates his mother more than anything else. When he escapes from the asylum, he tortures his mother's housekeeper and kidnaps her 11-year-old daughter. Lumbering account of mental depravity, not the gorefest one would expect from a film with such a title. Don't mistake this for a horror film. Also known as **CRAZED**, **POOR ALBERT AND LITTLE ANNIE**.

**Idle Hands** (1999, USA) **C-90m. \*½** D: Rodman Flender. Starring Devon Sawa, Seth Green, Elden Henson, Jessica Alba, Vivica A. Fox, Christopher Hart. Pretty stupid horror comedy about clueless pothead Sawa, whose hometown is gripped by grisly murders and then realizes that it's his hand – his possessed hand – that has committed them. Contrived, tasteless and hardly funny. The stuff dumb teenagers root for.

**I Dreamed of Africa** (2000, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Hugh Hudson. Starring Kim Basinger, Vincent Perez, Liam Aiken, Eva Marie Saint. Adaptation of Kuki Gallmann's autobiographical book about her decision to move to Africa with her son and new lover and the troubles that she encounters there. Uneven film is buoyed by Basinger excellent performance, although some plot twists are a little tough to take. Score by Maurice Jarre.

**I Escaped from Devil's Island** (1973, USA/MEX) **C-87m. \*½** D: William Witney. Starring Christopher George, Rick Ely, James Luisi, Jim Brown. Despite colorful title, this thriller is one big disappointment. Several prisoners try to escape from Caribbean island nicknamed Devil's Island. Trivial, talky, not entertaining at all. Veteran Witney's direction is not bad, but this boat sinks fast. Produced by Gene and Roger Corman. Score by Les Baxter.

**Iggi** (2010, KOR) **C-163m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Kang Woo-suk. Starring Jeong Jae-yeong, Park Hae-il, Yu Jun-Sang, Sun Yoo. Long but engrossing mystery drama about a young man who travels to the rural community, where his recently deceased father lived as a spiritual leader. The community chief, a former police detective, obviously has something to hide and may even be responsible for his father's death. In flashbacks their story is told. Rather vague, not always easy to follow, but interesting throughout, well-acted and well-scored. Based on an internet comic book. English title: **MOSS**.

**Igor** (2008, USA/FRA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Anthony Leondis. Starring (the voices of) John Cusack, John Cleese, Steve Buscemi, Sean Hayes, Eddie Izzard, Jennifer Coolidge, Jay Leno, Molly Shannon, Christian Slater, Arsenio Hall. Good voice cast saddled with second-rate script in FRANKENSTEIN spoof about a country, where evil scientists are competing with each other about who makes the most evil creations. All the assistants are called Igor, and our protagonist has plans to become a scientist himself. When his master dies, his chance to create life has come. Some laughs, but this has been done better.

**Igor and the Lunatics** (1985, USA) **C-80m.** D: Bill Parolini. Starring Joseph Eero, Joe Niola. Amateurish and eventually confusing Troma nonsense about a man whose involvement with a sect years ago comes back to haunt him when the guru is released from prison. Or something like that. Film turns into standard slasher fare in the second half with Igor (actually spelled *Ygor* in the closing credits) just a marginal character that is given a freakish spin by Joe Niola. Uncut print probably runs 81m.

**Iguana dalla Lingua di Fuoco, L'** (1971, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-95m.** \*\*½D: Willy Pareto (=Riccardo Freda). Starring Luigi Pistilli, Dagmar Lassander, Anton Diffring, Arthur O'Sullivan, Werner Pochath, Valentina Cortese, Riccardo Freda. Slowly paced giallo about a murdered woman, who is discovered in the trunk of the Dutch ambassador's car in Dublin, Ireland. Reinstated inspector Pistilli is out to investigate. Stylish, moody bits make this rather violent and nasty thriller watchable, but mainly for fans. Director Freda (I VAMPIRI) also coscripted and edited the picture. Fine score by Stelvio Cipriani (who did the music for Mario Bava's ANTEFATTO that same year, which also starred Pistilli). English title: THE IGUANA WITH THE TONGUE OF FIRE.

**I Hired a Contract Killer** (1990, FIN/GER/GBR/SWE) **C-80m.** \*\*½ D: Aki Kaurismäki. Starring Jean-Pierre Léaud, Margi Clarke, Kenneth Colley, T.R. Bowen, Imogen Claire, Peter Graves, Serge Reggiani, Aki Kaurismäki. *Very slight* comedy drama about loser Léaud, who decides to kill himself after losing his job. He eventually hires a contract killer but then falls in love and wants to get out of the contract. This is the premise for some truly off-beat ideas and situations, but Kaurismäki's direction is minimalistic, which may bore the audience at times. Still, a cult favorite, especially with Kaurismäki's fans. A matter of taste. Edited by Kaurismäki, the creator of the LENINGRAD COWBOYS.

**Ikenie Fujin** (1974, JAP) **C-70m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Masaru Konuma. Starring Naomi Tani, Nagatoshi Sakamoto, Terumi Azuma, Hidetoshi Kageyama. A woman is kidnapped by her ex-husband, who has just escaped from prison. The sadist abducts her to an abandoned house in the mountains and subjects her to torture and sexual slavery. A male fantasy that is watchable but at times hard to take, for bondage and hentai freaks. English title: WIFE TO BE SACRIFICED.

**I Know What You Did Last Summer** (1997, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE\*\*\*\*** D: Jim Gillespie. Starring Jennifer Love Hewitt, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Ryan Phillippe, Freddie Prinze, Jr., Anne Heche. Four teenagers dispose of a man whom they have run over with their car without telling the police and are shocked when a year later a letter with the title message arrives. Thriller written by Kevin Williamson of SCREAM fame offers a clever premise and standard, often unimaginative plot, but delivers nevertheless. Surprisingly well-made and effective, good of its type. Followed by a sequel (I STILL KNOW...).

**Il Etait une Fois un Flic** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Georges Lautner. Starring Michel Constantin, Michael Lonsdale, Daniel Ivernel, Mireille Darc, Venantino Venantini, Robert Dalban, Charles Southwood, Robert Castel, Alain Delon. Constantin plays an undercover cop, who is assigned to bust drug smuggling syndicate by impersonating a dead dealer's brother. Darc has to play his wife. Crime movie with humorous undertones sparks very little interest,

despite being cowritten by Francis Veber and the director (adapting a novel by Richard Caron). The cast is quite good, though. Also known as FLIC STORY, THERE WAS ONCE A COP. **Illusioniste, L'** (2010, FRA) **C-77m. \*\*½ D:** Sylvain Chomet. This Oscar-nominated animated feature is an interesting adaptation of an unfilmed screenplay by French film legend Jacques Tati (1907-1982). An aging magician travels from town to town for his shows, but fewer and fewer people want to see his acts. It's the 1930s, and interest in his shows is waning. Then a young woman tags along on his journey, and they form a genial bond. Tone of the film is melancholy, almost sad, which makes it depressing – and due to slow pace and lack of dialogue at times a chore to sit through. Too bad, since the piano score is beautiful. Aka THE ILLUSIONIST.

**Illustrated Man, The** (1969, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jack Smight. Starring Rod Steiger, Claire Bloom, Robert Drivas, Don Dubbins, Jason Evers, Tim Weldon, Christie Matchett. Disappointing adaptation of short stories by Ray Bradbury, with Steiger playing the title character, a tramp who is looking for the woman who illustrated his entire body. Young wanderer Drivas' encounter with the man enables him to see the future in some of his tattoos. Odd sci-fi is too slowly paced to engross the viewer, although the acting is quite intense. Score by Jerry Goldsmith, photography by Philip Lathrop generate some interest.

**I Love You, Alice B. Toklas!** (1968, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Hy Averback. Starring Peter Sellers, Jo Van Fleet, Leigh Taylor-Young, Joyce Van Patten. Winning comedy-drama about conservative lawyer Sellers, who at 35 finally decides to marry but then is drawn into the world of hippies and flower children. He leaves his spouse and has an affair with beautiful hippie Taylor-Young. Finally it dawns on him that he is just shying away from taking responsibilities. Not very credible, but entertaining, well-acted and well-scored (by Elmer Bernstein). Written and executive produced by Paul Mazursky and Larry Tucker.

**Ils** (2006, FRA/ROM) **C-77m. \*\*½ D:** David Moreau, Xavier Palud. Starring Olivia Bonamy, Michael Cohen, Adriana Mocca. Horror thriller set at a remote mansion somewhere in Romania, where French teacher Bonamy and her lover have withdrawn to. One night, they are woken by strange noises and are soon stalked by mysterious figures. Quite effective in parts, but basically one big tease, as the viewer is left in the dark until the very end. *Very similar to THE STRANGERS* (2008). English title: THEM.

**Ilsa, She Wolf of the SS** (1975, USA) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Don Edmonds. Starring Dyanne Thorne, Gregory Knoph, Tony Mumolo, Maria Marx, C.D. Lafleur (=George 'Buck' Flower), Uschi Digard, David F. Friedman. One of the most influential Nazisploitation films. The title character is a sexy blond German prison camp commander, who gets her kicks out of torturing, abusing and having sex with her prisoners. Initial interest wears off when it becomes clear that the film has no plot, but Thorne's physique is amazing (she was 42 when this was made!). Typical exploitation film was so successful, it spawned three sequels and many imitations. Followed by ILSA, HAREM-KEEPER OF THE OIL SHEIKS.

**Ilsa, Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks** (1976, CDN/USA) **C-93m. \*½ D:** Don Edmonds. Starring Dyanne Thorne, Michael (=Max) Thayer, Victor Alexander (=Jerry Delony), Elke Von (=Uschi Digard), Haji Cat (=Haji), Wolfgang Roehm (=Richard Kennedy), George 'Buck' Flower. Ilsa, from ILSA, SHE-WOLF OF THE SS (1975), resumes her murderous ways in an Arabian harem, which is visited by two Americans. More of the same, less violent perhaps, although the torture experiments are sure to make you cringe again. Becomes tedious after a while. Followed by GRETA, HAUS OHNE MÄNNER and one more ILSA-titled film, both in 1977.

**Ilsa, Tigress of Siberia** (1977, CDN) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Jean LaFleur. Starring Dyanne Thorne, Michel-René Labelle, Gilbert Beaumont, Jean-Guy Latour, Terry Haig. Pretty vile but somehow enjoyable exploitation flick is a mélange of torture and sex. Thorne is convincing

as tyrannic ruler of a Siberian prison camp anno 1953. During the day she devises cruel methods for rebellious prisoners to die, by night she needs not one but two of her prison guards to satisfy her lust. After the Stalinist regime ends, Ilsa picks up her evil doings as a mafia boss in present-day Canada(!). Extremely violent, corny fun for cult movie buffs. It even references Kubrick and Pasolini! Third ILSA movie, though fourth in a series, following GRETA – HAUS OHNE MÄNNER (1977). Produced by Roger Corman and Ivan Reitman. Also known as TIGRESS.

**Images** (1972, USA/GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Robert Altman. Starring Susannah York, René Auberjonois, Marcel Bozzuffi, Hugh Millais, Cathryn Harrison. Troubled author of children's books York travels with her husband to a cottage in Ireland, where she spent her childhood. She dreams up persons who once played a role in her life. Dreamworld and reality merge in this masterfully directed, beautifully photographed (by Vilmos Zsigmond) psycho drama. Brilliant score (by John Williams) and sound effects add to the unique feel of the film. A shattering portrait of a broken mind. Based on *In Search of Unicorns*, a story by Susannah York, the film's star.

**Imaginaerum** (2012, FIN/CDN) **C-86m. \*\*½ D:** Stobe Harju. Starring Marianne Farley, Quinn Lord, Francis X. McCarthy, Ilkka Villi, Ron Lea. Concept movie by Finnish symphonic metal band Nightwish has the look and feel of Tim Burton, visually beautiful, stylish, and with a dark story behind it. A 70-year-old composer suffers from dementia and memory loss. In a comatose state he dreams up his own 10-year-old self, who goes on an adventure with a scary snowman come alive. Meanwhile, his estranged daughter meets his former lover and learns about his troubled childhood. Sounds like it cannot fail, but the plot is weak and at times doesn't go anywhere. Concept is good but it barely sustains feature length. For fans of the band and those preferring form over content. Also known as IMAGINAERUM BY NIGHTWISH.

**Imagine Me & You** (2005, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Ol Parker. Starring Piper Perabo, Lena Headey, Matthew Goode, Celia Imrie, Anthony Head, Darren Boyd. Romantic comedy drama about newly-weds Perabo and Goode, who meet florist Headey at their wedding. The single woman is a lesbian, who subtly influences Perabo's sexual orientation – enough to make her split from her husband? Likable characters in realistic situations, this comedy drama is like a slice of life, if it wasn't for some redundancy and improbable twists. Still, an entertaining hour-and-a-half. Written by the director.

**Imago Mortis** (2009, ITA/SPA/EIR) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Stefano Bessoni. Starring Alberto Amarilla, Oona Chaplin, Leticia Dolera, Geraldine Chaplin, Jun Ichikawa. Atmospheric chiller about troubled film student Amarilla, who has frightening visions in the F.W. Murnau film school, a huge old mansion in the countryside. These ghostly apparitions point the way to a device built centuries ago to capture the image of death, the Imago Mortis. Slowly paced occasionally, but well-acted, well-scored and good-looking horror film also immensely benefits from the casting of Geraldine Chaplin and her grand-daughter Oona. Richard Stanley collaborated on the script.

**Imitation Game, The** (2014, USA/GBR) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Morten Tyldum. Starring Benedict Cumberbatch, Keira Knightley, Matthew Goode, Rory Kinnear, Allen Leech, Matthe Beard, Charles Dance, Mark Strong. Solid biopic set during World War Two, where mathematician Alan Turing (Cumberbatch) is assigned to break the infamous German encryption device ENIGMA and decipher the Nazi messages. It turns out that despite his brilliance, his character (and latent homosexuality) makes it difficult for him to be accepted. Excellent performance by Cumberbatch (he was nominated for the Oscar) and compelling storyline.

**Immoralità, L'** (1978, ITA) **C-109m.** \*\* D: Massimo Pirri. Starring Lisa Gastoni, Howard Ross, Karin Trenthepol, Andrea Franchetti, Volfrango Soldati, Mel Ferrer. A child killer (Ross) runs from the police and finds refuge in an abandoned cottage. He is helped by the neglected 11-year-old daughter of neurotic Gastoni and wheelchair-bound Ferrer. A strange relationship develops. Strange melodrama oversteps the line in several ways without being too interesting. The simulated sex scene (even if it probably uses a stand-in for Trenthepol) is pretty hard to take. First half is okay, but film deteriorates considerably in the second. Inauspicious score by Ennio Morricone. English title: THE COCK CROWS AT ELEVEN.

**Immortal Beloved** (1995, GBR/USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Bernard Rose. Starring Gary Oldman, Jeroen Krabbé, Isabella Rossellini, Johanna ter Steege, Marco Hofschneider, Miriam Margolyes, Barry Humphries, Valeria Golino, Bernard Rose. Fine, gripping bio-pic looks at the personality of great composer Ludwig van Beethoven (played with conviction by Gary Oldman), his obsession with music, his triumphs and, ultimately, his anger at slowly becoming deaf. All this is framed by his personal secretary Krabbé's attempts at finding Beethoven's 'immortal beloved', a mystery woman, to whom the late master has bequeathed his wealth. Writer-director Rose's quite unexpected follow-up to the horror shocker CANDYMAN (1992) is a well-scripted, well-photographed and especially well-scored historical drama. Beethoven's symphonies are ingeniously incorporated in the plot (kudos to music director Georg Solti). Unfortunately a little too long and slightly self-conscious, this might have been a great film.

**Immortel (ad vitam)** (2004, FRA/ITA/GBR) **C-103m.** \*\*\*½ D: Enki Bilal. Starring Linda Hardy, Thomas Kretschmann, Charlotte Rampling, Frédéric Pierrot, Thomas M. Pollard, Jean-Louis Trintignant. Futuristic thriller set in 2095 New York. Egyptian God Horus is getting ready to enter the human world from his floating pyramid to find a suitable woman to impregnate. He enters astronaut Kretschmann's body to make love to mysterious Hardy, who is being studied by scientist Rampling. Rather impenetrable graphic novel adaptation by the artist himself wallows in futuristic designs and ideas and constantly reminds one of films like BLADE RUNNER (1982), without having the necessary plot to make this as good. Some of the characters are computer-animated.

**Impasse** (1970, USA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Richard Benedict. Starring Burt Reynolds, Anne Francis, Lyle Bettger, Rodolfo Acosta, Jeff Corey, Clarke Gordon, Miko Mayama, Joanne Dalsass, Vic Diaz. Unimportant diversion, only interest springs from early Reynolds performance. Burt plays an adventurer in search for gold on the Philippines. Script quite complicated, Reynolds seems relaxed but you'll have forgotten the film completely in three days.

**Impatto Mortale** (1984, ITA) **C-81m.** \*½ D: Larry Ludman (=Fabrizio De Angelis). Starring Bo Svenson, Fred Williamson, Giovanni Lombardo Radice, Vincent Conte. Low-rent, profane buddy comedy about cop Svenson's chase for two killers, who are after a secret code that can predict winnings at casinos in Las Vegas. Williamson is his sidekick. A poor excuse for a movie, but at least Williamson and Svenson seem to be having a good time. Also known as GIANT KILLER and DEADLY IMPACT.

**Importance of Being Earnest, The** (2002, GBR/FRA/USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Oliver Parker. Starring Rupert Everett, Colin Firth, Frances O'Connor, Reese Witherspoon, Judi Dench, Tom Wilkinson, Anna Massey, Edward Fox, Patrick Godfrey. Seventh film version of the Oscar Wilde play (including the TV adaptations) has a game cast and good production values. Everett and Firth are two womanizing gentlemen in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, who both pretend to be called 'Ernest'. Then circumstances force them to play each other's alter ego, much to the confusion of the women they have fallen in love with. Seems overdone occasionally. Written by the director.

**Imposter, The** (2012, GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Bart Layton. Featuring Frédéric Bourdin, Nancy B. Fisher, Beverly Dollarhide. Absolutely outstanding documentary about a not-to-be-believed true story told by the controversial protagonist himself. In 1997 Spain, a 23-year-old drifter manages to fool authorities and pose as a 16-year-old from Texas that went missing in 1994. Even the family members – among the interviewees – don't get suspicious, being so happy that their missing son has returned. Completely baffling, with a twist that will shake you to the core. Brilliantly directed documentary also works so well, because Bourdin has so much charisma and everything is utterly real about the movie. A must-see. Good score by Anne Nikitin. Multiple award winner, including the BAFTA award for Best Documentary.

**Impostor** (2002, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Gary Fleder. Starring Gary Sinise, Madeleine Stowe, Vincent D'Onofrio, Tony Shalhoub, Mekhi Phifer, Tim Guinee, Lindsay Crouse, Elizabeth Pena. In the year 2079 humanity is at war with extra-terrestrials from Alpha Centauri, and Sinise has just developed a powerful weapon, when authorities claim that he is actually a replicant made to resemble himself. They want to kill him, but he manages to escape. Can he prove that he is human? Adaptation of a short story by Philip K. Dick almost seems like a TOTAL RECALL (1990) remake. Sinise is compelling in this sci-fi tale that otherwise remains rather undistinguished. Sat on the shelf for a year. R-rated director's cut runs 102m.

**Im Staub der Sterne** (1976, GDR) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Gottfried Kolditz. Starring Jana Brejchová, Ekkehard Schall, Alfred Struwe, Leon Niemczyk. Pretty bizarre, utopian sci-fi, one of only a handful produced in East Germany. A spaceship follows a rescue call to a distant planet and finds the civilization there is not in need of help. Obviously, the race in charge is hiding something. Unconvincing, rather cheap, but so outlandish it will keep you watching. A real curio, for buffs, with some rather adult scenes, even a few unsettling ones. Similar in tone to John Boorman's ZARDOZ (1974). Re-titled KRIEG DER PLANETEN. English title: IN THE DUST OF THE STARS.

**Inception** (2010, USA) **C-148m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Christopher Nolan. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ellen Page, Tom Hardy, Ken Watanabe, Cillian Murphy, Tom Berenger, Marion Cotillard, Pete Postlethwaite, Michael Caine, Lukas Haas. Highly acclaimed science-fiction drama from the director of THE DARK KNIGHT (2008). DiCaprio is an expert in extracting sensitive information from people by *entering* their dreams. He is then hired by Watanabe who wants an idea inserted into industrialite Murphy's subconscious, which would give him a monopoly on the world market. DiCaprio's crew then gets about creating a multi-level dream world, which has its dangers, though... Clever, almost *too* clever sci-fi puzzler, has a few startling parallels to the DiCaprio psycho thriller SHUTTER ISLAND (2010), but can stand well on its own. Not the masterpiece hailed by some, but an instant cult movie.

**In Cold Blood** (1967, USA) **134m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Richard Brooks. Starring Robert Blake, Scott Wilson, John Forsythe, Paul Stewart, Will Geer. Brilliant adaptation of Truman Capote's semidocumentary about two young delinquents who murder a family, and their subsequent trial and execution. Film is perfectly realized, direction, score, photography, acting and especially the script are all superb. An awe-inspiring achievement, one of the best films of the 1960s.

**Incontro nell'Ultimo Paradiso** (1982, ITA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Sabrina Siani, Rodolfo Bigotti, Renato Miracco, Sal Borgese. Naive jungle adventure about two pals who are stranded in the jungle and find the company of a blond primitive most stimulating. However, there are diamond smugglers nearby, who feel disturbed by the trio. Low-brow, low-grade, harmless adventure comedy that Lenzi made right after CANNIBAL FEROX! Some

of the slapstick is actually quite funny. Aka DAUGHTER OF THE JUNGLE, ADVENTURES IN LAST PARADISE.

**Inconvenient Truth, An** (2006, USA) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Davis Guggenheim. Compelling documentary by Al Gore based on his presentation about the extent and consequences of global warming. Facts and figures and given to demonstrate how vital this is to the future of mankind. A harrowing criticism of the Bush administration and America's role in global warming, Gore eloquently states his claim. Not exceptional as a film per se (the presentation is undercut by some remarks regarding Gore's private life), but compelling nonetheless.

**Incorrigible, L'** (1975, FRA) **C-99m**. \*\*½ D: Philippe de Broca. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Geneviève Bujold, Julien Guiomar, Charles Gérard, Daniel Ceccaldi, Capucine, Andréa Ferréol, Elizabeth Teissier, Anémone. Belmondo's energetic, restless performance as the title character, a swindler, is the whole show in this comedy based on a novel by Alex Varoux. Released from prison, Belmondo resumes his fraudulent ways and gets himself in trouble, while wooing a young woman (Bujold). Not much plot, but quite funny. Belmondo's fourth collaboration with director de Broca (LES TRIBULATIONS D'UN CHINOIS EN CHINE). Score by Georges Delerue. English title: THE INCORRIGIBLE.

**Incredibles, The** (2004, USA) **C-115m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Brad Bird. Starring (the voices of) Craig T. Nelson, Holly Hunter, Samuel L. Jackson, Jason Lee, Dominique Louis, Teddy Newton, Elizabeth Pena, Brad Bird, John Ratzenberger. Pixar's follow-up to FINDING NEMO (2003) was an equally big box-office hit. A family of former superheroes, who live undercover (unhappily) in suburbia, are suddenly called back to action. Full of great animation and ideas, but story is pat and not really aimed at kids (remember SPY KIDS?) and film is really just one big orgy of destruction. It climaxes in the thrashing and wrecking of an entire city, which puts real acts of terrorism to shame. Still, it won an Oscar for Best Animated Feature. Adults may enjoy the countless references to film classics.

**Incredible Shrinking Man, The** (1957, USA) **81m**. \*\*\* D: Jack Arnold. Starring Grant Williams, Randy Stuart, April Kent, Paul Langton, Raymond Bailey. Classic B-movie with a title that explains it all. Everyman Williams is exposed to a strange mist and mysteriously starts shrinking – until he's no bigger than a match! Then the real problems begin. Serious, dramatic, compelling fantasy criticized nuclear testing. Based on the novel *The Shrinking Man* by Richard Matheson (his first screen credit).

**Incubo sulla Città Contaminata** (1980, ITA/SPA) **C-92m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Mel Ferrer, Hugo Stiglitz, Laura Trotter. Radioactive zombies arrive by plane and wreak havoc among the population of a big city. Basically just another bad DAWN OF THE DEAD imitation but slightly more intelligent than others. Well-edited splatter movie also comes up with a nice score. U.S. title: CITY OF THE WALKING DEAD. Also known as NIGHTMARE CITY.

**Incubus** (1982, CDN) **C-96m**. M D: John Hough. Starring John Cassavetes, Kerrie Keane, Helen Hughes, Erin Flannery, Duncan McIntosh, John Ireland. Vague horror film about surgeon Cassavetes and his attempts to find out what is killing many young women and why it is trying to impregnate them. Nihilistic plot, atmosphere in typically mindless and pretentious early 80s horror shocker. Wait for a rerun of THE EXORCIST instead. Cassavetes is wasted in this adaptation of Ray Russel's novel.

**Independence Day** (1996, USA) **C-153m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Roland Emmerich. Starring Bill Pullman, Mary McDonnell, Jeff Goldblum, Judd Hirsch, Margaret Colin, Will Smith, Vivica A. Fox, Randy Quaid, Robert Loggia, James Rebhorn, Adam Baldwin, Brent Spiner, Harry Connick Jr, Harry Belafonte. Emmerich's immensely successful, immensely dumb blockbuster: Aliens have decided to besiege the Earth, and they are about to strike with

incredible fierceness. Excellent (Oscar-winning) CGI effects keep you entertained for some time, but the script is so full of contrivances you'll be shaking your head at every ludicrous plot twist. The characters are especially annoying. Originally released at 145m.

**Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull** (2008, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Harrison Ford, Cate Blanchett, Karen Allen, Shia LaBeouf, Ray Winstone, John Hurt, Jim Broadbent. Harrison Ford's return as adventurer Indiana Jones is a disappointment for various reasons. First of all, Ford's too old for the role, and Allen as his sidekick (from the first movie) doesn't fit into the 1950s (when the movie is set). LaBeouf is an unlikely action hero, and the story – a mind-bending concoction about Jones' quest for El Dorado and extra-terrestrial (Roswellian) involvement – is a mere excuse for showing off some (unbelievable) CGI stunts. No imagination or cleverness in this one. Even John Williams' score sounds artificial. Written by David Koepp, story by George Lucas and Jeff Nathanson.

**Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade** (1989, USA) **C-127m. \*\*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Harrison Ford, Sean Connery, Denholm Elliott, Alison Doody, John Rhys-Davies, Julian Glover, River Phoenix, Michael Byrne, Alex Hyde-White. Last part of the Indiana Jones trilogy has the history professor and adventurer Indy (Ford) team up with his father (Connery) to find the holy grail, which also the Nazis are after. Episodic plot has very little appeal and film lives off the trademark cliffhanger stunts and digital wizardry of the Spielberg factory. Quite funny, mostly thanks to Connery's performance. Perfect for kids, but adults may not really enjoy this outing, unless the little child inside of them has not disappeared.

**Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom** (1984, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Harrison Ford, Kate Capshaw, Jonathan Ke Quan, Amrish Puri, Roshan Seth, Philip Stone, Dan Aykroyd. Top-notch Spielberg adventure, a rollercoaster ride of a movie with lightning pace and ample amount of humor. Indiana Jones, the professor and star of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (1981), played perfectly by Ford, is catapulted into an adventure that takes him deep into Asia and finally India, where he is confronted with an evil, subterranean cult. Exhilarating thrill-ride may be a little too dark and violent for small kids (even some adults), but Spielberg doesn't give you time to breathe. This is entertainment at its best. Beware some edited prints. Fine cinematography by Douglas Slocombe, perfect score by John Williams. Spielberg, cowriter Lucas, Frank Marshall and Anthony Powell appear unbilled. Followed by INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE in 1989.

**Indiscreet** (1958, GBR) **C-100m. \*\*½ D:** Stanley Donen. Starring Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Cecil Parker. Pleasant fluff about finances expert Grant and his budding relationship with stage actress Bergman. He pretends to be married, however, because he wants to remain a bachelor. Stars save this otherwise shallow melodrama. Based on Norman Krasna's play *Kind Sir*.

**In Dreams** (1999, USA) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** Neil Jordan. Starring Annette Bening, Aidan Quinn, Stephen Rea, Robert Downey, Jr., Paul Guilfoyle, Katie Sagona, Prudence Wright Holmes, Krystal Benn. Near an artificial lake, which flooded a whole town in the 1960s, wife and mother Bening lives with her family. Soon she is terrified by haunting dreams, which turn out to be 'fed' to her by a serial killer, enabling her to see both the past, present and future deeds of the psychopath. When her own child is killed, the visions drive her insane and it's up to psychiatrist Rea to find out whether her visions correspond to reality. Stunningly filmed, stylish horror thriller (with shades of Jordan's earlier THE COMPANY OF WOLVES) is flawed by frenzied pace that doesn't camouflage the improbabilities but makes the viewer feel dissatisfied with the presentation of the story instead. Interesting throughout, even

sweat-inducing, but only recommended warmly to followers of the director. Based on the novel *Doll's Eyes* by Bari Wood. First-rate cinematography by Darius Khondji (DELICATESSEN, SE7EN, THE NINTH GATE).

**Inferno** (1980, ITA) **C-107m. \*\*\* D:** Dario Argento. Starring Leigh McCloskey, Irene Miracle, Sacha Pitoëff, Daria Nicolodi, Eleonora Giorgi, Veronica Lazar, Alida Valli, Gabriele Lavia, Feodor Chaliapin. Visually magnificent, surreal horror opus, the second part of the 'Three Mothers'-trilogy: In New York a young woman uncovers the secret of the house she lives in. It may be inhabited by Mater Tenebrarum, the Mother of Darkness. She writes a letter to her brother in Rome, asking him to visit her. Once he arrives all hell breaks loose... This is the film that expresses best the relationship between beauty and terror, which is the trademark of all of the director's films. Incredibly stylish camerawork, lighting, art direction/set decoration glorify a film whose narrative is often barely there. A feast for the senses; inferior to *SUSPIRIA* only in excitement, not in style. Beginning and end are best parts, mid-section is a little too aimless. The underwater sequence, staged sans credit by Mario Bava, is especially chilling. Fine classical score by Keith Emerson. Mater Lacrimarum, the Mother of Tears, has a brief appearance at the auditorium in Rome. Written by the director, loosely based on Thomas de Quincey's *Suspiria de Profundis*. Followed by *LA TERZA MADRE* in 2007.

**Inferno** (2016, USA) **C-121m. \*\*½ D:** Ron Howard. Starring Tom Hanks, Felicity Jones, Omar Sy, Irrfan Khan, Ben Foster. Third Robert Langdon movie based on the novels by Dan Brown: Hanks wakes up in Florence with no memory of the last few days. An emergency room doctor (Jones) helps him escape from henchmen that are after a token and a deadly virus that may wipe out the world... Rushed, almost hectic introduction sets the tone and pace for this thriller. There's no time for character development or deeper explanations, so the movie stays cold and feels like a product. Howard's shaky direction doesn't help.

**Inglourious Basterds** (2009, USA/GER) **C-153m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Brad Pitt, Mélanie Laurent, Christoph Waltz, Eli Roth, Michael Fassbender, Diane Kruger, Daniel Brühl, Til Schweiger, Gedeon Burkhard, August Diehl, Mike Myers, Julie Dreyfus, Rod Taylor, Bo Svenson, Enzo G. Castellari, voice of Harvey Keitel, narrated by Samuel L. Jackson. War comedy done in Tarantino's inimitable style interweaves three different plot strands. Pitt leads a group of mercenaries into 1944 France to assassinate Hitler, Jewish cinema owner Laurent finds herself romanced by German soldier-turned-movie star Brühl and takes this opportunity to get her revenge on third main character, SS-general Waltz, who killed her family in languid spaghetti western opening. Loosely based on the Italian war actioner *QUEL MALEDETTO TRENO BLINDATO* (1978), Tarantino's loses himself in film references again, but his plot this time is weak and poorly paced, not to mention overlong. And for a comedy there are just not enough laughs. Originally 190m., film was cut down to present length, with several actors' scenes deleted (Maggie Cheung, Cloris Leachman).

**In Her Shoes** (2005, USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Curtis Hanson. Starring Cameron Diaz, Toni Collette, Shirley MacLaine, Mark Feuerstein, Ken Howard, Candice Azzara, Brooke Smith, Jennifer Weiner. Comedy drama about lawyer Collette, whose life is constantly disrupted by her do-no-good sister Diaz. When Diaz even sleeps with her boyfriend, Collette breaks all ties with her. Jobless, homeless Diaz runs away to their estranged grandmother MacLaine. Refreshingly true-to-life, cliché-free story, though some scenes obviously lack the resonance they had in the novel by Jennifer Weiner, which this is based on. Its relatively slow pace results in slight overlength. Coproduced by director Hanson, Ridley and Tony Scott.

**Inhyeongsa** (2004, KOR) **C-93m. \*\*½ D:** Jeong Yong-ki. Starring Kim Yu-mi, Lim Eun-kyeong, Shin Hyeong-tak, Ok Ji-young. Korean horror film about five strangers who are invited to a mansion in the woods for a photo shooting. It turns out there's a doll maker living there, who tells them about the life of dolls and their vengeance when they are abandoned. Rather shallow horror with stylistic flourishes picks up in the second half, with some convincing performances. There's an Italian, almost Dario Argento-esque feel over the proceedings. Written by the director. English title: THE DOLL MASTER.

**Inkheart** (2008, USA/GBR/GER) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Iain Softley. Starring Brendan Fraser, Sienna Guillory, Eliza Bennett, Paul Bettany, Helen Mirren, Andy Serkis, Jennifer Connelly, Jim Broadbent. Disappointing filmization of Cornelia Funke's fantasy book about Fraser, who travels the world with his daughter looking for a special book. His special gift – everything he reads aloud becomes real – is like a curse to him. To it he owes the disappearance of his wife, and there is a horde of villains led by Serkis who need him for their own plans. Fantasy adventure owes so much to THE NEVERENDING STORY (1984) that one wonders why Funke wasn't accused of plagiarism in the first place. Fraser's casual hero and Softley's unimaginative direction don't make this convincing, let alone riveting. Good production values, though. Photographed by Roger Pratt.

**Inner Senses** (2002, HGK) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Law Chi-Leung. Starring Leslie Cheung, Karena Lam (=Lam Kar Yan), Maggie Poon, Waise Lee, Valerie Chow. Uneven but well-made mix between ghost story and romantic drama about psychiatrist Cheung, whose latest patient Lam is complaining about two ghosts that roam her apartment. In a chilling twist, the tables are later turned on the unbelieving therapist. The melodramatic, heart-felt finale makes the movie. Even more chilling when you consider that Cheung (A BETTER TOMORROW, A CHINESE GHOST STORY) committed suicide by jumping off a building a year after this movie premiered. Excellent score by Peter Kam.

**Innocents, The** (1961, GBR) **B&W-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Jack Clayton. Starring Deborah Kerr, Peter Wyngarde, Megs Jenkins, Michael Redgrave, Martin Stephens, Pamela Franklin. Outstanding gothic horror drama mostly works on a psychological level: Teacher Kerr takes up job at a remote mansion looking after two children, whose father doesn't have time for them. She soon learns that her predecessor killed herself, and her – now dead – lover still exudes a powerful influence over the children. Then eerie things start to happen... Superbly acted, especially by Kerr, with atmospheric cinematography (by Freddie Francis, assisted by OPERA's Ronnie Taylor) and creative direction, this stands as one of the best examples of gothic horror today. With its use of a (striking) children's lullaby, this also definitely influenced the works of Dario Argento. Based on the novel *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James, coscripted by Truman Capote.

**Innocents aux Mains Sales, Les** (1975, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-121m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Romy Schneider, Rod Steiger, Francois Maistre, Paolo Giusti, Francois Perrot, Hans-Christian Blech, Pierre Santini, Jean Rochefort, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Deliberately paced but fascinating crime drama from one of the French masters, about beautiful Schneider, who takes a lover to help her get rid of her alcoholic husband Steiger. After the elderly man goes missing, the police are soon suspecting her, but who will get the last laugh on whom? Excellent acting, brilliant direction make up for overlength. Based on Richard Neely's novel *The Damned Innocents*. Fine photographed by Jean Rabier, score by Pierre Jansen. English titles: DIRTY HANDS, and INNOCENTS WITH DIRTY HANDS.

**Inn of the Damned** (1976, AUS) **C-112m. \*½ D:** Terry Bourke. Starring Judith Anderson, Alex Cord, Micheal Craig, Joseph Fürst, Tony Bonner, John Meillon. Unusual western/horror mix, unfortunately with way too much comic relief. Guests check in at Anderson's motel but

never leave. Sheriff Cord tries to shed light on a mysterious disappearance. Terrible score, amateurish mise-en-scene. Avoid.

**I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry** (2007, USA) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Dennis Dugan. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Jessica Biel, Dan Aykroyd, Ving Rhames, Steve Buscemi, Nicholas Turturro, Richard Chamberlain, Dennis Dugan, Rob Schneider. Funny comedy about two fire fighters, one of whom (James) has recently lost his wife, and in order to make sure his kids have some kind of security if he also dies, he asks his buddy (Sandler), a womanizer, to marry him in liberal Canada. When a federal inspector comes to look if they are really gay, they have to act that way and get into all kinds of troubles, privately and in their male-only job. Lots of gags, most of which work in this comedy, though its contrivances are hard to overlook.

**Inseminoid** (1981, GBR) **C-92m. SCOPE BOMB** D: Norman J. Warren. Starring Robin Clarke, Jennifer Ashley, Stephanie Beacham, Victoria Tennant, Judy Geeson. Terrible sci-fi horror about a group of astronauts, who discover an alien life-form on a distant planet and soon find themselves under attack. Cheap effects, sloppily acted, a quickshot production made to cash in on the success of *ALIEN* (1979). Dick Pope was camera operator. Released in the U.S. as *HORROR PLANET*.

**Inside Llewyn Davis** (2013, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-104m.** \*\*\* D: Joel and Ethan Coen. Starring Oscar Isaac, Carey Mulligan, Justin Timberlake, Ethan Phillips, Robin Bartlett, John Goodman. The Coens stay true to their underdog characters with this drama set in 1961, where folk singer Isaac is probably spending the worst week of his life, drifting from one place to the next in search of accommodation and money (and a cat), meeting all kinds of weird, but also normal characters. Another *BARTON FINK* variation, although not nearly as stylish or uncompromising, this is a drama with resonance, but also quite downbeat after a while.

**Inside Man** (2006, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Spike Lee. Starring Denzel Washington, Clive Owen, Jodie Foster, Christopher Plummer, Willem Dafoe, Ken Leung. Another stylish Spike Lee joint about bank robber Owen, who has taken several hostages and plans to pull off the ultimate heist. Plummer, the owner of the bank, wants Foster to get something before Owen does. Is detective Washington smart enough to keep the upper hand? Funny, smart variation of the genre, with a fine performance by Washington. Screenplay by Russell Gewirtz.

**Inside Out** (2015, USA) **C-94m.** \*\*\*½ D: Pete Docter, Ronnie Del Carmen. Starring (the voices of) Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Richard Kind, Bill Hader, Diane Lane, Kyle MacLachlan, Frank Oz. Ingenious idea for a movie: All our feelings, joy, sadness, anger etc. reside in our head as little creatures who guide our actions. When an 11-year-old girl moves to San Francisco with her parents, the pillars of her life are shaken to the core. Her emotions (most of all Joy, played by Poehler) try to battle the deterioration of her self-confidence, including the loss of some core memories that might turn from happy ones to sad ones. Joy and Sadness unvoluntarily embark on a dangerous trip through the girl's subconscious. Fantasy adventure is clever, perhaps a tad too clever and calculated, but any movie that endorses family values and shows the power of memory in such a way will hit home emotionally – especially if it's as well made as this Pixar production.

**Insider, The** (1999, USA) **C-157m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Michael Mann. Starring Al Pacino, Russell Crowe, Christopher Plummer, Diane Venora, Philip Baker Hall, Lindsay Crouse, Debi Mazar, Stephen Tobolowsky, Colm Feore, Bruce McGill, Gina Gershon, Michael Gambon, Rip Torn, Lynne Thigpen, Wings Hauser. Pacino plays the producer of *60 Minutes*, a television news magazine, who stumbles on a paper incriminating the tobacco industry and may have found

a crown witness in scientist Crowe – who has just been fired from one of the biggest tobacco firms in the U.S. Is there the chance of having him give a public interview without breaking the secrecy clause? Masterfully cast drama tackles a serious problem but is also overlong and loses narrative momentum more than once. Mann's directorial style may be an approximation to Lars von Trier's Dogma rules, providing a high degree of authenticity. Perhaps a little too American in its style and tone for European viewers (similar to APOLLO 13 and NIXON). Based on a magazine story by Marie Brenner.

**Insidious** (2010, USA/CDN) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Wan. Starring Patrick Wilson, Rose Byrne, Ty Simpkins, Lin Shaye, Leigh Whannell, Angus Sampson, Barbara Hershey. Director Wan's first horror film after DEAD SILENCE (2007) is disappointing but still pretty scary: A family with three kids move into a new house and find that it's haunted, which may be the explanation for their son falling into an inexplicable coma. Even moving houses doesn't help much... what's the mystery surrounding the family? After consulting experts, it turns out that the boy is being pulled over to the other side by a powerful demon. Classic haunted house story offers us a handful of hair-raising moments, but this EXORCIST-meets-PARANORMAL ACTIVITY story (scripted by Leigh Whannell) has been done too many times before. Recommended to horror fans, but it somehow leaves you wanting. Followed by INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 2 (2013).

**Insidious: Chapter 2** (2013, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Wan. Starring Patrick Wilson, Rose Byrne, Ty Simpkins, Lin Shaye, Barbara Hershey, Steve Coulter, Leigh Whannell, Angus Sampson. Sequel to INSIDIOUS (2010) shows the horror isn't over for the Lambert family. They move into the house of her mother, but the ghost of the old woman seems to have followed them... has she possessed father Wilson? Has the same uncanny atmosphere as the original, but aside from typical jump scares, it's rather tame. Subplot concerning parapsychologists draws it out unnecessarily.

**Insidious: Chapter 3** (2015, USA/CDN) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Leigh Whannell. Starring Dermot Mulroney, Stefanie Scott, Angus Sampson, Leigh Whannell, Lin Shaye, James Wan. Rather pointless prequel (set 3 years before Chapter 1 and 2) starts okay, then bogs down. Teenager Scott tries to contact her dead mother, conjures up a demon instead, which medium Shaye tries to battle. Simply a series of jump scares without any innovation. By now, after all the paranormal stuff, it's not enough any more to think up a haunting and make a movie about it. Whannell (SAW, COOTIES) also scripted.

**Insomnia** (1997, NOR) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Erik Skjoldbjærg. Starring Stellan Skarsgård, Sverre Anker Ousdal, Bjorn Floberg, Giske Armand, Maria Bonnevie. Criminologist Skarsgård travels beyond the polar circle (where the sun doesn't set for months) to investigate the murder of a teenage girl. Soon he finds himself head-over-heels involved in the mystery and comes closer to the killer than he may wish. Unconventional crime drama, where the mystery surrounding the murder is far less important than the main character's own problems. Unfortunately, this lacks any genuine suspense or action and is not terribly interesting, either. Some liked this anyway. Hollywood remake followed in 2002.

**Insomnia** (2002, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Christopher Nolan. Starring Al Pacino, Robin Williams, Hilary Swank, Maura Tierney, Martin Donovan, Nicky Katt, Paul Dooley. A rare movie: A Hollywood remake of a non-U.S. film that surpasses the original in almost every way. Pacino plays a weary police detective, who is sent to Alaska with his partner to solve a murder case. Problems in the department at home and the midnight sun complicate the case, as the investigation takes unlikely turns. Supreme filmmaking by the director of MEMENTO (2000). Pacino is fine as usual, excellent use of David Julyan's score. Script also improves on the original in terms of pace and character depth. Only fault is that the story

has been told before (which those who have not seen the 1997 shouldn't mind). Recommended.

**Inspecteur Lavardin** (1986, FRA/SUI) **C-100m**. \*\*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Poiret, Jean-Claude Brialy, Bernadette Lafont, Jean-Luc Bideau, Jacques Dacqmine. Sequel to director Chabrol's successful *POULET AU VINAIGRE* (1985) has the title character investigate the murder of a prominent member of society in a little sea-side village. As usual, Chabrol exposes the bourgeoisie as a pretentious, seemingly pious social class, with people hiding skeletons in their closets. Deliberately paced and not as biting as other Chabrol films. Followed by four related TV movies (*LES DOSSIERS SECRETS DE L'INSPECTEUR LAVARDIN*).

**Instinct** (1999, USA) **C-126m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jon Turteltaub. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Donald Sutherland, Maura Tierney, George Dzundza. Hopkins plays an anthropologist, who was lost in the African jungle and is now returned by Rwandan authorities, because he has attacked and killed several hunters. The man refuses to speak and seems to have turned into a wild animal during his stay with mountain gorillas. Psychoanalyst Gooding, Jr., accepts the challenge of making Hopkins fit for a trial. Engrossing, compelling drama, despite overlength. Hopkins and Sutherland shine, Gooding, Jr., is good in a difficult role. Suggested by Daniel Quinn's novel *Ishmael*. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Internship, The** (2013, USA) **C-119m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Shawn Levy. Starring Vince Vaughn, Owen Wilson, Rose Byrne, Aasif Mandvi, Max Minghella, Will Ferrell. Disappointing comedy about two salesmen, who lose their job and decide to go for an internship at Google, where they meet all kinds of nerdy, funny, clever characters and must compete against them in silly battles. Some funny bits involving Ferrell, but the other vignettes are generally laughless and tasteless, if not sexist and degrading. Only interesting thing is insight into Google's headquarters, but if it's really like that is anyone's guess.

**Interstellar** (2014, USA/GBR/CDN) **C-169m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Christopher Nolan. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain, John Lithgow, Michael Caine, Casey Affleck, Mackenzie Foy, William Devane, Matt Damon. Science-fiction epic set in the Earth's near future, where dust storms and environmental problems have led to harvest failures. It seems the end of mankind is near. Former astronaut McConaughey, now a corn farmer, receives the chance to travel through a recently-discovered wormhole near Saturn and find a new home planet. With a heavy heart he leaves his family and joins a select crew in the ultimate mission of mankind. Visually spectacular space opera stands comparison with other good sci-fi mission movies, just perhaps not *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* (1968), which it most likely aspires to. The screenplay has some drawbacks, like the uninvolved plot set-up, some unnecessary mission detours and a distinct lack in (supporting) character depth. Despite that, the film is never boring and Hans Zimmer's score is excellent. If only McConaughey's Texan drawl was more intelligible. Written by the director and his brother Jonathan. Oscar winner for Best Visual Effects.

**Interview, The** (2014, USA) **C-112m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen. Starring James Franco, Seth Rogen, Lizzy Kaplan, Randall Park, Diana Bang, Rob Lowe, Eminem. Outrageous satire about talk show producer Rogen and host Franco, who come up with the idea to interview none other than North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un, who happens to be a fan of their show. Enter CIA agent Kaplan, who tells them that this would be a great chance to kill the man. Low-brow, with lots of sex and fart jokes but immensely funny, Franco is simply great! This almost never made it to theaters after Sony was attacked by hackers. It then received a limited theatrical release and was a big VOD hit.

**Interview With the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles** (1994, USA) **C-122m.** \*\*\* D: Neil Jordan. Starring Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt, Antonio Banderas, Stephen Rea, Christian Slater, Kirsten Dunst, Domiziana Giordano. Atmospheric adaptation of Anne Rice's excellent novel about a vampire, who, in 20<sup>th</sup> century San Francisco, tells a reporter about his 200-year existence, which he feels has been a curse. Beautiful production sometimes feels more like a vehicle for its stars than a vampire movie, but is nevertheless compelling. Good score, stylish direction, a fine modern vampire film. Written for the screen by Anne Rice.

**In the Cut** (2003, AUS/USA/GBR) **C-119m.** \*\*\* D: Jane Campion. Starring Meg Ryan, Mark Ruffalo, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Nick Damici, Kevin Bacon, Jane Campion. Fine, atmospheric erotic thriller with a surprisingly sexy Ryan. She plays a literature teacher in Manhattan, who is drawn into a murder investigation, when a body is found in her yard. A serial killer is dismembering his victims, and weary detective Ruffalo could also be a suspect. Good characterizations of emotionally unstable people, excellent camerawork, this is sometimes difficult to enjoy, but a well-made thriller. Director Campion adapted Susanna Moore's novel with the author herself. Coproduced by Nicole Kidman.

**In the Line of Duty** (1986, HGK) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: David Chang. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Hiroyuki Sanada, Michael Wong. Slam-bang action thriller Hong Kong-style, about three police officers, who battle a crime lord, after one of his partners has killed Sanada's family. Uneven plot but first-rate action set-pieces, furiously staged and edited. Followed by two sequels. Also known as ROYAL WARRIORS and ULTRA FORCE.

**In the Mood for Love** (2000, HGK/FRA/THA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Wong Kar Wai. Starring Maggie Cheung, Tony Leung, Siu Ping Lam, Rebecca Pan. Intoxicating mood piece set in the 1960s about a man and a woman who slowly realize that their spouses are cheating on them. A relationship between the two slowly develops, without either's determination. Score by Mike Galasso and Shigeru Umebayashi works wonders in this admittedly slight, slowly paced movie. The stars are in fine form. Glossy photography by Christopher Doyle.

**In the Winter Dark** (1998, AUS) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: James Bogle. Starring Brenda Blethyn, Ray Barrett, Richard Roxburgh, Miranda Otto. Mystery drama set in the Australian countryside where several neighbors are alarmed by mysterious animal slayings at night. Elderly Blethyn and Barrett have strange visions or premonitions, whereas loner Roxburgh befriends pregnant, mentally unstable Otto. Probably made more sense in the novel on which this is based, but it's fascinating as it is, solidly made and well-scored.

**In Time** (2011, USA) **C-109m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Andrew Niccol. Starring Justin Timberlake, Amanda Seyfried, Cillian Murphy, Olivia Wilde. Intriguing science-fiction thriller set in a future where time is the only currency. If you run out of time, you die, the rich have decades, even centuries on their digital arm clocks, the poor live in ghettos on a day-to-day basis. Poor factory worker Timberlake chances to get more than a hundred years from a rich guy and tries to change the system like a future Robin Hood. He even takes it on the lam with rich girl Seyfried, but timekeeper Murphy is in hot pursuit. Good performances in intriguing, slightly uneven storyline. Excellent production design (love those Dodge Challengers of the future!), highly recommended to sci-fi fans. Written by director Niccol (GATTACA).

**Intocabili, Gli** (1969, ITA) **C-96m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Giuliano Montaldo. Starring John Cassavetes, Britt Ekland, Peter Falk, Gabriele Ferzetti, Luigi Pistilli, Florinda Bolkan, Tony Kendall, Gena Rowlands. Crime potboiler about Cassavetes, who is released from prison and immediately plans to rob a Las Vegas casino controlled by the mob. He picks up hot Ekland along the way. Interesting cast – to say the least – unfortunately saddled with a second-rate script. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Score by Ennio Morricone boasts an incredibly bizarre

opening theme. Based on the novel by Ovid Demaris. Absolutely pristine BluRay transfer retains stunning picture quality. English title: MACHINE GUN MCCAIN.

**Intolerable Cruelty** (2003, USA) **C-100m**. \*\* D: Joel Coen. Starring George Clooney, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Geoffrey Rush, Cedric the Entertainer, Edward Herrmann, Paul Adelstein, Richard Jenkins, Billy Bob Thornton, Bruce Campbell. Big disappointment from the Coen brothers about divorce lawyer Clooney (about the best one there is), who meets his match in beautiful, infatuated Zeta-Jones, who becomes his adversary in several cases (including a very private one). A few scattered laughs, but look for satire in vain. Only the performances by the stars are good, although Zeta-Jones changes her opinion so many times, her character becomes totally incredible, and the supporting cast are not very-well integrated. In fact, it seems like the Coens only did the casting (some of their typically weird characters pop up) and filmed the scenes about Clooney's boss. This was their first film where they had cowriters – let's hope they rely on their own ideas next time. Score by Carter Burwell.

**Into the Grizzly Maze** (2015, USA/CDN) **C-94m**. \*½ D: David Hackl. Starring James Marsden, Piper Perabo, Billy Bob Thornton, Thomas Jane, Scott Glenn, Michael McManus. Contrived adventure thriller with stereotypical characters. Marsden returns to his Alaskan home turf and sets out into the wilderness to find his wife. However, there's a large grizzly bear on the prowl, and expert Thornton says he's not hungry, he's just pissed. Almost worthless thriller, you feel sorry for the bear.

**Into the Night** (1985, USA) **C-115m**. \*\*\* D: John Landis. Starring Jeff Goldblum, Michelle Pfeiffer, Dan Aykroyd, David Cronenberg, Richard Franklin, John Landis, Bruce McGill, Daniel Petrie, Paul Mazursky, Paul Bartel, Carl Perkins, Don Siegel, Jim Henson, David Bowie, Art Evans, Jack Arnold, Amy Heckerling, Roger Vadim, Lawrence Kasdan, Richard Farnsworth, Vera Miles, Irene Papas, Clu Gulager, Jonathan Demme. Popular thriller comedy about luckless Goldblum, who helps out mysterious blonde Pfeiffer one night, and gets drawn into mad-cap adventure, where they mostly run from bumbling Arab terrorists. A typical Landis contrivance, only this time it lacks the spirit of *BLUES BROTHERS* (1980) or the edge of *AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (1981). Goldblum and Pfeiffer are good, though, and there are a lot of directors to spot in cameo roles.

**Into the Wild** (2007, USA) **C-148m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Sean Penn. Starring Emile Hirsch, Marcia Gay Harden, William Hurt, Jena Malone, Brian Dierker, Catherine Keener, Vince Vaughn, Kristen Stewart, Hal Holbrook. Inspiring story about real-life Chris McCandless, who in the early 90s broke away from his parents after graduating from college to live a life on the road, with freedom the only thing he desired. Burning his money and abandoning his car, he treks south to Mexico and finally ends up in Alaska after a two-year odyssey. Evocative, well-directed, film is long but engrossing, with a priceless soundtrack written and performed by Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder. Makes you question a lot of things you take for granted. Based on the book by Jon Krakauer.

**Intruder** (1988, USA) **C-88m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Scott Spiegel. Starring Elizabeth Cox, Danny Hicks, Renee Estevez, Sam Raimi, Ted Raimi. Several young shop assistants have to work after hours and are menaced by a killer who slices them up one by one. Slasher movie comes up with standard plot, but direction is inventive and film is not without a sense of humor. Suspenseful, if also a little poorly timed during the gory attack scenes. A treat for genre fans, who have seen a lot of real trash in their lives. Never given full theatrical release, despite having Lawrence Bender (*RESERVOIR DOGS*, *PULP FICTION*) as a producer.

**Intruder, The** (1997, HGM) **C-87m**. \*½ D: Tsang Kan-Cheung. Starring Moses Chan, Lai Yiu-Cheung, Wong Man-Wai, Wu Chien-Lien. Mean-spirited thriller about a Chinese woman,

who kills a prostitute, assumes her identity and immigrates into Hong Kong. There, she finds a victim in a taxi driver, whom she brutally victimizes. No good guys, thus no relief from proceedings, a depressing movie. First-time director Tsang later cowrote SHAOLIN SOCCER. Co-produced by Johnny To. Also known as DARK INTRUDER.

**Intruders** (2011, USA/GBR/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Juan Carlos Fresnadillo. Starring Clive Owen, Carice Van Houten, Daniel Brühl. Director Fresnadillo's follow-up to the zombie sequel 28 WEEKS LATER (2007) is rather simple, straight-forward horror thriller about a haunting. Two parallel stories unfold, both featuring children (a little boy, and a twelve-year-old girl) who are haunted by a monster called Hollowface. He lurks in the dark corner of their room, waiting to steal their faces. Clive Owen plays the girl's father, who's the only grown-up who can see the apparition. Film builds too many suspense scenes where nothing really happens. Starts well, but becomes standard fare soon and doesn't recover. And you can see the story revelation coming a long way.

**Intruder Within, The** (1981, USA) **C-99m. \*½** D: Peter Carter. Starring Chad Everett, Joseph Bottoms, Jennifer Warren, Rockne Tarkington, Lynda Mason Greene, Matt Craven. Stupid title for a stupid movie: Workers on an oil rig are terrorized by an ALIEN-like creature that grows at an enormous rate (from rat to man-size). Its victims become zombie-like madmen. Badly paced, badly scripted, made for TV. That should be enough to turn you off. Creature designed by H.R. Giger, ripping off his own classic work for ALIEN (1979). Also known as THE LUCIFER RIG.

**Inugami** (2001, JAP) **C-106m. \*\*\*** D: Masato Harada. Starring Yuki Amami, Atsuro Watabe, Eugene Harada, Shiho Fujimura, Kazuhiro Yamaji. Well-made drama with fantasy and horror touches: School teacher Watabe arrives in a small village some time before starting work there, becomes entranced with surroundings and introvert paper maker Amami. Her family clan must protect ancient urns, which house the spirits of the Inugami, the spirits of dog gods. A bit too vague and esoteric but well-directed and evocative. Based on a novel by Masako Bando, adapted by director Harada. The Inugami were the subject of several previous movies (most notably in 1954 and 1976).

**Invaders from Mars** (1986, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*½** D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Karen Black, Hunter Carson, Timothy Bottoms, Laraine Newman, James Karen, Bud Cort, Louise Fletcher. Modernized remake of the 1953 sci-fi classic about a boy, who witnesses the landing of a spacecraft and soon realizes that aliens are taking over the bodies of everyone in town. Along with a teacher (Black) he tries to flee. Unconvincing, pretentious fare, with the aliens/monsters just plain laughable. Despite okay production values, this one just doesn't work. Originally shown at 100m.

**Invasion of the Blood Farmers** (1972, USA) **C-77m. M** D: Ed Adlum. Starring Norman Kelley, Tanna Hunter, Bruce Detrick, Paul Craig Jennings, Cynthia Fleming. Terrible horror trash about a group of druids who are looking for a certain blood type in order to resurrect their evil queen Fleming. Amateurish, very gruesome (but not that violent). This one only if you must. Also shown at 84m., but don't expect this version to be an improvement.

**Invasori, Gli** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-77m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Cameron Mitchell, George Ardisson, Andrea Checchi, Françoise Christophe, Ellen Kessler, Alice Kessler, Folco Lulli, Raf Baldassarre. Ambitious mini-epic with a Shakespearean plot: Twin brothers are separated as children and face themselves twenty years later, when the Vikings battle the British. Mario Bava's cinematography is the chief interest here, unfortunately the narrative thrust is lost soon. Perhaps works better in uncut 88m. version. Also known as ERIK THE CONQUEROR, THE INVADERS, and FURY OF THE VIKINGS.

**Invitation, The** (2015, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Karyn Kusama. Starring Logan Marshall-Green, Michelle Krusiec, Aiden Lovekamp, Mike Doyle, Jordi Vilasuso. Mystery drama (decidedly *not* a horror thriller) about a two people who are invited to a friends' reunion somewhere in the hills. Marshall-Green feels uneasy about going there since the invitation came from his ex, who separated from him after the death of their only child. There's tension among the guests, but this might just be in his imagination. Film builds some suspense, but the reward for the viewer is questionable. It's mostly weird and never surprising or exciting. Still, this managed to score quite a long festival run. From the director of JENNIFER'S BODY (2009).

**Invitation to Hell** (1982, GBR) **C-41m. n/r** D: Michael J. Murphy. Starring Becky Simpson, Joseph Sheahan, Colin Efford. British horror short about a woman who receives an invitation to a party weekend in a country mansion. During the party she becomes the subject of a bizarre ceremony and soon other group members start being possessed by an evil spirit. Borrows atmosphere and gore from Romero and Fulci, respectively, and has a competent horror score, but why this is a short is anyone's guess. The plotting is simply atrocious. For the curious.

**Invitation to Hell** (1984, USA) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Wes Craven. Starring Robert Urich, Joanna Cassidy, Susan Lucci, Joe Regalbuto, Kevin McCarthy, Patricia McCormack, Soleil Moon Frye, Michael Berryman. Made-for-TV chiller by Wes Craven about a family who have moved to a new town only to discover that a satanic club/cult is ruling the community. Solid shocks in familiar, sometimes pretentious INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS-like plot. Guess why they cast Kevin McCarthy.

**Iodo** (1977, KOR) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Kim Ki-Young. Starring Lee Hwa-shi, Kim Jeong-cheol, Choi Yun-seok, Kwon Mi-hye, Park Jeong-ja. A businessman is accused of having killed a man and together with a journalist he travels to the seaside community where he was from. The people there, mostly women, worship a 'water demon' and tell the dead man's story in flashbacks. Interesting examination of a secluded community has been compared to THE WICKER MAN (1973), but focuses more on character relationships. Slightly confusing plot setup, but film is well-acted and story maintains interest. English title: IO ISLAND.

**Io, Monaca... per Tre Carogne e Sette Peccatrici** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-82m. SCOPE \*½** D: Richard Jackson (=Ernst R. von Theumer). Starring Tony Kendall, Gordon Mitchell, William Berger, Vonetta McGee. Ludicrous trash movie follows the exploits of seven women who must escape lecherous criminals after managing to escape from prison. Joining them is a nun(!) who gives them spiritual support. Wild plotting, lots of action, but nonsensical. This one gets half a star for trash value. Alternative titles: THE BIG BUST OUT and CRUCIFIED GIRLS OF SAN RAMON.

**I Origins** (2014, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mike Cahill. Starring Michael Pitt, Steven Yeun, Astrid Berges-Frisby, Brit Marling. Uneven but original drama about lab scientist Pitt, who focuses his research on the human eye. One day he meets independent Berges-Frisby, a woman with beautiful irises and falls in love with her. At the same time, his romantically interested new lab partner Marling may lead him to a breakthrough in his work. Romantic drama with sci-fi touches makes a few unpredictable twists, but has a nice point regarding reincarnation. Stay with it. Written by director Cahill.

**Ipress File, The** (1965, GBR) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sidney J. Furie. Starring Michael Caine, Nigel Green, Guy Doleman, Sue Lloyd, Gordon Jackson, Aubrey Richards. Alternative espionage movie (based on Len Deighton's novel) adds realism to James Bond formula and subtracts action almost completely. Caine stars as stoic agent Harry Palmer, who has just been promoted and is allowed to investigate mysterious disappearance of scientists.

Surprisingly quiet, but smoothly filmed, with weird camera angles, and complemented by a terrific, haunting John Barry score. Incidentally, many people involved with James Bond movies worked on this one too (producer Harry Saltzman, composer John Barry, editor Peter R. Hunt, production designer Ken Adam). A British cult film that spawned four sequels, starting with FUNERAL IN BERLIN (1966).

**Irezumi** (1966, JAP) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Yasuzo Masamura. Starring Ayako Wakao, Akio Hasegawa, Gaku Yamamoto, Kei Sato, Reiko Fujiwara. Classic pink eiga movie about a young woman from a rich family, who runs away from home with her lover, is forced to become a geisha, then she meets a tattoo artist, who tattoos a tarantula on her back. Stark, powerful, if a bit stagey tale of the moral corruption of a woman. In fact, most other characters are immoral, too. Based on a novel by Junichirô Tanizaki. From the director of MOJU.

**I, Robot** (2004, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alex Proyas. Starring Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan, Alan Tudyk, James Cromwell, Bruce Greenwood. It's the year 2035, and humanity relies greatly on robots, to help in the household, as assistants etc. Smith plays a cop, who is suspicious of the new technology, and his doubts may be confirmed, when the robots' creator is found dead after an apparent suicide. With the help of scientist Moynahan, Smith uncovers a conspiracy. Science-fiction thriller based on the writings of Isaac Asimov sometimes has the feel of a typical Hollywood "product", but it's entertaining, well-directed and filled with great action sequences. Smith gives a slick, convincing performance. From the director THE CROW (1994) and DARK CITY (1998).

**Iron Man** (2008, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jon Favreau. Starring Robert Downey Jr., Terrence Howard, Jeff Bridges, Gwyneth Paltrow, Leslie Bibb, Shaun Toub, Jon Favreau, Stan Lee, voice of Paul Bettany. A Marvel comic book adaptation that (surprisingly) doesn't look like a comic book: Super-rich weapons manufacturer Downey Jr. gets a dose of his own produce when he is injured and kidnapped in Afghanistan and held prisoner to recreate his most powerful weapon for the guerilla forces. Instead, he forges an iron suit that will ultimately make him the superhero of the title. The effects are good, but plot is only so-so and doesn't justify overlength. ROBOCOP (1987) was better.

**Iron Monkey** (1977, HJK) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Chen Kuan Tai. Starring Suen Ga Lam, Chik Goon Gwan. Minor genre classic about a young man's determination to avenge the killing of his family. His father was a rebel leader and the young warrior goes back to (a martial arts) school to learn the legendary technique of the Monkey Fist. Okay plotwise, though slow, action sequences are better elsewhere. Followed by a sequel in 1996.

**I Saw What You Did** (1965, USA) **B&W-82m. \*\*½** D: William Castle. Starring Joan Crawford, John Ireland, Leif Erickson, Sara Lane, Andi Garrett. Two adolescent girls call people at random and play practical jokes at them. One of them (Ireland) has just killed his wife and the girls get themselves in trouble by telling him the title line. Good idea, but a bit too calculated and naïve, a fair thriller by producer-director Castle. Based on the novel by Ursula Curtiss. Remade for TV in 1988. Also known as I SAW WHAT YOU DID AND I KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

**I Shot Andy Warhol** (1996, USA/GBR) **C-103m. \*\*\*** D: Mary Harron. Starring Lili Taylor, Jared Harris, Stephen Dorff, Martha Plimpton, Danny Morgenstern, Lothaire Bluteau, Michael Imperioli, Reg Rogers, Donovan Leitch, Tahnee Welch. Screen-bio of Valerie Solanas, an Andy Warhol contemporary, who was a pioneer of radical feminism and achieved fame/notoriety when she shot her mentor in 1968. Taylor's fine performance buoys this well-directed drama. A little hard to take, but fascinating nonetheless. For another interesting, if less consequential film about an Andy Warhol contemporary see BASQUIAT.

**Isla Minima, La** (2014, SPA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alberto Rodriguez. Starring Javier Gutiérrez, Raúl Arévalo, María Varod, Perico Cervantes, Jesus Ortiz, Jesus Carroza. Crime drama set in 1980 Spain, where two police detectives are tackling a disgusting case. Teenage girls have been disappearing from a village, some seem to have run away. Then the dead bodies are found in the marshland. Can they track down the killer? Slowly paced, atmospheric, but plot is a bit aimless and leaves many questions unanswered. The aerial shots are astounding, but they don't fully redeem the movie. Owes a bit to Korean police dramas of recent years. English title: MARSHLAND.

**Isla Misteriosa y el Capitán Nemo, La** (1973, SPA/ITA/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*** D: Jaun Antonio Bardem, Henri Colpi. Starring Omar Sharif, Ambroise Bia, Jess Hahn, Philippe Nicaud, Gérard Tichy, Rik Battaglia, Jean Lefebvre, Gabriele Tinti. Low-grade adaptation of Jules Verne's *L'Île Mystérieuse* (the fifth film version), about five Americans who narrowly escape from prison in a balloon and end up on a seemingly deserted island. Little do they know that Captain Nemo (Sharif) is ruling a subterranean empire there. Unconvincing, but not bad, an okay timekiller for kids. Edited down from 6-part TV series. English titles: THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND OF CAPTAIN (or DR.) NEMO, THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND.

**Island, The** (1980, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael Ritchie. Starring Michael Caine, David Warner, Angela Punch McGregor, Frank Middlemass, Don Henderson, Zakes Mokae. Journalist Caine goes to Florida with his son, hoping to get an inside scoop concerning several mysterious disappearances in the Caribbean. Soon he makes the acquaintance of a band of primitive outcasts, who call themselves buccaneers. Pulp drama starts out as a nice adventure but becomes increasingly bizarre and unlikely. Caine's character is irresponsible (he buys his thirteen-year-old son a pistol!). Written by Peter Benchley (JAWS), based on his novel. Photographed by Henri Decaë, score by Ennio Morricone.

**Island at the Top of the World, The** (1974, USA) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Robert Stevenson. Starring David Hartman, Donald Sinden, Jacques Marin, Mako, David Gwillim. Juvenile fantasy film about a professor who goes in search of his son somewhere near the North Pole and finds lost civilization of Vikings living like in ancient times. Kids may be thrilled, adults may rejoice at the nice sets and effects.

**Island of Blood** (1982, USA) **C-82m. \*\*** D: William T. Naud. Starring Marie Alise (Recasner), Rick Dean, Ron Gardner, Terry Goodman. Low-grade, somehow watchable slasher horror movie about a film crew, who are slaughtered while shooting on an island. Offers some gruesome murders in generally tedious framework. Video title: WHODUNIT. Also known as SCARED ALIVE.

**Island of Dr. Moreau, The** (1996, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John Frankenheimer. Starring Val Kilmer, Marlon Brando, Ron Perlman, David Thewlis. Contemporary version of H.G. Wells' classic novel about mad doctor (Brando) who lives on a remote island inhabited by freaks. Strikingly directed and photographed, this is one of the rare exceptions of a good (and poignant) remake. Special effects by Stan Winston. Filmed before in 1933 (as ISLAND OF LOST SOULS) and 1977.

**Island of Terror** (1966, GBR) **C-89m. \*\*** D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Edward Judd, Carole Gray, Eddie Byrne, Sam Kydd. Cushing's credibility is put to a test in this B-monster movie from Britain. He plays a doctor, who is called to an island, where cancer research has resulted in the creation of bone-sucking monsters. Rather silly, unconvincing. Despite Fisher's (so-so) direction, this was not a Hammer production. Also known as NIGHT OF THE SILICATES, THE CREEPERS, THE NIGHT THE CREATURES CAME, THE NIGHT THE SILICATES CAME.

**Island on Fire** (1991, HGK) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Chu Yen-Ping. Starring Tony Leung, Jackie Chan, Samo Hung. Prison drama focusing on the lives of three inmates, who however have little to do with each other. Hung comes off best as caring father who breaks out just to see his son. Rest of film is pretty lifeless, with less action than you'd expect from a Hong Kong movie with such a cast.

**Isle of the Snake People** (1971, MEX/USA) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Juan Ibanez, Jack Hill. Starring Boris Karloff, Julissa, Carlos East, July Carmichael. A police captain investigates a snake worshipping cult in Mexico, which produced zombies. Not-bad horror film with attempts to keep direction lively and atmosphere dense. One of four movies Karloff made shortly before his death; his scenes seem actually quite out of place. Filmed in 1968. English titles: SNAKE PEOPLE, CULT OF THE DEAD, ISLE OF THE LIVING DEAD.

**Isola: Tajuu Jinkaku Shôjo** (2000, JAP) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Toshiyuki Mizutani. Starring Yoshino Kimura, Yû Kurosawa, Ken Ishiguro, Makiko Watanabe, Takashi Miike. Slightly disoriented woman with mind-reading abilities comes to Kobe to help take care of victims of the latest devastating earthquake. She meets a disturbed girl with multiple personalities and tries to find out about her past. One of the personalities inside her turns out to be quite dangerous. Plot is muddled and carries little weight, thus scary sequences don't work. One of the lesser Japanese horror films. Based on a novel by Yûsuke Kishi. English titles: ISOLA: MULTIPLE PERSONALITY GIRL and ISOLA: PERSONA 13.

**I Spit on Your Grave** (2010, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Steven R. Monroe. Starring Sarah Butler, Jeff Branson, Andrew Howard, Daniel Franzese. Remake of the cult horror thriller DAY OF THE WOMAN (1978) wasn't actually needed but is technically okay. Young writer Butler retreats to a cabin in the woods to write a new novel, gets harassed by local thugs. Predictable, drawn-out revenge movie with fairly good performances. Subject matter is gross and off-putting, though. Followed by a sequel in 2013.

**I Still Know What You Did Last Summer** (1998, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D. Danny Cannon. Starring Jennifer Love Hewitt, Freddie Prinze, Jr., Mekhi Phifer, Brandy, Jeffrey Combs. Sequel to I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER is better than expected. The killer is on the loose again, this time terrorizing the high school kids on a small island in the Bahamas. There is not much more to be said about the illogical, if also quite complicated plot, but technically the film is noteworthy. Lighting, camerawork, making good use of the setting, show skill and provide the slasher pic with the right atmosphere. Quite good, for people who like to see this kind of movies. Director Cannon was obviously influenced by Mario Bava's ANTEFATTO, which is cited in a scene involving a brass spear.

**Istruttoria è Chiusa: Dimentichi, L'** (1971, ITA) **C-104m.** \*\* D: Damiano Damiani. Starring Franco Nero, Georges Wilson, John Steiner, Riccardo Cucciolla, Ferruccio De Ceresa. Attempted satire on corruption in Italy features DJANGO Nero as architect, who goes to prison after causing a fatal car accident and finds himself left alone by justice. Rather harmless, dated film with Nero trying hard to look bewildered. Features a score by Ennio Morricone, which resorts to sound effects. Director Damiani also coscripted. Title translates as THE INQUEST IS CLOSED, FORGET IT.

**It** (1990, USA) **C-187m.** \*\*½ D: Tommy Lee Wallace. Starring Richard Thomas, Tim Reid, Annette O'Toole, Tim Curry, John Ritter, Emily Perkins, Olivia Hussey. Made-for-TV adaptation of Stephen King's bestseller: In 1960, several children combat a demon in their hometown that takes the form of a clown. 30 years later they return when the same evil has obviously awakened again. Fairly well-told but can't quite escape the tackiness of a television production. The clown (played by Curry) is uncanny, but horror this type belongs on the big screen. Originally shown in two parts.

**Italian Job, The** (1969, GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Peter Collinson. Starring Michael Caine, Noel Coward, Benny Hill, Raf Vallone, Tony Beckley, Rossano Brazzi, Margaret Blye, Irene Handl, Harry Baird, George Innes. Caine just got out of prison when he gets a message from a fellow criminal. Caine should organize a gold robbery in Italy. He then enlists the help of so-called experts to perform the job. Standard caper story helped immensely by Caine's sardonic performance and Collinson's stylish direction. A late 60s time capsule, fits perfectly in the era, a cult item in Britain. Highlight: Wild escape/chase involving three Minis. Photographed by Douglas Slocombe, music by Quincy Jones. Remade in 2003.

**Italian Job, The** (2003, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*** D: F. Gary Gray. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Charlize Theron, Donald Sutherland, Jason Statham, Seth Green, Mos Def, Edward Norton. After performing a daring heist in Venice, Italy, Wahlberg's men are double-crossed by Norton. Theron, whose father got killed in the mishap, is enlisted to help Wahlberg's gang to crack Norton's safe... not an easy feat. Pumped up with flashy editing and cool situations, but story is a yawn and script's contrivances don't help. Difficult to imagine this is based on a 1969 movie starring Michael Caine.

**It Came from Outer Space** (1953, USA) **81m. \*\*\*** D: Jack Arnold. Starring Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake, Joe Sawyer. Based on a story by Ray Bradbury, this was director Arnold's first feature film. Hobby-astronomer Carlson witnesses the crash of a meteorite, which, at second glance, turns out to be a spaceship! Before he can convince his wife and the police officers, the vessel is buried accidentally under tons of earth. Soon after, inexplicable things start to happen... could it be that extra-terrestrials are haunting the desert village? Solid, quite eerie sci-fi, warmly recommended to fans. Not that much inferior to 50s classics THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, WAR OF THE WORLDS, or INVADERS FROM MARS. Score by Henry Mancini.

**It Could Happen to You** (1994, USA) **C-101m. \*½** D: Andrew Bergman. Starring Nicholas Cage, Bridget Fonda, Rosie Perez, Isaac Hayes, Seymour Cassel, Stanley Tucci, Red Buttons. Ultra-kitschy romance more than strains credibility: Cop Cage shares a lottery ticket with waitress Fonda because he doesn't have enough money to tip her. When he wins four million bucks and decides to give Fonda half of it, his wife Perez freaks out. Guess what happens next. Film is based on a real-life incident, which couldn't have been as kitschy and exaggerated as this commercial Hollywood film. Cage's character is a total wimp!

**It Follows** (2014, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: David Robert Mitchell. Starring Maika Monroe, Keir Gilchrist, Olivia Luccardi. Horror chiller about a teenage girl who has sex with someone she has recently been dating and contracts no disease but a zombie/ghost that can take several forms. She learns that it will follow her everywhere and try to kill her. She can only shake off this curse by sleeping with someone else. Fairly intriguing premise is unnecessarily lengthened and film is mostly not very convincing, especially the supporting characters. Still, fairly popular, made a respectable festival run. Synthesizer score is a matter of taste.

**It Lives Again** (1978, USA) **C-91m. \*½** D: Larry Cohen. Starring Frederic Forrest, Kathleen Lloyd, John P. Ryan, John Marley, Andrew Duggan, Eddie Constantine. Absurd, needless sequel to IT'S ALIVE! (1974) has Ryan promise couple Forrest and Lloyd to take care of their mutated baby. Is there hope for their offspring? Unappealing, even off-putting, only for die-hard series fans. Only redeeming factors: Lloyd's performance and Bernard Herrmann's score, which is reused. Features a brief sequence from Bruce Lee's ENTER THE DRAGON (1973). Trilogy concludes in IT'S ALIVE III: ISLAND OF THE ALIVE in 1987.

**It's Alive!** (1974, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Larry Cohen. Starring John P. Ryan, Sharon Farrell, James Dixon, William Wellman Jr., Guy Stockwell. Horror shocker (or: schlocker) about new-born

baby, which is deformed and murders everyone in the way. Will the parents accept it nonetheless? Minor cult classic wants to be critical of society but is mostly slow and banal. Some effective scenes, good score by Bernard Herrmann. Followed by two sequels in 1978 and 1987 (starting with IT LIVES AGAIN). Written and produced by director Cohen, who is like a second-rate George Romero.

**It's Alive III: Island of the Alive** (1987, USA) **C-95m.** \*½ D: Larry Cohen. Starring Michael Moriarty, Karen Black, Laurene Landon, James Dixon, Gerrit Graham. Conclusion of the horror trilogy has Moriarty plead for the survival of the monster babies, one of them being his son. He joins an expedition to find them on the secluded island they were shipped to. Pretty fierce horror film, the opposite of low-key, but very grotesque and uneven. Strictly for those who enjoyed the first two parts. Cohen also scripted and produced.

**It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World** (1963, USA) **C-154m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*D:** Stanley Kramer. Starring Spencer Tracy, Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Buddy Hackett, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Dick Shawn, Phil Silvers, Terry-Thomas, Peter Falk, Buster Keaton, Don Knotts, Carl Reiner, Jimmy Durante, The Three Stooges, Jerry Lewis. Comedy of giant proportions about a group of people who are all told about a hidden treasure by a dying man and immediately set out to find it, resulting in a race to the west coast where everyone is trying to be quicker or cleverer than the other. Police inspector Tracy keeps an attentive eye on them. Filmdom's biggest treasure hunt, this comedy isn't consistently funny but always entertaining thanks to a great cast. Fine score by Ernest Gold, colorful cinematography by Ernest Laszlo. Oscar-winner for Best Effects, Sound Effects. Shot in Ultra Panavision, with an aspect ratio of 2,75:1! Original 70mm copy ran 192m. In the 1990s several scenes were restored; this version runs 188m. 4m. of footage remain unaccounted for and are considered lost.

**It's Complicated** (2009, USA) **C-120m.** \*\*\* D: Nancy Meyers. Starring Meryl Streep, Steve Martin, Alec Baldwin, John Krasinski, Lake Bell, Mary Kay Place, Rita Wilson, Bruce Altman. Another priceless comedy by writer-director Meyers (SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE). Streep is in romantic turmoil, as architect Martin wants to date her, but her divorced husband Baldwin has just rediscovered his love for her. Some truly funny scenes. Photographed by John Toll.

**It Stains the Sands Red** (2016, USA) **C-92m.** **SCOPE \*\*** D: Colin Minihan. Starring Brittany Allen, Juan Riedinger, Merwin Mondesir. Twist on the zombie genre: Party girl Allen leaves a burning Las Vegas with her boyfriend. When their car gets stranded they are attacked by a zombie, who proceeds to stalk and pursue her through the desert. How can she get rid of him? Fairly original premise leads to a mostly one-note plot. Ambitious to some degree, but if this is supposed to be a paraphrase of modern relationships, no thanks. Pretty grisly and gruesome, often gratuitously so. A festival hit nonetheless (or because of this).

**Ivanovo Detstvo** (1962, RUS) **B&W-95m.** \*\*\* D: Andrei Tarkovsky. Starring Nikolay Burlyayev, Valentin Zubkov, Evgenyi Zharikov, Stepan Krylov, Andrey Konchalovskiy. Strikingly directed and photographed feature debut of genius Tarkovsky. On an unnamed WW2 front in Russia, a 12-year-old boy is used to spy on the Germans, he keeps sneaking behind enemy lines. Film deals with the loss of his childhood, as well as the three soldiers who take care of him. A richly textured visual delight, although the plot is minimal. Burlyayev is amazing. Winner of the Golden Lion in Venice that year. English title: IVAN'S CHILDHOOD.

**Ivansxtc** (2000, GBR/USA) **C-93m.** \*\*\*½ D: Bernard Rose. Starring Danny Huston, Peter Weller, James Merendino, Adam Krentzman, Lisa Enos, Alison Taylor, Joanne Duckman, Tiffani Thiessen, Valeria Golino, Victoria Silvstedt. PAPERHOUSE and CANDYMAN director Rose follows his ANNA KARENINA (1997) with another Leo Tolstoy adaptation, this one is based on *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. Filmed with a handheld DV camera throughout, film at

first glance seems like a stunt, but draws you in early on and never lets you go. Huston is brilliant as a Hollywood talent agent, whose life in the fast lane, with girls, drugs and alcohol is coming to an abrupt end when he is diagnosed with lung cancer. Though it may seem like a small film with its minimal budget and experimental technique, this transcends its roots and strikes many chords, and Huston's performance is a powerhouse. Rose scripted with co-star Lisa Enos.

**I Was a Teenage Zombie** (1987, USA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: John Elias Michalakis. Starring Michael Rubin, Steve McCoy, George Seminara, Cassie Madden. Pretty inept but also rather funny horror spoof about some teenage losers who buy bad hash from McCoy and decide to get their money back. Unfortunately, the guy dies and they dump him into recently contaminated waters. Then the dealer returns, as a green-faced zombie thirsting for revenge. Amateurishly shot but good for a few laughs. Very much in the vein of Troma movies, whose founding father Lloyd Kaufman is referenced at one point in the film.

**I Was a Zombie for the F.B.I.** (1982, USA) **B&W-74m.** \*\*½ D: Marius Penczner. Starring James Raspberry, Larry Raspberry, John Gillick, Anthony Isbell, Christina Wellford, Laurence Hall, Rick Crowe. Pretty unique little cult movie about two F.B.I. agents, who are confronted with an alien invasion just when they are bringing two notorious criminals to prison. It turns out the aliens want to steal an important cola-formula and turn everyone into zombies! Send-up of 50s sci-fi and paranoia films is definitely not as cheesy as it sounds, especially not in 2005 DVD release, which pimps up the soundtrack and special effects. Surprisingly straight and watchable, doesn't play for laughs in spite of itself. A worthwhile view for cult movie enthusiasts. Written by the director.

**I Will Follow You Into the Dark** (2013, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Mark Edwin Robinson. Starring Mischa Barton, Ryan Eggold, Leah Pipes. Tedious horror chiller about Barton, who has recently lost both her parents. Her father used to be a priest, but she renounces the concept of an afterlife in her disappointment. Finally, she meets and falls in love again, but soon after the young man disappears inside a supposedly haunted apartment building. Not baldy made, with adequate acting by cute Barton, but film has no punch whatsoever. It seems to have been made for the TWILIGHT crowd.

**I Woke Up Early the Day I Died** (1998, USA) **C-88m. BOMB** D: Aris Iliopoulos. Starring Billy Zane, Sandra Bernhard, Karen Black, Bud Cort, Tippi Hedren, Eartha Kitt, Andrew McCarthy, Will Patton, Max Perlich, Ron Perlman, Tara Reid, Christina Ricci, John Ritter, Rick Schroeder, Nicolette Sheridan, Jonathan Taylor Thomas, Vampira. From a screenplay by Ed Wood comes this incomprehensible all-star stinker about a thief and his misadventures around the cemetery of an undefined town. No dialogue, just a headache-inducing score. This may actually be the first movie that aimed at being a bomb!

**Izbavitelj** (1976, YUG) **C-76m.** \*\*½ D: Krsto Papic. Starring Ivica Vidovic, Mirjana Majurec, Relja Basic. Not-bad but mostly heavy-going parable on the decline of civilization. Amidst an economic crisis, impoverished writer Vidovic finds a place to sleep in an empty building. At night he witnesses a banquet of decadent people and realizes that rats are trying to impersonate humans. No one believes him... is it an illusion? Sometimes labelled a horror film, but this is really 'only' a drama with some actors in (mild) rat make-up. Based on a novel by Alexander Grin. English title: THE RAT SAVIOR.

**Jackal, The** (1997, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Michael Caton-Jones. Starring Bruce Willis, Richard Gere, Sidney Poitier, Diane Venora, Tess Harper, J.K. Simmons, Mathilda May, Michael Caton-Jones. Weak remake of Fred Zinnemann's excellent thriller DAY OF THE JACKAL. Willis plays an elusive assassin with a mission to kill a V.I.P., and Gere, an Irish terrorist serving time in a U.S. prison, gives the FBI a hand in tracking him down. Apart from

some illogical plot elements, there's too little depth given to Willis' character. Gere is fine, however. Some of the violence is rather shocking. Film is somewhat redeemed by a stylish finale (which again is undermined by an illogical twist).

**Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story** (2001, USA) **C-174m.** \*\*½ D: Brian Henson. Starring Matthew Modine, Vanessa Redgrave, Mia Sara, Daryl Hannah, Jon Voight, Richard Attenborough, Honor Blackman, Freddie Highmore, voice of Brian Henson. Umpteenth adaptation of the fairy tale, blown up to gigantic proportions for television. Modine is a successful businessman, whose family seems cursed. Every male ancestor has died before reaching the age of 40. He investigates and finds out that it was his great-great-great-and-some-grandfather who was the original Jack on the Beanstalk. He goes to the Kingdom and realizes that they want their goose and golden harp back – for a reason. Overblown, a bit pretentious, but always watchable. A kind of TV version of LORD OF THE RINGS.

**Jackass Presents Bad Grandpa** (2013, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*½ D: Jeff Tremaine. Starring Johnny Knoxville, Jackson Nicoll, Greg Harris, Spike Jonze. Knoxville puts on heavy makeup and becomes an 80-year-old who must look after his 8-year-old grandson, when all he wants to do is score on women since his wife passed away. Some belly laughs, but mostly vulgar and embarrassing and not funny enough. For fans. Jonze, who appears as the grandma only in the outtakes, also receives story credit.

**Jack Be Nimble** (1993, NZL) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Garth Maxwell. Starring Alexis Arquette, Sarah Smuts Kennedy, Bruno Lawrence, Tony Barry, Elizabeth Hawthorne. Highly unusual drama about brother and sister, who were separated at an early age but are longing to get back together as grown-ups, especially because of their foster families. They are young adults with special talents: The boy has invented a hypnosis machine, and the girl is haunted by visions of her brother. Thriller drama with horror touches isn't completely convincing (you'll scratch your head at several turns) but very well-acted and so off-beat it will hold your interest throughout. Written by the director.

**Jack Brown Genius** (1994, NZL) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Tony Hiles. Starring Timothy Balme, Nicola Murphy, Marton Csokas, Stuart Devenie. Misfired fantasy comedy about inventor Balme, who goes mad when a thousand-year-old druid enters his brain and tells him he must find a way to fly within the next seven days. Silly slapstick scenes prevail. Cowritten and coproduced by Peter Jackson (of BRAINDEAD fame).

**Jack el Destripador de Londres** (1971, SPA/ITA) **C-90m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: Josè Luis Madrid. Starring Paul Naschy, Patricia Loran, Renzo Marignano, Orchidea de Santis. Naschy, probably the worst starring actor in the horror genre (perhaps *any* genre), here singlehandedly ruins horror thriller about a Jack the Ripper imitation killer in contemporary London. Naschy becomes the prime suspect, but he conveys no feelings whatsoever. To be fair, the screenplay (by the director, Naschy and Tito Carpi) is also extremely weak. The best sequence is the opening montage. English titles: JACK THE MANGLER OF LONDON, JACK THE RIPPER, and SEVEN MURDERS FOR SCOTLAND YARD.

**Jacket, The** (2005, USA/SCO) **C-103m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: John Maybury. Starring Adrien Brody, Keira Knightley, Kris Kristofferson, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Kelly Lynch, Brad Renfro, Daniel Craig, Steven Mackintosh, Angus MacInnes. Fantasy drama with science-fiction touches (or the other way round) about soldier Brody, who gets wounded in the first Gulf War in 1991 and almost dies. After becoming the prime suspect in a roadside killing he ends up in an asylum for the criminally insane, where doctor Kristofferson puts his patients into a strait-jacket and locks them into a morgue drawer. There, Brody finds he can escape into a dream(?)world, where it's 2007. Very well-acted, interesting, with cult appeal, but initial excitement wears thin. Too little time is invested in Brody's character. It's also fatally

reminiscent of vintage cult movies TWELVE MONKEYS (1995) and JACOB'S LADDER (1990). Two obvious references to the latter were edited out, including one alternate ending (of three!).

**Jackie Brown** (1997, USA) **C-154m. \*\*\*½ D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Pam Grier, Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Forster, Robert De Niro, Bridget Fonda, Michael Keaton, Michael Bowen, Chris Tucker. Outstanding adaptation of Leonard Elmore's *Rum Punch*, focusing on several characters who are all after half a million in cash that weapons dealer Jackson has Grier smuggle to L.A. Deliberately paced and talky but superbly cast and never boring. Prime performances by Grier as the title character, Jackson as an ultra-cool, cold-blooded crook, De Niro as his grungy assistant, Forster as marginal on-looker who is at a crossroads in his life, and Fonda as Jackson's stoned girlfriend. Climactic 'who's-got-the-money-bag'-game is a typical Tarantino set-piece. Shot from an ingenious perspective, this thriller is one of the best novel adaptations in recent memory. Due to the slow pace it sometimes seems possible to translate the film *back* into the book, everything is so meticulously depicted. Fine soul soundtrack adds to the film's mood. Written for the screen by Tarantino, whose follow-up to PULP FICTION is quite different from but no less fascinating than the 1994 cult classic.

**Jack Ketchum's The Lost** (2005, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Chris Sivertson. Starring Marc Senter, Shay Astar, Alex Frost, Megan Henning, Robin Sydney, Michael Bowen, Ed Lauter, Dee Wallace-Stone, Jack Ketchum. Psycho thriller drama about aimless, violent teenagers. Four years after killing a girl in the woods, the past is catching up with Senter, a cold-hearted, potentially dangerous hunk. The local detective has never had a chance to nail him for the crime, but things are changing. Needlessly long, poorly paced, unpleasant adaptation of Jack Ketchum's novel had an extensive festival run, but lacks a compelling storyline. Worth watching for Senter's intense performance only, who is a bit like a young Christian Bale. Maybe he was cast because of the similarities between this and AMERICAN PSYCHO (1999). Screenplay by the director.

**Jackson County Jail** (1976, USA) **C-89m. \*\*\* D:** Michael Miller. Starring Yvette Mimieux, Tommy Lee Jones, Robert Carradine, Frederic Cook, Severn Darden, Howard Hesseman, Mary Woronov. Tough, dramatic B-movie about a woman (Mimieux) who gets robbed on her way to New York and, being unable to prove her identity, is arrested in the title prison. When she is raped by an officer and kills him in self-defense, she flees with criminal Jones. Story is unexceptional but plot is unusually thoughtful and the chase sequences are well-filmed; the swift pace of the film makes it quite entertaining. Remade by Miller as OUTSIDE CHANCE (for TV). Produced by Roger Corman. German version is cut by at least 5 minutes.

**Jack the Giant Slayer** (2013, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Bryan Singer. Starring Nicholas Hoult, Eleanor Tomlinson, Ewan McGregor, Stanley Tucci, Ian McShane, Warwick Davis. Retelling of the fairy tale Jack and the Beanstalk with poor farmer's boy Hoult going to the big city to sell his horse and returning – after some complications – with a handful of beans, which turn out to be magical. The beanstalk then takes none other than the princess of the kingdom to the land of the giants, which are bent on revenge and can't wait to make it down to the human kingdom. Excellent CGI effects, exciting action sequences and a good dose of adventure make this fine entertainment.

**Jacob's Ladder** (1990, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*\* D:** Adrian Lyne. Starring Tim Robbins, Elizabeth Pena, Danny Aiello, Matt Craven, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Jason Alexander, Patricia Kalember, Eriq La Salle, Ving Rhames, Macaulay Culkin. Jacob Singer (Robbins) is slowly losing his grip on reality. He is haunted by terrifying demons in his every-day life as a postman. The graduated philosopher suspects his horrible experiences in Vietnam to be the trigger for his frightening visions. Is his life 'fading'? What about his lover Pena, his ex-wife Kalember and,

most importantly, his kids, one of whom has died in a tragic accident? Is Jacob going to hell...? Brilliantly devised and designed film (set in 1971) combines horror and mystery elements with a harrowing criticism of war, and manages to keep you enthralled right to the (shocking) end. A stunning achievement filled with religious and biblical references, a movie whose many layers of meaning will unfold only after repeated viewings. One of the most startling films of the decade. Robbins gives a superbly anxious performance, the rest of the cast is equally convincing. Fine photography by Jeffrey L. Kimball (TRUE ROMANCE) includes stylistic references to the films of Dario Argento, Maurice Jarre's score is excellent. The screenplay, written by Bruce Joel Rubin, is more or less a reworking of Robert Enrico's short film LA RIVIERE DU HIBOU (itself an adaptation of Ambrose Bierce's classic anti-war short story *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Ridge*). DVD-release contains three deleted scenes ('The Antidote' is awesome!), which raise the running time to 126m. At least two further scenes were filmed.

**J'ai Épousé une Ombre** (1983, FRA) **C-110m. \*\*\* D:** Robin Davis. Starring Nathalie Baye, Francis Huster, Richard Bohringer, Madeleine Robinson, Guy Trejan. Intriguing drama about a pregnant woman (Baye) who is abandoned by her lover and finds a friend in an equally pregnant stranger whom she meets in a train. When the train crashes and that woman dies, Baye takes on her identity and moves to the family of the dead woman's husband. Since they have never seen their son's wife, Baye's real identity is not found out for the time being. Holds interest to the very end. Good score by Philippe Sarde. Cornell Woolrich's *I Married a Dead Man* was filmed before as *NO MAN OF HER OWN* (1950), and later as *MRS. WINTERBOURNE* (1996). English title: *I MARRIED A SHADOW*.

**James and the Giant Peach** (1996, USA) **C-79m. \*\*\*½ D:** Henry Selick. Starring Paul Terry, Miriam Margolyes, Joanna Lumley, Pete Postlethwaite, Mike Starr, and the voices of Simon Callow, Richard Dreyfuss, Jane Leeves, Susan Sarandon, David Thewlis. James Henry Trotter, a poor orphan living at his ugly and evil aunts' house, goes on a wondrous journey when he steps inside a giant peach, whose inhabitants, a glowworm, a ladybug, a centipede, a grasshopper, a spider and a worm, become his new family. Together they set sail for New York, the boy's city of dreams. Marvellous stop-motion fantasy, like in Selick's *NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*, adapts Roald Dahl's story in stunning detail, with cute characters and some powerful dramatic scenes. Plot is a little uneven - the switch from live-action to stop-motion animation isn't seamless - but educational value is very high and film should make children's eyes glow with amazement. Co-produced by Tim Burton.

**Jamie Marks Is Dead** (2014, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Carter Smith. Starring Morgan Saylor, Noah Silver, Cameron Monaghan, Liv Tyler, Judy Greer. Deliberately paced horror drama for the TWILIGHT crowd. Film centers on a troubled teen, who is shocked when a bullied classmate is found dead one night. He then falls in love with the girl who found the dead body, and then Jamie Marks comes back from the dead! Quite atmospheric but very slow movie essentially about the problems of teens orienting themselves in the adult world. Based on a novel by Christopher Barzak.

**Jane Austen Book Club, The** (2007, USA) **C-106m. \*\* D:** Robin Swicord. Starring Maria Bello, Emily Blunt, Kathy Baker, Amy Brenneman, Maggie Grace, Jimmy Smits, Ed Brigadier, Kevin Zegers. Comedy drama about several characters, most with personal problems, who agree to meet in the title club, where they read a different Jane Austen novel every month. Movie tentatively examines links between the characters' real lives and the characters in the book, but non-Austen fans will feel excluded. Unexceptional, seems to treat every character from the outside, not the inside.

**Jane Eyre** (1996, ITA/FRA/GBR) **C-117m.** \*\*½ D: Franco Zeffirelli. Starring William Hurt, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Joan Plowright, Anna Paquin, Geraldine Chaplin, Billie Whitelaw, Maria Schneider, Fiona Shaw, Elle Macpherson, John Wood, Amanda Root, Samuel West. Adaptation of Charlotte Brontë's classic novel about the title character's social rise in 19th century England. Even though Hurt (as Rochester) and Gainsbourg (as Jane Eyre) are good, their casting choices are not optimal. Story well-told until final third, which seems rushed and out-of-sync with the rest of the film. An honorable but flawed filmization. Cowritten by the director.

**Janghwa, Hongryeon** (2003, KOR) **C-115m.** \*\*½ D: Kim Ji-Woon. Starring Kim Kap-su, Yum Jung-ah, Lim Su-jeong, Mun Geun-yeong. Difficult Korean cult mystery chiller about two sisters, who return to their father's home after spending time in a mental institution. Ever since their mother died, their stepmother has made life difficult for them. Now a ghost seems to be haunting their house. Why, and who is it? Movie keeps you on-edge for most of the time, but since little is explained, the effect of this is muted. May require multiple viewings. Written by the director. Based on a Korean folktale, which was filmed before in 1956, 1962 and 1972. English title: A TALE OF TWO SISTERS.

**Jarinko Chie** (1981, JAP) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Chinatsu Nakayama, Norio Nishikawa, Kiyoshi Nishikawa, Yasushi Yokoyama, Shinsuke Shimada. Animated feature from master Takahata about a little girl, whose parents have separated and who must work in her ne'er-do-well father's diner. She gets involved with small-time gangsters in this mildly entertaining comedy. Some clever moments, but Takahata instills this with too little story to make it work over its relatively long running time. He returned to the subject of family trouble in 1999 with HOHOKEKYO TONARI NO YAMADA-KUN (MY NEIGHBORS THE YAMADAS). Followed by a TV series (1981-1983, 64 episodes). English title: CHIE THE BRAT.

**Jason and the Argonauts** (1963, USA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Don Chaffey. Starring Todd Armstrong, Nancy Kovack, Gary Raymond, Laurence Naismith, Niall MacGinnis, Michael Gwynn, Douglas Wilmer, Honor Blackman, Nigel Green. Much-loved fantasy adventure about adventurer Jason (Armstrong) and his quest to find the Golden Fleece at the end of the world. Too episodic, carelessly plotted, but Ray Harryhausen's famous stop-motion effects are impressive (they were referenced in Sam Raimi's ARMY OF DARKNESS). Score by Bernard Herrmann. Remade for TV in 2000.

**Jason Goes to Hell: The Final Friday** (1993, USA) **C-89m.** \*½ D: Adam Marcus. Starring Kane Hodder, John D. LeMay, Kari Keegan, Steven Williams, Steven Culp, Erin Gray, Adam Marcus. Ninth installment in the FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup> series has little to do with the previous sequels. This time Jason is killed at the *beginning* of the film, only to return to haunt his sister when his spirit enters the bodies of assorted characters. Stupid plot, hardly any suspense, this entry is for splatter freaks, as the special effects are quite good. Also shown at 91m. Followed by JASON X (2001).

**Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back** (2001, USA) **C-104m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Kevin Smith. Starring Jason Mewes, Kevin Smith, Ben Affleck, Jeff Anderson, Brian O'Halloran, Shannon Elizabeth, Eliza Dushku, Ali Larter, Jennifer Schwabach, Will Ferrell, Jason Lee, Judd Nelson, George Carlin, Carrie Fisher, Seann William Scott, Gus Van Sant, Chris Rock, Jamie Kennedy, Wes Craven, Shannen Doherty, Mark Hamill, Amy Noble, Joey Lauren Adams, Alanis Morissette, Jason Biggs, Matt Damon. Kevin Smith's slacker characters from his previous films get their own movie here, as they try and stop(!) the Jay and Silent Bob movie that is being made in Hollywood. On the way they have all kinds of problems and adventures. A throwback to the days of Cheech & Chong, this Hollywood spoof is much too self-absorbed and episodic to

really work. Some funny moments, to be sure, but generally a disappointment, with many pointless cameo appearances.

**J.D.'s Revenge** (1976, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Arthur Marks. Starring Glynn Turman, David McKnight, Alice Jubert, Louis Gossett Jr., Jo Anne Meredith. Young Turman is possessed by the soul of a dead man who wants to avenge the murder of his wife. *Very odd* blaxploitation set in New Orleans is an atmospheric melange of black coolness, sex scenes and supernatural happenings. Uneven and strangely off-putting, but fans should give this one a look.

**Jenifer** (2005, USA) **C-58m.** n/r D: Dario Argento. Starring Steven Weber, Laurie Brunetti, Carrie Ann Fleming, Harris Allan, Mark Acheson. Episode produced for the Masters of Horror TV special (created by Mick Garris), where filmmakers such as John Carpenter, John Landis or Tobe Hooper tried their hands at horror shorts. Here, the Italian grandmaster Argento tells the story of cop Weber (who also scripted), who saves a young woman from being killed. It turns out the hideously disfigured, mute girl not only has an appetite for sex, but also for human flesh! Solidly made, with both sex and gore, but its plot remains too obvious and unlikely. Overall an okay view, slightly below par for Argento. Good score by Claudio Simonetti (Goblin).

**Jennifer** (1978, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Brice Mack. Starring Lisa Pelikan, Bert Convy, Nina Foch, Amy Johnston, John Gavin, Jeff Corey, Ray Underwood. Troubled teenager Pelikan, a former member of a snake cult, is hassled by nasty blonde Johnston but finally gets her revenge. Solid storytelling, good acting in ordinary horror thriller. Too low-key and slowly paced to score a higher rating. Interesting score by Jerry Styner.

**Jennifer Eight** (1992, USA) **C-127m.** \*\*½ D: Bruce Robinson. Starring Andy Garcia, Uma Thurman, Lance Henriksen, Kathy Baker, Graham Beckel, Kevin Conway, John Malkovich, Perry Lang, Lenny von Dohlen. Well-acted thriller about a New York cop (Garcia) on the trail of a serial killer in a small town. Blind witness Thurman may be the next target, and he wants to protect her, though there are still doubts whether there really *is* a serial killer. Quite good, but lacks the expert direction of, say, *THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*. Story development is also not very credible. Photographed by Conrad Hall.

**Jennifer's Body** (2009, USA) **C-107m.** \*\*½ D: Karyn Kusama. Starring Megan Fox, Amanda Seyfried, Adam Brody, Johnny Simmons, Chris Pratt, J.K. Simmons, Lance Henriksen. Teen horror comedy about two best friends, sexy Fox and nerdy Seyfried, who live in a small town. When a rock band gives a concert in the local bar and a fire breaks out, Fox disappears with them and returns the next day as a bloodthirsty succubus. Done with almost no regard for pace and plot, but remains watchable thanks to some likable performances and its sexy stars. Typical teen fodder. Written by Diablo Cody.

**Jerry Maguire** (1996, USA) **C-138m.** \*\*\* D: Cameron Crowe. Starring Tom Cruise, Cuba Gooding Jr., Renée Zellweger, Kelly Preston, Jerry O'Connell, Bonny Hunt, Jonathan Lipnicki, Mark Pellington, Eric Stoltz, Beau Bridges. Kinetic, lightning-based drama about sports manager Cruise, who is ousted from his firm after writing a pamphlet for better treatment of their clients. All he is left with is difficult wanna-be football star Gooding Jr. (who won an Oscar) and shy secretary Zellweger, who secretly adores him. Well-acted (Cruise wanted that Oscar *badly* but did not get it), well-made, engaging, entertaining drama. Written by the director.

**Jersey Girl** (2004, USA) **C-102m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Kevin Smith. Starring Ben Affleck, Liv Tyler, Jennifer Lopez, Raquel Castro, Stephen Root, Mike Starr, Jason Biggs, Jason Lee, Matt Damon, Will Smith. Throwback to Smith's *CHASING AMY* days with that film's star Affleck. He plays a busy public relations manager, who has great plans with his pregnant wife Lopez.

However, when she dies during childbirth, he is saddled with a baby that he cannot coordinate with his job. So he moves back to Jersey, to his dad, who gives him a hand in raising the girl. Tackles issues such as love, death, sex, parenthood seriously but not without humor, this comedy drama may seem overbaked and contrived to some, but it's filled with warmth. One of those movies to which your heart responds differently than your head. Photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond. Written and co-edited by the director, who dedicates the movie to his dad, who died during production.

**Jessabelle** (2014, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Kevin Greutert. Starring Sarah Snook, Mark Webber, Joelle Carter, David Andrews, Amber Stevens. Fine horror chiller set in Louisiana, where young Snook is forced to retreat after her boyfriend dies in an accident that leaves her temporarily wheelchair-bound. Her father's old cottage is full of memories. When she finds videotapes that her mother recorded during her pregnancy, she awakens a sinister presence in the house and uncovers a terrible family secret. Atmospheric, well-scripted mystery horror with a main actress that is perfect in the part. From the director of the last two SAW films. Good score by Anton Sanko (THE POSSESSION) has Goblin-like sound effects.

**Jetée, La** (1962, FRA) **27m. n/r** D: Chris Marker. Starring Davos Hanich, Hélène Chatelain, Jacques Ledoux, narrated by Jean Négroni. The inspiration for Terry Gilliam's sci-fi drama TWELVE MONKEYS is an interesting black-and-white short film, basically just a combination of stills. The narration is clumsy, atmosphere and score compensate somewhat. The story about personal and global apocalypse holds up in light of short running time. Remarkable, if not terribly impressive, most worthwhile when comparing it to Gilliam's remake. Watch LA JETEE online at [www.bijoucafe.com](http://www.bijoucafe.com).

**Jeune Fille Libre Ce Soir** (1975, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-111m. \*\*½** D: René Clément. Starring Maria Schneider, Sydne Rome, Vic Morrow, Robert Vaughn, Nadja Tiller, Georg Marischka, Renato Pozzetto. Interesting misfire from the director of LE PASSENGER DE LA PLUIE (1969). Schneider sleepwalks through her role as young, penniless girl, who accepts a babysitting job and soon finds herself in the middle of a kidnapping masterminded by Rome's actor friends Vaughn and Tiller. Cryptic and confusing in equal parts in the first half, then creates some nice suspense scenes, but flaws remain all too obvious. Recommended to buffs, who will savor cast and score (by Francis Lai). Written by director Clément, Nicola Badalucco, Luciano Vincenzoni and Mark Peploe (director of AFRAID OF THE DARK and cowriter of PROFESSIONE: REPORTER!). Clément's last movie; he retired much too early after this at the age of 62. Alternative titles: THE BABYSITTER, THE RAW EDGE, WANTED: BABYSITTER, L.A. BABYSITTER.

**Jigoku no Keibin** (1992, JAP) **C-96m. \*½** D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Makiko Kuno, Yutaka Matsushige, Hatsunori Hasegawa, Red Osugi. Early Kurosawa feature is set in an office building, where a new employee is faced with weird co-workers and a guard and former sumo wrestler, who also may be a serial killer. Off-putting, poorly directed and scored, film is slow and annoying all the way through. Impossible to detect that Kurosawa was at the helm (he also scripted!). English title: THE GUARD FROM UNDERGROUND.

**Jigsaw** (2017, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: The Spierig Brothers. Starring Matt Passmore, Tobin Bell, Callum Keith Rennie, Hannah Emily Anderson, Clé Bennett. The SAW series reboots with this sequel, the 8<sup>th</sup> film in total. Some mysterious murders carry John 'Jigsaw' Kramer's trademark, and indeed someone is playing a murder game with five victims. Has the serial killer returned from the grave? Cop Rennie and pathologists Passmore and Anderson try to shed light on the mystery. Cringeworthy effects, elaborate death traps and the trademark twist will give series fans their money's worth, others needn't bother. James Wan and Leigh Whannell were executive producers. Kevin Greutert edited the picture.

**Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius** (2001, USA) **C-82m. \*\*½ D:** John A. Davis. Starring (the voices of) Megan Canavagh, Mark DeCarlo, Debi Derryberry, Martin Short, Patrick Stewart, Jim Cummings, John A. Davis. Fair introduction of Nickelodeon's popular cartoon character, an extraordinarily intelligent boy, whose inventions sometimes even take him to space. One day, he encounters a malevolent alien race, who abduct everybody's parents. It's Jimmy Neutron to the rescue! Typically engaging, but noisy, hyperactive and with some not so pedagogical scenes. For fans.

**Jingle All the Way** (1996, USA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Brian Levant. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sinbad, Phil Hartman, Rita Wilson, Robert Conrad, Martin Mull, James Belushi, Jake Lloyd. Loud, colorful – and rather silly christmas comedy about busy dad Schwarzenegger and his quest for a sold-out Turbo Man Action Figure for his little son Lloyd on Christmas Eve. Unnecessarily violent but also quite funny family film, swiftly paced, if quite kitschy. Christmas bonus peps up this rating.

**Jiro Dreams of Sushi** (2011, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** David Gelb. Featuring Jiro Ono, Masuhiro Yamamoto, Daisuke Nakazama. Fascinating documentary about world-famous 85-year-old sushi chef Ono, who runs a small restaurant which can only serve 10 people at a time. He is the oldest chef that has been awarded three stars by the Michelin guide. The art of making sushi is explored, as well as Ono's philosophy behind it all. A poignant look at Japanese ways of life.

**Jisatsu Manyuaru** (2003, JAP) **C-86m. \*\* D:** Osamu Fukutani. Starring Nozomi Andô, Kei Horie, Ayaka Maeda, Kenji Mizuhashi. Horror drama about two young TV reporters, who decide to make a documentary about recent teen suicides and stumble upon a video manual, in which a mysterious girl explain different ways of killing oneself. Not bad, quite ambitious, but hardly gets going, never becomes exciting or scary. Shot on video, which gives this one an amateurish look at times. Followed by a sequel. English titles: THE SUICIDE MANUAL, THE MANUAL.

**Jisatsu Sâkuru** (2001, JAP) **C-99m. \*½ D:** Shion Sono. Starring Ryo Ishibashi, Masatoshi Nagase, Mai Hosho, Tamao Satô. Pointless horror drama starts with the suicide of 54 school girls, who all jump in front of a subway train. Other teens are influenced by this, and the police try to find out who is behind mysterious website, which seems to count the deaths before they happen. Poorly made, this is gory, but not convincing at all. English titles: SUICIDE CIRCLE, SUICIDE CLUB.

**Jitsuroku Abe Sada** (1975, JAP) **C-76m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Noboru Tanaka. Starring Junko Miyashita, Hideaki Esumi, Genshu Hanayagi, Yoshie Kitsuda. Considered a classic in some circles, this Japanese psycho drama deals with the obsessive, destructive love affair between restaurant owner Esumi and his mistress Miyashita. Might have been influenced by Bertolucci's classic L'ULTIMO TANGO A PARIGI (1973), but Japan has a history of this kind of movies itself. Strictly for those who find a combination of sex and death stimulating. Same true story filmed more successfully as AI NO CORRIDA (IN THE REALM OF THE SENSES) a year later. Remade again in 1998. English title: A WOMAN CALLED ABE SADA.

**Jo** (1971, FRA) **C-85m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Claude Gensac, Michel Galabru, Bernard Blier, Guy Tréjan, Ferdy Mayne, Yvonne Clech, Paul Préboist, Jacques Marin, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Classic Louis de Funès comedy, one of his funniest. Successful writer de Funès is blackmailed by a gangster and decides to get rid of him, planning everything neatly to dispose of the body. On the next day, de Funès realizes that he shot the wrong man and telephones his friends to find out who he buried under that new gazebo his wife Gensac had built in the garden. Adaptation of Alec Coppel's play (filmed before in 1959 with Glenn Ford as THE GAZEBO) features the French comedian in one of his best roles.

Colorful supporting cast makes this a lot of fun. Marvelous sets, black comedy, a sit-com in the best tradition. The final twenty minutes are a hoot! Good score by Raymond Lefevre, cinematography by Henri Decae. Some de Funès fans consider this to be his best. English title: JOE, THE BUSY BODY.

**Jodorowsky's Dune** (2013, USA/FRA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Frank Pavich. Featuring Alejandro Jodorowsky, Brontis Jodorowsky, Richard Stanley, Nicholas Windig Refn, Michel Seydoux, H.R. Giger, Chris Foss, Gary Kurtz. Documentary about probably the greatest science-fiction movie *never* made. After Jodorowsky's success with EL TOPO and THE HOLY MOUNTAIN in the early 1970s, he was invited by producer Seydoux to adapt the famous Frank Herbert novel *Dune*. Jodorowsky himself recounts the events that led to the cancellation and describes the talent that was already working on the project. Fascinating look at the artistic process in filmmaking and Jodo's own philosophical approach. It's too bad this was never realized. Documentary is well-made, but might have been even more in-depth. Jodorowsky's reunion with producer Seydoux led to a new project, the biographical drama LA DANZA DE LA REALIDAD (2013).

**Joe... Cercati un Posto per Morire!** (1968, ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring Jeffrey Hunter, Pascale Petit, Reza Fazeli, Ted Carter (=Nello Pazzafini), Piero Lulli, Daniela Giordano. Fairly good, serious spaghetti western, tending towards the American type. Hunter plays a gunslinger fallen from grace, who gets a chance to redeem himself when a woman (Petit) asks for his help. Then some bandits contend for the gold the woman knows the whereabouts of. Plot lacks power, but film is interesting, solidly made. Good score by Gianni Ferrio. English title: FIND A PLACE TO DIE.

**Joe Hisaishi in Budokan – Studio Ghibli 25 Years Concert** (2008, JAP) **C-116m. \*\*\*\*** D: none credited. Featuring Joe Hisaishi, Hayao Miyazaki, Gorô Miyazaki. Absolutely breathtaking concert made to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Studio Ghibli, the brilliant Japanese animation company. Master Hisaishi conducts a large, impressive orchestra and choir - in total perhaps 300 artists – putting you on a rollercoaster ride of emotions. Beauty and perfection, words cannot describe this wonderful, *wonderful* arrangement of music. Some clips of the respective movies are projected to a large screen overhead. Director Miyazaki appears towards the end, congratulating and applauding his composer. Made for Japanese television.

**Joe's Apartment** (1996, USA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: John Payson. Starring Jerry O'Connell, Megan Ward, Billy West, Reginald Hudlin, Jim Turner, Robetr Vaughan. Comic-book style comedy about hayseed O'Connell, who comes to live in the big city (N.Y.) and moves into a roach-infested apartment. The local bullies would rather see him dead, but they haven't reckoned with an army of thousands of (talking!) cockroaches, who all take Joe's side, cause he's so grungy. HOME ALONE for the MTV-Generation has some funny scenes but is mostly gratuitous. If you want to know what really ought to be done with roaches, view MIMIC (1997). Expanded from a short film.

**John Carpenter's Vampires** (1998, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*½ D: John Carpenter. Starring James Woods, Daniel Baldwin, Sheryl Lee, Thomas Ian Griffith, Maximilian Schell, Tim Guinee. Mean, effective vampire movie by old horror expert Carpenter. Woods plays a modern-day vampire hunter, who, searching for bloodsuckers in Mexico, touches upon a powerful master vampire (Griffith). When his team is killed, he swears vengeance, doing everything in his power to stop the evil creature on his quest to immortality. Some good shock effects, and a nice sense of humor put this above average of the usual horror fodder. However, film is dramatically pat and poorly cast but for Woods' cynical, foul-mouthed character. Very

violent scenes make this a sure pick for horror fans, others beware. Based on the novel *Vampire\$* by John Steakley. Also known as VAMPIRES.

**Johnny English** (2003, GBR) **C-88m. \*\*** D: Peter Howitt. Starring Rowan Atkinson, John Malkovich, Natalie Imbruglia, Ben Miller, Peter Howitt. Bond-spoof Mr Bean-style, about Atkinson's title character, who is assigned to continue spy work of the Number One British spy, after he got killed (and all the other candidates for the job, too). He sets out against French villain Malkovich, who intends to become King of Britannia. A bit slight, not too funny, this silly parody was written by regular 007 screenwriters Neal Purvis, Robert Wade. Let's stick to AUSTIN POWERS!

**Joko Invoca Dio... e Muori** (1968, ITA/GER) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Anthony Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Richard Harrison, Claudio Camaso, Werner Pochath, Paolo Gozolino, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi), Goffredo Unger. Below average revenge western has an earnest plot. Gunfighter Harrison wants to avenge the death by quartering of his brother, who was involved in a bank robbery with him. He tracks down the men responsible and exacts revenge. Never gets going properly. Title song is pretty ridiculous, Carlo Savina's score dull. English title: VENGEANCE.

**Jorobardo de la Morgue, El** (1973, SPA) **C-82m. \*½** D: Javier Aguirre. Starring Paul Naschy (Jacinto Molina), Rosanna Yanni, Victor Alcázar, María Elena Arpón, Maria Perschy, Alberto Dalbés, Manuel de Blas, Angel Menéndez. Weak horror film with gothic elements about hunchback Naschy, who is in love with a dying woman and cooperates with a doctor, who is planning to conduct Frankenstein-like experiments. Poorly written and hardly convincing, least of all Naschy himself. Pathetic score destroys what's left. Some over-the-top gore may interest horror freaks. English titles: THE HUNCHBACK OF THE MORGUE, THE RUE MORGUE MASSACRES.

**Joshuu 701-Gô: Sasori** (1972, JAP) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Shunya Ito. Starring Meiko Kaji, Rie Yokoyama, Isao Natsuyagi, Fumio Watanabe. Yayoi Watanabe. Japanese W.I.P. 'classic' about the title character, a prison inmate, who goes through much abuse after a failed escape attempt. She even becomes hated by the other prisoners, who are forced to do hard labor whenever she tries to break out. Pretty much like the other W.I.P. flicks, with lots of nudity and violence and a distinct lack of plot. Some surreal touches don't really make it better than the American counterparts. Based on a graphic novel (what else?), followed by five sequels in the 1970s and some remakes in the 1990s. English title: FEMALE PRISONER #701: SCORPION.

**Joshuu Sasori: 701-Gô Urami-Bushi** (1973, JAP) **C-89m. SCOPE\*\*\*½** D: Yasuharu Hasebe. Starring Meiko Kaji, Masakazu Tamura, Yumi Kanei, Hiroshi Tsukata, Yayoi Watanabe. Fourth installment in the SASORI series is not set in prison for almost two thirds. Kaji is caught by the police, escapes again and is helped by a technician at a night club, who is a victim of brutal police interrogation himself. Uneven, but quite intense at times, slightly superior to the original, as it is less predictable and showcases Kaji's charisma better. Actress Kaji (LADY SNOWBLOOD) left the series after this movie, which was followed by two more SASORI movies in the 1970s. English title: FEMALE PRISONER SCORPION: #701'S GRUDGE SONG.

**Jour et l'Heure, Le** (1963, FRA/ITA) **B&W-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: René Clément. Starring Simone Signoret, Stuart Whitman, Geneviève Page, Michel Piccoli, Reggie Nalder, Billy Kearns, Marcel Bozzuffi, Jacques Herlin. Clément's assured direction makes the difference in this WW2 drama about Signoret, a reluctant helper of the Résistance, who takes in American pilot Whitman and tries to help him escape to Spain. Longish but engrossing, with fine black-and-white cinematography by Henri Decae. Clément also coscripted. Costa-

Gavras and Claude Pinoteau were his assistant directors. English titles: THE DAY AND THE HOUR, and TODAY WE LIVE.

**Journey to the Center of the Earth** (1959, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Henry Levin. Starring James Mason, Pat Boone, Arlene Dahl, Diane Baker, Thayer David, Alan Napier. Exciting Jules Verne adventure about Professor Mason's perilous journey to the earth's core. Fine production values, grandly entertaining fantasy. German version is cut by a few minutes.

**Journey 2: The Mysterious Island** (2012, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Brad Peyton. Starring Dwayne Johnson, Josh Hutcherson, Vannesa Hudgens, Luis Guzman, Michael Caine. Sequel to JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (2008), also starring Josh Hutcherson, brings him to an island in the South Pacific, from where his grandfather (Michael Caine) has dispatched an encoded message. The mysterious island turns out to be an amazing playground for adventure. Not to be taken seriously, with a fairly episodic plot, but fun and thrilling nonetheless, actually much better than expected.

**Judas Kiss** (1998, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sebastian Gutierrez. Starring Alan Rickman, Emma Thompson, Carla Gugino, Gil Bellows, Simon Baker, Til Schweiger, Roscoe Lee Browne, Philip Baker Hall, Jack Conley. Gugino and her gang decide to kidnap a computer expert and demand 4 million dollars in return for his release. Detectives Rickman and Thompson are on their trail. An exercise in coolness and hipness by a first-time director. Comedy thriller is quite entertaining and amusing, but everything seems calculated and this kind of story has been filmed hundreds of times before (especially during the 90s). One of those films you will forget in a week or two.

**Jude** (1996, GBR) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Michael Winterbottom. Starring Christopher Ecclestone, Kate Winslet, Rachel Griffiths, Liam Cunningham, June Whitfield, Ross Colvin Turnbull. Epic love story set in 19<sup>th</sup> century England, about stonemason Ecclestone, who wants nothing more than to attend university. His marriage destroys these plans, but as he is soon left by his wife, he turns to his cousin Winslet, with whom he starts a wild affair. Great production values, excellent photography, but movie remains undramatic throughout and manages to involve the viewer. Too bad. Based on Thomas Hardy's last novel *Jude the Obscure*.

**Judex** (1963, FRA/ITA) **97m. \*\*\*** D: Georges Franju. Starring Channing Pollock, Francine Bergé, Edith Scob. A fraudulent, rich businessman is threatened by a mysterious stranger who calls himself Judex (Latin for 'judge') and wants to avenge those who have been faulted by the magnate. Meanwhile, others are after valuable manuscripts which prove the man's involvement in dubious transactions. Well-directed, highly unusual mystery drama (by the maker of LES YEUX SANS VISAGE) is filled with so many plot twists, it almost seems surreal. Sure to hold your attention all the way. Dedicated to the memory of Louis Feuillade, the French silent screen pioneer.

**Judge Dredd** (1995, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*½** D: Danny Cannon. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Armand Assante, Diane Lane, Rob Schneider, Joan Chen, Jürgen Prochnow, Max von Sydow, Balthazar Getty. Incredibly stupid, illogical sci-fi action featuring Stallone as a supercop who saves the world from supercriminal Assante. Absolutely trivial thriller has one zippy action scene but that's about it. What does Hollywood take us for? Idiots who only want to see 'some violence'?

**Judgment at Nuremberg** (1961, USA) **178m. \*\*\*\*** D: Stanley Kramer. Starring Spencer Tracy, Burt Lancaster, Richard Widmark, Maximilian Schell, Marlene Dietrich, Judy Garland, Montgomery Clift, William Shatner. Outstanding, thought-provoking epic-scale recreation of the famous Nuremberg trials of 1948, where four Nazi judges had to defend themselves in court. Direction, acting are first-rate in a must-see film.

**Juego del Adulterio, El** (1973, SPA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent. Starring Erika Blanc, Vicente Parra, Juan Luis Galiardo, Angel Menendez, Marisol Delgado, Agata Lys. Spanish giallo variation about rich Blanc, whose husband finds her cheating on him. When he discovers a trap door in the wine cellar he decides to get rid of her. But who will get the last laugh on whom? Starts quite well but bogs down in final third. Quite nice score but no one is credited. Written by the director. English title: THE DEADLY TRIANGLE.

**Jug Face** (2013, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE \*½** D: Chad Crawford Kinkle. Starring Sean Bridgers, Lauren Ashley Carter, Kaitlin Cullum, Sean Young. Unpleasant horror film set in a backwoods community, where an incestuous (and pregnant) young woman is promised to be 'joined' with a man she dislikes. There's a weird ritual, where jugs are made with faces on them and people sacrifice themselves. Quite bizarre but without suspense, entertainment or action. A C-movie that lacks appeal.

**Juggernaut** (1974, GBR) **C-109m. \*\*\*** D: Richard Lester. Starring Richard Harris, Omar Sharif, David Hemmings, Anthony Hopkins, Shirley Knight, Ian Holm, Clifton James, Roy Kinnear, Freddie Jones, Julian Glover, Simon MacCorkindale, Cyril Cusack. Stellar cast in solidly filmed suspenser about a bomb threat concerning captain Sharif's luxury-liner with 1,200 people on board. An anti-bomb squad, led by Harris, soon have their hands full. Longish but well-filmed, well-acted (especially by Harris) and suspenseful. With more melodrama in the plot this could have become a classic disaster thriller (à la THE TOWERING INFERNO).

**Jules et Jim** (1961, FRA) **108m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: François Truffaut. Starring Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, Henri Serre, Marie Dubois, Vanna Urbino. Unconventional, creatively directed love drama about impact of free-spirited woman Moreau on the relationship between Werner and Serre. Superbly scored, very well-acted classic drama of the Nouvelle Vague. Based on a novel by Henri-Pierre Roché.

**Juliette et Juliette** (1974, FRA/ITA) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Rémo Forlani. Starring Annie Girardot, Marlène Jobert, Pierre Richard, Alfred Adam, Robert Beauvais, Dominique Briand, Patrick Préjean, Daniel Prévost, Rémo Forlani. Dated emancipation comedy about two women whose paths cross. Girardot plays a free-spirited but unhappy journalist, Jobert is frustrated saleswoman married to wanna-be boxing champ Richard. The two women create a feminist magazine and movement. Plot lacks momentum, but film remains watchable. English title: JULIETTE AND JULIETTE.

**Jungle Book, The** (1967, USA) **C-78m. \*\*\*** D: Wolfgang Reitherman. Starring the voices of Phil Harris, Sebastian Cabot, Louis Prima, George Sanders, Bruce Reitherman. One of Disney's most popular animated features, this amiable comedy is about a boy who is raised by wolves in the jungle. When no-nonsense panther Bagheera intends to bring him back to the humans, they meet Baloo the Bear and learn about 'The Bare Necessities'. Cute, well-animated, but lacks a powerful narrative. Based on motives from Rudyard Kipling's novels. This was the last film that Walt Disney supervised before his death. Followed by a sequel in 2003.

**Jungle 2 Jungle** (1997, USA) **C-105m. \*\*\*½** D: John Pasquin. Starring Tim Allen, Martin Short, JoBeth Williams, Lolita Davidovich, David Ogden Stiers, Bob Dishy, Valerie Mahaffey. Disney-produced comedy, a remake of the French hit UN INDIEN DANS LA VILLE. Allen plays a New York stockbroker, who travels to South America to have his wife sign the divorce papers and learns that he has a thirteen year-old son, who has grown up in the jungle. Reluctantly he takes him to Manhattan, and predictable complications ensue. Some gags hit bull's-eye, but too many backfire. Pretty harmless and quite entertaining.

**Ju-On: The Grudge** (2003, JAP) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Takashi Shimizu. Starring Megumi Okina, Misa Uehara, Yui Ichikawa, Kanji Tsuda. A young social worker is sent to a house

to look after an old woman who lives there with her son and his wife. When she arrives she finds the old lady in a catatonic state and feels a supernatural presence, which – as the prologue leaves no doubt about – will kill anyone who has entered the house. Scary, eerie exercise in suspense will leave you breathless in the first half. Film deteriorates slightly, as an extra detour is made to stretch the plot, but overall a highly chilling film. This was the third film in a series by writer-director Shimizu, which started with JU-ON (2000) and JU-ON 2 (2000). Followed by JU-ON: THE GRUDGE 2 (2003) and US-remake THE GRUDGE (2004). **Ju-On: The Grudge 2** (2003, JAP) **C-92m**. \*\*½ D: Takashi Shimizu. Starring Noriko Sakai, Chiharu Niyama, Kei Horie, Yui Ichikawa, Shingo Katsurayama. Sequel to one of the scariest Japanese horror films since RINGU (1998) revisits the house of the first film, where a film crew want to film a documentary about the place, with horror actress Sakai taking part. The pregnant star soon starts to be haunted by the ghost of a woman and a little boy, as crew members start dying one by one. Non-linear narrative can be confusing if you are not used to Japanese faces, and film generally never manages to hit bull's-eye. Some scary sequences, to be sure, but it becomes grotesque towards the end, making this seem more like a curio than a potent horror film. Written by the director. The American THE GRUDGE 2 (2006) is not a remake of this movie (although Shimizu also directed it!).

**Jupiter Ascending** (2015, USA/GBR/AUS) **C-127m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Andy and Lana (Larry) Wachowski. Starring Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis, Sean Bean, Eddie Redmayne, Douglas Booth, Tuppence Middleton. Visually breathtaking science-fiction film with the plot the only element that's not convincing. Kunis plays the title character Jupiter, a half-Russian, half-American girl, whose life has not been good to her. She makes a living cleaning toilets, that is until she is contacted by a cosmic renegade (Tatum), who wants to protect her against an alien race (looking much like humans), who harvest the Earth (needing humans to make a special rejuvenating potion). Jupiter, as the rightful owner of the Earth(!), may be the only one who can stop this from happening. Lots of razzle-dazzle from the beginning, but it takes well beyond the first half to fully hit its stride. The sumptuous photography (John Toll), the production design (reminiscent of BLADE RUNNER at times), and Michael Giacchino's excellent score should make you forget about the rather juvenile plot. Cameo by Terry Gilliam, whose BRAZIL (1985) is referenced. The Wachowskis also wrote and produced the film.

**Jurassic Park** (1993, USA) **C-126m**. \*\*\*½ D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum, Richard Attenborough, Bob Peck, Martin Ferrero, Samuel L. Jackson, Dean Cain. Steven Spielberg blockbuster about scientists Neill and Dern (both dino experts), who are whisked away to eccentric zillionaire Attenborough's island, where they are more than surprised to behold the old man's dinosaur colony, which he cloned from the blood of a mosquito trapped in amber. They proceed to make a tour of the soon-to-be amusement park, but double-cross soon leads to a black-out and the visitors find themselves running for their lives from T-Rex and other carnivorous beasts. A whale of an adventure becomes a rollercoaster ride after an hour, with sweat-inducing cliffhanger stunts and not-to-be believed, state-of-the-art special effects. Periodic lulls are easily excused. This is Spielberg on top of his game. Incredibly, he made the acclaimed SCHINDLER'S LIST the same year! Based on the bestseller by Michael Crichton (who also scripted, with David Koepp). Good score by John Williams. Oscar winner for Best Effects. Followed by two sequels, starting with THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK (1997).

**Jurassic Park III** (2001, USA) **C-92m**. \*\* D: Joe Johnston. Starring Sam Neill, William H. Macy, Téa Leoni, Alessandro Nivola, Trevor Morgan, Michael Jeter, Laura Dern. Completely predictable sequel about scientist Neill, who reluctantly agrees to join a group of people

who go flying over the dino island. When they land – against his wishes – they soon find themselves in great danger. Action-filled semi-remake of the second film has cardboard characters and action set-pieces that seem to have been made for a theme-park. Might thrill younger kids.

**Jurassic World** (2015, USA/CHI) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Colin Trevorrow. Starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Irrfan Khan, Vincent D'Onofrio, Ty Simpkins, Nick Robinson, Jake Johnson, Judy Greer. In a new theme park built near the original JURASSIC PARK site, some 20,000 visitors are enjoying themselves, when the park's latest attraction, a genetically engineered, hyper-intelligent dinosaur breaks out of his compound and threatens everyone's lives. Down-to-earth dino whisperer Pratt may be the park's only chance. Rather dull script merely an excuse for big scale action scenes. It completely lacks the heart and excitement of the Spielberg classic. True excitement only sets in in the final fight. Pratt may have the cowboy gene but he is still not a serious actor.

**Just Before Dawn** (1981, USA) **C-106m. \*\* D:** Jeff Lieberman. Starring George Kennedy, Mike Kellin, Chris Lemmon, Gregg Henry, Deborah Benson, Ralph Seymour, Jamie Rose. Standard slasher movie about five young campers, who pick the wrong place to put up their tents. Despite warnings from ranger Kennedy and a drunken hick on the road, they start falling prey to a machete-wielding psychopath. Pretty straight-forward with a focus on nature scenes, but most sequences go on forever and give the film a deadly pace. Not-bad score by Brad Fiedel. From the director of SQUIRM (1976).

**Juste Avant la Nuit** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Michel Bouquet, Stéphane Audran, Francois Périer, Jean Carmet, Dominique Zardi, Henri Attal. Psycho drama made during director Chabrol's most productive (and successful) phase. Businessman Bouquet murders his lover during S&M games, then crumbles under the heavy load of guilt on his shoulders. Will he keep quiet towards unsuspecting wife Audran and his best friend Périer, whose wife was the victim? Heavy-going but fascinating examination of bourgeois mores, as is customary with Chabrol. Written by the director, based on a novel by Edouard Atiyah. English title: JUST BEFORE NIGHTFALL.

**Just Friends** (2005, USA/CDN/GER) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Roger Kumble. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Amy Smart, Anna Faris, Chris Klein, Chris Marquette, Giacomo Beltrami, Julie Hagerty. Fat teenager Reynolds is madly in love with Smart, who only wants to be friends. Ten years later the ugly duckling has changed into a handsome hunk, and chance brings him back to his old hometown. Can he get together with his old flame now? Comedy has some entertainment value, but becomes stupid and obnoxious around half-way through and never recovers.

**Just Heroes** (1989, HGK) **C-97m. \*\* D:** John Woo. Starring Danny Lee, Lee San Yin, Chiang Sing Chi, Wu Ma. Action melodrama by hot director Woo about the fates of several weapon dealers after their boss is assassinated. The action scenes are good, but story wears thin soon. No match for Woo's THE KILLER, which the director made the same year.

**Just Like Heaven** (2005, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\* D:** Mark Waters. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Mark Ruffalo, Donal Logue, Dina Waters (Spybey), Ben Shenkman, Jon Heder. Witherspoon plays a workaholic doctor, who's never really had a relationship, then one day she meets depressed Ruffalo and wonders why he has moved into her apartment. Then they realize she is a ghost and only he can see and hear her. It turns out that she's been in a coma for three months. How will the situation resolve itself? Cute, funny romantic fantasy comedy has its usual contrivances, but the stars are appealing and the story is moving. Short and sweet. Based on the novel *If Only it Were True* by Marc Levy.

**999-9999 (Kâaw)** (2002, THA) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Peter Manus. Starring Chulachak Chakrabongse, Sririta Jensen, Paula Taylor, Thepparit Raiwin, Norajan Sangigern. Okay Thai

horror movie about a mysterious phone number (see title), where a dark voice grants you a wish. When that comes true, it will ask for your part in the deal – your life. A couple of students die like this one after the other. Can the remaining ones figure out the mystery behind the number? A bit like FINAL DESTINATION (2000), with some over-the-top CGI effects, but hard to dislike and quite stylish. Co-written by the director.

**Kadaicha** (1988, AUS) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** James Bogle. Starring Zoe Carides, Tom Jennings, Eric Oldfield, Natalie McCurry. Not-bad Australian horror film about a century-old curse which kills off the local teenagers. It turns out that Carides' dad has built an apartment complex right on an Aboriginal burial ground. Plot is often dumb, but film is well-directed and well-edited, worth a look for horror buffs. Alternative title: STONES OF DEATH.

**Kaena: La Prophétie** (2003, FRA/CDN) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** Chris Delaporte, Pascal Pinon. Starring (the voices of) Cécile De France, Michael Lonsdale, Victoria Abril, Francois Siener, Jean-Michel Farcy. Digitally animated fantasy adventure set on a distant planet, where girl Kaena's tribe is threatened with extinction by another species, for which they provide frequent offerings (believing them to be their gods). Some eye-popping design, but story is not well set-up, and plot is not involving enough. Remains a bit too outlandish. English version, titled KAENA: THE PROPHECY, features voice performances by Kirsten Dunst, Anjelica Huston and Richard Harris (his last screen credit).

**Kaguyahime no Monogatari** (2013, JAP) **C-137m. \*\*\*½ D:** Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Aki Asakura, Yukiji Asaoka. Allegorical fantasy drama from master animator Takahata, his first film in 13 years. A childless bamboo cutter and his wife one day mysteriously find a newborn child inside a bamboo stalk and raise her like their own. She grows unusually fast and brings her parents wealth and fame. Later she is wooed by different men of nobility, even the Emperor himself. However, she harbours a tragic secret. Not a typical glossy anime, but a thoughtful examination of what makes us human, film is often too slowly paced, but once you're in the second half it becomes simply wonderful and heart-breaking. Excellent score by Joe Hisaishi. Based on a Japanese folktale. English title: THE TALE OF PRINCESS KAGUYA.

**Kaidan** (1964, JAP) **C-164m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Masaki Kobayashi. Starring Rentaro Mikuni, Michiyo Aratama, Misako Watanabe, Tatsuya Nakadai, Keiko Kishi, Katsuo Nakamura, Tetsuro Tamba, Kanemon Nakamura, Osamu Takizawa. Classic anthology of ghost stories made up of four separate tales: In "Black Hair", a samurai leaves his wife for a wealthier woman, is taught a lesson upon his remorseful return. "The Woman in the Snow" is a similar story of delusion and late retribution. "Hoichi the Earless", the longest segment, is about a blind musician who gets closer to spirits than he may wish, and "In a Cup of Tea" there's a ghostly apparition. Often slow and ponderous, but magnificent color cinematography speaks for itself. Studio settings lend it a contained, almost claustrophobic but stylish atmosphere. Based on the book by Lafcadio Hearn. Original U.S. release omitted the second episode, DVD release restored it, but it's still short of 20 minutes of the Japanese original version. English titles: KWAIDAN.

**Kaidan Hebi-Onna** (1968, JAP) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Nobuo Nakagawa. Starring Junzaburô Ban, Yukie Kagawa, Seizaburô Kawazu, Sachiko Kuwahara. Japanese ghost/revenge story about a peasant family, who suffer greatly under stubborn landowner. When the family father dies, the women become enslaved, and a supernatural revenge plan takes its course. Some atmospheric sets, cinematography, but plot is heavy-handed. For fans. Written by the director. Also known as GHOST STORY OF THE SNAKE WOMAN, and SNAKE WOMAN'S CURSE.

**Kaidan Semushi Otoko** (1965, JAP) **B&W-81m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Hajime Satô. Starring Ko Nishimura, Yûko Kusunoki, Shinjirô Ehara, Mitsue Suzuki. Expressionistic chiller about a recently widowed woman, who learns that she has inherited a mansion in the country, where her late husband used to bring his mistress. She travels there with a group of friends (among them her lecherous father-in-law) and is welcomed by a hunchback, who tells her that the Pit of Satan is in the house. Muddled plot doesn't bear close scrutiny, but score, photography and direction make this a nice experience for buffs, who will compare this to the black-and-white works of Bava, the Hammer chillers, and THE HAUNTING in particular. English titles: GHOST OF THE HUNCHBACK, and HOUSE OF TERRORS.

**Kaijû Sôshingeki** (1968, JAP) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ishirô Honda. Starring Akira Kubo, Jun Tazaki, Yukiko Kobayashi. Plodding fantasy movie features most (all?) of Toho's monsters. Godzilla and his companions have been banned to an island when a strange supernatural force threatens the Earth. Plot and effects are often laughable. English titles: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS, ALL MONSTERS ATTACK.

**Kairo** (2001, JAP) **C-119m. \*\*\*** D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Haruhiko Katô, Kumiko Aso, Koyuki, Kurume Arisaka, Masatoshi Matsuo. Fascinating tour-de-force from Japan's master of creep Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Student Katô learns of mysterious website that shows (live?) webcam streams of ghosts and promises an encounter. People around him start behaving oddly, others commit suicide. What's behind it all? Deliberate pace and overall vagueness make this a headtrip (and definitely not for all tastes), but Kurosawa transcends horror conventions and comes up with a philosophical ghost story like you have never seen before. Good score by Takshi Haketa. Remade as PULSE (2006). Also known as PULSE, THE CIRCUIT.

**Kakashi** (2001, JAP) **C-86m. \*\*½** D: Norio Tsuruta. Starring Maho Nonami, Kou Shibasaki, Grace Yip, Yoshiki Arizono, Mizuho Igarashi. Interesting chiller about a young woman who goes in search of her missing brother. Her only lead is a letter that brings her to a remote community, where everyone behaves very strangely and scarecrows play an important role. Sounds like WICKER MAN and it is. The acting isn't very convincing, neither is the plot, but fans can give this a look anyway. Based on the comic by Junji Ito. English title: SCARECROW.

**Kalevet** (2010, ISR) **C-90m. \*½** D: Aharon Keshales, Navot Papushado. Starring Lior Ashkenazi, Ania Bukstein, Danny Geva, Yael Grobglas. Israeli slasher movie – never knew there was such a thing – about a group of friends in the woods, a nature reserve, where there's a trap set up and a maniac stalking them. Plot turns from weak to misogynistic to stupid, and camerawork is much too shaky. Amateur hour. English titles: RABIES – A BIG SLASHER MASSACRE, and BLOOD CLAN.

**Kalifornia** (1993, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Dominic Sena. Starring Brad Pitt, Juliette Lewis, David Duchovny, Michelle Forbes, Catherine Larson, David Milford. The 1990s brought a large number of serial killer films (caused mainly by the influence and critical reception of THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS), and this example is one of the best. Intending to write a book about serial killers, Duchovny starts a journey with his girlfriend Forbes to California, making brief stops at important crime scenes. To share expenses they take a couple (Pitt and Lewis) along, unaware that the combination of dumbness and aggression in them would allow Duchovny to study the phenomenon on a live person. Violent, intense, well-scripted (in spite of some redundant stretches), well-photographed and directed thriller drama with good performances. Contains elements of such cult pics as BADLANDS and STRAW DOGS; this in fact preceded NATURAL BORN KILLERS and was released shortly before TRUE ROMANCE. Written by Tim Metcalfe (*not* Quentin Tarantino).

**Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love** (1996, IND) **C-114m. \*\*½** D: Mira Nair. Starring Indira Varma, Sarita Choudhury, Ramon Tikaram. Naveen Andrews, Rekha. Leisurely paced drama from

India about servant girl Varma, who is wooed by a prince but falls in love with an artist, which gives rise to complications. Not a sex film (as the title may suggest) but a sensuous drama that lacks the je-ne-sais-quoi to make it work. Pace is major drawback, keeps the film unfocused; overall mood is enticing.

**Kamen Gakuen** (2000, JAP) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Takashi Komatsu. Starring Tatsuya Fujiwara, Maya Kurosu, Ikkei Watanabe, Yuma Ishigaki, Chiaki Kuriyama, Ren Osugi. Psycho horror drama based on the novel by Osamu Sôda set in a typical Japanese high school, where a new trend is transforming everything. Students begin to wear masks and associate themselves in cult-like circles. A suicide is the beginning of a wave of resistance against authority. Intriguing thought, but a tad too unlikely, film is fairly interesting, but never riveting. The masks give everything a unique touch, seek it out if this appeals to you. Also known as PERSONA.

**Kanashimi no Belladonna** (1973, JAP) **C-97m.** \*\* D: Eiichi Yamamoto. Starring (the voices of) Tatsuya Nakadei, Katsuyuki Itô, Aiko Nagayama. Experimental, bizarre animated feature takes its inspiration from Joan of Arc and bases itself on the novel *La Sorcière* by Jules Michelet. The title character, the Belladonna, gets married, then possessed by the devil and rises to great wealth within her community. Some striking drawings, but animation is almost entirely limited to a panning of the camera, and the story is barely relevant. If you like psychedelic, artsy, Klimtian images, then you may be one of the few to enjoy this. As a movie it has far too little plot. Gisaburo Sugii is credited as animator. This was the third part of a trilogy of erotic films by Osamu Tezuka. English titles: BELLADONNA OF SADNESS, THE TRAGEDY OF BELLADONNA.

**Kanojo to Kanojo no Neko** (1999, JAP) **B&W-4m.** n/r D: Makoto Shinkai. Director Shinkai's debut short is a philosophical look at the relationship between a cat and her master, a young woman, over the course of one year. It's not as haunting as Shinkai's later movies – it's just too short for that – but some of his trademark elements are there. Rain, sky, lines in the sky, relationships, unfulfilled love etc. For completists, who want to see all of the works of this fascinating talent. English title: SHE AND HER CAT.

**Kansen** (2004, JAP) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Masayuki Ochiai. Starring Michiko Hada, Mari Hoshino, Tae Kimura, Yôko Maki, Kaho Minami. Horror drama of medium interest. In a run-down hospital, the troubled doctors and nurses must contend with difficult, even hopeless patients: a fully bandaged burn victim, a woman with dementia who sees invisible people, and a patient with an infectious disease that is about to be brought in. Often reminiscent of Lars von Trier's RIGET (1994/97) but the plot is aimless and doesn't generate many chills. It's sloppily acted, too. The eerie score is best thing about it. English title: INFECTION.

**Kappa no Ku To Natsu Yasumi** (2007, JAP) **C-138m.** \*\* D: Keiichi Hara. Animated feature from the maker of KARAFURU / COLORFUL (2010) is just as slow and draggy. A boy finds a petrified kappa (a mystical creature, a bit like a turtle), and when it returns back to life, it becomes a member of his family. Of course, he mustn't show it to anybody. Basically not much more than a premise, as film goes through every-day family situations without even attempting to be entertaining. English title: SUMMER DAYS WITH COO.

**Karafuru** (2010, JAP) **C-126m.** \*\* D: Keiichi Hara. Animated feature about a soul caught between life and death, who gets a chance to make up for its sins and is sent into the body of a 12-year-old, who just committed suicide. In this 'internship' he must take over the role of the boy and meets his less-than-perfect family. He is guided by a school-boy ghost. Has its moments of bliss thanks to sensitive score, but requires patience, as the (downbeat) story unfolds very slowly and generates little interest. English title: COLORFUL.

**Karate Kid, The** (2010, USA/CHI) **C-140m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Harald Zwart. Starring Jaden Smith, Jackie Chan, Taraji P. Henson, Michelle Yeoh. Remake of the 1984 hit with Chan in the Morita role. Kid Smith moves to China with his mom, cannot come to grips with new situation. What's more, he is bullied by some other kids. Janitor Chan agrees to teach him kung fu. Basically a story well-told, never boring. Nice portrayal of everyday life in China. Chan only gets to fight some teenagers... too bad! Score by James Horner, photographed by Roger Pratt.

**Kari-gurashi no Arietti** (2010, JAP) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Hiromasa Yonebayashi. Starring (the voices of) Mimirai Shida, Tomokazu Miura, Tatsuya Fujiwara. Hayao Miyazaki wrote and Studio Ghibli produced this enamoring animated version of Mary Norton's *The Borrowers*. A sick child finds there are little people living beyond his country house. They call themselves Borrowers, and the family's daughter, 14-year-old Arrietty, is getting ready to make her first borrowing. When she is discovered, their family's existence is threatened. Typically idyllic, leisurely paced and beautifully animated story echoes the classic MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO (1988) throughout, so Ghibli fans should find this a treat. Beautiful score by Cecile Corbel is extensively used and camouflages the somewhat uneventful plotline. English title: THE SECRET WORLD OF ARIETTY.

**Karisuma** (1999, JAP) **C-104m. \*½** D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Kôji Yakusho, Hiroyuki Ikeuchi, Ren Osugi, Yoriko Douguchi, Jun Fubuki. Incomprehensible mess by the director of the riveting KYUA (1997) about a police detective, who is suspended after a hostage-taking ends in two deaths. He goes out into the country and wanders around aimlessly in a forest, until he meets a hermit, who protects an unusual tree. Another character, a biologist, thinks this tree is a monstrosity and responsible for the death of all surrounding plants. Slowly paced, with a totally unmotivated and inappropriate musical score that can be heard every five minutes for 30 seconds or so, and silly story that may have some ecological relevance but is told in an frustratingly ponderous way. Do not expect to be entertained or thrilled here. Written by the director. International title: CHARISMA.

**Kashin no Irezumi: Ureta Tsubo** (1976, JAP) **C-74m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Masaru Konuma. Starring Genshu Hanayagi, Takako Kitagawa, Shin Nakamaru, Naomi Tani. Classic pinku sex film drama about two women, mother and daughter, who each have their sexual (re-)awakening and have problems acknowledging each other's desires. It all culminates in a giant tattoo created on the mother's torso. Plot is a bit unfocused, but most of the sex scenes are done with elegance. English titles: TATTOOED FLOWER VASE, TATTOOED CORE OF FLOWER, MATURE VASE, TATTOOED VAGINA.

**Kate & Leopold** (2001, USA) **C-123m. \*\*½** D: James Mangold. Starring Meg Ryan, Hugh Jackman, Liev Schreiber, Breckin Meyer, Natasha Lyonne, Bradley Whitford, Spalding Gray, Philip Bosco, Craig Bierko. Romantic comedy with a fantasy touch about scientist Schreiber, who's found a way to travel back in time and accidentally takes a 19th century Duke back to New York with him. The nobleman is aghast at the modern world, but soon falls in love with Schreiber's ex Ryan. Any movie that starts with such an overtly contrived opening that is also riddled with coincidences has a hard time getting into your heart, but this one does. The romance is believable and some of the complications funny. However, there is no need for this go on as long as it does. Director Mangold also scripted, with Steven Rogers.

**Kaze no Tani no Naushika** (1984, JAP) **C-116m. \*\*\*\*** D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Sumi Shimamoto, Mahito Tsujimura, Hisako Kyôda, Gorô Naya, Ichirô Nagai, Kôhei Miyauchi. Awe-inspiring science-fiction movie, director Miyazaki's second feature, which also meant the birth of Studio Ghibli. In the world of the future, mankind has withdrawn to little settlements, most of nature has been contaminated by poisonous spores. Giant-sized

beetles, so called Ohmu, are the guardians of the forest and go on rampages of destruction if man tries to fight them. Princess Nausicaä, an unusually brave girl, dwells in the Valley of the Wind with her people and roams the forests in search of building materials. Despite an ancient prophecy that promises a savior after a thousand years of suffering, other colonies are ready to wage war, at the cost of their own survival. Is the resurrection of the last remaining giant warrior the solution to all problems, or does it bring the end of the world? Complex, brilliant science-fiction movie with a noble cause is based on Miyazaki's own manga. His characters and story are totally real and believable, his animation contains breathtaking set-pieces, making this one of the most spectacular films ever made. May have been influenced slightly by the STAR WARS films, or even MAD MAX, but transcends these films because it encompasses a valuable message for humanity, making it a true masterpiece. Excellent score by Joe Hisaishi. Followed by TENKU NO SHIRO ROPYUTA (LAPUTA: CASTLE IN THE SKY). Trivia note: Nausicaä was a character in Homer's Odyssey. Also released in a truncated 84m. version titled WARRIORS OF THE WIND. Also known as NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WINDS.

**Kaze Tachinu** (2013, JAP) **C-126m.** \*\*\* D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Hideaki Anno, Steve Alpert, Morio Kazama, Jun Kunimura. Bitter-sweet swan song of a great director (it was announced as his last film) tells the story of real-life airplane designer Jiro Horikoshi, whose biography is traced from his childhood in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan, to his involvement in designing armoured planes in WW2. There's so much care and detail going into this, it's too bad the story isn't more compelling. Too often the vignettes around Jiro don't seem like they need telling, except perhaps a love story that is at the heart of the film. Nominated for Best Animated Feature at the Oscars, but it's Joe Hisaishi's score – one of many for Miyazaki – that would have deserved a nod, it's simply brilliant. English title: THE WIND RISES.

**Keeping the Faith** (2000, USA) **C-128m.** \*\*\* D: Edward Norton. Starring Ben Stiller, Edward Norton, Jenna Elfman, Anne Bancroft, Eli Wallach, Ron Rifkin, Milos Forman, Rena Sofer. Fast-paced comedy about rabbi Stiller and priest Norton, whose lives are turned upside down when a childhood friend of theirs, beautiful Elfman, makes a stop in New York City. Runs hot and cold and misses almost too many times, but film is very hard to dislike, especially because of radiant Elfman. Funny love triangle, though THREESOME was better.

**Keetje Tippel** (1975, NED) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Monique van de Ven, Rutger Hauer, Eddie Brugman, Hannah de Leeuwe, Andrea Domburg, Fons Rademakers. Verhoeven's follow-up to TURKS FRUIT is a fine social drama set in the 1880s. Van de Ven's family come to the big city hoping to find work, but the blond girl is the only one who manages to climb the social ladder. Might have raised more important questions, but nevertheless qualifies as a good period piece due to fine camerawork (Jan de Bont) and an excellent score. Based on the novel by N.N. Also known as KATHY TIPPEL, KATIE'S PASSION and HOT SWEAT. Verhoeven followed this with another historical drama, SOLDIER OF ORANGE.

**Keizoku/Eiga** (2000, JAP) **C-119m.** \*\*½ D: Yukihiro Tsutsumi. Starring Miki Nakatani, Atsuro Watabe, Shigeru Izumiya, Koyuki, Raita Ryu. Big-screen version of a popular TV series is a grotesque mystery about several characters who are invited to an island by a girl who lost her parents in a boating accident 15 years ago. It turns out she wants to get her revenge. Far from being as straight-forward as it sounds, this contains quite a lot of wacky Japanese humor, outrageous set-pieces and twists. Very uneven but quite stylish, so cult fans should give it a look. English title: KEIZOKU: THE MOVIE.

**Ken Park** (2002, USA/FRA/NED) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Larry Clark. Starring Adam Chubbuck, James Bullard, Seth Gray, Eddie Daniels, Zara McDowell, Maeve Quinlan, Stephen Jasso, Wade

Williams, Tiffany Limos, Julio Oscar Mechoso, Amanda Plummer, Larry Clark. Suburban drama from the maker of KIDS (1995) follows a few working-class teenage kids with dysfunctional families and shows how sex pervades their (bleak) lives. Film has its lyrical moments but adds a few too many deliberate shock scenes. Its open depictions of sex will put off quite a few viewers. Cowritten by Harmony Korine.

**Keoma** (1976, ITA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Franco Nero, Woody Strode, William Berger, Donald O'Brien, Olga Karlatos, Alfio Caltabiano. One of the last spaghetthis is a revisionist western with a defeatist point of view. Keoma (Nero) returns home, revisiting his foster father Berger and former slave Strode, but finds their town under control of villain O'Brien. The embittered half-breed then proceeds to protect and avenge sick prostitute Karlatos. Uneven, depressing plot but overall a powerful movie experience, film has become a cult item. Story by George Eastman (Luigi Montefiori). Uncut version runs 100m. English titles: DESPERADO, DJANGO RIDES AGAIN, DJANGO'S GREAT RETURN, and THE VIOLENT BREED.

**Kick-Ass 2** (2013, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jeff Wadlow. Starring Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Chloe Grace Moretz, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Morris Chestnut, John Leguizamo, Jim Carrey. Sequel to the 2010 action hit follows Hit Girl (Moretz), who is trying to fit in at school, and Kick-Ass, who dons his superhero costume after a brief hiatus. They join a gang led by Captain Stars and Stripes (Carrey) and go against a ridiculous wanna-be supervillain. Quite entertaining, but plot is second-rate and only held together by its fights. Moretz is good as the tormented teen, so is Taylor-Johnson's insecure title character, but some scenes are just over the top silly.

**Kid, The** (2000, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*½** D: Jon Turteltaub. Starring Bruce Willis, Spencer Breslin, Emily Mortimer, Lily Tomlin, Chi McBride, Jean Smart, Dana Ivey, Daniel von Bargen, Matthew Perry. Endearing Disney fare – although quite contrived – about soon-to-be 40 image advisor Willis, whose successful life is spent constantly negating his childhood. One day he befriends himself – as an 8-year-old – and learns quite a few things about his past. Willis is in good form and carries this Hollywood concoction a long way.

**Kill Bill: Vol. 1** (2003, USA/JAP/HGK) **C/B&W-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Quentin Tarantino. Starring Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Lucy Liu, Daryl Hannah, Vivica A. Fox, Michael Madsen, Michael Parks, Sonny Chiba, Chiaki Kuriyama, Julie Dreyfus, Jun Kuniyama, Quentin Tarantino. Typically eccentric Tarantino movie (his fourth), about amazon-like blonde Thurman, who was shot in the head and left for dead by her lover Bill (Carradine) – all this on her wedding day! After lying in a coma for four years, Thurman returns to exact revenge on those that were involved. The revenge trip takes her to Okinawa and Tokyo, Japan. At its best, this mind-blowing extravaganza is a razor-sharp homage to Japanese and Chinese action cinema (parts were filmed in the Shaw Brothers studios); at its worst, it's a drawn-out, nearly plotless indulgence, but mind: this is all part of Tarantino's set-up. Film comes to (bloody) life in final action set-piece in the "House of Blue Leaves" (in Japan the b&w sequence was shown in color). Among the highlights is a wildly animated sequence, manga-style. Terrific choreography by old master Yuen Woo-Ping (DRUNKEN MASTER). Film is concluded in KILL BILL VOL. 2 (2004).

**Kill Bill: Vol. 2** (2004, USA) **C/B&W-136m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Quentin Tarantino. Starring Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen, Daryl Hannah, Gordon Liu, Michael Parks, Perla Haney-Jardine, Chris Nelson, Bo Svenson, Larry Bishop, Sid Haig, Samuel L. Jackson. Continuation and conclusion of the story begun in KILL BILL: VOL.1. Thurman is still on a rampage of revenge, with three of her victimizers still on her death list (Madsen, Hannah and 'Bill' Carradine). More satisfying than VOL. 1, with some action highlights, impressive

performances (especially Hannah's) and an extensive use of a delaying, drawing out of scenes, which is not always meaningful but lends the movie a languid resonance. Tarantino again pays homage to B-movies of the 1960s and 1970s (most notably spaghetti westerns and chop-socky actioners), as well as some vintage cult films like *BLADE RUNNER* (1982). The soundtrack, including themes by Morricone and Bacalov, is superb. Based on characters created by Q(uentin) & U(ma), the latter seeming to have written the ending. And Q, thanks for the '?'.

**Killer, The** (1972, HGK) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Chu Yuan. Starring Chin Han, Wang Ping, Tsung Hua. A smart fighter battles a whole martial arts academy for reasons specified later in the film. Above-average eastern brings up no novelties apart from (at least in this genre) unprecedented scenes with loads of gore.

**Killer, The** (1989, HGK) **C-111m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Woo. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Danny Lee, Sally Yeh. Kinetic action melodrama is one of Woo's finest achievements. Plot focuses on the complicated relation-ship between a professional killer, a blind singer and a cop. Rich characterization and appropriately over-blown melodramatics, along with good direction make this a memorable, if a little hard-to-take experience. Try to see it in a theatre. Produced by Tsui Hark. Script by Woo.

**Killer Elite, The** (1975, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sam Peckinpah. Starring James Caan, Robert Duvall, Bo Hopkins, Burt Young. Engrossing action drama with Caan an assassin who yearns for revenge on his former partner Duvall. Peckinpah has created another fine action drama, which almost fails due to a meandering script but star performances, score and direction make up for occasional slow spots.

**Killer Fish** (1978, ITA/BRA/USA) **C-99m. \*\* D:** Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Lee Majors, Karen Black, Margaux Hemingway, Marisa Berenson, James Franciscus, Anthony Steffen. Strained adventure about a diamond heist masterminded by Franciscus and performed by Majors' crew. They sink the loot in the sea, but Franciscus knowingly puts Piranhas there... so that nobody gets any ideas. Good location work in Brazil, but going-ons are tedious, with too many supporting characters and a plot that goes nowhere. Aka *DEADLY TREASURE OF THE PIRANHA*, *THE NAKED SUN*.

**Killer Force** (1975, EIR/SUI/USA) **C-101m. \*\* D:** Val Guest. Starring Telly Savalas, Peter Fonda, Hugh O'Brian, Christopher Lee, O.J. Simpson, Maud Adams. Blah actioner about former security chief Fonda, who is hired to rob a diamond mine protected by Savalas. Solidly made but talky, of interest solely because of its cast. Fonda (with beard) comes off best. Also known as *THE DIAMOND MERCENARIES*.

**Killer Inside Me, The** (1976, USA) **C-99m. \*\*\*½ D:** Burt Kennedy. Starring Stacy Keach, Susan Tyrrell, Keenan Wynn, John Carradine. Psycho-drama about small-town cop Keach, who is suffering from a childhood trauma. Never rises above the mire, no better than passable entertainment. Keach is quite good but self-conscious narrative technique lessens effect.

**Killer Meteors, The** (1978, HGK) **C-100m. ½ D:** Lo Wei, Jimmy Wang-Yu. Starring Jackie Chan, Jimmy Wang-Yu, Chu Feng. One of producer-director Lo Wei's 'crimes', this dud has a largely confusing, incoherent plot and was only made to feature Wang Yu and Jackie Chan in one movie. First Jackie hires Jimmy to kill his (dangerous) wife, then they become opponents. Jackie plays the villain for the first and so far only time, but don't watch anyhow. Filmed in 1976.

**Killers** (2010, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Robert Luketic. Starring Ashton Kutcher, Katherine Heigl, Tom Selleck, Catherine O'Hara, Katheryn Winnick, Kevin Sussman. Thriller comedy starts out nicely with Kutcher a secret agent, who meets and falls in love with Heigl who is vacationing in France with her parents. He keeps his real identity a secret, but when they

marry, it seems someone is trying to kill him, and keeping that a secret is almost impossible. The stars look good, but movie goes overboard in the end and becomes stupid.

**Killer's Kiss** (1955, USA) **67m. \*\*\*** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Frank Silvera, Jamie Smith, Irene Kane, Jerry Jarret, Mike Dana. Kubrick's second feature length movie (after FEAR AND DESIRE) is fascinating, forcefully narrated thriller drama. Boxer Smith falls in love with Kane, who has been hustled lately by her former lover. Stylish, irresistibly well-made, an early show of Kubrick's genius, not to be missed. Edited, photographed, cowritten and coproduced by the director.

**Killer Tattoo** (2001, THA) **C-114m. \*\*½** D: Yuthlert Sippapak. Starring Suthep Po-ngam, Somchai Kemglad, Sornsutha Klunmalee, Petchtai Wongkamlao, Pongsak Pongsuwan, Pailin Pichitumphol. Trashy but fun action comedy about a group of bumbling hitmen (one of whom thinks he's Elvis), who are out to kill the Bangkok chief of police, when a rival assassin appears on the scene. He is looking for the murderer of his parents, who is sporting a special tattoo on his wrist. Lots of shoot-outs, as well as wacky comedy, this is terribly uneven, but cult movie fans will enjoy this crazy crossbreed of Cheech & Chong and Tarantino movies.

**Killer Tongue** (1996, SPA/GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*½** D: Alberto Sciamma. Starring Melinda Clarke, Jason Durr, Mapi Galán, Mabel Karr, Robert Englund. Wild horror movie about a young woman (Clark) who is waiting for her lover to be released from a New Mexican prison. When a meteor crashes in the desert, an alien organism (the Killer Tongue) infests her and turns her into a (sexy) monster. And that's just the beginning! Serpentine story comes up with many twists, most of them ludicrous. A pure trash movie, somewhat enlivened by stylish lighting and camerawork. Written by director Sciamma.

**Killing, The** (1956, USA) **83m. \*\*\*½** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Sterling Hayden, Coleen Gray, Vince Edwards, Jay C. Flippen, Ted de Corsia, Marie Windsor, Joe Sawyer, Elisha Cook, Timothy Carey. Kubrick's third feature is an exciting thriller about a meticulously planned robbery at a race track. Cook is perfect as nervous clerk who has a minor part in the operation but almost fouls things up by telling his wife Windsor about their plan. Carey makes a ruthless assassin. Excellent direction is always 100% on-target. Kubrick adapted the novel *Clean Break* by Lionel White.

**Killing Ground** (2016, AUS) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Damien Power. Starring Mitzi Ruhlmann, Harriet Dyer, Aaron Pedersen, Stephen Hunter. A couple goes camping in the wilderness and finds an abandoned car and tent at the campsite. In a parallel plot strand we find out about the fate of the owners, something that might soon happen to the couple, too. Slow-moving thriller with a *DELIVERANCE* (1972) undertone picks up the pace a little in the second half, but also becomes unnecessarily sadistic, and its characters make implausible choices.

**Killing Kind, The** (1973, USA) **C-99m. \*½** D: Curtis Harrington. Starring Ann Sothorn, John Savage, Ruth Roman, Luana Anders, Cindy Williams, Sue Bernard. After spending two years in prison for raping a beach girl (forced to do so by his pals), young Savage returns to his mother Sothorn's apartment house. Unable to free himself from her protection, he soon starts to take revenge – especially on the local girls. Psycho drama moves at a deadly pace which kills every spark of interest. Some good performances are lost in this muddled film. Don't mistake this for a thriller or a slasher movie.

**Killing Season** (2013, USA/BEL) **C-91m. SCOPE \*½** D: Mark Steven Johnson. Starring Robert De Niro, John Travolta, Milo Ventimiglia, Elizabeth Olin. Ridiculous thriller about war veteran De Niro, who's retreated to a cabin in the woods, and Serbian(!) death squad member Travolta, who seeks him out to get revenge fifteen years after the end of the Yugoslav war. Totally contrived mess of a movie, with the stars inflicting outrageous wounds on each other. Travolta's accent and performance is odd.

**Killing Zoe** (1994, USA/FRA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Roger Avary. Starring Eric Stoltz, Julie Delpy, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tai Thai, Bruce Ramsay, Gary Kemp. "When the Saints Go Marching In..." Violent, dirty, nasty action thriller, directed by PULP FICTION-cowriter Rogar Avary and executive produced by Quentin Tarantino and Lawrence Bender. Stoltz plays an American (safecracker) in Paris, who joins Anglade's drug-pushing gang in robbing a bank on the French National Holiday – in ultra-violent fashion. Needless to say, things go awry – RESERVOIR DOGS-style. Energetic, insane, over-the-top, a cult film for the PULP FICTION generation. Special make-up effects by Tom Savini.

**Kim Bok-nam Salinsageonui Jeonmal** (2010, KOR) **C-115m**. \*\* D: Jang Chul-soo. Starring Seo Yeong-hie, Ji Seong-won, Hwang Min-ho. After witnessing an assault and going through hard times at work, a bank clerk decides to pay a visit to a remote community where her grandfather used to live. She encounters an archaic system where the only young woman on the island is exploited by everyone and has a secret wish to run away to Seoul. Heavy-going drama with an ineffective main character. Her female counterpart is much better, but her martyrdom (and the following bloodbath) is difficult to watch, and the point isn't exactly clear. Entertaining or suspenseful it ain't. Also known as BEDEVILLED.

**Kimi no Na wa.** (2016, JAP) **C-106m**. \*\*\*\* D: Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Ryûnosuke Kamiki, Mone Kamishiraishi, Ryô Narita, Aoi Yuki. Exceptional fantasy drama from the maker of 5 CENTIMETERS PER SECOND and GARDEN OF WORDS. Two lives are mysteriously intertwined as every other day two teenagers switch bodies. He is a student in Tokyo, she lives a traditional life in the countryside. They leave messages for each other on their phones, but when they finally try to contact each other, every attempt fails. Does it have something to do with a comet that is passing by the Earth, just like it does every 1,200 years? Somewhat whimsical romance is offset by beautiful animation and excellent pace and plotting. Some sequences are mind-blowing! Genius Shinkai also scripted, based on his novel. Score (not by Tenmon this time, but by Radwimps) incorporates pop songs with the emotional piano score. English title: YOUR NAME.

**Kindar l'Invulnerable** (1964, ITA) **C-91m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Osvaldo Civirani. Starring Mark Forest, Mimmo Palmara, Rosalba Neri, Dea Flowers, Red Ross, Giulio Tomasini. Sword-and-sandal epic about invulnerable son of a king, who is stolen immediately after birth and raised by the king's arch-enemy, so that he can use him to conquer his city. Naïve but colorful fantasy, well-photographed by the director. Good use of Egyptian locations, above-average of its type, fine for kids. English title: KINDAR THE INVULNERABLE.

**King & I, The** (1999, USA) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Richard Rich. Voices of Miranda Richardson, Christiane Noll, Martin Vidnovic, Ian Richardson, Darell Hammond, David Burnham. Rather cheap animated remake of the 1956 musical THE KING & I about a female teacher who comes to live with an Asian prince in order to teach his children and finds his antics a bigger challenge than anything else. OK for children, adults may find this one a bore. Stereotype characters abound (especially the villain), the black panther is the only funny character in the cast. Filmed before as ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM.

**King Arthur** (2004, USA) **C-140m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Antoine Fuqua. Starring Clive Owen, Ioan Gruffud, Mads Mikkelsen, Joel Edgerton, Hugh Dancy, Ray Winstone, Ray Stevenson, Keira Knightley, Stephen Dillane, Stellan Skarsgard, Til Schweiger. Blockbuster bringing a new interpretation of the Arthurian legend. Arthur was in fact a warrior from Eastern Europe, fighting as a slave for the Romans in Britannia. Here, he must battle evil Saxons Skarsgard and Schweiger and rescue a Roman family from these barbarians. Slickly produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, but despite being competently made, film seems phony. The plot never

catches fire, remains strangely uninvolved. Knightley is one fierce chick, though. Score by Hans Zimmer. Released theatrically at 126m.

**Kingdom of Heaven** (2005, GBR/USA/SPA/GER) **C-145m. SCOPE\*\*½ D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Orlando Bloom, Jeremy Irons, Ghassan Massoud, Eva Green, Brendan Gleeson, Liam Neeson, Edward Norton, Marton Csokas, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, David Thewlis. Director Scott retreads the *GLADIATOR* (2000) paths with this epic-scale historical action drama set in the 12<sup>th</sup> century about blacksmith Bloom, who is reunited with his father Neeson just after his child has died and his wife has committed suicide. Bloom decides to join his father in the crusades and ends up defending Jerusalem against the Muslims. Stylishly photographed and directed, with some astounding action sequences, but plot should have been more compelling, despite Bloom's convincing performance. Scott also coproduced. Director's Cut runs more than 3 hours.

**Kingdom of the Spiders** (1977, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE\*\*\* D:** John 'Bud' Cardos. Starring William Shatner, Tiffany Bolling, Woody Strode, Lieux Dressler, Altovise Davis. Solid ecological horror thriller about veterinarian Shatner, who joins forces with scientist Bolling to wipe out spider plague in Arizona, where the nasty tarantulas have started to attack Strode's cattle herd. Not for the hardcore horror freak, this PG-rated chiller is more creepy than scary and quite predictable, but well-photographed and interesting, especially when compared to George Romero's *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*. A big plus for that ending. Steve Zaillian was among the editors.

**King Kong** (1976, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE\*\* D:** John Guillermin. Starring Jeff Bridges, Charles Grodin, Jessica Lange, John Rudolph, Rene Auberjonois, Julius Harris, Jack O'Halloran, John Agar, Rick Baker, Corbin Bernsen. Ludicrous remake of the 1933 classic has a notably lackluster plot: An expedition goes to an uncharted island hoping to find oil – instead they find the title creature, a giant gorilla, who's worshipped by the local tribe. Lange, in her film debut, plays the maiden that is sacrificed to the monster. Big-scale production (by Dino De Laurentiis) has only the Oscar-winning effects (by Rick Baker) and John Barry's score to recommend it. Grodin's performance is simply annoying. Kids may find this diverting. 45 minutes of footage added for cable TV showings. Followed by a sequel in 1986.

**King Kong** (2005, NZL/USA) **C-201m. SCOPE\*\*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Naomi Watts, Jack Black, Adrien Brody, Thomas Kretschmann, Colin Hanks, Andy Serkis, Evan Parke, Jamie Bell, Peter Jackson, Frank Darabont, Howard Shore, Rick Baker. Superbly made fantasy horror drama, a worthy remake of the 1933 monster movie classic. Down-on-her-luck actress Watts agrees to join seedy movie director Black to film an adventure movie overseas, not knowing that he is running away with money from his producers. Scriptwriter Brody is equally fooled. They all end up on mysterious island harboring creatures that time has forgotten, and Watts becomes the victim of a tribe who make regular sacrifices to a giant ape. Staggering tour-de-force from the maker of the *LORD OF THE RINGS* movies, breathtaking action and special effects as well as carefully plotted drama make this a winner all the way. There's real movie magic at work here. Excellent score by James Newton Howard. Director Jackson also coscripted and coproduced. Winner of 3 Oscars for Best Sound, Sound Editing and Visual Effects. Originally released at 187m.

**King Lear** (1970, GBR/DAN) **137m. \*\*\*\* D:** Peter Brook. Starring Paul Scofield, Irene Worth, Jack MacGowran, Alan Webb, Cyril Cusack, Patrick Magee. Excellent adaptation of William Shakespeare's most brooding, most fatalistic (and most fascinating) tragedy. Scofield excels as dignified but ultimately foolish King, who bans his youngest daughter and lays the fate of his realm into the hands of her two elder sisters. Soon he has to realize upon the irreverence they display that his days as an authority are over. A parallel plot concerns the Earl of

Gloucester (no less impressive: Jack MacGowran), who like Lear banishes the wrong child and has to suffer for it. Like in *MARAT/SADE*, Brook's direction is very immediate, the actors almost seem to address the audience with their speeches. Earthy performances by the supporting characters add to the already fascinating approach to the play. Brook omitted several passages and rearranged some scenes, but his work must still be seen as one of the best film adaptations of a Shakespeare text. Filmed in Denmark.

**King of Comedy, The** (1983, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*½ D:** Martin Scorsese. Starring Robert De Niro, Jerry Lewis, Diahnne Abbott, Sandra Bernhard, Shelley Hack, Ed Herlihy, Victor Borge, Tony Randall, Martin Scorsese, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio. Rupert Pupkin (De Niro) is a dreamer, a loser, setting all his hopes and dreams towards meeting his favorite star, TV talkshow host Jerry Langdon (Lewis) and persuading him to let him perform in one of his shows. When Langdon does not respond to his wishes, Pupkin teams up with neurotic Bernhard, herself a fan, to force the showmaster to acknowledge them. Intelligently handled psycho drama is incredibly bitter and realistic, kudos to a bravura performance by De Niro and Paul D. Zimmerman's thoughtful script. Another quiet, absorbing film from master director Scorsese.

**King of the Ants** (2003, USA) **C-102m. \*\* D:** Stuart Gordon. Starring Chris McKenna, Kari Wuhrer, Daniel Baldwin, George Wendt, Timm Sharp, Ron Livingston, Vernon Wells. Aimless youth McKenna takes up surveillance job, gets himself in deeper than he should by agreeing to kill the guy he's been observing. Then nobody wants anything to do with him, let alone pay him the money they promised. When he insists and refuses to give them the files they need, they subject him to torture and almost kill him. Almost. Strangely low-key crime drama with horror touches becomes a *DAY OF THE WOMAN* for the slacker generation. Kudos to director Gordon for trying to make this thoughtful, but Charles Higson's adaptation of his own novel seems contrived and ultimately pointless.

**Kingsman: The Secret Service** (2014, GBR) **C-129m. SCOPE BOMB D:** Matthew Vaughn. Starring Colin Firth, Taron Egerton, Samuel L. Jackson, Michael Caine, Mark Hamill, Jack Davenport. Action thriller spoof that is offensively unfunny: Firth is a member of a top secret government agency which is trying to figure out the plans of megalomaniac Jackson, who has kidnapped some celebrities. Firth is trying to recruit new members, among them street-smart Egerton, whose father was in the organization. Starts okay as a spoof of James Bond movies, but everything about it, the violence, the characters, the story, is so over-the-top it completely devaluates the proceedings. Contrived, pretentious, this movie feels fake from the word go. Based on a graphic novel (obviously).

**Kings of Summer, The** (2013, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jordan Vogt-Roberts. Starring Nick Robinson, Gabriel Basso, Moises Arias, Nick Offerman, Erin Moriarty. Nice coming-of-age movie about a teenager who's sick and tired of being bossed around by his single dad and decides to build a hut in the forest and move there permanently. He convinces two friends to come along. Some humorous touches, especially featuring the weird kid Biaggio (Arias), bitter-sweet and true-to-life.

**King Solomon's Mines** (1950, USA) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Compton Bennett, Andrew Marton. Starring Deborah Kerr, Stewart Granger, Richard Carlson, Hugo Haas, Lowell Gilmore. Classic adventure story from the novel by H. Rider Haggard is set in Africa where Kerr turns to adventurer Granger for help in finding her missing husband. Together they set out into dangerous uncharted territory. Often cited as a classic, but film is poorly paced and not much of an adventure, nor a romance (although Kerr looks lovely). Filmed before in 1937 and several times since. Winner of the Best Editing and Best Color Cinematography Oscar (by Robert Surtees).

**King's Speech, The** (2010, GBR/USA/AUS) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Tom Hooper. Starring Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, Helena Bonham Carter, Derek Jacobi. Firth is brilliant as Edward VI, who reluctantly took the throne in 1936 after the abdication of his brother, who preferred to marry a divorced American. His biggest problem was that his speech was impaired, and he was known as a stammerer. Taking lessons from unconventional speech therapist Rush, he tries to become fit for the speeches necessary for the job. Carefully produced, well-made film is just a bit sluggish, but Firth's impressive performance more than makes up for it. Winner of 4 Oscars, Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Director and Best Writing.

**Kingu Kongu Tai Gojira** (1962, JAP/USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ishirô Honda. Starring Tadao Takashima, Kenji Sahara, Yu Fujiki, Ichirô Arishima, Jun Tazaki. After two GOJIRA / GODZILLA movies of the 1950s, this was the first color movie about the monster. Here, it escapes from inside an iceberg to wreak havoc on Japan and must battle King Kong along the way (with special permission from RKO!), who has been abducted by Japanese businessmen from his Pacific island! Engaging pulp fiction, with rousing fights between the monsters, especially during the finale. Edited from original 98m. version. Followed by MOSURA TAI GOJIRA (GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA) in 1964. English title: KING KONG VS. GODZILLA.

**Kiss Daddy Goodbye** (1981, USA) **C-89m. \*½ D:** Patrick Regan. Starring Fabian Forte, Marilyn Burns, Jon Cedar, Marvin Miller, Nell Regan, Patrick Regan III. Two children with psychic powers must witness the killing of their single-parent father by the hands of a motorcycle gang. When they resurrect him, he goes on a rampage as a zombie. Starts interesting but turns out to be slow-moving and very unconvincing, especially the scenes involving the children (director Regan's own offspring). Burns, of T.C.M. fame, remains unscathed. Also known as CAUTION, CHILDREN AT PLAY, REVENGE OF THE ZOMBIE, VENGEFUL DEAD.

**Kiss Kiss Bang Bang** (2005, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Shane Black. Starring Robert Downey Jr., Val Kilmer, Michelle Monaghan, Corbin Bernsen, Dash Mihok, Larry Miller. Off-the-wall thriller comedy that provides countless twists instead of a coherent plot. Thief Downey Jr. comes to L.A. and gets mixed up with bisexual private eye Kilmer, who's working for rich guy Bernsen. Then there's dead bodies everywhere. Supposed to be an homage to (or spoof of) 40s noir mysteries, but plot is paper-thin and often annoying. Some funny dialogues make this mildly entertaining. First-time director Black wrote the original LETHAL WEAPON (1987).

**Kiss of Death** (1995, USA) **C-101m. \*\*½ D:** Barbet Schroeder. Starring David Caruso, Nicholas Cage, Samuel L. Jackson, Helen Hunt, Kathryn Erbe, Stanley Tucci, Michael Rapaport, Ving Rhames, Philip Baker Hall. Caruso plays an ex-crook turned family father, who has sworn to lead a straight life. One night he is asked by a friend (Rapaport) to help him out in stealing some trucks, and when he does - naturally he is caught. In prison he prepares for revenge. Well-cast thriller paints a credible picture of the underworld, but its pace slackens after an hour and never recovers. Still worth a look. Caruso is not very convincing in his first starring role. A remake of a 1947 film by Henry Hathaway. Photographed by Luciano Tovoli.

**Kiss of the Damned** (2012, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Xan Cassavetes. Starring Joséphine de la Baume, Milo Ventimiglia, Roxane Mesquida, Anna Mouglalis, Michael Rapaport, Riley Keogh, Ching Valdes-Aran. Unusual, sensual vampire movie in the vein of the cult movie HUNGER (1983) about a female vampire who falls in love with a handsome man, bites him and lives in a villa with him until her sister Mesquida arrives, who is bent on disrupting everyone's life. Stream-of-consciousness plot is not very consistent, just adds one scene and event after the next, but has some excellent directorial touches and an unusual but effective soundtrack. Mesquida plays the temptress with perfection. Writer-director Cassavetes is the daughter of Gena Rowland and John Cassavetes.

**Kiss or Kill** (1997, AUS) **C-96m. \*\*\* D:** Bill Bennett. Starring Matt Day, Frances O'Connor, Chris Heywood, Barry Otto, Andrew S. Gilbert, Barry Langrishe, Max Cullen. Lovers Day and O'Connor have specialized on robbing married men after seducing the them and putting some sleeping pills into their drinks. When their latest victim dies accidentally, they left with a lot of troubles and have to take it on the lam. The events are spiced up when they find a pornographical video in the dead man's suitcase, which proves that a former football star is a child molester. Thriller is off to a slow start due to conventional plotting, but picks up in the last third, which throws up some intriguing questions about the characters. An impressive, if flawed debut for writer-director-coproducer Bennett. The unconventional editing makes excessive use of the jump-cut technique.

**Kiss the Girls** (1997, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gary Fleder. Starring Morgan Freeman, Ashley Judd, Cary Elwes, Tony Goldwyn, Bill Nunn, Jeremy Piven, Roma Maffia, Jay O. Sanders. Conventional but well-made thriller about police psychologist Freeman, who is on the trail of a brutal serial killer. He is spurred on in his search when the man abducts his niece. Above-average direction, good acting by the two leads, but ordinary story line won't make you overlook occasional lapses in logic. Based on James Patterson's bestselling novel.

**Klansman, The** (1974, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Terence Young. Starring Lee Marvin, Richard Burton, Cameron Mitchell, O.J. Simpson, Lola Falana, David Huddleston, Linda Evans. Southern melodrama, solidly filmed by Bond director Young, about righteous sheriff Marvin and his difficult position trying to mediate between affiliates of Ku-Klux-Klan and eremite Burton, who helps black people on his farm. Racial tension is what this rather trashy film depicts, but comments are often pretentious. Marvin singlehandedly elevates this drama with a towering performance. B-movie veteran Mitchell makes a detestable villain. Cowritten by Samuel Fuller (who was also scheduled to direct), from a novel by William Bradford Huie. Alternative titles: KKK, THE BURNING CROSS.

**Klute** (1971, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Alan J. Pakula. Starring Donald Sutherland, Jane Fonda, Charles Cioffi, Roy Scheider, Dorothy Tristan, Rita Gam, Jean Stapleton. Fascinating, intelligent psychological thriller drama about private eye Sutherland, who goes in search of lost businessman and meets callgirl Fonda, who may have known him. A superbly acted, absorbing thriller, sensitively handled by producer-director Pakula. Fonda won an Oscar for her brilliant performance. Excellent score by Michael Small, stylish cinematography by Gordon Willis.

**KM 31: Kilometro 31** (2006, MEX/SPA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Rigoberto Castaneda. Starring Iliana Fox, Adrià Collado, Raúl Méndez, Luisa Huertas, Fernando Becerril, Mikel Mateos. Mexican-Spanish horror film about twins (both played by Fox), who are 'separated' when one of them falls into a coma after a road accident at ill-fated kilometer 31. Her sister investigates along with two friends, and they find out there may be a curse behind it. Darkly atmospheric chiller takes its cue from movies like *JU-ON* or other Spanish efforts of late and delivers some great shocks in unrelentingly eerie settings, but plot itself is rather weak. Still, worth watching for horror fans. Written by the director.

**Knack, and How To Get It, The** (1965, GBR) **85m. \*\*\*½ D:** Richard Lester. Starring Rita Tushingham, Ray Brooks, Michael Crawford, Donal Donnelly. Outstanding comedy focusing on the lives of several twens in London. One is a lady-killer, the other is trying hard to get the 'knack', with newcomer Tushingham spicing things up. Witty, imaginative film is full of brilliant ideas, and Crawford gives a sensational performance as the shy Colin. Fine score by John Barry is a further plus.

**Knights of the Round Table** (1953, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Richard Thorpe. Starring Robert Taylor, Ava Gardner, Mel Ferrer, Anne Crawford, Stanley Baker, Laurence Harvey,

Desmond Llewelyn. In the Middle Ages, the title characters gather to bring Arthur to the throne but meet fierce resistance in evil Modred. Well-known chivalry epic has too many dialogue sequences and a direction that does not really know what to make of new CinemaScope process. In fact, this was the first film the MGM studios made in widescreen (2.55:1). The flat IVANHOE (1952), also photographed by Freddie Young, was better.

**Knight's Tale, A** (2001, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Brian Helgeland. Starring Heath Ledger, Rufus Sewell, Shannyn Sossamon, Paul Bettany, Laura Fraser. Just what the title says: Ledger plays a hayseed who pretends to be a knight (in the Middle Ages), finds help in Bettany, who fakes his family history... and off they go to the next tournament, where there's action and romance waiting for the neo-knight (and the viewer). Starts at a medieval tournament, with the crowd clapping their hands in the rhythm of Queen's hit song 'We Will Rock You'. Don't say you weren't warned. Director Helgeland keeps writing crap.

**Knocked Up** (2007, USA) **C-133m. \*\*½ D:** Judd Apatow. Starring Seth Rogen, Katherine Heigl, Paul Rudd, Leslie Mann, Jason Segel, Jay Baruchel, Joanna Kerns, Harold Ramis, cameos by Jessica Alba, Steve Carell, Andy Dick, James Franco, Eva Mendes (as themselves). Heigl works for television and is moving up on the career ladder, when an unfortunate(?) one-night-stand with slacker Rogen makes her pregnant. She tries to make the best of the situation and keep the child, even if Rogen has no outlook at all. Some laugh-out-loud scenes and bitter truths about relationships, but overlength takes some of the movie's edge away. From the director of THE 40-YEAR OLD VIRGIN (2005).

**Knock Knock** (2015, USA/CHL) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Eli Roth. Starring Keanu Reeves, Lorenza Izzo, Ana de Armas, Aaron Burns, Ignacia Allamand, Colleen Camp. Slickly made thriller about architect Reeves who spends the weekend working at home, as his wife and kids go to the beach. At night two young women knock on his door seeking help and shelter from the rain. They seduce the family father and later stay to haunt him. Manipulative and rather pointless, but never boring despite its contrivances. Izzo (Roth's wife) and de Armas are ideal temptresses. Director Roth also scripted this remake of DEATH GAME (1977).

**Knowing** (2009, USA/GBR) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alex Proyas. Starring Nicolas Cage, Chandler Canterbury, Rosy Byrne, Lara Robinson, D.G. Maloney, Nadia Townsend, Ben Mendelsohn. In 1959 an elementary school class buries a time capsule with drawings inside. One odd girl has scribbled numbers all over her paper. Fifty years later astro physicist Cage's son gets this drawing, and the numbers turn out to identify every major disaster of the past fifty years... leading to a chilling prophecy that goes beyond the present day. Suspenseful, creepy, highly atmospheric mystery thriller from the director of THE CROW (1994) and DARK CITY (1998) doesn't completely do without Hollywood contrivances, but remains riveting all the way. Excellent score by Marco Beltrami. Proyas also produced.

**Knuckle Draggers** (2009, USA) **C-89m. \*\*\* D:** Alex Ranarivelo. Starring Ross McCall, Paul J. Alessi, Amie Barsky, Omar Gooding, Danielle Nicolet, Jennifer Alden. Refreshing indie movie offers a look at thirty-ish director McCall, whose girlfriend leaves him because of lack of success. His brother then takes up the task of introducing him into being the way women want him to be, though it seems everybody in his circle of friends is having problems of their own. Romantic comedy drama marks director Ranarivelo's feature debut, for which he creates a believable universe of characters, though some performances and situations are still slightly pretentious. All in all a telling slice-of-life, well worth-watching. Good score includes a song by McCann's ex-fiancee Jennifer Love Hewitt.

**Kôfuku No Kane** (2002, JAP) **C-87m. \*\* D:** Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Starring Susumu Terajima, Naomi Nishida, Itsuji Itao, Ryoko Shinohara, Seijun Suzuki. Another grotesque comedy drama from writer-director Sabu about middle-aged Terajima, who wanders

through the city, completely alienated from his surroundings. He becomes witness to a suicide, is arrested, set free again, meets all kinds of desperate characters, but cannot interact with any. A comment on modern urban culture perhaps, this movie is awfully slow, and deliberately so. Sabu devotees should give this a look, others will be put off by long sequences, where nothing at all happens. English title: BLESSING BELL.

**Kôkaku Kidôtai** (1995, JAP/GBR) **C-82m. \*\*½ D:** Mamoru Oshii. Starring Atsuko Tanaka, Akio Otsuka, Tamio Oki, Iemasa Kayumi. One of the best-known anime of the 1990s is a BLADE RUNNER-like thriller set in the future, where a female cyborg and her partner must hunt down a terrorist called the Puppet Master. Nicely atmospheric, well-animated manga adaptation with a second-rate plot. The impressive action animation is undermined by static dialogue scenes, where only the mouths move. Still, has a cult following. Followed by a TV series, a 2004 sequel (the Ghibli-produced INOSENSU: KOKAKU KIDOTAI aka GHOST IN THE SHELL 2) and a 2006 spin-off. International title: GHOST IN THE SHELL.

**Kokuhaku** (2010, JAP) **C-106m. \*\*½ D:** Tetsuya Nakashima. Starring Takako Matsu, Yoshino Kimura, Masaki Okada, Yukito Nishii. Visually arresting drama about a high school teacher, who stages an experiment to identify and punish two of her students, who are responsible for the death of her little daughter. After an interesting introduction, film follows the repercussions of this experiment on the students and delves into their worlds, video-clip style. Loses some of its earlier substance, as plot disintegrates into stylish fragments with pop songs, which will disappoint you if you are looking for a crime story. Instead it becomes an (over-directed) experiment itself. English title: CONFESSIONS.

**Kokuriko-Zaka Kara** (2011, JAP) **C-91m. \*\*\*½ D:** Goro Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Masami Nagasawa, Junichi Okada, Keiko Takeshita. Charming second feature of Hayao's son Goro following TALES FROM EARTHSEA (2006) is not a fantasy movie but a period drama set just before the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. A young girl, who cannot forget her father, whose ship sank in the Korean War, falls in love with a student while they're refurbishing the local students' club house. Flawless animation set to a beautiful score. May have a bigger emotional impact to Japanese audiences, but it's a treat for Western ones, too. The final twenty minutes especially, are wonderfully done. English title: FROM UP ON POPPY HILL.

**Koma** (2004, HKG) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Lo (Law) Chi-Leung. Starring Lee Sinje (=Angelica Lee), Karena Lam (=Kar Yan Lam), Andy Hui. Stylish thriller about a young woman (Lee) with kidney problems, who seems to be stalked by a killer that removes women's kidneys. That stalker may be troubled Law, who turns out to have an affair with Lee's lover, doctor Hui. Well-made, well-acted, but takes a few unlikely twists and turns and relationships between the characters are not very credible. The elaborate score is so over-bearing at times, it seems pretentious, because it tries to make the scenes appear more suspenseful than they actually are. Still, this uneven thriller-drama combination is worth a look for fans. Cantonese title: JIU MING.

**Kommissar X – Jagd auf Unbekannt** (1966, GER/ITA/YUG) **C-84m.SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Frank Kramer (=Gianfranco Parolini). Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Maria Perschy, Christa Linder, Nikola Popovic. Kendall is a suave private detective, who has all the qualities of James Bond. He is hired to find an abducted scientist, realizes that it's villain Popovic, who is planning evil things on an island. Sometimes enjoyable, sometimes dull, this Bond imitation suffers from low production values but remains a nice view for adepts. Kendall is a fine Connery substitute. Based on a novel by Paul Alfred Müller (writing as Bert F. Island). Followed by six sequels. English title: KISS KISS, KILL, KILL.

**Kommissar X – Drei Gelbe Katzen** (1966, GER/ITA/...)

**Kommissar X – In den Klauen des Goldenen Drachen** (1966, GER/ITA/AUT/YUG/SGP) **C-80m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Frank Kramer (=Gianfranco Parolini). Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Barbara Frey, Luisa Rivelli, E.F. Fürbringer, Gisela Hahn, Nikola Popovic, Frank Littlewood (=Gianfranco Parolini). Third entry in the spy series has Kendall and Harris travelling to the Far East (Singapore), where a physics professor has an assignment for them. Hardly any plot and action in this low-budget bore. English titles: AGENT JOE WALKER: OPERATION FAR EAST, and SO DARLING, SO DEADLY.

**Kommissar X – Drei Grüne Hunde** (1967, GER/ITA/FRA/LEB/HUN) **C-92m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Rudolf Zehetgruber, Gianfranco Parolini. Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Olga Schoberová, Christa Linder, Dietmar Schönherr, Herbert Fux, Rudolf Zehetgruber, Samson Burke, Sal Borgese. One of the weakest KOMMISSAR X movies, this one sends Harris and Kendall to Istanbul, where criminals intend to flood the world with LSD. Plot is without appeal whatsoever, only some motorcycle chases, Turkish settings are of note. English title: DEATH TRIP.

**Kommissar X – Drei Blaue Panther** (1968, GER/ITA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Frank Kramer (=Gianfranco Parolini). Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Corny Collins, Hannelore Auer, Siegfried Rauch, Erika Blanc, Franco Fantasia, Gianfranco Parolini. Fifth Joe Walker installment starts nicely, with Kendall and Harris chasing criminal Fantasia during the 1967 EXPO in Calgary, but film pretty much falls apart after that. Still, not bad, one of the better films of the series. Followed by two more KOMMISSAR X movies. Italian title: GANGSTERS PER UN MASSACRO.

**Kommissar X – Drei Goldene Schlangen** (1969, GER/ITA/THA/USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Roberto Mauri. Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Monica Pardo, Loni Heuser, Hansi Linder, Herbert Fux. Walker and Rowland meet in Bangkok, Thailand, where a young American tourist was abducted. On their search, they encounter a secret cult that deals with drugs. Typically clichéd, typically cheap spy adventure with a tendency towards exploitation. Score by Francesco de Masi is not bad, but film lacks any suspense whatsoever. English titles: ISLAND OF LOST GIRLS, THREE GOLDEN SERPENTS.

**Kommissar X Jagt die Roten Tiger** (1971, GER/ITA/PAK) **C-93m. \*½ D:** Harald Reinl. Starring Tony Kendall, Brad Harris, Gisela Hahn, Mohd Ali, Zeba, E.F. Fürbringer, Rainer Basedow. Last entry in the generally weak spy/crime series brings the boys to Pakistan, where the drug business has been flourishing (again). The same old tired nonsense. The only remarkable thing is how the hairdos and clothes changed since the last installment.

**Konec Srpna v Hotelu Ozon** (1967, CZE) **B&W-77m. \*½ D:** Jan Schmidt. Starring Vladimir Hlavaty, Jitka Horejsi, Ondrej Jariabek. Do not let the colourful English title coax you into watching this heavy-handed black-and-white drama, which basically only consists of a group of exhausted women travelling through the countryside after a presumable nuclear-fallout or a war. Nothing of interest happens, poorly directed. English title: LATE AUGUST AT THE HOTEL OZONE.

**Konga** (1961, GBR) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** John Lemont. Starring Michael Gough, Margo Johns, Jess Conrad, Claire Gordon. Scientist Gough returns from Uganda, Africa, with some new ideas how to mutate plants and animals and uses this method on his little chimp, who turns into a gorilla(!). He forces the ape to dispose of any rivals to his fantastic ideas. Gough's delicious, completely convincing performance buoys this uneven monster horror. Starts flat, then improves in the second half. Worth a look for aficionados. Photographed by Desmond Dickinson.

**Kong: Skull Island** (2017, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jordan Vogt-Roberts. Starring Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, Brie Larson, John C-Reilly, John Goodman, Corey Hawkins.

Bombastic action adventure does not rely on the previous films about the giant ape, but sets the action in the 1970s, right after the end of the Vietnam war. Goodman gets funding for exploring a remote Pacific island and brings some scientists, a group of soldiers led by Jackson, photographer Larson and British adventurer Hiddleston. They encounter the impressive title creature, as well as some other exotic (and deadly) animals. Awe-inspiring special effects and nicely adventurous plot easily make up for rather meaningless characters. Kong, with his body language and facial expressions looks incredibly real. Best enjoyed in 4DX.

**Kon Raruek Chat** (2005, THA) **C-75m.** \*½ D: Mona Nahm. Starring Andrew Gregson, Piyada Akaraseeni. Weak supernatural thriller about young entrepreneur Gregson, who is saved from drowning by Akaraseeni, who falls into a coma as a consequence. He finds himself strangely contacted by her through suicidal people. Obviously he must do some good to save her life. Interesting underlying philosophy is a bit confusing, but as a movie this sucks anyway. Gregson is dull, and the direction only so-so in this low-budget film. Story by Oxide Pang Chun, who also coproduced. English title: THE REMAKER.

**Kontroll** (2003, HUN) **C-110m.** \*\*\* D: Nimród Antal. Starring Sándor Csányi, Zoltán Mucsi, Csaba Pindroch, Sándor Badár, Zsolt Nagy, Eszter Balla, Gábor Herendi. Original black comedy drama from Hungary about a group of ticket controllers in the subway system of Budapest, whose job is crippling them physically and mentally. Main character is Csányi, who spends his entire life underground. Now, mysterious suicides begin disquieting the passengers and authorities. Somewhat aimless, underdeveloped, but peopled with likable, funny characters, a nice debut feature for director Antal. Also known as CONTROL.

**Kôrei** (2000, JAP) **C-97m.** \*\* D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Kôji Yakusho, Jun Fubuki, Tsuyoshi Kusanagi, Hikari Ishida, Kitarou. Sound recordist Yakusho and his wife Fubuki, a troubled medium, get mixed up in a kidnapping case, which they want to use to their advantage. Story set-up is too long and despite some eerie scenes involving hauntings, film ends up being much too conventional. Even the trademark chills seem constructed. A slight disappointment from the director of CURE/KYUA (1997). Based on a novel by Mark McShane, which was also the basis for the British classic SÉANCE ON A WET AFTERNOON (1964). Made for television. Also known as SÉANCE.

**Koritsi Vomva, To** (1976, GRE) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Nico Mastorakis. Starring Jessica Dublin, Maria Aliferi, Peter Winter, Christos Nomikos. Greek curio about two scam artists, who get involved in a hunt for two ladies with a special gift: they can use their eyes to kill (among other things). Quite stupid but somehow engaging mixture of spy, action, sex and fantasy elements. A silly movie for rabid trash fans. English titles: DEATH HAS BLUE EYES, THE PARA PSYCHICS.

**Koroshiya 1** (2001, JAP/HGK/KOR) **C-112m.** \*\* D: Takashi Miike. Starring Tadanobu Asano, Nao Omori, Shinya Tsukamoto, Alien Sun (=Paulyn Sun), Susumu Terajima, Jun Kunimura, Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Perhaps director Miike's most infamous film is a grotesque action horror film about a yakuza group whose boss vanishes one day. Scar-faced deputy Asano employs unusual, ultra-violent methods to find out where he went (with yakuza money). We, the audience, know that responsible for the disappearance is Ichi, a kind-of nerdy, neurotic superhero with an insatiable bloodlust. Meant to be satirical, with over-the-top digital and traditional special effects, but this sado-masochistic fantasy comes across as cynical and doesn't really have a point, let alone entertainment value (unless you are a gorehound). Uncut print is even more violent and runs 129m. English title: ICHI, THE KILLER. Followed by a video prequel in 2003.

**Kotoko** (2011, JAP) **C-92m. BOMB D:** Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Cocco, Shinya Tsukamoto. Bizarre, practically unwatchable horror drama about a young woman (Cocco, who also came up with the story) with a mental disorder, she's basically insane. She fails miserably looking after her baby, is paranoid, practices self-mutilation. Enter neighbour and secret admirer Tsukamoto (the director himself) who woos her and tries to help her. Off-putting, headache-inducing camerawork, a lowpoint in Tsukamoto's filmography.

**Koto No Ha No Niwa** (2013, JAP) **C-46m. n/r D:** Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Miyu Irino, Kana Hanazawa. Director wunderkind Shinkai's follow-up to CHILDREN WHO CHASE LOST VOICES FROM DEEP BELOW (2011) is a cinematic love poem about a young student, who skips class during rainy days to work on his shoemaking sketches, and a woman, who doesn't go to work when it rains. They meet again and again under a kiosk in a public park... and soon a bond forms between them. Lyrical, visually magnificent – the images seem to tell a story of their own. Not as compelling or heart-rending as Shinkai's 5 CENTIMETERS PER SECOND (2007), but still a must. Stay tuned until after the closing credits. English title: GARDEN OF WORDS.

**Koyaanisqatsi** (1983, USA) **C-89m. \*\*\*\* D:** Godfrey Reggio. Completely unconventional, absolutely spellbinding film, a documentary without narrative that captures beautiful pictures of nature (most of it in slow-motion), juxtaposing it with time-lapse clips of our lives and civilization. At times dizzying, this collage inquires into the nature of mankind and accuses it of taking too little heed of the really important issues of life. Brilliant score by Philip Glass makes this an experience you are not likely to forget. Film relies a great deal on the ability of the audience to elaborate its meaning. The hypnotic images probably carry an even bigger impact in movie theaters. A must-see, if only to lean back and think about your life. 'Koyaanisqatsi' is Hopi-Indian for 'Life in Decay', or 'Life out of Balance'. Presented by Francis Ford Coppola. Allen Ginsberg and Roger Spottiswoode are among those who receive special thanks in the closing credits. First part of an unfinished trilogy, followed by POWAQQATSI in 1988.

**Krampus** (2015, USA/NZL) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Dougherty. Starring Emjay Anthony, Adam Scott, Toni Collette, David Koechner, Stefania LaVie Owen, Krista Stadler, Conchata Ferrell. Horror film about an ancient Austrian-German folk legend, the title creature is an evil companion to Saint Nick – only he comes to take, not to give. Anthony's family have gathered for a Christmas celebration, when all of a sudden a blizzard snows them in completely and life seems to have died outside. His grandmother Stadler knows the Krampus is prowling around. Rather nonsensical, but effective, atmospheric X-Mas chiller, with good direction and excellent photography. This has been compared to the rollercoaster ride of POLTERGEIST (1982) and it's partly true. From the director of TRICK'R TREAT.

**Kronos** (1973, GBR) **C-91m. \*\*½ D:** Brian Clemens. Starring Horst Janson, John Carson, Ian Hendry, Caroline Munro, Shane Briant, Wanda Ventham. Strange Hammer production about a sword-wielding vampire hunter (Janson), who is called to eradicate vampire plague somewhere in British countryside. Unfocused plot takes away much of film's effect, atmosphere, occasional eeriness are its assets. Interesting, to say the least, and regarded to be a Hammer classic by some. This was writer-director Clemens' only directorial effort, and it shows. Also known as CAPTAIN KRONOS, VAMPIRE HUNTER and VAMPIRE CASTLE.

**Kronvittnet** (1989, SWE) **C-107m. \*\* D:** Jon Lindström. Starring Marika Lagercrantz, Per Mattson, Gösta Ekman, Emma Norbeck. Murder mystery about biochemist Mattson and his secret affair with a mysterious woman, who disappears and leaves him unable to explain that he didn't kill her. His frustrated wife starts investigating in order to prevent him from being convicted. Potentially intriguing premise falls flat due to sluggish pace which barely

keeps the viewer interested. Based on the novel *De Kroongetuige* by Maarten Hart, who made many classic mistakes in transferring the work to the screen.

**Kuchisake-onna** (2007, JAP) **C-90m**. \*\*½ D: Kôji Shiraishi. Starring Eriko Satô, Haruhiko Katô, Chiharu Kawai, Rie Kuwana. Horror film about an urban legend, the Slit-Mouthed Woman, who like the boogey man terrorizes an entire neighborhood, abducting small children. A school teacher investigates along with a possible relative of the scissor-wielding witch. Realism hurts the movie in the first half, but it delivers a fairly good finale. Followed by a sequel in 2008. English title: CARVED – THE SLIT-MOUTHED WOMAN.

**Kumiko, the Treasure Hunter** (2014, USA) **C-105m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: David Zellner. Starring Rinko Kikuchi, Nobuyuki Katsube, Shirley Venard, David Zellner, Nathan Zellner. Low-key, slowly paced but effective drama about a 29-year-old Japanese woman, whose life is unfulfilled. When she finds a video tape of the movie FARGO (1996) hidden on the beach, she becomes convinced that there's money to be found in Minnesota and sets out to find it! On her road trip she meets strange characters, and it becomes more and more clear that deep inside she's still a child. A downbeat but engrossing film. Director Zellner plays the policeman that helps Kumiko. He also scripted with his brother Nathan, based on a true story!

**Kumo no Hitomi** (1998, JAP) **C-84m**. \*½ D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Sho Aikawa, Dankan, Ren Osugi, Shun Sugata, Susumu Terashima. Crime/vengeance drama about a businessman-turned-hitman Aikawa, who avenges the murder of his daughter after six years. Then (or before?) he gets involved with a crime syndicate and starts killing people for them. Depressing examination of a life thrown out of balance, slowly paced and not at all interesting. Kurosawa made this right after his cult hit CURE (KYUA), back to back with HEBI NO MICHU (THE SERPENT'S PATH). English title: EYES OF THE SPIDER.

**Kumo no Mukô, Yakusoku no Basho** (2004, JAP) **C-91m**. \*\*\* D: Makoto Shinkai. Starring (the voices of) Hidetaka Yoshioka, Masato Hagiwara, Yuuka Nanri, Unshô Ishizuka. Utterly original science-fiction romance about a young engineer who narrates a story set on the brink of war in an alternate 1996, with Japan separated into North and South. At the border the young man makes plans to fly a self-built plane to an incredibly high tower that, it turns out, is a link to parallel universes. Controlling the fate of the country is the engineer's love interest, a girl that has been in a coma for three years and whose dreaming is believed to keep the universes from collapsing... Heart-felt, lyrical film looks great, too, it's perhaps a bit too downbeat for some with its melancholy mood, and it is also occasionally confusing, jumping back and forth in time. Has cult film possibilities. Fine score by Tenmon. Followed by the even better 5 CENTIMETERS PER SECOND (2007). English title: THE PLACE PROMISED IN OUR EARLY DAYS.

**Kumonosu Jo** (1957, JPN) **109m**. \*\*\*½ D: Akira Kurosawa. Starring Toshiro Mifune, Isuzu Yamada, Takashi Shimura, Minoru Chiaki. Impressive, atmospheric adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, cowritten and coproduced by director Kurosawa. Mifune plays the main character with frightening intensity, Yamada is his pale, scheming wife, who drives him to murder in order to gain the throne. Beautiful scenes in the cobweb forest, where Mifune receives two predictions by a witch, memorable finale. Close to the source, a must for the educated cineaste. Also known as THRONE OF BLOOD.

**Kumo no Yôni, Kaze no Yôni** (1989, JAP) **C-79m**. \*\*½ D: Hisayuki Toriumi. Starring (the voices of) Ryoko Sano, Junko Takahata, Ikuko Tani, Yôko Asagami, Yô Inoue. Historical anime about a country girl, who is chosen to become one of the new emperor's concubines and finds the transition from country life to life in the palace really difficult. First, she has to endure six months of training and is rivalled by many beautiful girls. Not bad, quite well-

animated Ghibli-style (some of their animators and designer worked on this), but plot lacks momentum and drama. Based on a novel by Ken'ichi Sakemi. English title: LIKE THE CLOUDS, LIKE THE WIND.

**Kung Fu-Killer** (1972, HGK) **C-97m. \*½ D:** Cheng Chang-Ho. Starring Chen Hsing, Tuty Kirana, Shin Il-Lung. Seemingly endless Kung Fu film about young fighter Hsing who has sworn to avenge the death of his father. He is after a druglord. Settings (Bali, Singapore, Hong Kong) and score (by Joseph Koo) save this uneventful film from the scrapheap. Produced by Raymond Chow. Title is the German video title.

**Kung FuOnSale** (1979, TIW) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Su JenPing.

Starring Cheng Fu Hung, Chiu Tsang, Fung Seung. Entertaining Kung Fu comedy about an unemployed young man who keeps being pushed around by everybody. He joins a group of clochards, trying to earn some money by letting people hit him(!). Then he meets an old man who teaches him the art of Kung Fu. One of the films made in the wake of the success of DRUNKEN MASTER (1978). Eastern with interesting characters does not offer enough action.

**Kung Fu Panda** (2008, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Mark Osborne, John Stevenson. Starring (the voices of) Jack Black, Dustin Hoffman, Angelina Jolie, Ian McShane, Jackie Chan, Seth Rogen, Lucy Liu, David Cross, Randall Duk Kim, James Hong, Dan Fogler, Michael Clarke Duncan, Wayne Knight, Kyle Gass. In China, an ordinary panda bear (Black) with a penchant for martial arts becomes the famed dragon warrior and must defend the village against an escaped bad guy. Can he learn the art of kung fu in time – or even at all? Mild comedy with tons of clichés, only the action sequences stand out.

**Kung-Fu Yoga** (2017, CHI/IND) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Stanley Tong. Starring Jackie Chan, Disha Patani, Amyra Dastur, Aarif Rahman. Wildly plotted action comedy about archaeology professor Chan (more or less playing himself), who has been researching an old legend and trying to locate an ancient treasure. Naturally, he is not the only one after the gold. Attempt at an INDIANA JONES type adventure doesn't really work, with an abundance of digital effects, most of which work but some of which are overdone (especially the animal scenes). Plot is often ludicrous. Likable Chan holds things together.

**Kunyonga – Mord in Afrika** (1986, GER/KNY) **C-90m. \*\* D:** Hubert Frank. Starring Ron Williams, Julia Kent, Christoph Eichhorn, Andràs Fricsay, Paul Breitner, Werner Kreindl. Quite obnoxious comedy about down-on-his-luck reporter Williams, who travels to Kenya, Africa, to investigate a kidnapping. Low-brow humor, lackluster plot, this action comedy hits its stride too late. Relatively competent direction saves it. Also known as BLACKBUSTER, and MURDER IN AFRICA.

**Kureopatora** (1970, JAP) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Osamu Tezuka, Eiichi Yamamoto. Starring (the voices of) Chintsu Nakayama, Hajime Hana. Solidly (or should I say 'sordidly') animated comedy about Cleopatra and her development into becoming Caesar's mistress in Egypt and Rome. Odd frame story sends three people from the future back in time to witness the events that took place. Raunchy, gleefully anachronistic, but so poorly paced, it occasionally becomes a chore to watch. The animators certainly seemed to have fun. Technically on a par with the Disney efforts of the time, R-rated though. English title: CLEOPATRA: QUEEN OF SEX.

**Kurîpî: Itsuwari no Rinjin** (2016, JAP) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Hidetoshi Nishijima, Yûko Takeuchi, Toru Baba, Teruyuki Kagawa. Partly captivating thriller drama about retired police detective Nishijima, who now works as a criminal psychologist and lecturer and has relocated to the suburbs with his wife. He chances upon a cold case of a disappeared family and starts to investigate. At the same time his wife tries to befriend

the neighbors, among them the strange Kagawa and his daughter. Mostly engrossing, but script is slapdash and not quite as creepy as the title vainly suggests. The final half hour is especially illogical and strange. English title: CREEPY.

**Kuroyuri Danchi** (2013, JAP) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Hideo Nakata. Starring Atsuko Maeda, Hiroki Narimiya, Masanobu Katsumura. With the promise of star director Nakata (RINGU) comes this supernatural horror film set in an apartment complex, where a young woman falls prey to strange events surrounding her neighbour and an evil spirit. Some effective scenes, but no novelties. Maeda's distress becomes annoying. English title: THE COMPLEX.

**Kuro no Tenshi Vol.1** (1997, JAP) **C-107m. \*\*\*½ D:** Takashi Ishii. Starring Riona Hazuki, Reiko Takashima, Jinpachi Nezu, Kippe Shiina, Miyuki Ono. Stylish and violent action thriller about a six-year-old girl whose (Yakuza) parents are killed before her very eyes. She is saved by a hitwoman who calls herself the Black Angel. After 14 years in Los Angeles, she returns to Japan to seek revenge on her parents' killers, also calling herself the Black Angel. Visually arresting movie that loses some of its momentum and impact in drawn-out finale. A major inspiration on Quentin Tarantino's KILL BILL films. Written and coproduced by director Ishii. English title: THE BLACK ANGEL. Followed by VOL.2 in 1999.

**Kyôfu Kikei Ningen: Edogawa Rampo Zenshû** (1969, JAP) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Teruo Ishii. Starring Teruo Yoshida, Yukie Kagawa, Teruko Yumi, Mitsuko Aoi. Experimental horror mystery about an aspiring doctor, who escapes from a lunatics asylum and follows a lead to a family that is mourning the death of their beloved husband and son. When he realizes that he looks just like him, he poses as the dead man, pretending to have been resurrected. The family, it turns out, harbours a terrible secret on a nearby island. Straight-forward plot with elements reminiscent of performance art seems like a crossbreed of Jess Franco and Alejandro Jodorowsky (whose HOLY MOUNTAIN may have been influenced by this). It's too slow and uneven to be enjoyable, but it's a time capsule and sort-of a must for cult movie buffs. English title: HORRORS OF MALFORMED MEN.

**Kyûketsu Dokuro-sen** (1968, JAP) **B&W-80m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Hiroshi Matsuno. Starring Kikko Matsuoka, Yasunori Isikawa, Masumi Okada, Asao Uchida, Asao Koike, Kaori Tanaguchi. Incredible pulp melodrama with supernatural elements. Three years after a band of criminals violently looted a cruise ship, the ship mysteriously reappears and somebody takes revenge on the looters. Matsuoka, whose twin sister perished on the ship, lives with a priest and is strangely affected by the events. Strikingly photographed (in black-and-white), so as to almost make it expressionistic in style, film remains unpredictable and thus intriguing till the very end. Leading lady Matsuoka's beauty is almost iconic. She had an uncredited bit part in YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE a year before. English title: THE LIVING SKELETON.

**Kyuketsuki Gokemidoro** (1968, JAP) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Hajime Sato. Starring Teruo Yoshida, Tomomi Sato, Eizo Kitamura, Hideo Ko, Kathy Horan. Outrageous science-fiction horror movie, the stuff cult movies are made of: The crew onboard a continental flight in Japan is in shock when they learn of a possible bomb on board, then the plane is attacked by suicidal birds and crashes when a UFO-like object almost hits them. At the mountainous crash-site an alien organism soon starts preying on the surviving passengers. Plays like a psychedelic Star Trek-episode for adults, colorful, trashy, a lot of fun, a must for cult movie fans. Contains an incredible array of themes: disaster, vampirism, sci-fi, war, greed, lust, apocalypse, everything you always wanted to see combined in one movie. Melodramatic score by Shunsuke Kikuchi. Alternative titles: BODYSNATCHER FROM HELL, GOKE THE VAMPIRE, VAMPIRE GOKEMIDORO.

**Laberinto del Fauno, El** (2006, SPA/MEX) **C-119m. \*\*\*½ D:** Guillermo del Toro. Starring Ivana Baquero, Sergi López, Maribel Verdú, Doug Jones, Ariadna Gil, Alex Angulo, Federico

Luppi. Outstanding fantasy drama set in 1944 Spain, where there is still resistance by guerrilla groups, even after the Fascists won the Civil War. An adolescent girl is brought to a Fascist camp along with her sick, pregnant mother, who is now married to the camp's general, ultra-sadistic López. Amidst these troubles, the girl enters a fantasy world, where a Pan (or Faun), a spirit of the forest, tells her she is a long-lost princess, whose soul will be immortal if she passes three tests. Excellent combination of war and fantasy/horror themes (as done before by del Toro in EL ESPINAZO DEL DIABLO in 2001). Compelling and intense, superbly written by the director, a must-see. Oscar-winning cinematography by Guillermo Navarro. English title: PANS LABYRINTH.

**Labor Day** (2013, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ivan Reitman. Starring Kate Winslet, Josh Brolin, Gattlin Griffith, Tobey Maguire, Tom Lipinski, Maika Monroe, Clark Gregg, James Van Der Beek, J.K. Simmons. Prolific writer-director Reitman (THANK YOU FOR SMOKING, JUNO) tries his hands at an adaptation of a novel by Joyce Maynard. Single mother Winslet and her 13-year-old son are taken hostage by escaped convict Brolin. However, he turns out to be friendly and helpful around the house, even providing fatherly support for the boy. Film details short moments of bliss during a Labor Day weekend, and is told largely from the insecure boy's perspective. Slow, low-key drama is well-handled and has a good score by Rolfe Kent. The roles of Maguire, Van der Beek and Simmons are cameos at best.

**Labyrinth** (1986, USA/GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jim Henson. Starring David Bowie, Jennifer Connelly, Toby Froud. Shelley Thompson, Christopher Malcolm, voices of Brian Henson, Frank Oz. Cute children's fantasy about a teenage girl (Connelly), who just wishes that her little brother might go away. Suddenly he really is gone – stolen by the King of the Goblins (Bowie). Now the girl must gather her courage and master a dangerous labyrinth, where she meets all kinds of weird and funny characters. Beautifully made, funny script by Terry Jones (of Monty Python fame), executive produced by George Lucas. Bowie's costume and hairdo are simply embarrassing these days, however.

**Lac des Morts Vivants, Le** (1980, FRA/SPA) **C-92m.** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Howard Vernon, Pierre-Marie Escourrou, Anouchka, Jean Rollin. Dreadful zombie film about dead WW2 soldiers, who occasionally leave their watery grave to kill naked nymphs. Sounds interesting but is very poorly made. Stands as the only(?) collaboration between Jean Rollin and the notorious Jess Franco (cowriter). There's a similar movie called SHOCK WAVES (1977). Aka ZOMBIE LAKE.

**L.A. Confidential** (1997, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Curtis Hanson. Starring Kevin Spacey, Russell Crowe, Guy Pearce, James Cromwell, Kim Basinger, Danny DeVito, David Starhain, Ron Rifkin, Matt McCoy. Stylish noir-like thriller set in Los Angeles in the 1950s. Pearce plays an ambitious, righteous young cop investigating a multiple murder. Although three suspects are soon arrested, the pool of crime is deeper than he may have thought. Stark but badly translated adaptation of James Elroy's novel. Plot is too complex and seems to scratch the surface only. There are too many marginal characters, not all of whom make sense. Highly regarded by some critics, however. Basinger won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. Her role is quite pointless, though. The screenwriters (Curtis Hanson and Brian Koppelman) also won an Oscar (why?).

**Là Dove Non Batte il Sole** (1974, ITA/SPA/HGK) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Lee Van Cleef, Lo Lih, Karen Yeh, Femi Benussi, Juliàn Ugarte, Erika Blanc, Georges Rigaud. THE STRANGER AND THE GUNFIGHTER (English title) is about Martial Arts expert Lih, who travels to the Wild West to retrieve a fortune hidden by his late uncle. The only hints to the whereabouts of the treasure have been tattooed on the butts of prostitutes. Gunfighter Van Cleef tags along. Strange genre mixture is occasionally

funny but hardly exciting. For those who want to see Lieh in a western setting (his fight scenes are below par, though). Coproduced by Run Run Shaw. Also shown at 105m.

**Lady and the Tramp, The** (1955, USA) **C-76m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Clade Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske. Starring (the voices of) Peggy Lee, Barbara Luddy, Larry Roberts, Bill Thompson, Verna Felton. Disney's follow-up to PETER PAN (1953) is the studio's first animated feature in widescreen (CinemaScope). Story about a cocker spaniel and her adventures with a street dog has become a classic. Beautifully animated, sweet (if not terribly compelling) story, a treat for kids.

**Lady in Cement** (1968, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Gordon Douglas. Starring Frank Sinatra, Raquel Welch, Dan Blocker, Richard Conte. Sinatra reprises his private detective role from TONY ROME (1967) in this tongue-in-cheek mystery. He is hired by big man Blocker (of *Bonanza* fame) to find a missing girlfriend, which Rome is interested in ever since finding the title character, her friend, at the bottom of the sea during a diving expedition. Easy-going, quite amusing, only the plot is a bit too unfocused. For fans of Frank. Set in Miami.

**Lady in the Water** (2006, USA) **C-110m. \*\*½** M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Paul Giamatti, Bryce Dallas Howard, Jeffrey Wright, Bob Balaban, Sarita Choudhury, Cindy Cheung, M. Night Shyamalan, Mary Beth Hurt, Jared Harris. Another interesting – albeit less successful – mystery/fantasy concoction by Shyamalan about Giamatti, the caretaker of an apartment complex, who suspects some of the residents to use the pool at night. Then he meets the culprit in fragile Howard. She claims to be a sea nymph running from an evil wolf-like creature, which wants to prevent her from returning to her world. Is she a character from a bedtime story? Can he or any of the other tenants help her? Writer-director Shyamalan tries to build up a fantasy world all his own, and keeps things bubbling, but more than once undermines his plot by adding pointless humor and implausible characters. May require multiple viewings to understand all the symbolisms.

**Ladykillers, The** (1955, GBR) **C-90m. \*\*\*½** D: Alexander Mackendrick. Starring Alec Guinness, Cecil Parker, Herbert Lom, Peter Sellers, Danny Green, Jack Warner, Frankie Howerd, Katie Johnson. Classic black comedy from the Ealing Studios about five 'gentlemen' who rent a flat in an old lady's house, pretending they are musicians. In fact, they are planning to rob a money transporter, and the old lady should unwittingly give them a hand. Needless to say, things go as wrong as they possibly can. Fine performances, some hilarious set-pieces and director Mackendrick's stylish visuals make this a treat to watch.

**Ladykillers, The** (2004, USA) **C-104m. \*\*** D: Joel and Ethan Coen. Starring Tom Hanks, Irma P. Hall, Marlon Wayans, J.K. Simmons, Tzi Ma, Ryan Hurst, Bruce Campbell. Pointless remake of the cult comedy only changes the setting to the Deep South, as gentleman/professor Hanks rents a room in Hall's house, intending to dig his way through to the safe of a casino. Not very funny comedy, made agreeable by the Coens' usual casting ideas and some nice production design. Hanks gives it his best, but Wayans' character is terribly annoying. Score by Carter Burwell.

**Lady Stay Dead** (1981, AUS) **C-90m. \*½** D: Terry Bourke. Starring Chard Hayward, Louise Howitt, Deborah Coulls, Roger Ward. Pretty vile exploitation about handyman Hayward, who is a serial killer of women. Starts okay but goes nowhere. Sadistic and unpleasant stuff. Written by director Bourke.

**Lager SSadis Kastrat Kommandatur** (1976, ITA) **C-94m. BOMB** D: Sergio Garrone. Starring Mircha Carven, Paola Corazzi, Giorgio Cerioni, Serafino Profumo. Nazisploitation trash about a camp where women are subjected to various forms of torture and sexual abuse. Pointless, unappealing, bottom-of-the-barrel stinker. Also known as SS EXPERIMENT LOVE CAMP and CAPTIVE WOMEN II: ORGIES OF THE DAMNED.

**Lair of the White Worm, The** (1988, GBR/USA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Ken Russell. Starring Amanda Donohue, Hugh Grant, Catherine Oxenberg, Peter Capaldi, Sammi Davis, Imogen Claire, Chris Pitt. A hobby archaeologist unearths a strange skull in a farmyard, and it turns out that it might belong to a legendary worm, which was battled by nobleman Grant's ancestors. Meanwhile, mysterious snake woman Oxenberg has arrived at her estate nearby. Adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel is unfortunately pretentious, especially some of the performances. The rear-projection effects are bloody but unconvincing. A minor Russell film.

**Lake House, The** (2006, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alejandro Agresti. Starring Keanu Reeves, Sandra Bullock, Shohreh Aghdashloo, Christopher Plummer, Ebon Moss-Bachrach. Bullock plays a doctor living at the title edifice, who starts a correspondence with a man (Reeves) who – as it turns out – lived there before her. The twist: He lives in 2004, she in 2006. When they fall in love, they must ask themselves how this time span can be bridged. Intriguing, albeit not entirely logical combination of fantasy and romance is a remake of the Korean SIWORAE (2000), though this seems as if it would have worked better as a 1970s European art film starring, perhaps, Romy Schneider and Marcello Mastroianni.

**Lake Mungo** (2008, AUS) **C-88m. \*\*\*** D: Joel Anderson. Starring Rosie Traynor, David Pledger, Martin Sharpe, Talia Zucker. Chilling mockumentary about the family of an Australian teen, who died in a swimming accident. After her funeral, she seems to have returned as a ghost. Film interviews her mother, father, brother and friends, and shows footage of ghost sightings. Even a psychic figures in the story. Doesn't completely gel, especially as some of the actors are not convincing, but it's still an intriguing view despite being entirely fictional. Written by the director.

**Lama nel Corpo, La** (1966, ITA/FRA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael Hamilton (=Elio Scardamaglia). Starring William Berger, Françoise Prévost, Mary Young, Barbara Wilson. Typical European chiller of the time is set at a hospital, where doctor Berger has a disfigured patient with a history. A young damsel-in-distress reveals his secret, and murderer seems to be loose, too. Rather tame, slowly paced plot by Ernesto Gastaldi and Luciano Martino, might have worked better with a more renowned director. Score by Francesco de Masi. English titles: THE MURDER CLINIC, REVENGE OF THE LIVING DEAD, NIGHT OF TERRORS, and THE BLADE IN THE BODY.

**Land Before Time, The** (1988, USA) **C-70m. \*\*½** D: Don Bluth. Starring the voices of Gabriel Damon, Candace Hutson, Judith Barsi, Will Ryan, Pat Hingle, Helen Shaver. Quite ambitious animated fantasy (from a former Disney animator), about a little dinosaur's quest to find a hidden valley which his dying mother(!) was planning to reach with him. After a bumpy, uneven start, this becomes quite cute. Good score by James Horner. Co-executive produced by none other than George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. Followed by nine(!) video sequels until 2003.

**Land of the Dead** (2005, USA/CDN/FRA) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: George A. Romero. Starring Simon Baker, John Leguizamo, Dennis Hopper, Asia Argento, Robert Joy, Eugene Clark, Tom Savini, Simon Pegg, Edgar Wright. Interesting continuation of Romero's DEAD movies takes place in a devastated urban area, where mercenary-type people raid warehouses and supermarkets to supply food for the super-rich, who have set up their existence in a huge skyscraper run by Hopper. Zombies are continually on the prowl and some of them are even showing signs of intelligence. Mercenary Baker, who dreams of getting out of the hellhole makes the acquaintance of prostitute Argento, and is then asked by Hopper to stop renegade mercenary Leguizamo. Nicely atmospheric zombie feast with all the gory ingredients, its script however (by Romero himself) remains too undramatic and often too conventional. Still, sort-of a must for horror fans. Unrated version runs 97m.

**Landru** (1963, FRA/ITA) **C-115m.** **\*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Charles Denner, Michèle Morgan, Danielle Darrieux, Hildegard Knef, Juliette Mayniel, Stéphane Audran, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi, Jean-Pierre Melville. Sober account of French gentleman Landru (Denner), who during WWI frequently abandons his family to seduce lonely widows and ends up killing them. Fascinating to some degree but overlong, Denner's performance is as cold (frighteningly so) as the rest of the film. Previously filmed by Charlie Chaplin as MONSIEUR VERDOUX (1947). Screenplay by Françoise Sagan. Claude Zidi was camera assistant. English title: BLUEBEARD.

**Land That Time Forgot, The** (1975, GBR) **C-90m.** **\*\*½ D:** Kevin Connor. Starring Doug McClure, John McEnery, Susan Penhaligon, Keith Barron. Exciting but not really convincing fantasy adventure about a group of people who discover a mysterious land in the South Atlantic where dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures have survived. Effects are laughable compared to Spielberg's JURASSIC PARK creatures. Followed by a sequel in 1977.

**Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life** (2003, USA/GBR/NED/GER/JAP) **C-110m.** **SCOPE \*\* D:** Jan de Bont. Starring Angelina Jolie, Gerard Butler, Ciarán Hinds, Chris Barrie, Noah Taylor, Djimon Hounsou, Til Schweiger, Simon Yam. Second big-screen adaptation of the successful computer game pits title heroine Jolie against a crime syndicate that is after Pandora's Box in order to use it as a biological weapon. Rather silly action yarn, kept alive by some bombastic set-pieces, but anyone aged older than 12 will be offended by the story. Good score by Alan Silvestri.

**Last Chance Harvey** (2008, USA) **C-93m.** **SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joel Hopkins. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Emma Thompson, Eileen Atkins, Kathy Baker, Liane Balaban, James Brolin, Richard Schiff. Nicely subdued romantic drama about composer Hoffman, who is on the brink of losing his job and travels to his estranged daughter's wedding in London. He chances to meet spinster Thompson and they spark a romance. Refreshingly normal, without contrivances (if you can accept a Hoffman/Thompson romance), and fine performances by its stars. Written by the director.

**Last Days on Mars, The** (2013, GBR/EIR) **C-98m.** **SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ruairi Robinson. Starring Liev Schreiber, Elias Koteas, Romola Garai, Olivia Williams, Johnny Harris. On the eve of their return to Earth, the first humans on Mars make a discovery which leads to the outbreak of a virus with horrific consequences. Science-fiction seems familiar and takes too long to get going. When it does, it has some good, effective sequences. Schreiber's performance is the same from start to finish, his concentration doesn't ring true, especially not in panic situations. Owes a bit too much to ALIEN (1979).

**Last Horror Film, The** (1984, USA) **C-87m.** **\*\* D:** David Winters. Starring Joe Spinell, Caroline Munro, Judd Hamilton, David Goldenberg, David Winters, Susanne Benton. Spinell (in a redo of his role in MANIAC) plays a psychopathic New York taxi driver (ring a bell?), who travels to the Cannes film festival to meet his favorite movie star, gorgeous Munro. When he is disappointed by her and her manager, he starts killing film people in most brutal fashions. Trivial slasher movie has some good, dynamic editing to recommend it, but little else. Movie buffs will have fun counting the movie references at the Cannes festival, where this was shot in 1981. Alternative titles: FANATIC, FANATICAL EXTREME.

**Last House on Dead End Street** (1973, USA) **C-77m.** **□ D:** Roger Watkins. Starring Roger Watkins, Ken Fisher, Bill Schlageter. Bottom-of-the-barrel cheapo with some disgusting gore scenes looks like someone's home movies. Laughable voice-over narration in story of misfit who wants to produce snuff movies. A non-movie, in all respects. The actors all used pseudonyms. Alternative titles: THE CUCKOO CLOCKS OF HELL, THE FUN HOUSE.

**Last House on the Left** (1972, USA) **C-91m.** D: Wes Craven. Starring David Hess, Lucy Grantham, Sandra Cassel, Marc Sheffler, Jeramie Rain, Fred Lincoln. Extremely unpleasant, cheap thriller about the kidnapping, raping and killing of two teenage girls by a group of escaped convicts and the subsequent revenge exacted by one of the girls' parents. Director Craven's first feature, but he shows no feel for action or suspense. Even his admirers will be disappointed. Craven also scripted and edited. Sean S. Cunningham (FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup>) produced. Based on Ingmar Bergman's VIRGIN SPRING. Also shown at 84m.

**Last Hurrah for Chivalry** (1978, HGC) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Woo. Starring Lau Kong, Wei Pai, Damian Lau, Lee Hoi San, Fung Hark-On, Sheng Kuo. Terribly uneven martial arts drama about Lau, whose family is slaughtered by evil Lee. Lau goes on to find refuge at an old master's place, from which he plots his revenge. His scheme includes two excellent swordsmen, who should avenge him. Early, ambitious film by Hong Kong icon John Woo (who also wrote the script) almost completely loses its focus before the mid-section, but comes back on track early enough. Well-choreographed fight scenes, good dramatic score. Produced by Raymond Chow. Also known as LAST HURRAY FOR CHIVALRY.

**Last Kiss, The** (2006, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tony Goldwyn. Starring Zach Braff, Jacinda Barrett, Casey Affleck, Rachel Bilson, Michael Weston, Eric Christian Olsen, Harold Ramis, Blythe Danner, Tom Wilkinson. Well-acted comedy drama about 29-year-old Braff, whose girlfriend announces she is pregnant. Then he finds himself drawn to a beautiful stranger, who has fallen for him. Will he cheat on his girlfriend because he finds it too difficult to enter a new phase in his life? Or can he make the right decision? His pals seem like no great help at all. Telling drama, a remake of the Italian hit L'ULTIMO BACIO (2001), was scripted by Paul Haggis.

**Last Mimzy, The** (2007, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Bob Shaye. Starring Chris O'Neil, Rhiannon Leigh Wryn, Joely Richardson, Timothy Hutton, Rainn Wilson, Kathryn Hahn, Michael Clarke Duncan. Interesting science-fiction drama about two ordinary children, who find a mysterious cube on the beach one day. The toys(?) inside give them extraordinary abilities, and there's a stuffed bunny called Mimzy trying to communicate to the girl. It turns out the cube is from the future where mankind is at risk. Adapted from a short story by Lewis Padgett (a pseudonym for two authors), this is quite original, but script (by Bruce Joel Rubin and Toby Emmerich) has a few silly contrivances and is rooted in reality too much, with federal involvement completely unnecessary. Score by Howard Shore.

**Last Movie, The** (1971, USA) **C-108m. \*\*** D: Dennis Hopper. Starring Dennis Hopper, Stella Garcia, Julie Adams, Tomas Millian, Don Gordon, Roy Engel, Samuel Fuller, Sylvia Miles, John Alderman, Michael Anderson Jr., Rod Cameron, Peter Fonda, Henry Jaglom, Kris Kristofferson, John Phillip Law, James Mitchum, Dean Stockwell, Allan Warnick, Russ Tamblyn, Ted Markland. Cult movie made after Hopper's success with EASY RIDER (and with the final cut option) is a lumbering, rather disjointed film-within-and-film story of a western movie shoot in Peru. Crew member Hopper is shocked when an extra dies, joins a prostitute and is asked by priest Milian to stop the population who are behaving like the cowboys in the movie. A time capsule at best, filled with cool songs by Kris Kristofferson (whose first film this was), but not everyone will appreciate its flaccid pace. Hopper spent a year editing this (with help from none other than Alejandro Jodorowsky, whose EL TOPO has the same iconoclastic attitude), then won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival. Photographed by László Kóvács.

**Last Night** (1998, CDN) **C-70m. \*\*** D: Don McKellar. Starring Don McKellar, Sandra Oh, Callum Keith Rennie, Sarah Polley, Geneviève Bujold, David Cronenberg. The Canadian contribution to a series of television movies, which all deal with the Silvester night

1999/2000. This one is set in Toronto, where everybody is waiting for the end of the world, which - for no apparent reason - coincides with the millenium. Writer-director McKellar shows several people in supposedly meaningful situations, but fails to make any points. Remains watchable thanks to a short running time and some guest star turns.

**Last of the Mohicans, The** (1992, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Michael Mann. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Madeleine Stowe, Russell Means, Eric Schweig, Jodhi May, Steven Waddington, Wes Studi, Maurice Roëves, Patrice Chéreau, Colm Meaney, Pete Postlethwaite. Powerful, highly cinematic film version of James Fenimore Cooper's classic novel about the role of the Indians in the English-French war. Great score by Randy Edelman, sweeping direction by Mann. Oscar awarded for Best Sound. Same story filmed many times before.

**Last Samurai, The** (2003, USA/JAP/NZL) **C-154m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Edward Zwick. Starring Tom Cruise, Ken Watanabe, William Atherton, Tony Goldwyn, Masato Harada, Billy Connolly, Timothy Spall, Koyuki. Embittered civil war veteran Cruise is hired by the Japanese emperor to train his inept soldiers for war against outlaw band of samurais led by Watanabe. Cruise is sent to war too soon, his army is destroyed and he is captured. As a prisoner, he learns to respect the traditions and the way of the samurai. Characterization and plotting are much too smooth and clichéd, but film is very well-made and has more than its share of beautiful, exciting, even touching moments, kudos to director Zwick. Cruise and his co-star are good. Entertaining, despite length, from the LAST OF THE MOHICANS (1992) school of filmmaking. Excellent score by Hans Zimmer, fine photography by John Toll.

**Last Stand, The** (2013, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kim Jee-woon. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Forest Whitaker, Johnny Knoxville, Peter Stormare, Luis Guzman. Arnie's return to starring roles is fair action thriller about an escaped drug lord, who picks the wrong town to cross the border into Mexico. Sherriff Schwarzenegger, leading a tranquil life, is out to stop him. Second-rate plot, but engaging performances, some laughs, and enough action to keep you posted. Director Kim is better known for I SAW THE DEVIL (2010).

**Last Unicorn, The** (1982, USA/GBR/JAP/GER) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Arthur Rankin Jr., Jules Bass. Starring (the voices of) Alan Arkin, Jeff Bridges, Mia Farrow, Tammy Grimes, Robert Klein, Angela Lansbury, Christopher Lee, Keenan Wynn, Paul Frees, Rene Auberjonois. Dream-like animated fantasy about a unicorn, the last of its kind, who sets out to find others of its race and meets a king that is sending out a fiery red bull to capture every unicorn. Not always on-target, but creates a beautiful fantasy feel. Has become a cult item, especially among girls. Written by Peter S. Beagle, based on his novel. Beagle had also worked on the screenplay for LORD OF THE RINGS (1978). The Japanese animation team later worked for Hayao Miyazaki.

**Last Voyage, The** (1960, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Andrew L. Stone. Starring Robert Stack, Dorothy Malone, George Sanders, Edmond O'Brien, Woody Strode. Disaster film about the sinking of a luxury ship is interesting in that it predates Hollywood's disaster movie run by more than 10 years, but it is also obviously inspired by the TITANIC films of the 1950s, especially A NIGHT TO REMEMBER (1958). Corny narration, film is made watchable by earnest performances, good pace.

**Last Wave, The** (1977, AUS) **C-106m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Weir. Starring Richard Chamberlain, Olivia Hamnett, David Gulpilil, Frederick Parslow, Vivean Gray. Director Weir's follow-up to PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK is an equally fascinating story of an apocalypse/catastrophe set in modern-day Australia, where rain and hailstorm cause emergency situations in the big cities. Chamberlain plays a lawyer who must defend several Aborigines accused of murder and slowly realizes that his own dreams and the tribe's cult may have relevance for the abnormal

weather situation. Not entirely successful (mostly due to slow pace) but chilling and especially interesting if compared to Dario Argento's PROFONDO ROSSO and SUSPIRIA, which may have been an inspiration for this film (although SUSPIRIA was released the same year). Cowritten by Weir.

**Last Will and Testament of Rosalind Leigh, The** (2012, CDN) **C-80m. \*\*\*½** D: Rodrigo Gudino. Starring Aaron Poole, Vanessa Redgrave, Julian Richings, Charlotte Sullivan. Exceptional chiller about antiques dealer Poole, who returns to his family's house after the death of his mother Redgrave. It's a villa full of strange artifacts, figures and statues, and Poole soon finds himself drawn into the strange aura of the place, which once housed an obscure angel cult run by his father. Soon, a supernatural presence emerges... Excellent score and textbook atmosphere, scary bits add up to a superior chiller. Written and directed by the editor of the Rue Morgue horror magazine.

**Las Vegas 500 Millions** (1968, SPA/ITA/FRA/GER) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Antonio Isasi. Starring Gary Lockwood, Elke Sommer, Lee J. Cobb, Jack Palance, Jean Servais, George Géret. Not bad thriller about a gang of crooks who abduct money transporter and try to crack it open in a most unusual hideout. Static direction helped by effective editing. Sommer is sexy, but her role is limited. Aka THEY CAME TO ROB LAS VEGAS. Original (uncut) running time: 130m.

**Lat den Rätte Komma in** (2008, SWE) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Tomas Alfredson. Starring Kare Hedebrandt, Per Ragnar, Henrik Dahl, Karin Bergquist, Peter Carlberg. Slowly paced horror drama set in wintry 1982 Sweden, where a bullied, neglected 12-year-old boy befriends his new neighbor, a girl, who may be a blood-thirsty vampire. Acclaimed, but only asset is wintry cinematography, there seems to be no point in the time setting or, in fact, the entire plot. It's INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE less style, less suspense and less stars. There's little texture to be drawn from the ponderous proceedings. The gory effects left me as cold as the Swedish winter. English title: LET THE RIGHT ONE IN.

**Late Phases** (2014, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\*½** D: Adrian Garcia Bogliano. Starring Nick Damici, Ethan Embry, Lance Guest, Tina Louise, Rutanya Alda. Okay horror film set at a retirement community, where blind war veteran Damici checks in. Soon after his neighbour is killed in a ferocious attack by what looks like a werewolf, the weapons expert then has four weeks to prepare for the next full moon or find the werewolf among the other residents. Watchable, although the monster is not very convincing. From the director of SUDOR FRIO (2010).

**Late Show, The** (1977, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*½** D: Robert Benton. Starring Art Carney, Lily Tomlin, Bill Macy, Eugene Roche, Joanna Cassidy, John Considine, Howard Duff. Grumpy old private detective Carney investigates the death of his former partner Duff in this grungy murder mystery. Complex plot will mean nothing if you do not pay close attention. Characters are occasionally annoying, but score is good. A matter of taste: If you liked the 40s Chandler/Hammett classics, you will certainly go for this one, too. Produced by Robert Altman. Rating applies to German version, which is too dark and poorly dubbed.

**Latino Encounter** (1994, HGK) **C-96m. \*\*\*½** D: Derek Cheung. Starring Leon Lai, Veronica Yip, Eric Kot, Jan Lamb. Hong Kong remake of Robert Rodriguez' EL MARIACHI can stand on its own: A drifter from Hong Kong is mistaken for a hitman in a small Mexican village, lots of mayhem ensues. Well-directed, occasionally aesthetic action thriller. Violent showdown is the highlight. A certain Tony Leung is credited as martial arts choreographer. Produced by Leonard Ho.

**Laurin** (1989, GER/HUN) **C-84m. \*\*\*½** D: Robert Sigl. Starring Dora Szinetar, Brigitte Karner, Károly Eperjes, Hédi Temessy, Barnabas Tóth, Robert Sigl. Moody horror film about Laurin,

a young girl with a strange hallucinatory gift, who is terrified when a serial killer roams the countryside killing young children. Deliberately paced, sometimes pretentious but also well-photographed and atmospheric. Production values are low, film was perhaps made for TV. Co-scripted by Sigl. Filmed in English.

**Lavender Hill Mob, The** (1951, GBR) **B&W-81m.** \*\*\* D: Charles Crichton. Starring Alec Guinness, Stanley Holloway, Sid James, Alfie Bass, Marjorie Fielding, Edie Martin, Audrey Hepburn, Desmond Llewelyn, Robert Shaw. Classic British comedy with formidable Guinness performance about a timid bank clerk, who stumbles upon a way to export gold and plans to pull off robbery that will leave him and his partners with millions. Good fun. Won Oscar for Best Screenplay. Photographed by Douglas Slocombe.

**Laws of Attraction** (2004, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Peter Howitt. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Julianne Moore, Michael Sheen, Parker Posey, Frances Fisher, Nora Dunn, David Kellen, Peter Howitt. Totally contrived romantic comedy about divorce lawyers Brosnan and Moore, who get in each other's ways and fall in love. Of course, they are adversaries at first, and of course, a case brings them to Brosnan's hometurf in beautiful Ireland. Pah! Buoyed only by charismatic star performances. At least it has a compact running time.

**Leading Man** (1997, GBR) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: John Duigan. Starring Jon Bon Jovi, Anna Galiena, Lambert Wilson, Thandie Newton, Barry Humphries, David Warner, Nicole Kidman. Bon Jovi plays an American actor in London, rehearsing for a theater production. The writer of the play (Wilson), who has an affair with the leading-lady, is about to abandon his family. The American offers to seduce his frustrated wife, in order to make her happy. Wilson reluctantly agrees, ignorant of what this may lead to. Character drama is too undramatic to be compelling. Well-acted, an okay outing by the director of SIRENS.

**League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, The** (2003, USA/GBR/CZE/GER) **C-110m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Stephen Norrington. Starring Sean Connery, Naseeruddin Shah, Peta Wilson, Tony Curran, Stuart Townsend, Shane West, Jason Flemyng, Richard Roxburgh, David Hemmings, Stephen Norrington. Marvelous, old-fashioned fantasy adventure set in 1899, where six superheroes are gathered by Roxburgh in order to stop political escalation obviously brought about by a super-villain, which may lead to a world war. Among the valiant fighters: Allan Quatermain (Connery), Captain Nemo (Shah), the vampiric Mina Harker (Wilson), the Invisible Man (Curran), Dorian Gray (Townsend), and Dr. Jekyll (Flemyng). Plot is rather thin, but pace, twists and especially effects more than make up for it. Contains lots of references to films and literary works of the period. Great production design perfectly captures the Victorian Age. Based on the comic books by Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill.

**League of Gentlemen, The** (1959, GBR) **B&W-113m.** \*\*\* D: Basil Dearden. Starring Jack Hawkins, Nigel Patrick, Roger Livesey, Richard Attenborough, Bryan Forbes, David Lodge, Patrick Wymark, Nigel Green, Oliver Reed. British RIFIFI-version about several gentlemen, most from the army, who are recruited (blackmailed) by Hawkins to perform a daring bank robbery. Suffers from inadequate pace but delightful dialogues and great actors make it fun. Co-star Forbes adapted a novel by John Boland.

**Leatherface: Texas Chainsaw Massacre III** (1990, USA) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Jeff Burr. Starring Kate Hodge, Ken Foree, Tom Everett, Duane Whitaker, R.A. Mihailoff, William Butler. Continuation of the horror series ignores Hooper's sequel and puts a traveling couple in danger after they are attacked at a gas station and flee into the wrong direction. Quite vividly directed, this entry is not bad, although it becomes stupid and illogical at the end, losing its earlier bonus. Also, the cannibal family is portrayed as rather 'normal' freaks. Nice turn by Ken Foree (DAWN OF THE DEAD), one song is by Danny Elfman. 85m. version is also available. Followed by RETURN OF THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE.

**Left Behind** (2014, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Vic Armstrong. Starring Nicolas Cage, Lea Thompson, Cassi Thomson, Nicky Whelan, Chad Michael Murray, Martin Klebba. Science-fiction thriller seems like it was made by a church or a sect. Cage plays a pilot, whose daughter returns for his birthday, but he leaves the family for an overnight flight to London. When all of a sudden people all over the world mysteriously vanish, it seems like the end of the world has come. Laughable plot with laughable characters seems preachy at its worst, but it's actually an okay view, if you see it as a disaster movie. Director Armstrong is better known for his stunt work in over 100 feature films. Based on a novel that was filmed as a trilogy from 2000 to 2005.

**Legacy, The** (1978, USA) **C-102m. \*\* D:** Richard Marquand. Starring Katharine Ross, Sam Elliott, John Standing, Ian Hogg, Margarte Tyzack, Charles Gray, Roger Daltrey. Americans Ross and Elliott are lured to England for a interior design job, but the eccentric (dying?) owner of the castle has sinister plans. The other guests, each wearing a mysterious ring, are killed one by one. Rather silly yarn enforces stereotypes and is not very thrilling. Story by Jimmy Sangster. Inauspicious score by Michael J. Lewis. Also known as THE LEGACY OF MAGGIE WALSH.

**Legally Blonde** (2001, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Robert Luketic. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Luke Wilson, Matthew Davis, Selma Blair, Victor Garber, Jennifer Coolidge, Raquel Welch. Predictable comedy about typical blonde Witherspoon, who'd do everything to get her lover back – even go to Harvard law school. Witherspoon is radiant (as usual), but plot is awfully contrived. Hard to believe this was nominated for a Golden Globe! Based on the novel by Amanda Brown.

**Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde** (2003, USA) **C-94m. \*\*½ D:** Charles Herman-Wurmfeld. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Sally Field, Regina King, Jennifer Coolidge, Bruce McGill, Dana Ivey, Bob Newhart, Luke Wilson. Witherspoon returns as the clever blonde Elle Woods, who is about to get married but wants to find her dog's mother in order to send her an invitation card. It turns out that she is about to be killed in an experiment, and Elle decides she wants to fight against animal testing, even if it means losing her job at the law firm. Dressed in pink she conquers the congress. An utter contrivance in terms of plot, but swiftly paced and amusing. Witherspoon is smashing.

**Legend** (1985, GBR/USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Tom Cruise, Mia Sara, Tim Curry, David Bennent, Alice Playten, Billy Barty. Magical, visually breathtaking fantasy about beautiful Princess Sara, who stumbles into an adventure that the Brothers Grimm might have invented. An evil demon seeks to envelop the land in eternal darkness by killing the last two unicorns alive, using the Princess as a pawn. Enter young hero Cruise, who has fallen in love with the innocent girl. Brilliant production design complements director Scott's overwhelming visual style, with touches of his earlier BLADE RUNNER (1982). Jerry Goldsmith's score was replaced by Tangerine Dream for 89m. U.S. release in 1986. Director's Cut runs 113m., released as an Ultimate Edition on DVD, retains the Goldsmith score and improves film substantially, including some potent scenes of horror. After this film director Scott turned away from fantasy and horror for good, too bad! Written by William Hjortsberg.

**Legend of Evil Lake, The** (2003, SKR) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lee Kawng-Hoon. Starring Jeong Jun-Ho, Kim Hyo-jin, Kim Hye-ri, Choi Won-Seok. Hardly comprehensible South Korean martial arts epic about a demon trapped in a lake and the woman he possesses. Well-directed, superbly photographed film is a feast for the senses but not really for the mind. Give this one a look if you like this kind of stuff. Same story filmed before in 1969 (English title was A THOUSAND YEAR-OLD FOX).

**Legend of Fong Sai-Yuk, The** (1993, HGK) **C-102m**. \*\*½ D: Corey Yuen. Starring Jet Li, Michelle Reis, Josephine Siao, Chu Kong, Adam Cheng, Man Cheuk Chiu, Sibelle Hu. Li stars as title figure, a young fighter whose parents are associated with a secret society of rebels. He falls in love with a girl of a wealthy family, and lots of fighting ensues. Unusual amount of drama uplifts standard martial arts comedy. One or two outstanding fight scenes, but film's best feature is Siao's part as Li's mother. Her character is unusually emancipated. Followed by a sequel.

**Legend of Hell House, The** (1973, GBR) **C-94m**. \*\*\* D: John Hough. Starring Pamela Franklin, Roddy McDowall, Clive Revill, Gayle Hunnicutt, Roland Culver, Peter Bowles, Michael Gough. A physicist (Revill), a mental medium (Franklin), and a survivor (McDowall) are hired to investigate mysterious haunted house that is said to kill all the people who enter. Good atmosphere achieved by creative camerawork (by Alan Hume) and chilling electronic score. Doesn't hold up to the very end but remains convincing. Based on the novel *Hell House* by Richard Matheson.

**Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The** (1958, USA) **C-33m**. n/r D: Clyde Geronimi, Jack Kinney. Starring (the voice of) Bing Crosby. Nice Disney short, originally appeared as the first half of the double-bill that was THE ADVENTURE OF ICHABOD AND MR. TOAD (1949). Perfect Halloween fodder about a scrawny school teacher, who comes to a village and falls in love with pretty lass. However, he has to compete with a local hunk and, ultimately, with a headless horseman. Remade by Tim Burton in 1999 (as SLEEPY HOLLOW). Based on the story by Washington Irving.

**Legend of the Golden Pearl** (1985, HGK) **C-87m**. \*\*½ D: Teddy Robin Kwang. Starring Sam Hui, Ti Lung, Teddy Robin Kwan, Joey Wong, Bruce Baron. Quite obvious INDIANA JONES rip-off from Hong Kong about adventurer Wisely (Hui), who starts investigating why so many people are after the legendary Golden Pearl. His exploits lead him from Africa to Asia. Some well-directed scenes and good camerawork (Peter Pau) put this slightly above average, though Hui as hero doesn't register at all. His acting is terrible. The character of Wisely appears in three more movies: THE SEVENTH CURSE (1986), BURY ME HIGH (1990) and THE CAT (1992). Also known as LEGEND OF WISELY, LEGEND OF WU.

**Legend of the Lost** (1957, USA/ITA) **C-108m**. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Henry Hathaway. Starring John Wayne, Sophia Loren, Rossano Brazzi, Kurt Kaszner, Sonia Moser. Contrived but worthwhile adventure yarn set in Timbuktu, from where treasure hunter Brazzi ventures into the desert with guide Wayne. Loren is the love interest who soon puts the men's partnership to the test. If one overlooks the artificial situations and pardons the sometimes awful dialogue, one will find the film entertaining and suspenseful. Younger audiences will be especially pleased. Jack Cardiff's beautiful cinematography is a major asset. Shot in Lybia.

**Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires, The** (1974, GBR/HGK) **C-88m**. \*\*½ D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring Peter Cushing, David Chiang, Julie Ege, Robin Stewart, Shih Szu, John Forbes-Robertson. Cushing is earnest as vampire hunter Professor van Helsing, who is convinced that vampires have found their way to China. Together with seven brothers he battles the 'seven golden vampires'. Dramatic score, effective direction highlight this Hammer/Shaw co-production. Plot becomes repetitive, though, and some may consider the horror/eastern combination a drawback. The thrilling, violent action scenes almost earn it a good rating. Sure to please genre fans. Released in the U.S. as SEVEN BROTHERS MEET DRACULA.

**Legend of the Werewolf** (1975, GBR) **C-87m**. \*\* D: Freddie Francis. Starring Peter Cushing, Ron Moody, Hugh Griffith, Roy Castle, David Rintoul, Lynn Dalby. Acceptable version of the Werewolf legend with Cushing a police surgeon, who discovers that recent murders must have been committed by a wild beast. Solidly made, but lacks wit, style and imagination.

**Legend of Zorro, The** (2005, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Martin Campbell. Starring Antonio Banderas, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Rufus Sewell, Nick Chinlund, Julio Oscar Mechoso, Pedro Armendariz Jr., Mary Crosby. Rather late follow-up to THE MASK OF ZORRO (1998) is a better movie, surprisingly, as Zorro (Banderas, good this time) decides to leave his wife (Zeta-Jones) and their son to be able to help the underprivileged. Soon, however, he regrets this move, as his wife gets engaged to a rich landowner with sinister plans. Exciting, stylish action adventure with barely any lulls, richly scored by James Horner, well-edited by Stuart Baird. If only the contemporary James Bond and BATMAN movies could have this much zest! Steven Spielberg was among the executive producers.

**Legends of the Fall** (1994, USA) **C-134m. \*\*½** D: Edward Zwick. Starring Brad Pitt, Anthony Hopkins, Aidan Quinn, Julia Ormond, Henry Thomas, Karina Lombard, Gordon Tootosis, Tantoo Cardinal, Paul Desmond. Epic family saga, dealing with the fates of three brothers in the early 20th century. Pitt plays the rebellious Tristan, who marries the woman promised to his brother, who dies in World War One. Film explores his affiliation with nature and his domineering, anti-Government father (Hopkins). Exceptional photography and director Zwick's (GLORY) feel for epic material almost overcome soap-opera like, pointless plot. Pitt plays the ultimate heartthrob, a reason why so many women went for this film. Based on a short novel by Jim Harrison. John Toll's cinematography deservedly won an Academy Award.

**Leggenda di Enea, La** (1962, ITA/FRA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Giorgio Rivalta. Starring Steve Reeves, Carla Marlier, Liana Orfei, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Gianni Garko, Maurice Poli, Charles Band. Sequel to LA GUERRA DI TROIA (1961) follows Trojan hero Aeneas (Reeves) to Italy, where tries to set up a peaceful existence for his folks. Standard sword-and-sandal movie, not very rousing. Cowritten by Albert Band, whose son Charles has a small role. English titles: THE AVENGER, and THE LAST GLORY OF TROY.

**Legione dei Damnati, Le** (1969, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-93m. SCOPE \*½** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Jack Palance, Thomas Hunter, Wolfgang Preiss, Curd Jürgens. Uninteresting war action about a group of soldiers who try to sabotage a German cannon in France. OK direction but overall, film is unexciting and trite. Coscripted by Dario Argento. U.S. title: BATTLE OF THE COMMANDOS.

**LEGO Movie, The** (2014, USA/AUS/DEN) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Phil Lord, Christopher Miller. Starring (the voices of) Will Arnett, Elizabeth Banks, Will Ferrell, Morgan Freeman, Jonah Hill, Liam Neeson. Lightning paced Lego adventure about a simple-minded construction worker, who breaks out from his daily routine when he discovers an artefact that makes him the great new hope of the resistance movement against super-powerful Lord Business. Zillions of jokes and ideas, almost too much at times, this works just as well as the video games did (which also featured Batman, Superman etc). Twist at the end even endows it with a message. A well-deserved box-office hit. Aka THE LEGO MOVIE.

**LEGO Batman Movie, The** (2017, USA/DEN) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Chris McKay. Starring (the voices of) Will Arnett, Michael Cera, Rosario Dawson, Ralph Fiennes, Zach Galifianakis, Conan O'Brien, Zoe Kravitz. Follow-up to THE LEGO MOVIE (2014) is just as fast-paced and brimming with ideas and effects. Story revolves around Batman's continuous fight with the Joker, who tricks him into being sent to the Phantom Zone, where he hopes to recruit all the villains there. Batman in the meantime suffers from loneliness, which he won't admit, especially towards his new police commissioner, Gordon's daughter. Good fun for kids, but the plot itself is rather weak and not really interesting.

**Leidenschaftliche Blümchen** (1978, GER) **C-97m. \*\*½** D: André Farwagi. Starring Nastassja Kinski, Gerry Sundquist, Stefano D'Amato, Gabriele Blum, Sean Chapman, Véronique Delbourg, Fabiana Udenio, Kurt Raab. Quite aesthetic (if perfect voyeurist fodder) about a

school of girls, where new student Kinski arrives just right to help the other girls lose their virginity. Pretty harmless stuff, occasionally funny. Set in 1956 Switzerland, based on a novel by Laura Black. Some of the music is by Francis Lai. English titles: BOARDING SCHOOL, PASSION FLOWER HOTEL, PREPPY SCHOOL GIRLS, and VIRGIN CAMPUS.

**Le Mans** (1971, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Lee H. Katzin. Starring Steve McQueen, Siegfried Rauch, Elga Andersen, Ronald Leigh-Hunt, Fred Haltiner, Luc Merenda, Christopher Waite, Carlo Cecchi. Racing fanatic Steve McQueen's labor-of-love project about the 24 hours of Le Mans is a spectacular, very well-made movie. Plot takes second chair to often not-to-be-believed, truly exciting camerawork. McQueen's aura itself is something to watch. Surprisingly well-directed, with excellent editing. Written by Harry Kleiner (BULLITT).

**Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events** (2004, USA) **C-108m. \*\*½ D:** Brad Silberling. Starring Jim Carrey, Liam Aiken, Emily Browning, Kara and Shelby Hoffman, Timothy Spall, Catherine O'Hara, Billy Connolly, Meryl Streep, Luis Guzmán, Jamie Harris, Craig Ferguson, Jennifer Coolidge, Jane Adams, Cedric the Entertainer, Dustin Hoffman, voice of Jude Law. Three remarkable children become orphans when their house burns down and their parents die in the flames. From then on, weird uncle Olaf tries to become their guardian to steal their inheritance. Adaptation of the books by Daniel Handler (writing as Lemony Snicket) retains the weirdness and dark humor but ultimately remains rather lifeless and undramatic. Also the title should have been A SERIES OF UNLIKELY OR UNPLEASANT EVENTS. If this looks like Tim Burton worked on it, it's because Emmanuel Lubezki shot it and Rick Heinrichs designed it. This has interesting parallels to Jerry Lewis' THE FAMILY JEWELS (1965).

**Léolo** (1992, CDN/FRA) **C-107m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jean-Claude Lanzon. Starring Maxime Collin, Ginette Reno, Roland Blouin, Julien Guimar, Pierre Bourgault, Giuditta del Vecchio, Denys Arcand, narrated by Gilbert Sicotte. Unique film about the life of a twelve year-old boy growing up in a poor part of Montreal, as seen through his eyes. Bizarre, surreal, colorful, atmospheric, mystical, funny, stylish and highly poetic. Screenplay by the director is semiautobiographical. Collin proves a perfect pick for the lead. Not for all tastes, but score, photography, direction all up to challenge of the script. Fine soundtrack includes songs by Tom Waits, The Rolling Stones and Gilbert Beaud.

**Léon - The Professional** (1994, USA/FRA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Luc Besson. Starring Jean Reno, Natalie Portman, Gary Oldman, Danny Aiello, Ellen Greene. Perfect thriller/drama hybrid, both tender and thrilling, about professional hitman (Reno) who 'adopts' a twelve year-old girl (Portman) who has just lost her entire family in a police raid. She asks the simple-minded man to teach her his job in order to be revenged on corrupt policeman Oldman. Well-acted, well-directed, with terrific action scenes and touching scenes of emotional bonding. Oldman stands out as the bizarre psycho-cop. Originally released at 109m., film was reissued in a Director's Cut version two years later with an additional 26m. This longer version explores the relationship between the killer and the girl in more detail.

**Leo the Last** (1970, GBR) **C-113m. \*\*½ D:** John Boorman. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Billie Whitelaw, Calvin Lockhart, Glenna Forster-Jones, Lew (Louis) Gossett (Jr.), Kenneth J. Warren. Experimental parable about a rich man (Mastroianni), who discovers his social conscience when watching the poor black people across the street. He more and more becomes part of their lives, until their plight becomes his. Well-directed by Boorman, but becomes repetitive after a while. For the filmmaker's fans. Boorman also scripted with Bill Stair from a George Tabori play. Also shown in a 104m. version.

**Leo Tolstoy's Anna Karenina** (1997, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*½ D:** Bernard Rose. Starring Sophie Marceau, Sean Bean, Alfred Molina, Mia Kirshner, James Fox, Fiona Shaw, Danny Huston,

Phyllida Law, David Schofield. Lavishly filmed but dramatically flawed adaptation of Tolstoy's famous novel. Marceau is fine as the title figure, who falls in love with a Count (Bean), putting her marriage with Fox (with whom she has a son) in jeopardy. Handsomely photographed by Daryn Okada, who provides many of the film's finest moments, but plot seems superficial, especially the romance between the two leads is off to an abrupt start. Director Rose himself wrote the screenplay. Filmed on location in St. Petersburg and Moscow.

**Lepke** (1975, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Menahem Golan. Starring Tony Curtis, Anjanette Comer, Michael Callan, Warren Berlinger, Milton Berle, Vic Tayback, J.S. Johnson. Gangster drama chronicling the rise and fall of syndicate Boss Lepke in Brooklyn of the 1930s. Curtis is good in the lead role, and he is given fine support, especially by Tayback as Lucky Luciano. Johnson, as the killer Mendy Weiss, has also a thankful role. Period flavor well-captured, good score by Ken Wannberg; it all adds up to a satisfying drama. Golan also produced. Photographed by Andrew Davis. Also shown at 98m. and 110m.

**Les Misérables** (2012, USA) **C-158m. \*\*\*** D: Tom Hooper. Starring Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, Anne Hathaway, Amanda Seyfried, Sasha Baron Cohen, Helena Bonham Carter. Umpteenth filmization of the musical version of Victor Hugo novel about personal fates around the French revolution of the 19th century. Former slave worker Jackman adopts wretched Hathaway's daughter, all the while hunted by policeman Crowe. For musical lovers. Hooper's attempt to novelise it by having the actors sing live on the set works quite well. Hathaway's performance is brilliant.

**Lethal Weapon 4** (1998, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Richard Donner. Starring Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci, Chris Tucker, René Russo, Jet Li. The two cops are back, this time battling a Chinese syndicate that smuggles humans. Fourth installment in the action film series starts with a bang, but when after an hour the plot is still unclear, you'll begin to shift in your seat. Lots of low-brow humor pepped up with spectacular stunts. Sadly, the film's propagated family values are contradicted by a violent final battle with villain Jet Li. Certainly for fans of the series, others beware.

**Let Us Prey** (2014, EIR/GBR) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Brian O'Malley. Starring Liam Cunningham, Pollyanna McIntosh, Bryan Larkin, Hanna Stanbridge, Douglas Russell. Visually striking horror film set in a remote police station somewhere in Ireland. On her first night, rookie cop McIntosh must contend with hostile staff, annoying prisoners and a mysterious stranger (Cunningham), who seems to have supernatural powers. Indeed, he brings out the worst in people. Plot takes second chair to intense visuals and ultimately gory violence. It even throws in an Argento reference. Recommended to buffs.

**Letzte Schrei, Der** (1974, GER) **C-96m. \*½** D: Robert van Ackeren. Starring Delphine Seyrig, Barry Foster, Peter Hall, Kirstie Pooley, Ellen Umlauf, Henning Schlüter, Udo Kier, Rolf Zacher. Very strange satire about an advocate (Foster) who is hired by a lingerie producer (Hall) to save him from bankruptcy. The man, however, intends to sell the firm, and meanwhile enjoys affairs with the businessman's wife and daughter! Intended as a farce, film is neither funny nor shocking but terribly undecided and ultimately pointless. Ambitious direction, but script cancels effect. Ackeren is best known for WOMAN IN FLAMES.

**Lèvres de Sang** (1975, FRA) **C-87m. \*½** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Jean-Loup Philippe, Annie Briand (Belle), Nathalie Perrey, Martine Grimaud. Another one of Rollin's vampire/sex films, this one bores with slow plot and poor acting. Philippe has vivid recollections from his childhood, which involve a sexy woman in a castle. He tries to find the place and the person, but someone is trying to prevent him from getting there. Also, there are some scantily clad

vampires on the loose in the city. Unlike earlier Rollin efforts, this one has very little atmosphere. English title: LIPS OF BLOOD.

**Liar, Liar** (1997, USA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Tom Shadyac. Starring Jim Carrey, Maura Tierney, Justin Cooper, Cary Elwes, Anne Haney, Jennifer Tilly, Amanda Donohoe, Swoosie Kurtz. Randall 'Tex' Cobb. Heinous lawyer Carrey (divorced) keeps disappointing his little five-year-old son Cooper, until the boy's birthday wish forces him magically to say the truth for 24 hours, which gets Carrey in some precarious situations and ultimately makes him realize what a bad father he is. Carrey overacts, has some funny bits, but script is contrived and has a false, false, false Hollywood ending.

**Libido** (1965, ITA) **90m.** \*\*\* D: Julian Berry (=Ernesto Gastaldi), Victor Storff (=Vittorio Salerno). Starring Giancarlo Giannini, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi), Dominique Boschero, Mara Maryl. Traumatized young man (Giannini) returns to his father's estate, where he witnessed a murder twenty years ago. When he starts having visions of his late father, he begins to suspect his solicitor and his wife, who have come to the country house with him. Interesting gothic melodrama with shades of the giallo is well-acted and comes up with some neat twists in the final third to make up for some pacing flaws. Score by Carlo Rustichelli is quite good. This was Giannini's first film and one of proficient screenwriter Gastaldi's few directorial efforts. Film deserves to be better known.

**Licence to Kill** (1989, GBR) **C-133m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: John Glen. Starring Timothy Dalton, Carey Lowell, Robert Davi, Talisa Soto, Anthony Zerbe, Frank McRae, Everett McGill, Benicio Del Toro, Desmond Llewelyn, Caroline Bliss, Don Stroud. Sixteenth Bond adventure was Dalton's second (and last) appearance as the British secret agent. Bond goes against South American druglord Davi and even risks his famous licence to kill, because he wants to avenge the killing of a colleague's wife. Vicious, rather violent (probably the most violent in the whole series) but overlong, with the only really effective action set-piece coming at the very end. Dalton can't be blamed, his performance is good. Still, the Bond movie series made a break after this film for six long years.

**Licence to Wed** (2007, USA) **C-91m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Ken Kwapis. Starring Robin Williams, Mandy Moore, John Krasinski, Eric Christian Olsen, Christine Taylor, Josh Flitter, DeRay Davis, Peter Strauss, Grace Zabriskie, Roxanne Hart. Krasinski and Moore want to get married in her hometown, but they haven't reckoned with reverend Williams, who makes their marriage preparation an endurance test. Quite funny, but also quite contrived, this one is an okay view, all in all.

**L.I.E.** (2001, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*\* D: Michael Cuesta. Starring Paul Dano, Bruce Altman, Billy Kay, James Costa, Tony Donnelly, Brian Cox. Aimless 15-year-old Dano, who has lost his mother to an accident on the Long Island Expressway (the L.I.E. of the title), starts hanging out with a teen who sells his body to gays and ultimately gets involved with elderly pedophile Cox. Daring subject matter, well-acted and convincingly brought to the screen, although Dano's story is unrelentingly depressing. Cowritten by the director.

**Liebestraum** (1991, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*½ D: Mike Figgis. Starring Kevin Anderson, Pamela Gidley, Bill Pullman, Kim Novak, Graham Beckel, Zach Grenier, Thomas Kopache, Max Perlich, Catherine Hicks. Oddly effective thriller about Anderson's return to his birthplace, where his mother (Novak) is slowly dying. He becomes involved with his best friend's wife and learns there is secret about the old building her husband is about to demolish. Figgis' stylish approach seems pretentious at some points when the story ceases to make sense (especially in some surreal scenes), but there is still enough atmosphere to spare and several eerie scenes to make this an okay view. Music by director Figgis (LEAVING LAS VEGAS). David

Lynch must have seen this prior to casting Pullman for LOST HIGHWAY. Watch out for cut versions.

**Life** (2017, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Daniel Espinosa. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Rebecca Ferguson, Ryan Reynolds, Hiroeyuki Sanada. Science-fiction horror about a group of astronauts aboard the ISS who study an incoming probe from Mars and discover a living cell, proof of life beyond our planet Earth. The initial excitement is replaced by terror, when the organism grows exponentially and proves ultra-strong and intelligent. Fairly well-made, quite violent, but never achieves the tension and suspense created by its role model ALIEN (1979). Plot is also rather one-note.

**Life After Beth** (2014, USA) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Jeff Baena. Starring Aubrey Plaza, Dane DeHaan, John C. Reilly, Paul Reiser, Anna Kendrick, Paul Weitz. Mild horror comedy about DeHaan, who is devastated after the death of his girlfriend. Then she reappears as if nothing happened... but slowly turns into a zombie. Nice idea for a title, but Plaza's makeup and demeanor are not convincing at all. It's also supposed to be funny, but there are no laughs.

**Life and Death of Peter Sellers, The** (2004, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\* D:** Stephen Hopkins. Starring Geoffrey Rush, Charlize Theron, Emily Watson, John Lithgow, Miriam Margolyes, Peter Vaughan, Sonia Aquino, Stanley Tucci, Stephen Fry. Biopic of the great Peter Sellers tries to shed light on his complicated personality, and basically follows his career and private life from the 1950s to his untimely death in 1980. Rush is near-perfect in the role, as is the rest of the fine cast, Theron looks remarkably like Britt Ekland. Highly interesting, at times sad drama was made for television, but released theatrically in most countries. Highlights are re-enacted scenes from Sellers' hit movies. Fans of the actor should not miss this one. Based on a book by Roger Lewis.

**Lifeforce** (1985, GBR) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Tobe Hooper. Starring Steve Railsback, Peter Firth, Frank Finlay, Mathilda May, Patrick Stewart, Michael Gothard. Fast-paced, effective science-fiction movie with horror elements about a strange spaceship that is discovered trailing the Halley's Comet. It turns out the three humanoids aboard are vampire-like extra-terrestrials bent on destroying the Earth. A zombie-plague puts London on the brink of destruction, and astronaut Railsback may be the only one who knows how to stop the creatures' leader, beautiful May. Trashy tale of the bizarre is well-directed by Hooper and offers some great shocks and effects. Especially for fans of the genre, others beware. Based on Colin Wilson's novel *Space Vampires*. Also shown at 116m.

**Lifeforce Experiment, The** (1993, CAN/GBR) **C-92m. \*\* D:** Piers Haggard. Starring Donald Sutherland, Mimi Kuzyk, Vlasta Vrana, Corin Nemec, Hayley Reynolds. Interesting but unsatisfying TV adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's 1966 story 'The Breakthrough'. A scientist (Sutherland) is conducting experiments to capture the lifeforce of dying people. The CIA, being interested in the research, sends a computer specialist (Kuzyk) to the professor, but not necessarily to make him stop. Kuzyk is unconvincing, the atmosphere is too clinical, and plot is hardly dramatic. It's the suspense that suffers.

**Life Less Ordinary, A** (1997, USA/GBR) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Danny Boyle. Starring Ewan McGregor, Cameron Diaz, Holly Hunter, Ian Holm, Dan Hedaya, Stanley Tucci. From the makers of TRAINSPOTTING comes this romantic comedy about unlikely kidnapper McGregor, who abducts the daughter of his former boss and finds himself in trouble when she takes control of the negotiations. In another strand of action, two angels from heaven try to make them fall in love with each other. Uneven but charming comedy, with some dazzling moments, is likely to appeal to fans of the two attractive stars. Hunter, as a resolute angel, steals the film; she has one hell of a role!

**Life of Brian** (1979, GBR) **C-94m. \*\*\*½ D:** Terry Jones. Starring Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin, Neil Innes, Spike Milligan, Charles McKeown, George Harrison. Now-classic satire on religious fanaticism is British comedy troupe Monty Python's best film. Born on the same day as the messiah, naïve Brian (Chapman) spends his life in Nazareth, among Roman centurions, Jewish would-be revolutionaries, and constantly bugged by his mother (director Jones himself). Absolutely hilarious gags, a laugh riot! Slightly uneven, like most Monty Python films, but first half is priceless. And remember: 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life'! The actors appear in no less than 40 roles! Coproduced by ex-Beatle George Harrison. Complete title is MONTY PYTHON'S LIFE OF BRIAN.

**Life of David Gale, The** (2003, USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Alan Parker. Starring Kevin Spacey, Kate Winslet, Laura Linney, Matt Craven, Gabriel Mann, Alan Parker. Mediocre drama in the vein of TRUE CRIME (1999) and DEAD MAN WALKING (1995). Reporter Winslet gets the chance to interview murderer and rapist Spacey, who's awaiting execution on death row. She firmly believes he is guilty, despite his reputation as an anti-capital punishment activist and philosophy professor. What brought him into this situation? Interesting but overlong and not always credible, good performances keep it afloat. Director Parker also produced with Nicolas Cage.

**Life of Pi** (2012, USA/TIW) **C-127m. \*\*\*½ D:** Ang Lee. Starring Suraj Sharma, Irrfan Khan, Adil Hussain, Raf Spall, Gérard Depardieu. Inspiring, beautifully rendered adaptation of Yann Martel's bestselling novel about the young son of a zookeeper from India, who boards a ship to Canada intending to start a new life there. When the ship sinks, only the boy and a few animals manage to save themselves on a lifeboat. And it's the untamed Bengal Tiger that the boy is afraid of most, but he also forms a bond with over the weeks and months to come. Drama with epic scope weaves a thin but philosophical plot and is technically brilliant. You have never seen a tiger this close up and this impressively before. Screenplay adapted by David Magee (FINDING NEVERLAND).

**Life With Mikey** (1993, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½ D:** James Lapine. Starring Michael J. Fox, Christina Vidal, Nathan Lane, Cyndi Lauper. Fox is well-cast as former child TV star who unsuccessfully runs an agency for talented kids. One day pickpocket Vidal steals his wallet and he is so stunned by her 'performance' when she is caught that he decides to promote her. Needless to say, she manages to grab a role in a television commercial. Formulaic feel-good movie, a conventional comedy drama, not very imaginative.

**Light at the Edge of the World, The** (1971, USA/SPA/SUI/LIE) **C-105m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Kevin Billington. Starring Kirk Douglas, Yul Brynner, Samantha Eggar, Jean-Claude Drouot, Fernando Rey, Renato Salvatori, Aldo Sambrell. Absolutely incomprehensible drama set on a remote island in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (reportedly on Cape Horn), where lighthouse keeper Douglas is confronted with (impressive) Brynner and his pirate horde. Flashback scenes identify Douglas as a broken man, but you'll give up figuring out what it's about after an hour or so. Maybe complete 120m. version helps. Based on the novel *Le Phare du Bout du Monde* by Jules Verne. Beautiful photography by Henri Decae.

**Lights Out** (2016, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David F. Sandberg. Starring Teresa Palmer, Gabriel Bateman, Alexander DiPersia, Billy Burke, Maria Bello. Nice horror chiller based on the director's own short film of 2013. Palmer's little brother has been suffering from their mother's depressive fits, so she takes him under her wing. It turns out that a supernatural entity is putting their lives in danger, which cannot be seen in light. Starts well, toying with our primal fear of darkness, loses some steam (and ideas) in the second half, only to deliver

an effective finale. Owes a bit to THE PACT (2012) and THE BABADOOK (2014) without reaching the latter's quality, but still good. Co-produced by James Wan.

**Limey, The** (1999, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Steven Soderbergh. Starring Terence Stamp, Lesley Ann Warren, Luis Guzmán, Barry Newman, Joe Dallesandro, Nicky Katt, Peter Fonda. Stylish, initially fascinating thriller about embittered father (and ex-con) Stamp, who considers music producer Fonda to be responsible for the death of his estranged daughter. Simple revenge formula in an attractive wrapping. Unusual concoction of past/present/future is film's major asset. Has cult film possibilities. The stars seem very relaxed. Scenes that show Stamp as a young man are from 1967 movie POOR COW, which was the directorial debut of Ken Loach.

**Limitless** (2011, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Neil Burger. Starring Bradley Cooper, Robert De Niro, Abbie Cornish, Andrew Howard, Anna Friel. Cooper plays a slacker, who has been left by his girlfriend and is aimless in everything he does, when a former acquaintance gives him a pill, which is supposed to make him use 100% of his brain (instead of the usual 20%). He becomes a stock market genius and extremely successful, however, there are people after the drug, and one day he might just run out of it. A superhero movie, like HANCOCK for the brain and not the muscles. Interesting, even intriguing, but plot strangely never catches fire.

**Lincoln** (2012, USA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Sally Field, David Strathairn, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, James Spader, Hal Holbrook, Tommy Lee Jones, John Hawkes, Jackie Earle Haley, Bruce McGill, Tim Blake Nelson, Jared Harris. U.S. president Abraham Lincoln gets a monument in celluloid in this grand-scale bio-pic detailing his plight to end the Civil War and managing to pass the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution in order to end slavery. The events of the winter of 1864/1865 are shown in loving detail, with Lincoln not just a clever lawyer but also caring family father. Excellent performances highlight this technically perfect picture, which portrays the president as a humorous, stoic ruler. Lincoln was not a very compelling man, and unfortunately neither is this movie. Score by John Williams. Beautiful photography by Janusz Kaminski.

**Link** (1986, GBR) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Richard Franklin. Starring Terence Stamp, Elisabeth Shue, Steven Pinner, Richard Garnett. Well-directed horror thriller about young student Shue who goes to work with anthropologist Stamp and soon finds herself terrorized by his chimps. Plot disregards the question 'why?' and sends attractive, cute Shue on an exciting run from psychopathic ape Link. Just don't search for some deeper meaning to all this. Jerry Goldsmith's awkward score is inappropriate for a horror film, though.

**Linkeroever** (2008, BEL) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Pieter Van Hees. Starring Eline Kuppens, Matthias Schoenarts, Sien Eggers. Mystery drama about successful young runner Kuppens, who is forced to take a four-week rest after injuring herself. She falls in love with an athlete and moves into his apartment in a high-rise off the left bank ('linkeroever') of the Antwerp river. She then uncovers a mystery surrounding the disappearance of a previous tenant, which may be linked to an old legend. Engrossing, even intriguing, despite some minor plotting flaws. Owes a bit to Polanski's apartment-horror trilogy. Cute Kuppens is convincing. English title: LEFT BANK.

**Lion King, The** (1994, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff. Voices of Jonathan Taylor Thomas, Matthew Broderick, James Earl Jones, Jeremy Irons, Moira Kelly, Rowan Atkinson, Whoopi Goldberg, Cheech Marin. Cute animated feature from Disney about a young lion destined to be King one day, who falls prey to an intrigue by his evil uncle, only to return years later to claim his inheritance. Sophisticated, serious plot (not without comic

bits, however), and fine, Oscar-winning songs by Elton John and Tim Rice. Love that Bruce Lee parody. One of the highest grossing cartoon features ever made.

**Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, The** (1979, GBR) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Bill Melendez. Simply but cleverly animated adaptation of C. S. Lewis' novel about four kids who stumble into mysterious land Narnia, which is ruled by the evil Snow Queen. Kids will love this, and even adults will be delighted by this nice adventure.

**Lisa and the Devil** (1972, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Elke Sommer, Telly Savalas, Alida Valli, Alessio Orano, Sylva Koscina, Gabriele Tinti. Tourist Sommer gets lost in a Spanish town and stumbles into a strange house, where the butler (Savalas) may be the devil himself! Well-produced, extremely stylish tale of the bizarre shows Bava at his best. Superbly photographed, well-acted horror drama is a masterpiece of surreal filmmaking. Haunting classical music score is an interpretation of Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*. Note: Bava reworked his film for the 1975 American theatrical release, adding unrelated scenes to the plot. Titled HOUSE OF EXORCISM, film then resembled more an EXORCIST-clone and was dismissed by critics (this version rates \*½). The 1996 U.S. re-release showed the film restored, with some slight cuts, however (3 gore close-ups and one nudity scene). Rating applies to the original version only. It's a shame Bava had to chop up his film like that (obviously for financial reasons). Italian title: IL DIAVOLO E I MORTI. Spanish title: LA CASA DEL EXORCISMO. Shot in Panoramica (1,85:1).

**Lisa, Lisa** (1974, USA) **C-68m**. \*\*½ D: Frederick R. Friedel. Starring Leslie Lee, Jack Canon, Frederick R. Friedel, Ray Green, Douglas Powers. Three criminals on the run wind up terrorizing a girl, who cares for her paralyzed grandfather in their farm house. Little do the thugs know that Lisa is mentally unbalanced herself and willing to make use of her axe when harassed... Sick little thriller is awfully slow (especially at the beginning) but works thanks to an eerie score and compact running time. This looks as if it was shot on Italian film stock (strangely enough). Cult movie buffs, give it a look. Also known as CALIFORNIA AXE MASSACRE, AXE MURDERS, and simply AXE.

**Little Boy Blue** (1998, USA) **C-104m**. \*\*\* D: Antonio Tibaldi. Starring Ryan Phillippe, Nastassja Kinski, John Savage, Shirley Knight, Tyrin Turner, Jenny Lewis, Brent Jennings, Adam Burke. Understated, awfully low-key, but interesting and well-plotted drama about a dysfunctional Texan "family". The father (Savage) forces his son (Phillippe) to have an oedipal relationship with his mother (Kinski), because he himself is impotent. The 20 year-old also has to look after his two little brothers, ... who may be his own sons! However, the tyrant's past is catching up with him soon. Well-acted, well-written, if not terribly auspicious, this one unfolds slowly and builds to a shattering climax.

**Little Children** (2006, USA) **C-137m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Todd Field. Starring Kate Winslet, Jennifer Connelly, Patrick Wilson, Jackie Earle Haley, Noah Emmerich, Gregg Edelman. Slice-of-life drama about several characters living in an unspecified U.S. town. Winslet is an unhappily married mother, Wilson is her male counterpart, who becomes her affair. Thrown into the mix are a sex offender and his elderly mother, and Wilson's friend, ex-cop Emmerich, who has founded an organization against the man. Long but quite engrossing, film examines the characters' (often juvenile) actions and their consequences, true-to-life and well-acted. Odd novel-like narration is distracting but disappears later almost completely. Based on a novel by Tom Perrotta.

**Little City** (1998, USA) **C-90m**. \*\*½ D: Roberto Benabib. Starring Jon Bon Jovi, Penelope Ann Miller, Josh Charles, Annabella Sciorra, JoBeth Williams, Joanna Going, Joe Bellan, Peter Gardiner. Cute romantic comedy about the hexangular relationship of several San Francisco twens. They switch lovers quickly, refusing to stay with one for long, because they can't

really decide. Newcomer Miller spices things up. Amusing but uneven, with abrupt dramatics, and an unsatisfying conclusion. Bon Jovi actually plays a rather unsympathetic character, and it's Charles who scores the most points. Written by the director.

**Little Girl... Big Tease** (1977, USA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Roberto Mitrotti. Starring Jody Ray, Rebecca Brooke, Robert Furey, Phil Bendone. Pure exploitation about teenager Ray, who is kidnapped one day by three criminal low-lives (one of them her former teacher!) and held for ransom in a big house. The girl has her sexual awakening there, which includes erotic grappling with all three of her abductors. A male fantasy, this sex film is made watchable by easy listening score. Also known as SNATCHED.

**Little Miss Sunshine** (2006, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris. Starring Greg Kinnear, Toni Collette, Steve Carell, Alan Arkin, Paul Dano, Abigail Breslin. Bitter-sweet comedy drama about a crazy suburban family from the lower middle class. Dad Kinnear is trying to get a book published, gay uncle Carell has just tried to kill himself, teen son Dano is refusing to speak and daughter Breslin is preparing for a beauty pageant with her grampa Arkin (in an Oscar-winning turn). Together they embark on a trip to California to bring Breslin to her competition. Oscar-winning script by Michael Arndt is hellishly funny at times. Best suited to American audiences.

**Little Nicky** (2000, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Steven Brill. Starring Adam Sandler, Patricia Arquette, Harvey Keitel, Rhys Ifans, Tom 'Tiny' Lister Jr., Rodney Dangerfield, Reese Witherspoon, Dana Carvey, Jon Lovitz, Quentin Tarantino, Carl Weathers, Rob Schneider, Ozzy Osbourne. All-star, no-brain comedy about Satan's three sons (among them the idiotic title character Sandler), who battle for the throne in hell on the streets of New York City. Low-brow spoof has its moments, but loses steam pretty quickly. Cowritten by star Sandler.

**Little Odessa** (1994, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: James Gray. Starring Tim Roth, Edward Furlong, Moira Kelly, Vanessa Redgrave, Paul Guilfoyle, Natasha Andrejchenko, Maximilian Schell, David Vadim. Remarkable drama about hitman Roth, whose latest assignment takes him to Little Odessa, the place where his estranged family lives. Roth finds himself drawn into their affairs, as his mother (Redgrave) is dying of a brain tumor and his disoriented little brother (Furlong) is suffering from the tyranny of his father (Schell), an adulterous Russian patriarch. Richly textured, well-directed but also incredibly gloomy and heavy-going (especially that score). An underrated little gem, winner of the Silver Lion at the Venice film festival. Director Gray's first feature (shot when he was 24).

**Little Princess, A** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\*½** D: Alfonso Cuarón. Starring Eleanor Bron, Liam Cunningham, Liesel Matthews, Rusty Schwimmer, Arthur Malet, Vanessa Lee Chester, Errol Sitahal, Vincent Schiavelli. Second filmization of Frances Hodgson Burnett's children classic can stand alongside the best films for children: Bron returns from India with her father, who puts her into a boarding school, because he has to go back and fight in World War One. The headmistress is cold-hearted and unfriendly and makes the bright girl suffer at every opportunity. And then the news of her father's death reaches London. Sweet-natured, tear-jerking drama, technically very well-made, with superior art direction, set decoration and production design. Fine photography by Emmanuel Lubezki (A WALK IN THE CLOUDS).

**Live and Let Die** (1973, GBR) **C-121m. \*\*\*** D: Guy Hamilton. Starring Roger Moore, Yaphet Kotto, Jane Seymour, Clifton James, Julius Harris, Geoffrey Holder, David Heddisson, Gloria Hendry, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell. Unusual Bond production concerns the secret agent's attempts to stop unscrupulous narcotics producer Kotto. Episodic adventure makes good use of locations, though the plot line disappears at times and there is comparatively little action. Roger Moore is a little stiff in his first appearance as James Bond. Still, very interesting as an homage to Blaxploitation cinema and the only Bond film to (hesitantly)

include supernatural elements. Title song by Paul McCartney. Trivia notes: Shot in 1.85:1 aspect ratio, unlike most other Bond pictures, which were filmed in widescreen. Fans demanded a return of Desmond Llewelyn ('Q') in the next series entry, THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN.

**Live Free or Die Hard** (2007, USA/GBR) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Len Wiseman. Starring Bruce Willis, Timothy Olyphant, Justin Long, Maggie Q, Cliff Curtis, Jonathan Sadowski, Andrew Friedman, Kevin Smith, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Zeljko Ivanek. Late sequel to the DIE HARD franchise pits an older, more cynical cop McClane (Willis) against computer terrorists, who are plunging the U.S. into chaos by switching off all computer-operated services (basically everything, from traffic to power). McClane is battling them with a computer whiz kid in tow. Forget plot setup or character development, this overlong blockbuster rocks only in several explosive big-scale action set-pieces that puts it in the realm of an action fantasy. Also known as DIE HARD 4.0.

**Livide** (2011, FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alexandre Bustillo, Julien Maury. Starring Chloe Coulloud, Félix Moati, Jérémy Kapone, Catherina Hacob, Béatrice Dalle. Atmospheric, scary horror film about a teenage girl (Chloé Coulloud) whose latest job involves helping a mobile nurse care for elderly patients. One of them, a centenarian dance instructor in a cerebral coma, resides in an old derelict villa. Then the girl's boyfriend comes up with the idea of breaking into the mansion at night. Little does he know that the treasures that are rumored to be hidden in the house are of flesh and blood and ready to draw the same. Not perfect, but creepy, violent and off-kilter enough to make this great fun for horror fans. Love the SUSPIRIA references! From the directors of A L'INTERIEUR aka INSIDE (2007). English title: LIVID.

**Living Daylights, The** (1987, GBR) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Glen. Starring Timothy Dalton, Maryam D'Abo, Jeroen Krabbé, Joe Don Baker, John Rhys-Davies, Art Malik, Desmond Llewelyn, Caroline Bliss. Dalton's debut as James Bond after the departure of Roger Moore is hard-hitting, well-made adventure about 007's involvement in helping Russian general Krabbé switch sides. Ultimately, the Russian turns out to be the ally of ruthless weapons dealer Baker. Technically well-made (especially well-edited) thriller has good production values and features a refreshingly serious performance by Dalton. Unfortunately, the villain is less potent than usual and film peters out without a suitable climax. Good location work. Dalton returned in LICENCE TO KILL (1989).

**Living Dead Girl** (1982, FRA) **C-89m. D:** Jean Rollin. Starring Marina Pierro, Françoise Blachard, Mike Marshall, Carina Barone, Alain Petit, Véronique Carpentier. A young vampire is provided with victims by her human girlfriend. An American couple discovers them. Poor horror film lacks everything that made Rollin's earlier features (LE VIOL DU VAMPIRE, LA VAMPIRE NUE) fascinating and adds gruesome, nihilistic gore scenes.

**Living Dead: Outbreak on a Plane** (2007, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Scott Thomas. Starring David Chisum, Kristen Kerr, Kevin J. O'Connor, Richard Tyson, Erick Avari, Derek Webster, Dale Midkiff. Not-bad zombie horror that takes its cue from the B-movie hit SNAKES ON A PLANE. In a plane's cargo hold, a special freight gets loose and infects the people on board with the zombie virus. There's not much more to say, but films like this have been much worse. Solid plot setup, some gory effects, an okay view. Also known as FLIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, and PLANE DEAD.

**Living It Up** (1954, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Norman Taurog. Starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Janet Leigh, Edward Arnold, Fred Clark, Sheree North. Typical Martin/Lewis pairing about Jerry, who becomes a victim of radiation and is (wrongly) pronounced terminally ill by his doctor Martin. Enter N.Y.C. newspaper journalist Leigh, who wants to make Jerry's last wish

come true and bring him to the Big Apple. Quite entertaining but not really funny comedy, a remake of NOTHING SACRED (1937).

**Lo Chiamavano Tresette... Giocava Sempre con il Morto** (1973, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring George Hilton, Cris Huerta, Evelyn Stewart (=Ida Galli), Sal Borgese, Umberto D'Orsi, Rosalba Neri. Quite funny comedy western follows the exploits of unlikely duo Hilton and Huerta, as they are assigned to bring gold transport to Dallas. Spaghetti western parody with lots of low-brow humor and brawls. Hilton is good, Huerta tries to imitate Bud Spencer. Nice score by Bruno Nicolai. Followed by a sequel. Also known as THEY CALLED HIM THE PLAYER WITH THE DEAD, MAN CALLED INVINCIBLE, TRICKY DICKY and IN THE WEST THERE WAS A MAN NAMED INVINCIBLE.

**Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels** (1998, GBR) **C-107m. \*\* D:** Guy Ritchie. Starring Jason Fletmyng, Dexter Fletcher, Nick Moran, Jason Statham, Steven Mackintosh, Vinie Jones, Sting, P.H. Moriarty. More milieu study than thriller, this box-office hit from the U.K. is about four pot-smoking small-time crooks, who decide to beat a crime kingpin in a game of poker for a lot of money. When they *lose*, they are given one week to get the money they owe to the man. Soon they have a plan, but lots of underworld characters complicate the proceedings. Slowly paced due to simple plotting, and never terribly thrilling or entertaining (that is, to non-British audiences). Artistic approach is more off-the-wall than stylish. A PULP FICTION-TRAINSPOTTING-influenced movie and, like most clones, a long way from the originals. Written by the director. U.S. title: TWO SMOKING BARRELS.

**Logan** (2017, USA/CDN/AUS) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** James Mangold. Starring Hugh Jackman, Patrick Stewart, Dafne Keen, Boyd Holbrook, Stephen Merchant, Elizabeth Rodriguez, Richard E. Grant, Eriq La Salle. Ultra-violent final(?) chapter in the X-Men spin-off about Jackman's Wolverine character. In this outing he must deal with dying mentor Stewart and a fierce wolverine girl, going on the run from the organization that tries to hunt them down and eliminate the mutants for good. Kinetic in the action sequences, but all the more anemic in the other scenes, plot doesn't spark an interest, at least with non-fans, and ut's overlong to boot.

**Logan's Run** (1976, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Michael Anderson. Starring Michael York, Jenny Agutter, Richard Jordan, Roscoe Lee Browne, Farrah Fawcett, Michael Anderson Jr., Peter Ustinov. Bizarre science-fiction adventure set in the 23<sup>rd</sup> century, where the population lives in a huge dome. Life must end for everyone at the age 30. Those who refuse to be 'renewed' (in a sort-of religious ceremony) go on the run. So-called Sandmen, humans of a higher caste, hunt down and kill these outlaws. Sandman Logan (York) is assigned to find secret sanctuary of escaped runners but uncovers the mystery behind the renewal and finds out what is beyond the city dome. Exciting adventure shows an intriguing future in the first half and becomes a whale of an adventure in the second. Somewhat muddled plot setup is soon forgotten. Dazzling, Oscar-winning special effects add to the fun. A latter-day cult item, based on the novel by William F. Nolan and George Clayton Johnson. Well-photographed by Ernest Laszlo, fine score by Jerry Goldsmith. Followed by a short-lived TV series (14 episodes) in 1977.

**Lola Rennt** (1998, GER) **C-79m. \*\* D:** Tom Tykwer. Starring Franka Potente, Moritz Bleibtreu, Herbert Knaup, Nina Petri, Armin Rohde, Joachim Król, Ludger Pistor, Suzanne von Borsody. Aggressive, flashy pop-thriller about a rebellious young pair of lovers who get caught in crime and must deliver DM100,000, which he has forgotten in a subway train. When he (Bleibtreu) calls her (Potente) for help, she has 20 minutes to solve the problem and runs for help (and for his life). These 20 minutes are repeated twice - in increasingly unrealistic segments - each with different incidents (chance meetings, accidents, etc.) and

outcomes. The point writer-director Tykwer is trying to make - that fates can depend on minor incidents - is meager. His use of many different stylistic means makes film interesting, although it doesn't enrich its plot and creates the impression that Tykwer is merely trying out all that he learned at film school. The director also contributed to the pulsating score. A smash hit in Germany. English title: RUN LOLA RUN.

**Lolita** (1997, USA/FRA) **C-137m. \*\*\* D:** Adrian Lyne. Starring Jeremy Irons, Melanie Griffith, Frank Langella, Dominique Swain, Suzanne Shepherd, Keith Reddin. Sublime version of Vladimir Nabokov's classic novel about the seduction of a 40-year-old school teacher (Irons) by a 14-year-old nymphet (Swain), with perfect casting and sensitive direction. Irons is masterful as usual, Swain gives an eye-opening performance. More lavish than Stanley Kubrick's 1962 version, but one can hardly forget the wonderful Peter Sellers, who had Irons' part. Created a scandal (especially the comic-book scene) and sat on the shelf for more than a year. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Lonely Hearts** (2006, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Todd Robinson. Starring John Travolta, James Gandolfini, Jared Leto, Salma Hayek, Scott Caan, Laura Dern, Michael Gaston, Bruce MacVittie, Dan Byrd, Andrew Wheeler, Alice Krige. Fairly good version of the real Lonely Hearts case, about two low-lives Hayek and Leto, who travel the country cheating widows out of their fortune and subsequently killing them. Police inspector Travolta is on the case. Thriller recreates the period of the 1940s quite well and has good performances, but adds pointless subplots, and the criminals lack the edge or insanity of those in earlier film versions. Maybe casting gorgeous Hayek as Martha Beck wasn't such a good idea. Filmed before as **THE HONEYMOON KILLERS** (1970), **LONELY HEARTS** (1991), and **PROFUNDO CARMESI** (1996).

**London Has Fallen** (2016, USA/GBR/BUL) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Babak Najafi. Starring Gerard Butler, Aaron Eckhart, Morgan Freeman, Angela Bassett, Radha Mitchell, Robert Forster. Sequel to the action blockbuster **OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN** (2013) is a political thriller which plays like a zombie apocalypse. President Eckhart travels to London to attend the Prime Minister's funeral and falls prey – like dozens of other politicians – to a fierce terrorist attack. It's bodyguard Butler's task to save his life. Works quite well with suspension of disbelief, but some plot elements are just too much. Extremely violent for a film this type.

**Lonesome Jim** (2005, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*½ D:** Steve Buscemi. Starring Casey Affleck, Liv Tyler, Kevin Corrigan, Mary Kay Place, Seymour Cassel. Downbeat Jim Jarmusch-like comedy drama about loser Affleck who returns to his hometown from an unsuccessful stance in New York City. He feels completely aimless and desperate, especially when his brother tries to commit suicide. Nurse Tyler, a single mom, could help him out of his misery. Moody but slight character drama. Buscemi's third feature following **TREES LOUNGE** (1996) and **ANIMAL FACTORY** (2000).

**Lone Wolf & Cub 2: Baby Cart at the River Styx** (1972, JAP) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Kenji Misumi. Starring Tomisaburo Wakayama, Kayo Matsuo, Minoru Ooki, Shooji Kobayashi, Shin Kishida, Akihiro Tomikawa. Dark, atmospheric, altogether fascinating action film set in 17th century Japan, the second of a 6-part series and reportedly the best. Wakayama plays Ogami, an assassin who used to be the Shogun's executioner. He travels through the country with his son Daigoro, who is pushed by his father in a baby cart. Ogami, while being constantly under attack by clans who would like to see him dead, is hired to kill an unfaithful worker who intends to give away the secret of an important dye process. The film creates a sense of mysticism like few motion pictures before. Very little emotions in the film itself, but viewer is taken aback with beautiful visuals and fierce fight scenes that are extremely bloody and violent. A sensational achievement, based upon the Japanese comic book series. First

film explains why Ogami has become an assassin and should be viewed before Part 2. All film in the series titled LONE WOLF & CUB, with different subtitles: SWORD OF VENGEANCE (1), BABY CART TO HADES (3), BABY CART IN PERIL (4), BABY CART IN THE LAND OF DEMONS (5), and WHITE HEAVEN IN HELL (6).

**Long Arm of the Law, The** (1984, HGK) **C-94m. \*\*½ D:** Johnny Mak. Starring Chen Jing, Huang Jian, Jiang Lung, Ben Lam, Wong Kwong Leung. Hard-hitting action thriller (pre-BETTER TOMORROW) about four friends who team up in metropolis of Hong Kong to pull off a heist at a jeweller's, only to realize that somebody betrayed them to the police. The guy who helps them out, demands a contract murder in return... but the cops are already hot on their trails. Seriously plotted, detailing the main characters' hopes and frustrations with their situation, but film only really comes alive in the finale, which ends on a startling note. Written by Philip Chan, coproduced by Samo Hung. Original Hong Kong version runs slightly longer. Followed by three sequels. Also known as REDGUARDS FROM HONG KONG, HONG KONG VICE.

**Long Dimanche de Fiancailles, Un** (2004, FRA/USA) **C-134m.SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Audrey Tautou, Gaspard Ulliel, Dominique Pinon, Chantal Neuwirth, André Dussolier, Marion Cottillard, Dominique Bettenfeld, Jodie Foster, Jean-Pierre Becker, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, Tchéky Karyo, Denis Lavant, Rufus. Outstanding, visually breathtaking drama from the creator of LE FABULEUX DESTIN D'AMELIE POULAIN (2001). WW1, the front, in early 1917. Five soldiers, sentenced to death, are sent between enemy lines to their certain doom. One of them, a barely 20-year-old, is in love with Mathilde (Tautou), who, about three years later, refuses to believe that her boyfriend is dead. She commences a frantic search for clues that show that he might still be alive. Dazzling, superbly directed drama has the same inimitable look and feel of the director's earlier features. Excellent score by Angelo Badalamenti. Based on the novel by Sébastien Japrisot. English title: A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT.

**Longest Night, The** (197?, CHI) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Chin Hsiang. Starring Josef Landa, Richard Ming. Obscure war film about the Korean civil war in the 1950s (which led to the conflict with the U.S.A.). Lots of shoot-outs, explosions, but plays more like a propaganda movie or documentary than a war film. Quite violent. German video version is titled DIE LÄNGSTE NACHT (title above is a translation into English). Very rare and obscure film is not listed in the IMDb.

**Long Goodbye, The** (1973, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Altman. Starring Elliot Gould, Nina van Pallandt, Sterling Hayden, Henry Gibson, Mark Rydell, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Moody adaptation of Raymond Chandler's classic detective novel with Gould as Philip Marlowe, who is trying to solve the mystery surrounding a friend's suicide. He becomes entangled with all kinds of weird characters including boozy writer Hayden and his beautiful wife van Pallandt. Altman's seemingly indifferent approach may be interpreted as contempt but film captures the defeatist tone of the novel quite well and becomes more and more fascinating as it meanders toward the solution. Gould is fine as Marlowe (who only cares for his cat).

**Long Good Friday, The** (1980, GBR) **C-114m. \*\*\* D:** John Mackenzie. Starring Bob Hoskins, Helen Mirren, Dave King, Bryan Marshall, Derek Thompson, Eddie Constantine, Paul Freeman, Pierce Brosnan. British cult film about a London crime boss, who is clueless as to who is trying to botch a deal with American Constantine by blowing up his establishments and killing his men. More character drama than action thriller, this gritty film is buoyed by Hoskins' brilliant performance. Brosnan's film debut.

**Long Pigs** (2007, CDN) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Nathan Hynes, Chris Power. Starring Anthony Alviano, Jean-Marc Fontaine, Paul Fowles, Shane Harbinson, Roger King. Low-budget mockumentary along the lines of *HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER* (1986), but not as effective by far. Self-proclaimed serial killer Alviano is much too casual and humorous about his murderous ways as he explains how he chats up and then dismembers his victims. The documentary crew even tag along. Watchable found-footage drama with some disgusting effects.

**Long Weekend** (1978, AUS) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Colin Eggleston. Starring John Hargreaves, Briony Behets, Mike McEwen, Roy Day, Michael Aitkens. Australian chiller about a married couple with problems who go on a camping trip into the wilderness but find themselves stalked by different animals and “something in the water”. Slow pace in first half almost brings it down, but second one becomes more interesting, even hypnotic. Unsettling score by Michael Carlos. Remade in 2008.

**Looper** (2012, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Rian Johnson. Starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Bruce Willis, Emily Blunt, Paul Dano, Noah Segan, Piper Perabo, Jeff Daniels. Time-travel sci-fi about a contract killer who kills people sent back in time from the future. Then he suddenly faces himself – 30 years older Willis, who wants his help in finding future crime boss that created this future. Interesting concept undermined by weak final third, when it becomes cruel toward children and some things are never fully explained. Written by director Johnson.

**Lorax** (2012, USA/FRA) **C-86m. \*\*½** D: Chris Renaud, Kyle Balda. Starring (the voices of) Danny DeVito, Zac Efron, Taylor Swift, Ed Helms, Betty White. Based on Dr. Seuss' children's book, this animated feature is about a boy who lives in a city of plastic. One day he decides to venture out beyond the city's boundaries to find out what happened to the real trees and finds a mysterious character who tells him a story about the title character. Rather predictable, not terribly funny family fare. Given the high expectations you might have, it's a disappointment.

**Lord of Illusions** (1995, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\*** D: Clive Barker. Starring Scott Bakula, Kevin J. O'Connor, Famke Janssen, Vincent Schiavelli, Barry Del Sherman, Sheila Tousey. Famed fantasy/horror novelist Clive Barker's third feature film, following *HELLRAISER* and *NIGHTBREED*, has private eye Harry D'Amour meet the Lord of Illusions in Los Angeles. The title figure is an illusionist who has learned his trade from a real magician/conjurer, who, longing to be resurrected, is bent on destroying the world. Barker's imaginative cinematic style wins over a slowly moving plot and too many unexplained sequences. A must for horror and fantasy fans, if only to see Harry D'Amour, protagonist and hero of two Barker novels, in action. The finale is, like in *NIGHTBREED*, especially effective.

**Lord of the Rings, The** (1978, USA) **C-133m. \*\*\*** D: Ralph Bakshi. Starring the voices of Christopher Guard, William Squire, Michael Scholes, John Hurt, Simon Chandler, Dominic Guard, Norman Bird. First major attempt at bringing the immortal Tolkien novel to the big screen is valiant. Renowned cartoon director Bakshi (*FRITZ THE CAT*, *HEAVY TRAFFIC*) succeeds in capturing the fairy-tale world of Middle-Earth, where little hobbit Frodo must protect a powerful ring from the Dark Lord, who needs it for his own evil purposes. Ambitious, well-animated (if you excuse the somewhat disappointing combination of real-action with animation). In many parts a direct influence on Peter Jackson's 2001 epic and like that one sticks close to its source. Only liability: This version ends unfortunately somewhere in the middle of the novel. Despite being slightly more fairy-tale-like than Jackson's version, this is also not for small children. Fine dramatic score by Leonard Rosenman, produced by Saul Zaentz (who also cofinanced the 2001 film). Plans for a sequel

were thwarted. Similar animated features: THE HOBBIT (1978) and THE RETURN OF THE KING (1980), which featured the voice of John Huston! Both were made for television.

**Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, The** (2001, NZL/USA) **C-178m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett, John Rhys-Davies, Billy Boyd, Dominic Monaghan, Orlando Bloom, Hugo Weaving, Sean Bean, Ian Holm, Christopher Lee, Bruce Spence, Peter Jackson. Long-awaited fantasy extravaganza based on the epic novel by J.R.R. Tolkien represents only the first part of the famous trilogy (Parts Two and Three were filmed simultaneously, however). Director Jackson (BRAINDEAD, HEAVENLY CREATURES) takes us on an awe-inspiring journey through fantastic Middle-Earth, as little hobbit Frodo Baggins (Wood) is entrusted with an all-powerful ring by his uncle Bilbo (Holm), which ensures stability and harmony (apart from making its bearer invisible) but is much sought-after by an evil warlord called Sauron. Frodo embarks on a long journey into an uncertain future (and never before-seen places and perils) to protect the ring from the evil bloodhounds of the Dark Lord. Magnificently filmed fantasy adventure is a mixed bag(gins). Plotwise, this could be broken up into four sections: The beginning, which is nice but lacks the kind of magical charm that made the book so enchanting; the start of the journey, which seems choppy and confusing; the part set in the halls of Morin, which is when the film hits its stride, becoming a full-fledged, exciting (and scary) adventure; and the final part, which is a good continuation of part three and paves the way very well for the films to come. Excellent use of special effects (most computer-generated, but who cares when this becomes hardly distinguishable from 'real' action?). Performances are good (especially McKellen's as Gandalf), all in all film bears the marks of a production which was realized with the heartblood of all involved. Not the masterpiece expected (especially not for critical fans of the novel), but a fine thrill-ride which pulls all stops. Adapted by Frances Walsh, Philippa Boyens and director Jackson. Good score by Howard Shore.

**Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, The** (2002, USA/NZL) **C-179m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Billy Boyd, Liv Tyler, John Rhys-Davies, Dominic Monaghan, Christopher Lee, Miranda Otto, Brad Dourif, Orlando Bloom, Cate Blanchett, Karl Urban, Bernard Hill, David Wenham, Andy Serkis, Hugo Weaving, Peter Jackson. Spectacular continuation of the saga follows three major plot strands. While Frodo and Sam are trying to reach the gates of Mordor and make the acquaintance of a most hideous creature, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli follow the Orcs, who have abducted the hobbits Merry and Pippin. Will the men's kingdom of Rohan withstand the evil Saruman's army of Orcs and Uruk-hai? It all comes down to a battle that will decide the fate of Middle-Earth. An improvement over the first part in terms of excitement and entertainment, film is not without dramatic flaws, however, and sometimes takes too long to make its point. Movie peters out at the end, without satisfactory set-up for the final part. Eye-popping special effects, especially at that climactic Battle of Helm's Deep, create an awesome razzle-dazzle. The CGI creature Gollum (modeled after actor Serkis) is an equally impressive creation. Production design, cinematography are again first-rate. Filmed back-to-back with parts one and three, with the same crew.

**Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King, The** (2003, USA/NZL) **C-201m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Peter Jackson. Starring Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Liv Tyler, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Billy Boyd, John Rhys-Davies, Dominic Monaghan, Miranda Otto, Bernard Hill, John Noble, Orlando Bloom, Andy Serkis, Karl Urban, Hugo Weaving, Cate Blanchett, Sean Bean, Ian Holm, Peter Jackson. Truly extraordinary, excellent conclusion of the trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien. With the Battle of Helm's Deep over, Aragorn must mobilize all forces to help defend human

kingdom of Gondor (ruled by stubborn Noble) against ultimate army of the Dark Lord. Meanwhile, Frodo and Sam have been led into Mordor by Gollum... into their demise? Even more epic, more spectacular, this extravaganza is the highpoint of the saga, featuring some of the most breathtaking battle scenes ever filmed, complemented by Jackson's expert direction and fine performances by all. While the first film was adventurous, the second one exciting, this last part pulls all stops, resulting in a powerful movie experience (even if it takes a while to get going). Best line: 'I am not a man'. Christopher Lee's scenes as Saruman were cut from final print. THE RETURN OF THE KING was filmed before in 1980 (as a sequel to the animated Ralph Bakshi version).

**Lords of Dogtown** (2005, USA) **C-108m**. \*\*\*½ D: Catherine Hardwicke. Starring John Robinson, Emile Hirsch, Rebecca De Mornay, William Mapother, Julio Oscar Mechoso, Nikki Reed, Heath Ledger, Johnny Knoxville, Jay Adams, Tony Alva, Charles Napier, Stacy Peralta, Tony Hawk, Bai Ling, Alexis Arquette. Irresistible drama about the legendary Z-boys from Venice, California, a group of surfers, who made skateboarding popular worldwide in the 1970s and whose subsequent fame put their friendship to a test. Hardwicke's direction is just as loose and lively as her protagonists, the time period is meticulously recreated, making the movie compelling despite some storytelling flaws. Screenplay written by Stacy Peralta, who was one of the founders of the movement (portrayed in the film by Robinson); he directed the documentary DOGTOWN AND Z-BOYS in 2001. This was the director's follow-up to her equally authentic THIRTEEN (2003). Also known as DOGTOWN BOYS.

**Lords of Salem, The** (2012, USA/GBR/CDN) **C-101m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Rob Zombie. Starring Sheri Moon Zombie, Meg Foster, Bruce Davison, Judy Geeson, Ken Foree, Dee Wallace, Sid Haig. Slow and pretentious horror film about witchcraft and the return of some witches along with Satan in present-day Salem. Radio DJane Zombie receives a mysterious record, which she plays on air, then all hell breaks loose. Some stylish shots, but plot is garbage.

**Lorna** (1964, USA) **B&W-91m**. \*\*\*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Lorna Maitland, Director Meyer's first 'serious' skin flick after several nudie comedies is about voluptuous title character Lorna, who feels neglected by her boyfriend and runs into an escaped convict. Meanwhile, the boyfriend is envied by his sleazy colleagues at work. Pretty steamy, with corny on-screen narration by preacher Griffith. Unfortunately, it's rather slowly paced and the soundtrack – albeit fitting – is rather repetitive. Followed by the better, more dramatic MUDHONEY (1965).

**Losers** (2000, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Amy Heckerling. Starring Jason Biggs, Mena Suvari, Zak Orth, Thomas Sadoski, Jimmi Simpson, Greg Kinnear, Dan Aykroyd, Colleen Camp, Andy Dick, David Spade. Amiable teen-comedy about 'loser' Biggs, who falls for college student Suvari, but must contend with her lover, Professor Kinnear. Funny, likable and features a great soundtrack. For those who found AMERICAN PIE or ROAD TRIP too low-brow. Written and coproduced by director Heckerling (FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH, CLUELESS).

**Lost City of Z, The** (2016, USA) **C-141m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: James Gray. Starring Charlie Hunnam, Robert Pattinson, Sienna Miller, Tom Holland, Edward Ashley, Angus Macfadyen. Adventure drama based on the life of British soldier Percival Fawcett, who is hired by the Royal Geographical Society to help map the Bolivian jungle, then becomes convinced there is a sunken city of gold (the legendary El Dorado) to be found there. He sacrifices his family life to go back again and again. Disappointing drama doesn't have the slightest touch of adventure, and it's ridiculously long. Some good photography, solid performances, but storywise a dud. Based on the book by David Grann.

**Lost Continent, The** (1968, GBR) **C-89m**. \*\*\*½ D: Michael Carreras. Starring Eric Porter, Hildegard Knef, Suzanna Leigh, Tony Beckley, Nigel Stock, Neil McCallum. Interesting,

dramatic fantasy about ship which gets lost somewhere before Caracas. The crew not only encounter a strange, hostile civilisation but also have to battle bizarre sea monsters. Earnest performances make this movie better than one would expect. Too bad it's a little short on action. Based on the novel *Uncharted Seas* by Dennis Wheatley.

**Lost Empire, The** (1985, USA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jim Wynorski. Starring Melanie Vincz, Raven De La Croix, Angela Aames, Paul Coufos, Robert Tessier, Angus Scrimm. Engagingly silly fantasy adventure features three busty babes, who infiltrate island of mysterious Scrimm, who is said to have a pact with the devil. Really absurd little trash movie has amusing one-liners and C-movie veteran Wynorski's direction (his first) is not bad. Steals from every big movie franchise (INDIANA JONES, STAR WARS, James Bond, ...) and throws in sex, violence, swordplay and prison action among other things. Which B-movie fan could resist? Wynorski also scripted and produced. Filmed in 1983.

**Lost Highway** (1997, USA/FRA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*½** D: David Lynch. Starring Bill Pullman, Patricia Arquette, Balthazar Getty, Robert Loggia, Robert Blake, Richard Pryor, Lisa Boyle, Jack Nance, Henry Rollins, Gary Busey, Marilyn Manson, Giovanni Ribisi. Tender sax player Pullman has been having some problems focusing on reality lately, and director Lynch exploits his descent into madness for more than two hours. A lot happens in this wild thriller - but absolutely nothing of it makes sense. Film could have been reduced to a ten-minute video clip. Blake's galvanising, chilling performance as the 'mystery man' is the definite highlight of Lynch's first film in six years.

**Lost Horizon** (1973, USA) **C-149m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Charles Jarrott. Starring Peter Finch, Liv Ullmann, George Kennedy, Michael York, Sally Kellerman, Olivia Hussey, Bobby Van, Charles Boyer, John Gielgud. Remake of the 1937 Frank Capra classic (based on the James Hilton novel) is an interesting misfire. Five strangers escape from a war-torn China to travel to Hong Kong, when their plane is hijacked. They end up in the Himalayas and are escorted to the wondrous place Shangri-La, a green valley where people live long and peacefully. After a rousing beginning, film stutters to a halt and adds musical numbers to its already thinning plot. Songs by Burt Bacharach and Hal David are actually good, but don't mean much in the context of the film. Buffs will savor Grade-A performances and colourful settings, well-photographed by Robert Surtees. This was a big box-office failure and remained unreleased on home video for many years.

**Lost in Space** (1998, USA/GBR) **C-130m. \*\*** D: Stephen Hopkins. Starring William Hurt, Mimi Rogers, Heather Graham, Lacey Chabert, Jack Johnson, Gary Oldman, Matt LeBlanc, Jared Harris, Edward Fox. Another movie to update a TV series from the 1960s, this one is incredibly loud and full of special effects. Hurt's family are selected to be the first humans to colonize a distant planet (the Earth is dying from pollution), but thanks to villainous Oldman, their mission leads them completely elsewhere, to hostile places and lifeforms. Who did they make this film for? It's too violent (not to mention way overlong) for children, too idiotic for grown-ups.

**Lost in Translation** (2003, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Sofia Coppola. Starring Scarlett Johansson, Bill Murray, Akiko Takeshita, Kazuyoshi Minamimagoe, Kazuko Shibata, Giovanni Ribisi, Anna Faris. Acclaimed drama with an Oscar-winning script about two Americans in Japan, whose paths cross during their stay. Murray is a bored movie star on a tour in Japan filming a commercial and appearing in various TV shows. Johansson, who's come to Tokyo with her photographer-husband Ribisi, is bored, and much like Murray feels alienated from her surroundings. During the movie they meet and spend a few days together. Old-fashioned character drama, well-acted, with a nicely laconic touch. Close to the work of Jim Jarmusch. Written by the director, executive produced by her father, Francis Ford Coppola.

**Lost Souls** (2000, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Janusz Kaminski. Starring Winona Ryder, Ben Chaplin, Philip Baker Hall, Elias Koteas, John Hurt, John Diehl. Endless horror movie, made by two-time Oscar-winning cinematographer Kaminski. Story concerns writer Chaplin, who is identified as the future antichrist by Ryder and Hurt. Weakly scripted, not exactly original chiller. The photography is fine (as you would expect) but otherwise this film has no merits. Avoid.

**Lost River** (2014, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ryan Gosling. Starring Catherine Hendricks, Iain De Caestecker, Saoirse Ronan, Matt Smith, Ben Mendelsohn, Ev Mendes, Barbara Steele. In an abandoned, derelict town somewhere in America single mother Hendricks might lose her (shabby) home if she doesn't pay her mortgage instalments, for which she is under pressure from banker Mendelsohn. Hesitantly she accepts a dubious job in a nightclub. Her son De Caestecker is roaming the overgrown buildings for scrap metal and other valuable things. His friend Ronan tells him of an underwater city that might hold the key for redemption. Deliberately paced but hypnotic tale of the bizarre marks actor Ryan Gosling's directorial debut, for which he was clearly influenced by Nicolas Windig Refn (and that director's influence, Alejandro Jodorowsky – cf. the bloody stabbing scene a la SANTA SANGRE). Not for everyone's taste, but also the score carries this a long way. Great casting of horror legend Steele. Gosling also scripted.

**Lost World: Jurassic Park, The** (1997, USA) **C-134m. \*\*\* D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Jeff Goldblum, Julianne Moore, Pete Postlethwaite, Arliss Howard, Richard Attenborough, Peter Stormare. Sequel to the 1993 blockbuster is really just a rehash but entertaining all the same: When John Hammond (Richard Attenborough) reveals that the dinosaurs for his park were really bred somewhere else (on a different island), Goldblum travels there to preserve the wildlife from mean safari hunters, who want to bring the animals back to the mainland. Spielberg's direction, creating some great cliffhanger stunts, compensates for a rather unmotivated script (based on Michael Crichton's *The Lost World*, not on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel of the same title). A rollercoaster ride, to be sure, but not for very small kids.

**Love** (2011, USA) **C-84m. \*\*\* D:** William Eubank. Starring Gunner Wright, Corey Richardson, Bradley Horne, Nancy Stelle. Astounding little film aims for greatness, and you can't fully deny that it achieves just that goal. An astronaut aboard a space station suddenly loses contact to the station on the Earth and never regains it. He spends the following six years trying to elongate the life-support systems in his little vessel but his sanity soon falters. Science-fiction film leaves a lot to interpretation – maybe a tad too much – but its references to the perennial classic 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968) make you overlook – or seriously consider – the odd Civil War elements. Funded completely by the rock band Angels & Airwaves, shot on a shoestring budget, it's a philosophical statement of life and relationships, and a warning, too. May actually improve with repeated viewings.

**Love** (2015, FRA/BEL) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gaspard Noé. Starring Aomi Muyock, Karl Glusman, Klara Kristin, Ugo Fox, Aron Pages (=Gaspard Noé). A love triangle set in Paris, told from the perspective of young American Glusman, who is passionately in love with French artist Muyock. Their mutual desire for a female playmate leads to a threesome and complicates their relationship, especially after the girl gets pregnant. Glusman tries to be a father, but he finds himself drawn back to Muyock, who has rejected him. Told in non-linear fashion, with real, unsimulated graphic sex, film receives its authenticity from the earthy love scenes, which make it really unique, if not iconoclastic. Never before has pornography found its way into serious cinematic narration, even though the sexual act and all the feelings it entails (love, jealousy, aggression, release...) are a vital part of our lives often

neglected in films. Here, its unabashed depiction makes the film incredibly real if not groundbreaking. Written by No , his first film since ENTER THE VOID (2009).

**Love Actually** (2003, GBR/USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Richard Curtis. Starring Bill Nighy, Colin Firth, Sienna Guillory, Liam Neeson, Emma Thompson, Heike Makatsch, Martin Freeman, Joanna Page, Keira Knightley, Hugh Grant, Laura Linney, Thomas Sangster, Alan Rickman, Billy Bob Thornton, Rowan Atkinson, Ivana Milicevic, January Jones, Elisha Cuthbert, Claudia Schiffer, Shannon Elizabeth, Denise Richards, Richard Curtis. Charming multi-character drama set right before Christmas about the importance of love and its impact on all of us. Contrivances aside (Hugh Grant as Prime Minister?), this comedy drama is moving and funny, kudos to director Curtis (writer of FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL, NOTTING HILL).

**Love and a .45** (1994, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: C.M. Talkington. Starring Gil Bellows, Ren e Zellweger, Rory Cochrane, Jeffrey Combs, Jace Alexander, Ann Wedgeworth, Peter Fonda, Jack Nance, C.M. Talkington. Black comedy thriller, very much in the vein of TRUE ROMANCE (1993). Bellows and Zellweger must run from police, creditors and a fellow gangster, when their latest robbery goes terribly wrong. Violence paves their way to Mexico. Well-acted, entertaining B-movie with an attitude and a cool soundtrack. Love that RAISING ARIZONA-like voice-over narration. Premiered at about the same time as PULP FICTION (1994), which may be a reason why this didn't get the attention it deserves. Written by director Talkington, who has a cameo as the tattoo artist.

**Love and Death on Long Island** (1997, CDN/GBR) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Richard Kwietniowski. Starring John Hurt, Jason Priestley, Fiona Loewi, Sheila Hancock, Maury Chaykin, Gawn Granger, Elizabeth Quinn. A British writer (Hurt), out of touch with the modern world, goes to watch a movie for the first time, and instead of watching an E.M. Forster adaptation, buys the wrong ticket and is forced to watch HOT PANTS COLLEGE II, a teenage comedy starring Ronnie Bostock (Priestley). He becomes obsessed and infatuated with the young actor and decides to travel to Long Island to find him. Quiet, hypnotic drama, perfectly cast. Bogs down towards the end, but still worth watching. From the novel by Gilbert Adair.

**Love and Money** (1982, USA/GER) **C-90m. \*\*** D: James Toback. Starring Ray Sharkey, Ornella Muti, Klaus Kinski, Armand Assante, King Vidor. Director Toback's follow-up to FINGERS (1978) is similarly thoughtful, but has very little to think about and simply wants too much. Sharkey starts working for wealthy businessman Kinski to influence the president of a fictitious South American country. Sharkey also has an affair with Kinski's bored wife Muti. How will this turn out? How soon will you turn off? Sat on the shelf for two years and understandably so. Only legendary Vidor (in his first acting role since 1934!) gets some laughs.

**Love Crimes** (1992, USA) **C-97m. \*½** D: Lizzie Borden. Starring Sean Young, Patrick Bergin, Arnetia Walker, James Read, Ron Orbach, Wayne Shorter. Stupid thriller about sexually repressed, traumatized state attorney Young and her obsession with tracking down Bergin, a man who claims to be a famous photographer and gradually wins the trust of unsuspecting women. Stupid plot twists in the second half destroy this originally watchable psycho thriller. Beware of cut prints.

**Loved Ones, The** (2009, AUS) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sean Byrne. Starring Xavier Samuel, Robin McLeavy, Victoria Thaine, Jessica McNamee, Richard Wilson. Instant cult movie about troubled student Samuel, who caused the death of his father in a car accident. When he refuses to go to the prom with wallflower McLeavy, she abducts him into her 'family' and proceeds to torture him. Horror thriller filmed with gusto exudes a sick fascination. Pretty vile and bloody, but not without some storytelling flaws; the subplot concerning Wilson and

super-hot McNamee has almost nothing to do with the rest of the film! Still, this is probably the HEATHERS of its generation. Recommended to cult film fans. Written by the director.

**Love Happens** (2009, USA) **C-109m.** \*\* D: Brandon Camp. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Aaron Eckhart, Dan Fogler, John Carroll Lynch, Martin Sheen, Judy Greer, Frances Conroy. Eckhart is a successful businessman promoting his latest book and holding seminars on how to deal with grief and loss. In reality, however, he cannot properly deal with the death of his own wife. Enter florist Aniston, and the romance starts. Barely believable, poorly paced and rather downbeat. Some (women) might still like it. Good score by Christopher Young.

**Lovely Bones, The** (2009, USA/GBR/NZL) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Peter Jackson. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Rachel Weisz, Saoirse Ronan, Susan Sarandon, Stanley Tucci, Jake Abel, Michael Imperioli, Amanda Michalka, Peter Jackson. Immensely moving fantasy tale based on the novel by Alice Sebold may well be Peter Jackson's masterpiece. A 14-year-old girl, stuck somewhere between heaven and earth, tells of her murder and her family's grief and attempt to find the killer, psychopath Tucci, who lives in their suburban neighborhood. The girl, wandering around lost in a world that seems to spring from her imagination, tries to influence the events after her death, before she can finally move on to heaven. Absolutely stunning recreation of 1970s America and breathtaking visualization of the girl's fantasy world, immaculately directed by Jackson. Some scenes will chill you to the bone. Beautifully photographed by Andrew Lesnie, sensitively scored by Brian Eno, film is further highlighted by Ronan's heart-wrenching performance. This is a film you will not easily forget. Written by director Jackson, Philippa Boyens and Fran Walsh.

**Lovely Molly** (2011, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Eduardo Sánchez. Starring Gretchen Lodge, Alexandra Holden, Johnny Lewis. Lodge plays the title character, who moves into her parents' house with her boyfriend Lewis. Then slowly something evil start to haunt and ultimately possess her. Rather slow horror chiller with drug references is too depressing, but becomes outright disturbing towards the end. Sánchez, who directed THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT in 1999, inserts some home video sequences here, too.

**Love Potion No. 9** (1992, USA) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Dale Launer. Starring Tate Donovan, Sandra Bullock, Mary Mara, Dale Midkiff, Hillary Bailey Smith, Anne Bancroft, Dylan Baker. Harmless fantasy comedy about two nerds Donovan and Bullock, who both receive magic potion from gypsy Bancroft and suddenly find themselves wooed by all people they use their it on. Complications ensue, with the central question: Will they get each other in the end? Mostly silly stuff, though Bullock is cute.

**Love Walked In** (1998, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Juan José Campanella. Starring Denis Leary, Terence Stamp, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón, Michael Badalucco, Danny Nucci, Gene Canfield, Marj Dusay, Moira Kelly. Initially interesting drama of cynical piano player Leary and his sexy lover Sánchez-Gijón, who try to pull off a scheme, blackmailing rich husband Stamp by having her seduce him. Film suffers from the same symptom of most literary adaptations (José Pablo Feinmann's novel *Ni el Tiro del Final*): a slow pace and too little insight into the characters. Worth a look, but it won't satisfy most viewers.

**Love Witch, The** (2016, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anne Biller. Starring Samantha Robinson, Gian Keys, Laura Waddell, Jeffrey Vincent Parise. Stylish but overlong drama about self-proclaimed witch Robinson, who relocates to a new city and drives men to insanity. Will she even manage to turn the head of police detective Keys? Writer-director Biller recreates the 1960s here with astounding hair, make-up, music and fashion. For a feature this long, it lacks plot, but if you are a patient viewer preferring form over content, you might hit gold here. Robinson is seductive in the title role.

**Luca il Contrabbandiere** (1980, ITA) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Fabio Testi, Ivana Monti, Guido Alberi, Enrico Maisto, Venantino Venantini, Ajita Wilson, Marcel Bozzuffi, Lucio Fulci. Gangster thriller about smuggler Testi, who swears revenge when his brother is murdered after a series of blows against their business. Sort-of ambitious but never exciting, this was made during director Fulci's most productive phase but is a cut below his stylish horror films like *ULTIMI ZOMBI* (1979) and *PAURA NELLA CITTA DEI MORTI VIVENTI* (1980). Some of his trademark gore scenes have found their way into this one too, as well as some jarringly sadistic violence. The plot manages to maintain a marginal interest. For Fulci's fans. Alternative titles: *CONTRABAND*, *THE NAPLES CONNECTION* and *THE SMUGGLER*.

**Lucertola Con la Pelle di Donna, Una** (1971, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-99m.SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Florinda Bolkan, Stanley Baker, Jean Sorel, Leo Genn, Anita Strindberg, Alberto de Mendoza, Ely Galliano, Silvia Monti, Georges Rigaud, Mike Kennedy. Tense psycho thriller, one of Fulci's best films: Bolkan has hallucinatory dreams and fantasies of a sexual nature about her neighbor Strindberg and must face an investigation when the flamboyant, sexy lady next-door is stabbed to death. Did Bolkan commit the murder? Is she going insane? Plot pays the price for being complex in the uneven, confusing final third, but photography (by Luigi Kuveiller, of *PROFONDO ROSSO* fame) and Ennio Morricone's excellent, disturbing score make this an impressive experience. A psychedelic time-capsule, an unexpected sleeper from an infamous director. A must for giallo fans. Cowritten by Fulci. English titles: *LIZARD IN A WOMAN'S SKIN* and *SCHIZOID*.

**Lucky Jim** (1957, GBR) **95m. \*\*½** D: John Boulting. Starring Ian Carmichael, Terry-Thomas, Hugh Griffith, Sharon Acker, Jean Anderson. Mildly funny comedy about the comic misadventures of lecturer Carmichael at a British university. Slapstick scenes come off best. Based on the novel by Kingsley Amis.

**Lucky Number Slevin** (2006, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Paul McGuigan. Starring Josh Hartnett, Bruce Willis, Lucy Liu, Morgan Freeman, Ben Kingsley, Michael Rubinfeld, Peter Outerbridge, Stanley Tucci, Kevin Chamberlin, Danny Aiello, Robert Forster. Good cast in intriguing thriller puzzle about down-on-his-luck Hartnett, who arrives in NYC and is mistaken for his friend whose apartment he is using. He becomes involved with two rivalling crime lords (Freeman, Kingsley) who force him to act on their behalves. Enter hitman Willis, who may also be working for both sides. Interesting thriller has some powerfully stylish moments and is well-plotted, even if it lacks conviction at times. Writer Jason Smilovic seems to be a movie buff.

**Lucky You** (2007, USA/AUS) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Curtis Hanson. Starring Eric Bana, Robert Duvall, Drew Barrymore, Debra Messing, Robert Downey Jr. Poker drama set in Las Vegas, where down-on-his-luck Poker player Bana must try to raise the \$10,000 needed to enter the World Series tournament. He also has to come to terms with his father, who is a poker superstar. Along the way he meets and falls in love with waitress/would-be singer Barrymore. Slickly made, but takes longer than it should. For poker fans. Score by Christopher Young.

**Lucy** (2014, FRA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Luc Besson. Starring Scarlett Johansson, Morgan Freeman, Choi Min-sik, Amr Waked. High-octane action thriller with Johansson playing a party girl who is whirled into a nightmare when she is forced to become a drug mule, delivering an extremely powerful narcotic across the border. When the packet, sown into her intestines, bursts, she becomes super-intelligent and super-aware of everything around her, which is explained by her using more and more of her cerebral capacity. She then contacts scientist Freeman, but is chased by villain Choi, who wants his drugs back. Starts

well, as you are thrust into the action just like the main character, but becomes more and more fabricated as it goes along. By the end it's a sci-fi movie. Still, a box-office smash.

**Lumikuningatar** (1986, FIN) **C-88m. \*\*\*½ D:** Päivi Hartzell. Starring Satu Silvo, Outi Vainionkulma, Sebastian Kaatrasalo, Tuula Nyman, Kiti Kokkonen, Kari Väänänen. Astounding fairy tale/fantasy, based on the story by Hans Christian Andersen. The evil snow queen (Silvo) lures an innocent boy into her sleigh and brings him to her ice kingdom. The boy's sister then embarks on a wondrous journey to find and rescue her brother. Brilliantly photographed, highly artistic rendering of the fairy tale, with a beautiful score by Jukka Linkola. Often unconventional (and not really for small kids) but deserves to be seen more widely. English title: THE SNOW QUEEN.

**Lunga Fila di Croci, Una** (1969, ITA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Sergio Garrone. Starring Anthony Steffen, William Berger, Mario Brega, Nicoletta Macchiavelli. Bounty hunters Django (Steffen) and Sartana (Berger) team up to catch evil pistoleros who smuggle Mexican workers into the States. Their boss Fargo tries to buy them off. Above-average spaghetti western tries hard shake off genre patterns but will hardly appeal to anyone else but fans. Still, it's well-cast, with both stars oozing a good deal of machismo.

**Lunghi Capelli della Morte, I** (1964, ITA) **B&W-94m. \*\*½ D:** Antonio Margheriti. Starring Barbara Steele, George Ardisson, Halina Zalewska, Umberto Raho. Quite good gothic chiller set at the time of witch burnings. Steele tries to persuade the count not to burn her mother, but he is only interested in seducing her. When she is also killed, she curses him. Her younger sister Zalewska is forced to marry the son, and then Steele returns from her grave... Uneven plot hampers proceedings considerably, though atmosphere is nice and score by Carlo Rustichelli (as Evirust) is excellent. Cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi. English title: THE LONG HAIR OF DEATH.

**Lunghi Giorni della Vendetta, I** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-105m. SCOPE\*\*\* D:** Stan Vance (=Florestano Vancini). Starring Giuliano Gemma, Francisco Rabal, Gabriella Giorgelli, Conrado San Martin, Nieves Navarro. First-rate revenge western about an outlaw who breaks out of prison to avenge the murder of his father. Stylish direction, superb timing, excellent score (by Armando Trovaioli). The showdown is perfect. Coscripted by Fernando di Leo. English title: THE DEADLIEST FIGHT.

**Lung Wei Village** (1980, HGK) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Tyrone Hsu Hsia. Starring Lo Lieh, Yueh Hua, Polly Shang Kuan, Chin Hu. -Watchable eastern with a muddled plot about several associates who are trying to find a white-clad villain and a traitor among themselves. Lots of flying around, acrobatics, an okay eastern, but rather only for fans. Also known as 99 CYCLING SWORDS.

**Lupa Mannara, La** (1976, ITA) **C-78m. \*\*½ D:** Rino Di Silvestro. Starring Annik Borel, Frederick Stafford, Tino Carraro, Andrea Scotti, Dagmar Lassander. Borel may be the reincarnation of a werewolf woman, burned at the stake 200 years ago, and indeed she kills her sister's lover at full moon. She takes it on the lam and falls in love with a stranger. Frustratingly uneven crossbreed of werewolf and revenge movie, with a strong performance by the lead actress. An interesting addition to the colorful canon of Italian exploitation cinema. Original version runs about 20 minutes longer. English titles: LEGEND OF THE WOLF WOMAN, DAUGHTER OF A WEREWOLF, NAKE WEREWOLF WOMAN, SHE-WOLF, TERROR OF THE SHE WOLF, WEREWOLF WOMAN, and even WOLF MAN(!).

**Lupo dei Mari, Il** (1975, ITA) **C-79m. \*½ D:** Giuseppe Vari. Starring Chuck Connors, Giuseppe Pambieri, Barbara Bach, Rik Battaglia, Pino Ferrara, Luciano Pigozzi (Alan Collins), Lars Bloch, Maurice Poli, Ivan Rassimov. Feeble film version of the classic Jack London story *The Sea Wolf*. Apart from the cast basically nothing of interest here. Original version runs

longer. English titles: WOLF LARSEN, THE LEGEND OF THE SEA WOLF, and LARSEN, WOLF OF THE SEAS.

**Luther the Geek** (1990, USA) **C-80m.** \*\*\*½ D: Carlton J. Albright. Starring Edward Terry, Joan Roth, Stacy Haiduk, Thomas Mills, Joseph Clark. Harrowing, disturbing horror film about the title character, a mentally disturbed psycho killer, who makes chicken sounds and has killed several people by neckbite. When he is paroled, the real horror begins for a housewife, her daughter and the girl's lover. Well-filmed, suspenseful but uneven. A notable debut feature from Albright. Worthy of a comparison with THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE and HENRY, PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER.

**Lycanthropus** (1961, ITA/AUT) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Richard Benson (=Paolo Heusch). Starring Barbara Lass, Carl Schell, Curt Lowens, Maurice Marsac, Maureen O'Connor, Alan Collins. Minor but not uninteresting horror thriller (an Italian-Austrian coproduction). Gruesome murders at a school for delinquent girls coincide with the arrival of a new teacher. Is he roaming the countryside as a werewolf by night? Weak direction, but some arresting camerawork and interesting plot elements (foreshadowing the giallo) make it watchable. Scripted by Ernesto Gastaldi. Score by Armando Trovaioli. Also known as WEREWOLF IN A GIRLS' DORMITORY, BEI VOLLMOND MORD, THE GHOUL IN SCHOOL, I MARRIED A WEREWOLF, MONSTER AMONG THE GIRLS.

**Mac** (1992, USA) **C-118m.** \*\*\*½ D: John Turturro. Starring John Turturro, Michael Badalucco, Carl Capotorto, Katherine Borowitz, John Amos, Olek Krupa, Ellen Barkin, Joe Paparone. Simple tale about three carpenter brothers in 1950s New York, who decide to open their own business. Bitter-sweet comedy drama, well-performed and nicely filmed (Turturro, in his directorial debut, was obviously influenced by his cooperation with the Coen Brothers in MILLER'S CROSSING and BARTON FINK). However, film lacks a certain continuity in the plot line and is not very compelling in its (ragged) depiction of the oft-quoted American Dream. Turturro also cowrote the screenplay.

**Macabro** (1980, ITA) **C-90m.** \*\*\*½ D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Bernice Stegers, Stanko Molnar, Veronica Zinny, Roberto Posse, Ferdinando Orlandi, Fernando Panullo. Subtle, almost coy horror film about married woman whose lover dies in a car accident. After a stay in a clinic she moves into the house where she used to meet her deceased lover. The house's owner, a blind man, hears strange noises coming from her room. Just what is she keeping locked in her freezer? The directorial debut of Mario Bava's son is a truly macabre, quite suspenseful thriller. Nice art direction and cinematography (by Franco Delli Colli), but the story does not hold up to the very end. Screenplay by Lamberto Bava, Pupi Avati, Roberto Gandus and Antonio Avati. Aka MACABRE, and in the U.S. as FROZEN TERROR.

**Macbeth** (1948, USA) **107m.** \*\*\* D: Orson Welles. Starring Orson Welles, Jeanette Nolan, Dan O'Herlihy, Edgar Barrier, Roddy McDowall, Robert Coote, Erskine Sanford, Alan Napier. First film adaptation of Shakespeare's famous tragedy about usurper Macbeth, who is driven by a lust for power (and his mega-lomaniacal wife Lady Macbeth). Black-and-white photography is first-rate, Welles' direction good. Strange, surreal interior sets create an eerie atmosphere. Also shown in cut version, which runs 89m. and is dubbed into American English (original version is in Scottish). Written and produced by Welles.

**Macbeth** (1971, GBR) **C-140m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Roman Polanski. Starring Jon Finch, Francesca Annis, Martin Shaw, Nicholas Selby, John Stride, Stephan Chase. Master director Roman Polanski's film version of the Shakespeare tragedy is more explicit than the Orson Welles film of 1948. The destruction of a man whose greed has led him to commit gruesome crimes is elaborately told by Polanski, who cowrote the screenplay with Kenneth Tynan.

Some stunning surreal sequences cleverly woven into plot. If you can't watch it in a theater, nothing but a widescreen video will do the film's grandeur justice.

**Macchie Solari** (1975, ITA) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: Armando Crispino. Starring Mimsy Farmer, Barry Primus, Ray Lovelock, Carlo Cattaneo, Massimo Serato. Troubled med student Farmer is writing her thesis about suicides, when a mysterious wave of suicides happens in Rome, officially attributed to solar activity (macchie solari). When a friend becomes a victim, she starts investigating with priest Primus. There's also her love interest Lovelock and her father Serato in this uneven, complicated melange of horror and crime. Late giallo has nice views of Rome, a fine performance by pretty Farmer and an unsettling score by Ennio Morricone. English titles: AUTOPSY, THE VICTIM, TENSION, THE MAGICIAN, and SUN SPOTS.

**Machete** (2010, USA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Robert Rodriguez, Ethan Maniquis. Starring Danny Trejo, Michelle Rodriguez, Robert De Niro, Jessica Alba, Steven Seagal, Jeff Fahey, Cheech Marin, Don Johnson, Lindsay Lohan, Tom Savini. Director Rodriguez continues his streak of grindhouse movies like PLANET TERROR (2007) with Trejo's Machete character getting his own movie. The Mexican rough guy is hired to kill a Texas senator but is double-crossed. He then sets out to get his revenge. The concept itself is pure cult movie material, has a great cast, but the film isn't fun to watch. A disappointment. Followed by a sequel in 2013.

**Machete Kills** (2013, USA) **C-107m.** \*½ D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Danny Trejo, Michelle Rodriguez, Mel Gibson, Amber Heard, Alexa PenaVega, Charlie Sheen, Lady Gaga, Cuba Gooding Jr., Vanessa Hudgens, Tom Savini, Jessica Alba. Over-the-top sequel to MACHETE (2010) starts nicely with a fake trailer, but story is pure trash. President Sheen (billed as Carlos Estevez) wants Machete to bring down a cartel boss. The real bad guy however is played by Gibson, who wants to destroy the world and leave the world in a spaceship. Gratuitous, incoherent, but probably on purpose. Worst of all, this is rather boring. Trejo is not convincing.

**Machine, La** (1994, FRA/GER) **C-96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Francois Dupeyron. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Didier Bourdon, Nathalie Baye, Erwan Baynaud, Claude Berri. Sci-fi thriller set in contemporary France about brain specialist Depardieu, who has invented a mind-switch machine in secrecy and plans to use it on his latest patient, serial killer Bourdon, in order to find out what's going wrong in his mind. Unfortunately, the killer refuses to let him return to his body. Off-beat but also highly improbable (even idiotic) body-switch movie that is almost saved by tight direction and good acting. Do not think too hard about the plot. For example, how is doctor Depardieu going to find out anything if he is just in the killer's *body* and *not* his mind (which is again in the doctor's body)? Based on a novel by René Belletto. English title: THE MACHINE.

**Machine, The** (2013, GBR) **C-91m.** \*\*\*½ D: Caradog W. James. Starring Caity Lotz, Toby Stephens, Sam Hazeldine. Science-fiction tale mostly set in a lab where artificial intelligence scientist Stephens has just assigned Lotz to help him. Then things go wrong and Lotz is turned into an android. Has many echoes of BLADE RUNNER (especially the score), but despite some convincing special effects and a serious turn by the main actors, this is too downbeat. The low budget confines the setting to basically one place, and the entire film suffers. Watch it for the effects.

**Machinist, The** (2004, SPA) **C-102m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Brad Anderson. Starring Christian Bale, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón, John Sharian, Michael Ironside, Larry Gilliard Jr., Anna Massey. Extraordinary psycho drama that plays like a mystery: Machinist Bale, who works under deplorable conditions has problems with himself. He hasn't slept in a long time, he finds strange notes on the refrigerator and a mysterious man keeps popping up every now and then. Is Bale going insane? Bleak but atmospheric, well-directed and ideally

scripted (by Scott Kosar), this puzzler owes more than a bit to JACOB'S LADDER (1990) but stands well on its own as a mystery thriller and an examination of repressed guilt. Bale is brilliant in the title role, for which he lost an incredible 63 pounds. Made and produced by Spanish hands (apart from director, screenwriter and cast), original title is EL MAQUINISTA. **Maciste alla Corte del Gran Khan** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Riccardo Freda. Starring Gordon Scott, Yoko Tani, Hélène Chanel, Dante DiPaolo. Another subpar muscleman movie, this one is relentlessly talky, with only a handful of action sequences, as strongman Maciste (Samson in the dubbed version) defends some peasants against a despotic ruler in the Far East. Duccio Tessari cowrote the screenplay. Also known as SAMSON AND THE SEVEN MIRACLES OF THE WORLD, GOLIATH AND THE GOLDEN CITY, and MACISTE AT THE COURT OF THE GREAT KHAN.

**Maciste all'Inferno** (1962, ITA) **C-85m. \*½ D:** Riccardo Freda. Starring Kirk Morris, Helene Chanel. Naive action fantasy about title hero Maciste, who heads into Hades, trying to find a witch in order to save a beautiful young girl from the stake. He meets some odd creatures in the Underworld, but effects are dull and the supernatural power of the hero is too obviously faked. Despite the director, a most tedious venture. English title: MACISTE IN HELL.

**Maciste Contro i Mostri** (1962, ITA) **C-80m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Guido Malatesta. Starring Reg Lewis, Margaret Lee, Luciano Marin, Andrea Aureli, Birgit Bergen. Cheesy fantasy / stone age adventure with Reg Lewis in his only appearance as Maciste (Maxus in the English version). The strongman helps a tribe to avenge the brutal attack of a rival tribe who kidnapped their women. He battles some cardboard monsters along the way. Almost entirely without appeal, especially also because of Lewis, who is simply terrible. Sound editing by Bruno Mattei. English title: COLOSSUS OF THE STONE AGE, FIRE MONSTERS AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES.

**Maciste, l'Eroe Piu Grande del Mondo** (1963, ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE\*½ D:** Michele Lupo. Starring Mark Forest, José Greci, Livio Lorenzon, Giuliano Gemma, Erno Crisa, Jacques Herlin. Another unimaginative sword-and-sandal epic about the title hero, who lends a hand in a revolution. Plot stinks, film's good production values save it from the scrap heap. Produced by Leone Film.

**Maciste, l'Uomo Piu Forte del Mondo** (1961, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE\*½ D:** Antonio Leonviola. Starring Mark Forest, Moira Orfei, Paul Wynter, Gianni Garko, Enrico Glori. Typically silly muscleman movie, one of hundreds made after the success of LE FATICHE DI ERCOLE (HERCULES). Bodybuilder Forest plays a muscleman who infiltrates the world of the sadistic 'mole men' in order to save a beautiful princess. Ludicrous, overlong and pretty violent. Score by Armando Trovaioli.

**Maciste nella Terra dei Ciclopi** (1961, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*½ D:** (Antonio) Leonviola. Starring Mitchell Gordon (=Gordon Mitchell), Chelo Alonso, Vira Silenti, Dante DiPaolo, Aldo Bufi Landi, Fabio, Moira Orfei. Rather weak peplum movie about strongman Maciste, who protects a little boy from evil queen who wants to get her revenge on Ulysses' descendants. She also houses a brutal cyclops in her dungeon. Slowly paced, not bad at the beginning, but loses the little steam it has before long. Not much fantasy in this one. English titles: ATLAS AGAINST THE CYCLOPS, ATLAS IN THE LAND OF THE CYCLOPS, MACISTE VS. THE CYCLOPS, and MONSTER FROM THE UNKNOWN WORLD.

**Mackintosh Man, The** (1973, USA) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** John Huston. Starring Paul Newman, Dominique Sanda, James Mason, Harry Andrews, Ian Bannen, Michael Hordern, Nigel Patrick, Peter Vaughan. Spy thriller by master director Huston featuring Newman as the title character, who is recruited to steal a stash of diamonds for reasons specified later.

Meandering storyline leaves little room for suspense, let alone action. Some nice locations, but this has been done better. Based on the novel by Desmond Bagley.

**Madagascar** (2005, USA) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Eric Darnell, Tom McGrath. Starring (the voices of) Ben Stiller, Chris Rock, David Schwimmer, Jada Pinkett Smith, Sacha Baron Cohen, Cedric the Entertainer, Andy Richter, Tom McGrath. Funny, well-designed animated feature from Dreamworks: A lion, a zebra, a giraffe, and a hippo, all living the good life as attractions in the New York zoo find themselves tempted by freedom and get more than they bargained for when they are washed ashore on the title island. Some plot weaknesses offset by good vocal performances and production design. Recommended family fare.

**Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa** (2008, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Eric Darnell, Tom McGrath. Starring (the voices of) Ben Stiller, Chris Rock, David Schwimmer, Jada Pinkett Smith, Sacha Baron Cohen, Cedric the Entertainer, Andy Richter, Bernie Mac, Alec Baldwin, Chris Miller. Sequel to the 2005 hit is a bit disappointing, as plot is a rip-off of THE LION KING. The N.Y.C. zoo animals want to leave Madagascar but their plane crashes in the African wilderness, where Alex the lion finds his long-lost family and must contend against evil relative, who wants to be king himself. Rather silly, saved by some good animation and funny scenes. Bernie Mac's last film.

**Madame Bovary** (1991, FRA) **C-142m. \*\*** D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Jean-François Balmer, Christopher Malavoy, Jean Yanne, Lucas Belvaux, Jean-Claude Bouilland, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi, narrated by François Périer. One of director Chabrol's few duds, this adaptation of Gustave Flaubert's famous novel is too uninvolved to justify its overlength. Huppert gives her best as the title character, a country lass who marries a doctor hoping to lead an exciting life in the city. Drama is well-acted and has some good moments, but second half is lethargic and adds no new perspectives to the story. The narration fails to evoke compassion for the main character. May appeal more to audiences who have read the novel. Previously filmed in 1932, 1934 (by Jean Renoir) and 1949 (by Vincente Minnelli).

**Madame und ihre Nichte** (1969, GER) **C-86m. \*\*** D::Eberhard Schröder. Staring Ruth-Maria Kubitschek, Edwige Fenech, Fred Williams, Rainer Penkert, Karl Walter Diess. Trivial erotic comedy about 'madame' Kubitschek, who has many lovers and says her beautiful daughter Fenech is really her niece. Nothing to get excited about, but provides enough period flavor to make this marginally interesting. For fans of Fenech, who appears nude. Also known as MADAME AND HER NIECE.

**Mad City** (1997, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Costa-Gavras. Starring John Travolta, Dustin Hoffman, Mia Kirshner, Alan Alda, Robert Prosky, Blythe Danner, William Atherton, Ted Levine, Tammy Lauren, William O'Leary. Travolta, who has only recently lost his job, returns to his former working place, a museum, to have one last talk with his former boss, and he has brought a shot gun with him to make her listen to him. When a bunch of school kids storm the scene, television reporter Hoffman - who just happens to film a news clip about the museum - immediately goes on air and reports of a 'hostage crisis'! Travolta, whose intentions were of the most harmless kind, is soon faced with deep troubles. Hoffman, however, as he gets to interview the man, realizes that he can't capitalize on Travolta's desperate situation, and tries to get the public's sympathies. How will everything turn out? Well-acted, well-written drama that goes to show how easily truth can be manipulated by the media.

**Madeo** (2009, KOR) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Bong Joon-ho. Starring Kim Hye-ja, Won Bin, Jin Ku, Yun Je-mun, Jun Mi-sun. Grotesque, at times disturbing psycho drama about a retarded young man, who is framed for having killed a school girl, and his over-protective mother, a poor herbs saleswoman. She sets out to prove his innocence, but the rural

community and her social standing are in the way. Interesting companion piece to the director's cult hit SALINUI CHUEOK / MEMORIES OF MURDER (2003) features a searing, tour-de-force performance by Kim as the title character. First-rate direction and good score make this a memorable experience. English title: MOTHER.

**Madhouse** (1974, GBR) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Jim Clark. Starring Vincent Price, Peter Cushing, Robert Quarry, Adrienne Corri, Linda Hayden. Cheaply produced horror thriller about famous actor Price, whose own horror role as Dr. Death comes to haunt him, when a series of murders is committed, all copying killings from his films. Poorly designed thriller creates little suspense. The story is also not very intriguing. Based on the novel *Devilday* by Angus Hall. Some elements may be derived from Dario Argento's early films, but that is probably a coincidence. Jim Clark went on to become a top Hollywood editor. Also known as DEATHDAY, THE MADHOUSE OF DR. FEAR, THE REVENGE OF DR. DEATH.

**Mad Love** (1995, USA) **C-95m. \*½** D: Antonia Bird. Starring Chris O'Donnell, Drew Barrymore, Joan Allen, Jude Ciccolella, Kevin Dunn, Liev Schreiber, Richard Chaim, Robert Nadir. Weakly scripted teenager love story, from the director of the acclaimed PRIEST. O'Donnell plays an ordinary guy who falls in love with manic-depressive girl Barrymore. Together they flee their frustrating every-day existence. No chemistry between the stars, and when the film tries for some serious dramatics at the end, the whole thing has long ceased to be credible. This is about as intellectual as its title.

**Mad Magician, The** (1954, USA) **B&W-72m. \*\*½** D: John Brahm. Starring Vincent Price, Mary Murphy, Eva Gabor, Patrick O'Neal, John Emery. Price is quite good as inventor of magic tricks, who feels cheated by his boss and starts killing and impersonating famous magicians. Quite well-made, but unfortunately filmed in black-and-white, which takes away some of its corny edge. Originally released in 3-D.

**Madman** (1982, USA) **C-88m. \*½** D: Joe Giannone. Starring Gaylen Ross, Tony Fish, Harriet Bass, Seth Jones, Paul Ehlers. Typical slasher movie from the early 80s just replaces Jason Vorhees with a guy called Madman Marz, who stalks the crew at a summer camp for children. Some gory effects, but scenes are unnecessarily drawn out, with people endlessly walking through the forest. You'll be tempted to fast-forward after some 45 minutes. Not *that* bad, but still a drag.

**Mad Max** (1979, AUS) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: George Miller. Starring Mel Gibson, Joanne Samuel, Hugh Keays-Byrne, Steve Bisley, Tim Burns, Roger Ward, Vince Gil. Tense, original action drama boosted Mel Gibson to stardom: He plays a highway patrolman in the near future, who may be the only one able to stop ruthless gang of punks led by 'Toecutter' Keays-Byrne, who pillage, rape and kill. Few science-fiction elements apart from the time setting, film isn't perfect (note some faults in plot coherency and dramatics in general) but very well-filmed and especially well-edited. Interesting, bizarre characters add to the unique feel of the movie. Brian May's score is effective despite being an obvious imitation of Bernard Herrmann's PSYCHO theme. First-time director Miller followed this with the even more impressive MAD MAX 2: THE ROAD WARRIOR (1981). He states the science-fiction cult movie A BOY AND HIS DOG (1975) as a major inspiration for this film.

**Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior** (1981, AUS) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: George Miller. Starring Mel Gibson, Bruce Spence, Michael Preston, Max Phipps, Vernon Wells, Kjell Nilsson, Emil Minty. Outstanding sequel to MAD MAX (1979) surpasses the original in many ways. Policeman Gibson has turned into a loner, a Road Warrior, who is constantly on the search for fuel, which has become more precious than water in the post-apocalyptic world. He reluctantly agrees to help a group of survivors defend their fuel supply against a band of scavenging lunatics. More epic in scope, grandly filmed in widescreen, this science-fiction

action extravaganza made many people discover the first film and rightfully has a place in film history. Great score by Brian May. Released in the United States as THE ROAD WARRIOR. Followed by MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME (1985).

**Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome** (1985, AUS/USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: George Miller, George Ogilvie. Starring Mel Gibson, Tina Turner, Bruce Spence, Adam Cockburn, Frank Thring, Angelo Rossitto, Paul Larsson. Grandly filmed, riveting sequel with Mad Max (Gibson) going in search of his stolen automobile and ending up in the cesspool Bartertown, one of the last outposts in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. He becomes the pawn in a struggle for power between the midget ruler (Rossitto) of the underworld and the city's mayor (Turner). He also becomes the new hope for a tribe of lost children in the desert. Lightning paced, superbly directed science-fiction adventure with beautiful photography by Dean Semler and an excellent score by Maurice Jarre. A worthy conclusion of the trilogy around the loner in the barren outback. Followed by MAD MAX: FURY ROAD in 2015.

**Mad Max: Fury Road** (2015, AUS/USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: George Miller. Starring Tom Hardy, Chalize Theron, Nicholas Hoult, Hugh Keays-Byrne, Josh Helman, Nathan Jones, Zoe Kravitz. Absolutely terrific reinvention of the classic MAD MAX films: Loner Max (Hardy) is taken prisoner by the gang of warlord Keays-Byrne, who rules the post-apocalyptic wasteland, controlling the only water reserves. One of his truck drivers, Furiosa (Theron), is plotting to kidnap the ruler's concubines and take them to the 'green place'. Fate then brings Max and Furiosa together. Science-fiction action extravaganza is filled with astounding, unbelievable stunts that will have you gasp with excitement. This film is pure rock'n'roll! Crazy characters, brilliant production design, great cinematography (by John Seale), thundering score... an awe-inspiring experience, best enjoyed in IMAX 3D. Some minor flaws in plot and character development are completely eclipsed by the pure audacity of the proceedings. Cowritten by director Miller.

**Mad Room, The** (1969, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*½** D: Bernard Girard. Starring Stella Stevens, Shelley Winters, James Ward, Carol Cole, Severn Darden, Beverly Garland, Michael Burns. Interesting psycho thriller about young woman (Stevens), who manages the affairs of a widow (Winters), and one day takes her brother and sister to live with them. Years back the two were suspected of having killed their parents and were put in an asylum. Remake of the 1941 LADIES IN RETIREMENT (based on Reginald Denham's play) is not bad, especially with that hair-raising score, but quite slow. Photography by Harry Stradling, Jr.

**Madwoman of Chaillot, The** (1969, USA) **C-132m. \*\*\*** D: Bryan Forbes. Starring Katharine Hepburn, Paul Henreid, Oskar Homolka, Yul Brynner, Richard Chamberlain, Edith Evans, Donald Pleasence, John Gavin, Nanette Newman, Danny Kaye, Margaret Leighton, Giulietta Masina, Charles Boyer, Claude Dauphin. Incredible cast in virtually unknown adaptation of a play by Jean Giraudoux. Hepburn plays the title character, a French countess, who lives in her own fantasy world. One day, an incident involving Chamberlain wakes her up to see the greed and ruthlessness in the modern world, personified by businessmen, brokers and warmongers (Brynner, Henreid, Homolka et al). She enlists the help of a ragpicker (Kaye) to simulate a trial against them. Dismissed upon original release (which explains its obscurity), film's flaws are overcome by wonderful, even hypnotic performances, especially touching Hepburn's, commanding Brynner's and heartfelt Kaye's in a rare serious role (it was also his last theatrical appearance). Haunting theme by Michael J. Lewis (in his first score), nice production values make this a real find for buffs. Play was also filmed in 1960, 1976 (both for TV) and 1994.

**Maggie, The** (1954, GBR) **B&W-92m. \*\*\*½** D: Alexander Mackendrick. Starring Paul Douglas, Alex Mackenzie, James Copeland, Abe Barker, Tommy Kearins. Minor effort from the

director of *THE LADYKILLERS* (1955) and *DON'T MAKE WAVES* (1967). Douglas is an American businessman, whose cargo ends up on Scotsman Mackenzie's ship, a run-down steamer. Afraid that he might lose it, he first sends an assistant, then takes the matters into his own hands. Mild black-and-white comedy. Released as *HIGH AND DRY* in the U.S.

**Maggie** (2015, USA/SUI) **C-95m. SCOPE \*½** D: Henry Hobson. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Abigail Breslin, Joely Richardson, Douglas M. Griffin, J.D. Evermore. Horror drama is quite the opposite of what you would imagine as a zombie movie. Schwarzenegger's daughter Breslin is showing signs of a (zombie) transformation and he spends the entire film worrying what might become of her. She might be quarantined any day now, so he tries to make their final time together special. Barely any action, this film is solemn and depressing and the plot isn't going anywhere. Schwarzenegger, in a rare serious turn, is okay, but you know you're in trouble when the sound effects (constant thunder rumbling) and the score (the sad piano type) are substituting for atmosphere.

**Magic Christian, The** (1969, GBR) **C-92m. \*\*½** D: Joseph McGrath. Starring Peter Sellers, Ringo Starr, Isabel Jeans, Caroline Blakiston, Richard Attenborough, Laurence Harvey, Christopher Lee, Spike Milligan, Roman Polanski, Raquel Welch, Graham Chapman, John Cleese. Formidable cast in whimsical satire about super-wealthy businessman Sellers, who introduces hapless Starr as the heir to his company. Lots of mayhem, not a lot of laughs, a time capsule at best. Monty Python's Chapman and Cleese also coscripted from a novel by Terry Southern.

**Magic Cop** (1990, HGK) **C-87m. \*\*\*** D: Tung Wei. Starring Lam Ching-Ying, Michiko Nishiwaki, Wilson Lam, Frankie Chin, Billy Chow, Wu Ma. Offbeat, well-paced Hong Kong fantasy about cop Lam, who comes to the city to investigate the death of a relative, who turns out to have been a zombie. This refreshing mixture of horror, fantasy and crime elements also throws in some slapstick (unfortunately). Mid-section is draggy, but there are some very well-directed sequences. Also known as *MR. VAMPIRE 5*.

**Magician, The** (1926, USA) **89m. \*\*\*** D: Rex Ingram. Starring Paul Wegener, Alice Terry, Ivan Petrovich, Firmin Gémier, Gladys Hamer, Henry Wilson. Expressionist silent horror set in France about sinister hypnotist and magician Wegener's evil plan to use the heart and blood of a virgin in order to create new life. Hesitant plot (the creation of which life?) and heavy-handed direction, but wonderful gothic atmosphere compensates. Best sequences: The conjuring of the faun and the climax in the sorcerer's castle. Ingram adapted the W. Somerset Maugham novel. Photographed by John F. Seitz (*DOUBLE INDEMNITY*, *SUNSET BOULEVARD*). German actor/director Wegener codirected *DER GOLEM, WIE ER IN DIE WELT KAM* in 1920.

**Magiciens, Les** (1975, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-92m. \*\*\*½** D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Rochefort, Franco Nero, Stefania Sandrelli, Gert Fröbe, Gila von Weitershausen. In a Tunisian holiday resort rich business man Rochefort befriends odd magician/clairvoyant Fröbe, who predicts a murder, which may have something to do with Nero, whose marriage is put to a test when he meets a former lover while vacationing with his wife. Chabrol lends a unique spin to marital dramas with this symbolic and fascinating film. Well-acted, with Fröbe excellently cast, drama draws its power from what the audience does *not* know and can only speculate about. Based on the novel *Initiation au Meurtre* by Frédéric Dard.

**Magnificent Ambersons, The** (1942, USA) **88m. \*\*\*½** D: Orson Welles. Starring Tim Holt, Joseph Cotten, Dolores Costello, Anne Baxter, Agnes Moorehead, Ray Collins, Richard Bennett, Erskine Sanford. Welles' second feature film is one of his best. Adapted from the Booth Tarkington novel, this brilliantly shot family drama deals with the effects of

modernization on a rich family that is unwilling to accept the changing times. Welles had to give up the final cut, but this still carries the stamp of a directorial genius.

**Magnificent Seven, The** (1960, USA) \*\*\*½

**Magnifico Gladiatore, Il** (1964, ITA) **C-78m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alfonso Brescia. Starring Mark Forest, Marilù Tolo, Nazzareno Zamperla. Sword-and-sandal adventure featuring Forest as Attalus (not Hercules this time). The strongman must withstand the evil schemes of a would-be emperor, who has substituted Caesar with a doppelgänger. Plot is not bad, but formula had become tiresome by then.

**Magnolia** (1999, USA) **C-187m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Paul Thomas Anderson. Starring Tom Cruise, Jason Robards. Episodic story about several characters whose lives finally intertwine got rave reviews but is overlong and rather pointless (unless that life is a series of coincidences). Some fine performances (notably Cruise's), make up your own mind about the movie. From the director of *HARD EIGHT* and *BOOGIE NIGHTS*.

**Magnum Special per Tony Saitta, Una** (1976, ITA/CDN) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Martin Herbert (=Alberto De Martino). Starring Stuart Whitman, John Saxon, Martin Landau, Tisa Farrow, Carole Laure, Jean LeClerc, Gayle Hunnicut. Detective Whitman, grieving the death of his sister, sets out with assistant Saxon to find her murderer. One-dimensional thriller mixes giallo elements with the gritty realism of police movies but is hardly distinguished. Some nice directorial touches make this film worthwhile for those who care. De Martino's follow-up to *L'ANTICRISTO*. Score by Armando Trovajoli. English titles: *STRANGE SHADOWS IN AN EMPTY ROOM*, *BLAZING MAGNUMS*, *TOUGH TONY SAITTA* and *.44 SPECIAL*.

**Magus, The** (1968, GBR) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Guy Green. Starring Michael Caine, Anthony Quinn, Candice Bergen, Anna Karina, Paul Stassino, Julian Glover, Jerome Willis, Corin Redgrave, John Fowles. Interesting late 60s time capsule set on a Greek island, where Caine has just travelled to take up a teacher's job and get away from his on-and-off girlfriend Karina. On the island he meets mysterious Quinn and his guest Bergen, and becomes involved in a psycho game. Very leisurely paced mystery drama is kept afloat by great location filming, nice score (by John Dankworth), and good performances, especially Quinn's. Based on the novel by John Fowles (*THE COLLECTOR*), who appears as a boat captain.

**Maid in Manhattan** (2002, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Wayne Wang. Starring Jennifer Lopez, Ralph Fiennes, Natasha Richardson, Stanley Tucci, Tyler Posey, Bob Hoskins. Contrived Hollywood romance set in a big New York hotel. Room maid Lopez, who is living a hard life as a single mother, one day dares to put on the dress of a guest, and is instantly mistaken for her by gentleman-politician Fiennes. Needless to say, it's love at first sight. How long will she keep up the masquerade? Certainly smooth but predictable, formulaic. Fiennes and director Wang should be ashamed.

**Maimai Shinko to Sennen no Mahô** (2009, JAP) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: Sunao Katabuchi. Starring (the voices of) Mayuko Fukuda, Manami Honjô, Jenya. A young schoolgirl with a vivid imagination grows up in rural Japan some time around the 1950s or 1960s. She befriends a new student in her class, who has moved all the way from Tokyo and seems to know the benefits of luxury. Slightly episodic plot, but animation is stunningly beautiful and score is touching. Not really for small children, as it is a lot about death and dying. English title: *MAI MAI MIRACLE*.

**Maison Sous les Arbres, La** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-97m. \*\*** D: René Clément. Starring Faye Dunaway, Frank Langella, Barbara Parkins, Maurice Ronet, Patrick Dewaere, Franco Ressel. Interesting psycho mystery drama, a distant relative to the giallo, which had its heyday around the time. Dunaway lives with her writer-husband Langella and two children in an

apartment in Paris. Recently, she has been having memory lapses, and he seems to be involved with a mysterious organization which is blackmailing him. Are their children in danger? Slow-moving, ponderous, not as fascinating as master director Clément's previous film, *LE PASSENGER DE LA PLUIE* (1970). Good acting by Dunaway, Langella gets nothing to do. Based on a novel by Arthur Cavanaugh. Score by Gilbert Bécaud. English title: *THE DEADLY TRAP*.

**Maître Nageur, Le** (1978, FRA) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Jean-Louis Trintignant. Starring Jean-Claude Brialy, Guy Marchand, Stefania Sandrelli, Moustache, Jean-Louis Trintignant. Marchand plays a hapless singer, who meets a woman whose dreams always come true. Naturally, she has dreamt that they will fall in love and be rich one day. Marchand then takes up job as a swim master (*maître-nageur*) at eccentric zillionaire Zopoulos' estate, which seems to be ruled by odd butler Brialy. Surreal comedy is full of absurd ideas, only some of them are funny. Mainly interesting for Trintignant's direction; his only other one being for *UNE JOURNÉE BIEN REMPLIE* (1972). Based on the novel by Vehé Katcha.

**Majo No Takkyûbin** (1989, JAP) **C-103m.** \*\*\*\* D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Minami Takayama, Rei Sakuma, Kapppei Yamaguchi, Keiko Toda, Mieko Nobusawa, Koichi Miura. Charming, absolutely beautiful fantasy is one of master Miyazaki's most endearing films. A 13-year-old witch, eagerly following family tradition, grabs her broomstick and black cat and heads for a city by the ocean to live there for a year by herself. After some starting problems, she befriends a baker's family and sets up a delivery service. Lovingly animated, filled with an old-world charm of friendliness, slowness and peace (albeit not without Miyazaki's trademark criticism of technology), this masterpiece unfolds beautifully without needing to be spectacular – and just when you didn't expect it any more it becomes just that. Truly amazing. Miyazaki's based his screenplay on a children's book by Eiko Kadono. Reportedly he set the story in an alternative 1950s Europe, where the World Wars never happened. Wonderful score by Joe Hisaishi. English version, titled *KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE*, features the voice talents of Kirsten Dunst, Debbie Reynolds, Janeane Garofalo, and Phil Hartman, among others.

**Mala Carodejnice** (1986, CZE/GER) **C-96m.** \*½ D: Zdenek Smetana. Poorly animated, loosely structured fairy tale about a young witch, who does all kinds of stupid things before being accepted by the older ones. Completely unappealing. Very small kids may find this spellbinding – for five minutes. Based on the book *Die Kleine Hexe* by popular German writer Otfried Preußler. Released in Germany as *DIE KLEINE HEXE*.

**Mala Ordine, La** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Fernando di Leo. Starring Mario Adorf, Henry Silva, Woody Strode, Adolfo Celi, Sylva Koscina, Ulli Lommel. Violent but ordinary mafia thriller with Adorf a small-time crook who is framed for something he hasn't done and is chased by two American killers (Silva and Strode) and the local mafia headed by Celi. Some interesting casting saves this thriller. Titled *THE ITALIAN CONNECTION* for the American release in 1973 (with a running time of 92m.).

**Malastrana** (1971, ITA/GER/YUG) **C-97m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Aldo Lado. Starring Ingrid Thulin, Jean Sorel, Mario Adorf, Barbara Bach, Fabijan Sovagovic, José Quaglio, Jürgen Drews. Vague mystery about reporter Sorel, who is found dead in a public park in Prague. However, he is not really dead. His mind is alive, and against the prospect of an impending autopsy, he tries to remember what brought him into this situation. It turns out he set out to find his lost girlfriend Bach in the streets of Prague. Interesting giallo is quite well-made and mysterious enough to keep you guessing, but dramatics are uneven and film has little punch. Genre fans shouldn't mind. Score by Ennio Morricone. Writer-director Lado's first

film. Released as LA CORTE NOTTE DELLE BAMBOLE DI VETRO in Italy (MALASTRANA is the film's intended title, though). English titles: SHORT NIGHT OF GLASS DOLLS and PARALYZED.

**Maleficent** (2014, USA/GBR) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Stromberg. Starring Angelina Jolie, Elle Fanning, Charlto Copley, Lesley Manville, Imelda Staunton, Juno Temple, Sam Riley. Disney blockbuster is a variation, not a remake of the classic SLEEPING BEAUTY (1959). Jolie plays the witch who would later curse the young princess, but her own back story is quite touching and explains her grudge against the king. Pleasant-enough, with colorful CGI effects, but dramatically flat, without an identifiable character, at times even annoying (the fairies!). Jolie does her best to make this a memorable performance. Quite dark and violent, not suitable for younger children, it was even released to theaters in a cut version. Fine photography by Dean Semler.

**Malenka** (1969, SPA/ITA) **C-74m. \*\*½ D:** Amando de Ossorio. Starring Anita Ekberg, John Hamilton (=Gianni Medici), Julián Ugarte, Diana Lorys, Adriana Ambesi, Paul Muller. Nicely atmospheric chiller that makes use of the vampire myth. Ekberg learns she has inherited a castle and travels there, only to find her uncle waiting to turn her into a master vampire. Her fiancé Medici becomes suspicious and investigates. Interesting DRACULA variation, with Ekberg hamming it up considerably. Great sets, good score by Carlo Savina. Director de Ossorio also scripted, his first horror film. Some prints runs longer. Alternative titles: BLOODY GIRL, FANGS OF THE LIVING DEAD, MALENKA THE VAMPIRE, THE NIECE OF THE VAMPIRE, THE VAMPIRE'S NIECE.

**Malibu Express** (1985, USA) **C-105m. \*½ D:** Andy Sidaris. Starring Darby Hinton, Sybil Danning, Art Metrano, Shelley Taylor Morgan, Brett Baxter Clark. Pulp fiction about handsome private detective Hinton, whose latest case involves a secret formula stolen by the Russians. What sounds like a 60s spy movie is in fact an 80s sex movie disguised as an action thriller. Gratuitous, both in terms of nudity and plot. It's the Playboy bunnies that get the most attention. Followed by eight(!) sequels, starting with HARD TICKET TO HAWAII (1987).

**Malizie di Venere, Le** (1969, ITA/GER) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Max Dillman (=Massimo Dallamano). Starring Laura Antonelli, Régis Vallée, Ewing Loren, Renate Kasché, Werner Pochath, Mady Rahl, Wolf Ackva, Peter Heeg. Based on Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's notorious work, this erotic drama is about a writer's obsession with naked women, especially Antonelli, whom he marries and asks to torture him both physically and mentally. Film explores (or rather exploits) his sado-masochistic tendencies and his downfall, which leads him to seeking refuge in an asylum, where he tells his story to a psychiatrist. Interesting, well-photographed, and with enough period flavor and nudity to please fans, but pseudo-critical and slowly paced. Antonelli is a wow in one of her first roles. Alternative titles: DEVIL IN THE FLESH, VENUS IM PELZ, and VENUS IN FURS (not to be confused with Jess Franco's film of the same year).

**Mallrats** (1995, USA) **C-94m. \*\*½ D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Jeremy London, Jason Lee, Shannon Doherty, Claire Forlani, Ben Affleck, Joey Lauren Adams, Renée Humphrey, Jason Mewes, Kevin Smith, Ethan Suplee, Stan Lee, Priscilla Barnes, Michael Rooker, Scott Mosier, Brian O'Halloran. More lunacy from CLERKS (1994) director Smith. Two slackers (London and Lee) spend their day at a shopping mall after having been dumped by their girlfriends. There they meet all kinds of different characters, some funny, some dull. Typical mid-90s comedy has, like Smith's other films, acquired a cult following. Critically drubbed because of general crudeness and some mean-spirited scenes involving children. It's fun for Smith's fans (and filmbuffs)! Comic book artist Stan Lee plays himself.

**Malpertuis** (1971, BEL/FRA/GER) **C-91m. \*\*\*** D: Harry Kümel. Starring Orson Welles, Susan Hampshire, Michel Bouquet, Mathieu Carrière, Jean-Pierre Cassel, Daniel Pilon, Walter Rilla, Sylvie Vartan, Johnny Hallyday. Interesting curio, unreleased for many years. A sailor returns home only to find his family's house gone. He stumbles through the streets and wakes up in Malpertuis, a mysterious mansion owned by patriarch Welles, who is dying. The old man's last will stipulates that every potential inheritor must stay at Malpertuis until they die. Surreal, dreamy art direction, fine Georges Delerue score, atmospheric settings make this an impressive experience, although main character is hardly appealing and plot is confusing at times. Reportedly works better in uncut version, which runs around two hours. Not a horror film, although a nice companion piece to director Kümel's LE ROUGE AUX LEVRES (DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS), released the same year. Photographed by Gerry Fisher, based on the novel by Jean Ray. Also known as THE LEGEND OF DOOM HOUSE.

**Maltese Falcon, The** (1941, USA) **100m. \*\*\*½** D: John Huston. Starring Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Gladys George, Peter Lorre, Sydney Greenstreet, Ward Bond, Elisha Cook Jr., James Burke, Charles Drake, William Hopper, Walter Huston. Fast-moving, fast-talking, exciting crime classic from the book by Dashiell Hammett (filmed before in 1931). Bogart plays private eye Sam Spade with great expertise, as he is drawn into struggle for mysterious, immensely expensive title token. Sometimes he is so laid-back that his motivations are a great mystery, too. Sort-of abrupt ending keeps this from being an knock-out classic. Directorial debut of maverick director John Huston. This was also actor Greenstreet's first film (at 62!).

**Mama** (2013, CDN/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Andy Muschietti. Starring Jessica Chastain, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Megan Charpentier, Isabelle Néllisse, Daniel Kash, Javier Botet, Jane Moffat. Horror chiller about two little children, who mysteriously disappeared when their father killed their mother. Years later, they are discovered living in a cabin in the woods and no one knows how they managed to survive. Deeply disturbed, they move in with their uncle and rock-chick girlfriend Chastain. Soon it becomes clear that the ghost who cared for them has followed them to their suburban house. Partly effective horror with some good shock scenes remains too pretentious and clichéd in its plot. Still, fairly good stuff. Executive produced by Guillermo del Toro, based on director Muschietti's 3m. short made in 2008.

**Mamba** (1988, ITA) **C-81m. \*\*½** D: Mario Orfini. Starring Trudie Styler, Gregg Henry, Bill Moseley. Styler is trapped in her apartment with a deadly snake, courtesy ex-lover Henry. The mamba must bite within 60 minutes, or else it will die. Silly premise, but well-photographed (by Dante Spinotti) and directed. Good sound effects and score by Giorgio Moroder. Some chills make this an okay view. Also released as FAIR GAME.

**Man, The** (2005, USA) **C-83m. \*\*½** D: Les Mayfield. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Eugene Levy, Luke Goss, Miguel Ferrer, Susie Essman. Tough cop Jackson, whose partner has just been killed, is about to get in touch with a weapons dealer, when conservative family father Levy steps into his way. The dental appliances salesman is forced to work with Jackson, as the crooks believe him to be the contact. Buddy movie comedy sounds like it's second-rate (which in some parts it is), but you end up being entertained quite well. Levy (AMERICAN PIE) is funny.

**Management** (2008, USA) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Stephen Belber. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Steve Zahn, Margo Martindale, Fred Ward, Woody Harrelson. Romantic comedy drama about essentially unhappy travelling businesswoman Aniston, who stays at caretaker Zahn's motel and finds his attempts to be romantic with her amusing. However, Zahn refuses to give her up, even follows her home... and strikes a cord within her. Quite odd comedy drama has

some laughs, but Aniston's character is rather weird and not really compelling. Watch it for Zahn's typical goofball persona, if you must.

**Man Called Noon, The** (1973, GBR/ITA/SPA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½D:** Peter Collinson. Starring Richard Crenna, Stephen Boyd, Rosanna Schiaffino, Farley Granger, Patty Shepard, Angel del Pozo, Howard Ross, Aldo Sambrell. Unusual European western about clever gunslinger Crenna, who, suffering from amnesia, tries to reconstruct his identity. Is he a killer? Elaborate camera angles, nice score by Luis Bacalov, but overall too self-conscious. Crenna is quite good, but one would still wish for a tougher hero like Clint Eastwood, for instance. Not bad, though, based on the novel by Louis L'Amour. Italian title: LO CHIAMA VANO MEZZOGIORNO. Spanish title: UN HOMBRE LLAMADO NOON.

**Man Cheng Jin Dai Huang Jin Jia** (2006, HGK/CHI) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Zhang Yimou. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Gong Li, Jay Chou, Li uye, Ni Dahong, Qin Junjie. Sumptuous costume drama, very much in the league of the director's earlier HERO and HOUSE OF FYLING DAGGERS. Talky plot is about emperor Chow, who is at odds with his wife and one of his sons. Court intrigue and political ambitions complicate the proceedings, but visually breathtaking scenery (including astounding production design and costumes) takes first chair. Zhang's commanding direction makes the difference. Based on a play by Cao Yu, written by the director. English title: CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER.

**Manchester by the Sea** (2016, USA) **C-137m. \*\*\* D:** Kenneth Lonergan. Starring Casey Affleck, Lucas Hedges, Michelle Williams, Kyle Chandler, Stephen Henderson, C.J. Wilson, Matthew Broderick. Downbeat but engrossing drama about janitor Affleck, who finds out he was selected to be his nephew's guardian in his late brother's will. Unable to make commitments since he separated from his wife Williams, Affleck struggles with the task. In flashbacks we learn more about his past. Realist view of an unusual situation in every-day settings. Oscar-winning screenplay by the director. Affleck also won an Academy Award for Best Actor.

**Man From Earth, The** (2007, USA) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Schenkman. Starring David Lee Smith, Tony Todd, John Billingsley, Ellen Crawford. Interesting thought-experiment seems like a filmed play or a TV movie: A professor is about to leave his community and some friends come by his little house for an impromptu good-bye party. He then confesses to them that he has lived for some 14,000 years and never aged, thus moving on to new places every ten years. Set in one place only, it's stagey but well-acted. At times the premise gets paperthin, but it's always interesting, even fascinating at times. The title makes no sense. Written by Jerome Bixby.

**Man from U.N.C.L.E., The** (2015, USA/GBR) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Guy Ritchie. Starring Henry Cavill, Armie Hammer, Alicia Vikander, Elizabeth Debicki, Hugh Grant, Jared Harris. Big-screen version of the 1960s spy series is generally lifeless and unfunny. During the cold war, a CIA agent has to work with a Russian in order to find missing scientist among a very rich family of Italian industrialists. Nice production design, but film goes on forever without ever creating suspense or excitement. It's much too talky for that.

**Mangiati Vivi** (1979, ITA) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Janet Agren, Robert Kerman, Ivan Rassimov, Paola Senatore, Mel Ferrer. A young woman (Agren) travels to South East Asia to look for her lost sister in the jungle. Teaming up with vietnam vet Kerman, she soon finds her with a group of religious fanatics, the so-called Purification sect. Around their small camp there's cannibals waiting for fresh human flesh. Gruesome exploitation movie, repulsive in its depiction of animal violence. Story-telling is accept-able, though. Strictly for trash fans! Screenplay by director Lenzi (CANNIBAL FEROX). English title was originally EATEN ALIVE FROM[sic!] THE CANNIBALS. The FROM was later changed to BY.

**Manhattan Baby** (1982, ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Christopher Connelly, Martha Taylor, Brigitta Boccoli, Giovanni Frezza, Lucio Fulci. Archaeologist Connelly returns from excavations in Egypt, unknowing that his daughter has taken a cursed amulet with her. Back in New York, all kinds of inexplicable things start to happen. Confusing shocker, redeemed somewhat by stylish camerawork, direction and an okay score. Still, only for Fulci fans. Also known as EVIL EYE, EYE OF THE EVIL DEAD, and THE POSSESSED.

**Manhunter** (1986, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Mann. Starring William Petersen, Kim Greist, Joan Allen, Brian Cox, Dennis Farina, Stephen Lang, Tom Noonan. Typical 80s thriller, made by stylist Mann, about a weary cop Petersen, who tries to catch a serial killer by thinking himself into his mind. He gets unexpected help from infamous criminal Hannibal ('The Cannibal') Lecter. Okay plot development climaxes in furiously directed finale, which makes great use of Iron Butterfly's 60s hit *In a Gadda Da Vida*. Stylish photography by Dante Spinotti. Based on Thomas Harris' novel *Red Dragon*, followed by THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS in 1991 and HANNIBAL in 2001.

**Maniac** (1980, USA) **C-87m. \*\* D:** William Lustig. Starring Joe Spinell, Caroline Munro, Gail Lawrence, Kelly Piper, Rita Montone, Tom Savini, William Lustig. Infamous, disgusting would-be slasher drama about serial killer Spinell, who gruesomely murders women at random, scalping them to decorate the dummies in his small apartment with their hair. Pseudo-psychological trash is one of the most unbearable films of all time. As nihilistic as HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER, but much less meaningful. Why two stars instead of a bomb? The film is not badly made, quite suspenseful, well-acted by Spinell and boasts some truly over-the-top special effects (by Tom Savini). Somehow it has to be seen to be believed (if you can bear it). Don't watch if in doubt. Actor Spinell also cowrote and coproduced the picture. He reprised this role sort of in THE LAST HORROR FILM (1984). Remade in 2012.

**Maniac** (2012, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Franck Khalfoun. Starring Elijah Wood, America Olivo, Nora Arnezeder, Liane Balaban. Remake of the notorious 1980 slasher movie about a psychopath (Wood), who feels compelled to kill women, again and again. He scalps them and puts their hair on mannequins, which act as his wives. Pretty depressing, this would work as a psycho study, but has a stupid finale, which undermines any noble intentions. Cute Arnezeder comes off best. Also known as ALEXANDRE AJA'S MANIAC (Aja coscripted and coproduced it).

**Maniac Cop** (1988, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** William Lustig. Starring Tom Atkins, Bruce Campbell, Laurene Landon, Richard Roundtree, William Smith, Robert Z'Dar, Sheree North, Jake LaMotta, William Lustig, Sam Raimi, George 'Buck' Flower. Action thriller with horror elements about a mysterious, seemingly superhuman cop, who goes on a rampage in the streets of New York City. Campbell, a police officer himself, tries to solve the case of the bloody killings and hunt down the maniac. Not-bad B-thriller with eerie score, stylish directorial touches and atmosphere to spare. Good of its type. From the director of MANIAC (1980). Written and produced by B-movie icon Larry Cohen. That's Sam Raimi playing the reporter at the parade. Followed by two sequels in 1990 and 1992. Japanese print has several (uninteresting) additional scenes totalling 6m.

**Maniac Cop 2** (1990, USA) **C-88m. \*½ D:** William Lustig. Starring Robert Davi, Claudia Christian, Michael Lerner, Bruce Campbell, Laurene Landon, Robert Z'Dar, Charles Napier, Sam Raimi. Sequel to the quite good MANIAC COP (1988) has a silly setup which undermines the whole film. The killer cop didn't really die in the first film, he survived and is going on another rampage. Campbell (the first film's hero) is killed early on. Notwithstanding some interesting casting, several effective scenes, this sequel is as uninspired as any FRIDAY THE

13<sup>TH</sup> follow-up. Written and produced (again) by Larry Cohen. Followed by MANIAC COP 3: BADGE OF SILENCE.

**Mani di Pistolero** (1965, ITA/SPA) **C-75m. SCOPE** 7 D: Rafael Romero Marchent. Starring Craig Hill. Cheap Euro-western about gunslinger who has kidnapped the son of a sheriff in order to be revenged on the lawman. Atypical spaghetti western with ham-fisted direction generates no interest whatsoever. There's also very little action.

**Manitou, The** (1978, USA/CDN) **C-99m. SCOPE** \*\* D: William Girdler. Starring Tony Curtis, Michael Ansara, Susan Strasberg, Stella Stevens, Jon Cedar, Ann Sothorn, Burgess Meredith. Pretty campy, rather ludicrous horror film about phony psychic Curtis, whose girlfriend Strasberg develops a tumor on her neck, which turns out to be the fetus of an ancient medicine man waiting to be reborn! Curtis looks as if he will burst out laughing after each silly line, but film is also quite well-made and well-scored (by Lalo Schifrin). Worth a look for horror buffs (and those of unintentional humor). Plot is awfully similar to that of THE EXORCIST (1973). Some prints include additional scenes. Director Girdler's last film; he died after this was completed in a helicopter crash at the age of 30.

**Mann mit dem Goldenen Pinsel, Der** (1969, GER/ITA) **C-79m. \*\*** D: Franz Marischka. Starring Willi Colombini, Edwige Fenech, Rainer Basedow, Marcella Michelangeli, Dick Randall, Ellen Umlauf, Rolf Eden, Calisto Tanzi. Erotic comedy about a frustrated young painter, who suddenly becomes famous when an arts dealer likes one of his paintings made in a fit of rage. His girlfriend Hong Kong (Fenech) soon has competition in sexy Michelangeli. A trivial time capsule with nudity, slightly amusing. Fenech fans may find this a must for their collection as the actress bares it all here (especially in a delightful body-paint scene). Some prints may run longer. Italian title: L'UOMO DAL PENNELLO D'ORO. English titles: THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN BRUSH, LET IT ALL HANG OUT.

**Man of Iron** (1972, HGC) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Chang Cheh. Starring Chen Kuan-Tai. Young hot shot Joe (Kuan-Tai) interferes with crime syndicate when he falls in love with a prostitute. Imaginative direction and camerawork make pulp melodrama worthwhile, although the plot is strictly second-rate. The violent fight scenes are somewhat reminiscent of WEST SIDE STORY(!).

**Mano Nera – Prima della Mafia, Più della Mafia, La** (1973, ITA) **C-90m. \*\*** D: Antonio Raccoppi. Starring Lionel Stander, Rosanna Fratello, Michele Placido, Luigi Pistilli, Philippe Leroy, Corrado Gaipa, Nino Vingelli, Roger Brown, Salvatore Billa. Modest mafia drama about young immigrant Placido, who tries to get by in New York City, then gets involved with the mafia. Same basic story told in dozens of other films at the time, this one does not stand out. Only good thing about it is Carlo Rustichelli's score. English title: THE BLACK HAND.

**Man Outside, The** (1967, GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Samuel Gallu. Starring Van Heflin, Heidelinde Weis, Pinkas Braun, Peter Vaughan, Charles Gray, Paul Maxwell, Ronnie Barker. Heflin is fine as weary spy, who gets ousted from the CIA and fends for himself in case of double-crossing colleague. Competently made, realistic, but a bit too talky for its own good. Based on a novel by Gene Stackleborg.

**Mansión de la Locura, La** (1973, MEX/USA) **C-84m. \*\*½** D: Juan López Moctezuma. Starring Claudio Brook, Arthur Hansel, Ellen Sherman, Martin LaSalle, David Silva, Mónica Serna. Oddly fascinating drama about a researcher (Hansel), who travels to an insane asylum somewhere in the woods. The doctor in charge (Brook) explains his therapy of soothing and shows him around in the facility. Hansel starts doubting his methods, when a woman is about to be treated cruelly. A performance film, and as such a veritable 70s time capsule, this feels like it was made by a commune or a troupe of artists. Despite familiar trappings, this is not a horror film. Impressive settings seem to be an abandoned factory.

Recommended to fans of Alejandro Jodorowsky, who was a close friend of director Moctezuma. Based on a short story by Edgar Allen Poe called "The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Feather". English titles: THE MANSION OF MADNESS, DR. GOUDRON'S SYSTEM, DR. TARR'S PIT OF HORRORS, DR. TARR'S TORTURE DUNGEON, and HOUSE OF MADNESS.

**Mansión de la Niebla, La** (1972, SPA/ITA) **C-84m. \*\*½ D:** Francisco Lara Polop, Pedro Lazaga. Starring Andrés Resino, Analía Gadé, Evelyn Stewart (=Ida Galli), Annalisa Nardi, Alberto Dalbés, Georges Rigaud. Interesting mix of gothic and giallo elements in quite atmospheric shocker. Several characters get lost in thick fog and stumble into mysterious mansion in the middle of nowhere. Soon they are confronted with Stewart's sinister family history. Some scares, diverting for fans. Complete version runs 86m. Polop's first movie as a director. His last was SEDUCTION OF A PRIEST in 1990. English titles: MURDER MANSION, MANIAC MANSION.

**Man Who Changed His Mind, The** (1936, GBR) **65m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Stevenson. Starring Boris Karloff, Anna Lee, John Loder, Frank Cellier, Cecil Parker. Intriguing chiller about brilliant scientist Karloff, who has found a way of transporting minds from one chimp to another, and he thinks this works with humans, too! Well-done, with the climax especially effective. Also known as THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN, THE BRAINSNATCHER, DR. MANIAC.

**Man Who Fell to Earth, The** (1976, GBR) **C-133m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Nicolas Roeg. Starring David Bowie, Rip Torn, Candy Clark, Buck Henry, Bernie Casey, Jackson D. Kane, Claudia Jennings. Intelligent, at times fascinating science-fiction drama about "alien" Bowie, who crashlands on the Earth and uses his superior intelligence to establish a leading company. His alien-ness ultimately breaks his spirit, especially since he has had to abandon his wife and kids on their planet. Very adult parable on human estrangement and the inhuman pressures of society, not to be digested easily. Bowie is perfectly cast as the fragile being from space. First-rate photography by Anthony B. Richmond. Paul Mayersberg adapted the novel by Walter Tevis. Originally shown at 140m. Remade as a TV movie in 1987.

**Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, The** (1962, USA) **123m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Ford. Starring John Wayne, James Stewart, Vera Miles, Lee Marvin, Edmond O'Brien, John Carradine, Woody Strode, Strother Martin, Lee Van Cleef. Classic western by genre master John Ford is elegantly framed story about naïve young lawyer Stewart, who comes to the West, thinking his ideas about law are superior to local gunplay. It turns out that he is taught about the West as much as he tries to teach them. Brilliant opening and closing scenes (the frame), the actual story relies too much on comic relief, but otherwise this is one of the best American westerns of the 1960s, with excellent acting by all.

**Man Who Wasn't There, The** (2001, USA) **116m. \*\*\*½ D:** Joel Coen. Starring Billy Bob Thornton, Frances McDormand, Michael Badalucco, James Gandolfini, Katherine Borowitz, Jon Polito, Scarlett Johansson, Tony Shalhoub, George Ives, Ted Raimi. After BLOOD SIMPLE (and to some degree, FARGO) the Coens have fashioned another film noir tale about adultery and murder. Low-key personality Thornton, a barber in a Californian town of the late 1940s, finds out that his wife McDormand is cheating on him. He plots to blackmail her lover, in order to invest the money in seedy businessman Polito's business idea. Needless to say, this is just the beginning of a serpentine story. Immaculate atmosphere and photography (glistening black-and-white by Roger Deakins, who earned an Oscar nomination) in story that is sometimes too slow and ponderous (like its lead character) but certainly unusual, with some striking twists and ideas. Again, some highly original, ultimately engrossing writing by Joel and Ethan Coen. A must for their followers. This was their first movie without any comic touches since MILLER'S CROSSING (1990). Excellent production

design (by Coen regular Dennis Gassner) makes this look like it was actually filmed in the late 1940s. Moody score by Carter Burwell includes pieces by Mozart and Beethoven.

**Man Who Would Be King, The** (1975, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John Huston. Starring Sean Connery, Michael Caine, Christopher Plummer, Saeed Jaffrey, Shakira Caine. Elaborate film version of Rudyard Kipling's 1888 short story, with Caine and Connery as two loafers who attempt to become Kings in a distant land, Kafiristan, by drilling the people like in the army. Framework with reporter Plummer differs from that of the book and the imperial context suffers, but director Huston seems to be in his element when depicting life in Kafiristan. Interesting, funny, well-acted, but not a typical adventure yarn.

**Man With Bogart's Face, The** (1980, USA) **C-111m. \*\*½** D: Robert Day. Starring Robert Sacchi, Franco Nero, Michelle Phillips, Olivia Hussey, Misty Rowe, Victor Buono, Herbert Lom, Sybil Danning, George Raft, Yvonne De Carlo, Philip Baker Hall. Amusing take on Hollywood film noir stars Sacchi as a private detective, who gets facial surgery to look like his idol Humphrey Bogart and then takes on a case à la *THE MALTESE FALCON* (1941). Good fun for buffs, although plot could have been a little more focused and tighter. Almost good. Sacchi does a great Bogart impression (as in the giallo *CASA D'APPUNTAMENTO*). Written and produced by Andrew J. Fenady, based on his novel. Also known as *SAM MARLOW, PRIVATE EYE*.

**Man with the Golden Gun, The** (1974, GBR) **C-125m. \*\*\*** D: Guy Hamilton. Starring Roger Moore, Christopher Lee, Brit Eklund, Maud Adams, Hervé Villechaize, Clifton James, Richard Loo, Marc Lawrence, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn. Exotic, lavish 007 adventure, Moore's second outing as the super-spy. Bond is led to believe that Scaramanga, the world's best assassin, is out to kill him, but it turns out he wants to acquire a device that produces solar power. Occasionally silly, and not airtight, this is not one of the best Bond films, but still good because of the cast, the action and overall Bond flair. Certainly an answer to the Kung Fu boom of the 70s and, more accurately, to Bruce Lee's *ENTER THE DRAGON* (see opening scene).

**Maps to the Stars** (2014, CDN/GER/USA/FRA) **C-111m. \*½** D: David Cronenberg. Starring Julianne Moore, Mia Wasikowska, John Cusack, Evan Bird, Olivia Williams, Robert Pattinson. Off-putting psycho drama set in Hollywood, where psychotic actress Moore (in a terrific performance) is trying to get a role played by her late mother, and young Wasikowska, who becomes her assistant, but tries to reconnect with her family, who's afraid of her. Almost every single character is either cynical or off-putting, or both. Cronenberg ventures into *CRASH* territory here, but this lacks any kind of fascination. If watching Moore wiping her butt on the toilet is your cup of tea, tune in.

**Mar Adentro** (2004, SPA/FRA/ITA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alejandro Amenábar. Starring Javier Bardem, Belén Rueda, Lola Duenas, Mabel Rivera, Celso Bugallo, Clara Segura, Joan Dalmau. Remarkable drama about middle-aged Bardem, who has been a quadriplegic for over twenty years and has now decided to go to court to have his final wish fulfilled: to end his life. The family around Bardem cannot understand him, but lawyer Rueda is fascinated by the case. Beautifully handled drama is based on a real case. The cast is flawless, Amenábar's score is heart-felt. An interesting contribution to the discussion of euthanasia, though one might have wished for more controversy. Written by Mateo Gil and the director, who also edited and coproduced. Oscar-winner for Best Foreign Language Film. English titles: *THE SEA INSIDE*, and *THE SEA WITHIN*.

**Marathon Man** (1976, USA) **C-125m. \*\*\*** D: John Schlesinger. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Laurence Olivier, Roy Scheider, William Devane, Marthe Keller, Fritz Weaver. Superior thriller, based on the novel by William Goldman. Hoffman plays an ambitious and successful

history student, who is drawn into a large-scale diamond smuggle involving his businessman brother Scheider and Nazi-criminal Olivier. Fine direction by Schlesinger, good, bizarre score by Michael Small make this an intriguing experience, although the script by Goldman (with the uncredited assistance of Robert Towne) tries to be as complex as the novel, and fails (of course). Infamous torture scene was shortened after preview audiences found it too disturbing and repellent. Cinematography by Conrad Hall.

**Marat/Sade (The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum at Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade)** (1966, GBR) **C-120m.** \*\*\*½ D: Peter Brook. Starring Patrick Magee, Clifford Rose, Glenda Jackson, Ian Richardson, Brenda Kempner, Ruth Baker, Michael Williams, Freddie Jones. Hypnotic, disturbing, brilliantly filmed and acted play about the staging of the assassination of Jean-Paul Marat, a key figure in the French Revolution, in an insane asylum. Acted with raw power. Identifies revolution with insanity in a most unusual way. Shoot this rating to \*\*\*\* if you are familiar with the French Revolution. Based on a play by Peter Weiss.

**Marche Pas Sur Mes Lacets** (1977, FRA) **C-87m.** \*½ D : Max Pécas. Starring Sylvain Green, Dominique Jubelin, Jean-Marc Longval, Vanessa Vaylord, Caroline Laurence. Typical low-brow teen comedy about three friends, who have a lot of sexual adventures before entering the army. They pose as hotel managers, when a group of sexy British teens arrives. Lots of nudity, little coherence. Score is quite good. Vaylord had a small role in Polanski's THE TENANT. British video title: THE FRENCH LOVERS.

**March or Die** (1977, USA) **C-104m.** \*\*\*½ D: Dick Richards. Starring Gene Hackman, Terence Hill, Max von Sydow, Catherine Deneuve, Ian Holm, Rufus. Ambitious but lackluster adventure drama about exploits of the French Foreign Legion in Morocco, where they are assigned to protect an ancient burial site. Good cast, but rather unexciting. Photographed by John Alcott.

**Mardi Gras Massacre** (1978, USA) **C-92m.** \*½ D: Jack Weis. Starring Curt Dawson, Gwen Arment, Butch Benit, Nancy Dancer. Cheap trash piece about a religious fanatic who picks prostitutes off the streets of New Orleans and involves them in sacrificial act, which ends by gutting the women. Some unintentional hilarity, not-bad, graphic effects gain this half a star – just don't expect anything remotely movie-like. Deadening.

**Marebito** (2004, JAP) **C-92m.** \*\*\*½ D: Takashi Shimizu. Starring Shinya Tsukamoto, Tomomi Miyashita, Kazuhiro Nakahara, Miho Ninagawa. From the director of the JU-ON films comes this disturbing horror drama about cameraman Tsukamoto, who is obsessed with videotaping everything everywhere. When he films a suicide in the Tokyo subway, he becomes intrigued by the man's motives and thinks the answer to the man's terror-filled demise lies somewhere in the subway system. Indeed, he enters a mysterious world, where he not only encounters the suicide victim, but also a sick, naked girl with fangs. He takes her home and tries to nurture her back to health. What sounds like a bizarre fantasy horror movie, becomes a bit of a letdown as there is no satisfying explanation for anything and cult director-turned-actor Tsukamoto is obviously not up to the difficult role. Still, very interesting for horror devotees, as it not only includes some eerie, disquieting images, but also references early 20th century literature and philosophy (Lovecraft, Shaver). Screenplay by Chiaki Konaka, based on his novel. Subtitled: THE STRANGER FROM AFAR.

**Marginal, Le** (1983, FRA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Jacques Deray. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Henry Silva, Carlos Sotelo Mayor. Violent Belmondo actioner with the French star actor in a typical role: He plays a tough cop who has been assigned to wipe out the organisation of druglord Silva. Slow and offensive at first (and glorifying the macho image of its star), but pace picks

up in second half. Standard action plot has nothing new to offer, however. Ennio Morricone composed the score.

**Mariachi, El** (1992, MEX/USA) **C-81m**. \*\*\* D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Carlos Gallardo, Consuelo Gómez, Jaime de Hoyos, Peter Marquardt, Reinol Martinez. Rodriguez' debut feature, which he made on a shoestring budget of \$7,000 (at the incredible age of 24). A harmless guitar player (=mariachi) is mistaken for a hitman and must run from gun-wielding assassins in a Mexican village. A bit slight, but ironic throughout, well-directed and sharply edited (by Rodriguez himself), its technical finesse keeps you watching. A sleeper hit, which the director sort of remade as *DESPERADO* in 1995.

**Marie-Chantal Contre le Docteur Kha** (1965, FRA/SPA/ITA/MAR) **C-111m**. \*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Marie Laforêt, Francisco Rabal, Serge Reggiani, Charles Denner, Akim Tamiroff, Roger Hanin, Stéphane Audran, Claude Chabrol, Henri Attal, Gérard Tichy. Espionage spoof by none other than Claude Chabrol, who casts singer Laforêt as a hapless tourist, who is given a blue panther jewel by a stranger on a train and is followed by all kinds of people (Russian, American, and those working for villain Tamiroff) from Switzerland to Morocco. Absolutely pointless, perhaps the *OCEAN'S THIRTEEN* of its time. Lots of stars but hardly entertaining. Chabrol made several more commercial films of this kind, like *LA ROUTE DE CORINTHE* (1967), before starting on his incredible run in the late 60s. Bertrand Tavernier was production assistant, credited as 'chargé de presse', and Claude Zidi was camera operator. English title: *BLUE PANTHER*, and *MARIE-CHANTAL VS. DOCTOR KHA*.

**Marie-Octobre** (1959, FRA) **99m**. \*\*\* D: Julien Duvivier. Starring Bernard Blier, Robert Dalban, Danielle Darrieux, Paul Frankeur, Jeanne Fusier-Gir, Paul Guers, Daniel Ivernel, Paul Meurisse, Serge Reggiani, Noël Roquevert, Lino Ventura. Darrieux summons nine men to her mansion, all former colleagues in the *Résistance* movement in WW2, now respectable members of society. It turns out she wants to find the man who betrayed them fifteen years ago and who caused the death of their leader. First-rate whodunit with intriguing twists and a top cast. Recommended. Based on the novel by Jacques Robert.

**Mari Iyagi** (2002, KOR) **C-82m**. \*\*½ D: Lee Sung-gang. Acclaimed Korean animated feature about two adolescent boys, who spend a summer together and discover a magical world in an old lighthouse. What sounds like Studio Ghibli magic, simply isn't. The animation is drab, with the faces lacking most features, the direction seems weird, and the story-telling strange. It takes much too long for anything to happen, when it does it's mostly depressing. That said, film is not bad and certainly worth a look for animation buffs, but the magic (and meaning) almost completely eluded me. English title: *MY BEAUTIFUL GIRL MARI*.

**Marins Perdus, Les** (2003, FRA) **C-107m**. \*\*½ D: Claire Devers. Starring Bernard Giraudeau, Miki Manojlovic, Sergio Peris-Mencheta, Marie Trintignant, Audrey Tautou, Darry Cowl. After their boss goes broke, the crewmembers aboard a freighter abandon ship. Only three men stay behind, with a rather depressing outlook. Moody drama is heavy-going most of the way; saved by a stylish approach and good performances. Based on the novel by Jean-Claude Izzo. English title: *LOST SEAMEN*.

**Mario Bava: Maestro of the Macabre** (2000, USA) **C-60m**. \*\*\* D: Charles Preece, Garry S. Grant. Insightful documentary about a rediscovered genius of 20<sup>th</sup> century cinema: Mario Bava. Clips of most of his films are shown in-between interviews with family members (like his son Lamberto), collaborators (like Alfredo Leone or Carlo Rambaldi) and admirers (Joe Dante, Tim Burton). Successfully attempts to combine tid-bits about his work and his personality, a must for his followers and those interested in B-movies. Other interviewees: John Carpenter, Sean S. Cunningham, John Phillip Law, Ib Melchior, Daria Nicolodi, Carlo

Rustichelli, Dardano Sacchetti, John Saxon and the late Samuel Z. Arkoff. Writer-director Preece also made a documentary about Dario Argento that same year.

**Mario Bava: Operazione Paura** (2004, ITA) **C-53m. n/r** D: Gabriele Acerbo, Roberto Pisoni. Featuring Joe Dante, John Landis, Lamberto Bava, Dario Argento, Luigi Cozzi, Ennio Morricone, Mario Monicelli, Fabrizio Bava, Tim Burton, Roger Corman, Roman Coppola, Dino De Laurentiis, Daria Nicolodi, Barbara Steele, Elke Sommer, John Phillip Law, Carlo Rambaldi, Quentin Tarantino, Sergio Stivaletti. TV documentary about the legendary Italian director features lots of interesting interviews, but doesn't give a coherent look at his oeuvre, some movies like ANTEFATTO are not even mentioned. Seems superficial, especially the host Joe Dante seems to look down on Bava's career although he admires his work. Still, a priceless collection of statements on the maestro and his work.

**Mariscal del Infierno, El** (1974, SPA/ARG) **C-88m. \*½** D: León Klimovsky. Starring Paul Naschy, Norma Sebregast, Guillermo Bredeston, Vidal Molina, Eduardo Calvo. Medieval costumer with Naschy an evil marshal, who hires an alchemist to produce the Philosopher's Stone. Meanwhile, his subjects are forming to rebel against him and may have found a leader in Bredeston. Some earnest performances aside, this is extremely tedious and not really a horror film. Naschy also scripted. English titles: DEVIL'S POSSESSED, MARSHAL OF HELL.

**Marley & Me** (2008, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Frankel. Starring Owen Wilson, Jennifer Aniston, Eric Dane, Kathleen Turner, Alan Arkin, Nathan Gamble, Haley Bennett. Comedy drama based on a true story about young journalist couple Wilson and Aniston, who buy a labrador puppy that develops into a rowdy giant of a dog. Film follows about ten years of their lives (the life span of the dog), as they make important decisions in life regarding job and family. Some funny scenes, some drama, true-to-life, but in the end you'll wonder what was special about this story. It could have been anyone's. What's more, there are many better dog movies around (although, admittedly, also worse ones).

**Marlowe** (1969, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Paul Bogart. Starring James Garner, Gayle Hunnicutt, Carroll O'Connor, Rita Moreno, Sharon Farrell, William Daniels, Jackie Coogan, Bruce Lee. Garner plays Raymond Chandler's famous detective in this adaptation of Chandler's novel *The Little Sister*. Marlowe is hired to search for Farrell's brother and discovers a link between his disappearance and some drug-trafficking masterminded by a surgeon. Mystery written by Stirling Silliphant is old-fashioned (in the negative sense of the word) and would be uninteresting today if it wasn't for martial arts legend Bruce Lee's (short) appearance. Lee also choreographed the fights (there are not many, however).

**Marnie** (1964, USA) **C-130m. \*\*\*½** D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Tippi Hedren, Sean Connery, Diane Baker, Martin Gabel, Louise Latham, Bob Sweeney, Alan Napier, Bruce Dern, Alfred Hitchcock. Sophisticated psycho drama from the master about troubled secretary Hedren, who keeps stealing money and changing her identity until she is caught by Connery, a wealthy businessman, who falls in love with her. Can he find out what's troubling her? Plot (based on the Winston Graham novel) is overlong but keeps you involved nevertheless, with some typical Hitchcock elements. The puzzle pieces come together in the stunning final third. Highly recommended, especially to cult movie buffs, as this was a decisive influence on Dario Argento's PROFONDO ROSSO (childhood trauma, nursery rhymes, the color red, mother complex...) Excellent score by Bernard Herrmann.

**Mars Attacks!** (1996, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tim Burton. Starring Jack Nicholson, Glenn Close, Annette Bening, Pierce Brosnan, Danny DeVito, Martin Short, Sarah Jessica Parker, Michael J. Fox, Rod Steiger, Tom Jones, Nathalie Portman, Jim Brown, Pam Grier, Paul Winfield, Lukas Haas, Christina Applegate. Wild spoof of old-fashioned sci-fi movies:

Spaceships from Mars land on Earth and while everybody is hoping the Martians are peaceful creatures they turn out to be quite hostile, wreaking havoc on the entire planet. Who will be able to save the Earth? Superbly designed comedy doesn't bother with a well-constructed plot but uses its brilliant ideas to entertain the audience. Danny Elfman's great score adds to the fun. Great cast is enjoying themselves.

**Martian, The** (2015, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig, Jeff Daniels, Michael Pena, Sean Bean, Kate Mara, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Donald Glover. When a manned mission to Mars is aborted during a violent dust storm, astronaut Damon is left behind, presumed dead. When he awakens the next day, he is faced with almost certain death... unless he can make the best of his scientific expertise as a botanist. Will he hold up until a rescue team – or the next manned mission in five years – makes it to the Red Planet? Expertly made survival thriller is most notable for stunning (3D) images of the Martian surface. The personal crisis seems less interesting than NASA's rescue operation, and there is very little subtlety, but it's still compelling and never boring, despite some artificial plot contraptions. Based on a book by Andy Weir.

**Martin** (1977, USA) **C/B&W-95m. \*\*½ D:** George A. Romero. Starring John Amplas, Lincoln Maazel, Christine Forrest, Elayne Nadeau, Tom Savini, George A. Romero, Michael Gornick. Director Romero's first film in four years (after the apocalyptic THE CRAZIES) is now overshadowed by his masterpiece DAWN OF THE DEAD, which was released only months after MARTIN. This is more a character study than a horror film: Troubled teenager Martin (Amplas) is compelled to kill with razorblades and drinks his victims' blood. His fanatic uncle (Maazel) keeps seeing a vampire in him, and Martin is trying to convince him that he isn't. Some telling social commentary, but awfully low-budget (shot in full-frame) and downbeat. Written and edited by Romero. Effects artist Savini also has a small role. Film was completely re-scored by Goblin (SUSPIRIA) for Italian release.

**Martyrs** (2008, FRA/CDN) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** Pascal Laugier. Starring Morjana Alaoui, Mylène Jampanoi, Catherine Bégin, Robert Toupin, Patricia Tulasne, Xavier Dolan. Difficult to stomach horror thriller that does not offer any kind of relief to its audience. A young girl escapes from torture hell and grows up in an asylum. 15 years later she finds her perpetrators and bluntly kills them. However, there's an imagined(?) demon tormenting her and her girlfriend tries to help her in vain. Is there any escape from this bloody nightmare? The answer is no. Typically nihilistic French horror is competently filmed and has a chilling twist, but it's unrelenting in many ways, not exactly uplifting. Pretty much as gory and vile as it gets, not recommended to anybody who's not into cult or horror. Written by director Laugier (SAINT ANGE).

**Marvin's Room** (1996, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Jerry Zaks. Starring Meryl Streep, Leonardo DiCaprio, Diane Keaton, Robert De Niro, Hume Cronyn, Dan Hedaya. Keaton plays a woman who has cared for her bed-ridden father and his sick sister all her life. When she is also taken ill, she asks her sister (Streep) to come help her out. Streep, however, is facing problems of her own with rebellious son DiCaprio. First half of this drama is not terribly moving, but film improves in the second, as first-rate performances give depth to the characters. Fine score by Rachel Portman. Based on the play by Scott McPherson.

**Mary and Max** (2009, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*½ D:** Adam Elliott. Starring (the voices of) Toni Collette, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Eric Bana, narrated by Barry Humphries. Totally original, clay-animated comedy drama about two disparate characters who get to know each other through letters in the late 1970s. Neglected 9-year-old Mary from Australia contacts lonely 50-ish Asperger's patient Max from New York, and their messages seem to strike a chord in

their souls. Filled with offbeat ideas and quirky animation, this is funny and touching at the same time. More, please! Mary's life story, however, is quite sad, so this is not for children.

**Mary Poppins** (1964, USA) **C-140m**. \*\*\*½ D: Robert Stevenson. Starring Julie Andrews, Dick Van Dyke, David Tomlinson, Glynis Johns, Elsa Lanchester. Charming children's fantasy, based on the books by P.L. Travers, about two "naughty" children and their new nanny (Andrews, in her film debut), who takes them into a marvelous fantasy world. One of the classic films about and for children (by Disney, of course), with delightful music and then-stunning effects interweaving real-action and animation. A treat for kids, though adults may find their minds wandering occasionally. Van Dyke is as delightful as in the later CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG. Oscars went to the lovely Andrews, the editor, the effects team and songwriters/composers Richard and Robert Sherman.

**Maschera del Demonio, La** (1960, ITA) **B&W-83m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Barbara Steele, Ivo Garrani, John Richardson, Andrea Cecchi, Arturo Dominici, Enrico Olivieri, Calra Bindi, Antonio Pierfederici, Tino Bianchi, Germana Dominici. Directorial debut of cinematographer Mario Bava is regarded today as a classic of the genre. Witch/vampire Steele was burned two centuries ago, but her resurrection is impending since a professor has unwittingly spilled some of his blood onto her death mask. Once the premise is established, plot never really takes off, but beautiful photography (by Bava himself) creates one of the finest gothic atmospheres in screen history. Banned upon original release, film has become a cult item. Based on a story a Nikolaj Gogol. This was Bava's first film as a single director and as such - next to LA RAGAZZA CHE SAPEVA TROPPO (THE EVIL EYE) - his only one in black-and-white. Ubaldo Terzano, who photographed several Bava films (e.g. LA FRUSTA E IL CORPO) is credited as camera operator. Trivia notes: The death mask was designed by Mario Bava's father, famous sculptor and painter Eugenio Bava. In 1989, Lamberto Bava (Mario's son) directed a remake of the film. British title: THE MASK OF SATAN. U.S. title: BLACK SUNDAY.

**Maschera del Demonio, La** (1989, ITA/SPA/GER/FRA/POR) **C-94m**. \*\*½ D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Giovanni Guidelli, Debora Caprioglio, Stanko Molnar, Mary Sellers, Alessandra Bonarotta, Michele Soavi, Eva Grimaldi. Little-seen horror film by Lamberto Bava, whose father Mario made his version of the same Gogol story in 1960 (the now-classic BLACK SUNDAY). A group of skiers fall into a crevasse and discover a dead body buried in ice wearing an iron mask. When they take it off, an earthquake leads them into an eerie village, where a priest is the only inhabitant. Forces of evil soon take control of their minds. Atmospheric, wintry horror film plays like a fairy tale at times. It's a bit too melodramatic (not to say hysterical) at times, and the plot drags in the mid-section, but Bava's direction is ambitious. Worth watching for buffs. Interesting links to LA CHIESA (1989), whose director Michele Soavi has a minor role here. Score by Simon Boswell. Also known as DEMONS 5: THE DEVIL'S VEIL.

**Maschera di Cera, La** (1997, ITA/FRA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Sergio Stivaletti. Starring Robert Hossein, Romina Mondello, Riccardo Servento Longhi, Gabriella Giorgelli, Umberto Balli. Well-produced, stylish remake of HOUSE OF WAX with Hossein a sinister artist, whose wax figures look frighteningly real. A newspaper journalist discovers a link between recent disappearances and Hossein's new creations. Superb make-up effects (by the director himself) highlight this chiller. Only marred by sort of awkward flashback sequences. Story concocted by Daniele Stoppa, Lucio Fulci and Dario Argento, who is also credited as artistic supervisor; film has some typical touches, especially the camera moves look as if Argento himself had directed them. Fulci cowrote the screenplay with Stoppa; this was his last project. English title: THE WAX MASK.

**Mask of Fu Manchu, The** (1932, USA) **68m.** \*\*½ D: Charles Brabin, Charles Vidor. Starring Boris Karloff, Lewis Stone, Karen Morley, Charles Starrett, Myrna Loy. Chiller based on Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu character, played excellently by Karloff, whose schemes involve the golden mask of Genghis Khan, with which he wants to rule Asia. Only works intermittently. Charles Vidor was fired after starting the film.

**Mask of Murder** (1985, CDN) **C-88m.** \*½ D: Arne Mettson. Starring Rod Taylor, Valerie Perrine, Christopher Lee, Sam Cook, Terrence Hardiman, Christine McKenna, Cyd Hayman, Frank Brennan. Poor murder mystery with Taylor and Lee on the trail of a serial killer. After the murderer is caught, the killings don't stop, but Taylor seems to be more interested in the fact that his wife is having an affair with another policeman. Predictable, unexciting B-film, somewhat redeemed by the presence of Lee and Taylor.

**Mask of Zorro, The** (1998, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Martin Campbell. Starring Antonio Banderas, Anthony Hopkins, Catherine Zeta-Jones. Stylish reworking of the old legend with Hopkins playing an aged Zorro, who teaches a nobody (Banderas) the art of fencing and fighting, so that the people's suppression by an evil general may end. First-rate action scenes, stunts and explosions, but film is too long and Banderas is unappealing in the lead role. Hopkins as his mentor is much more of a gentleman. Zeta-Jones provides the beautiful love interest. A sure pick for those who can accept Banderas in the lead role.

**Masks** (2011, GER) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Andreas Marschall. Starring Susan Ermich, Magdalena Ritter, Julita Witt, Norbert Losch, Dieter Rita Scholl. Horror thriller about young actress Ermich, who gets turned down at an audition but is invited to an exclusive acting class that teaches by the uncompromising method of a Polish acting guru from the 1970s. At the school there is more going on than meets the eye. Homage to Dario Argento's *SUSPIRIA* (1977) copies many of the classic's iconic shots. Pace and acting are subpar and the going-ons slightly pretentious. Still, not bad, worth a look for fans of Dario Argento and Mario Bava, to whom this is dedicated. Good Goblin imitation score.

**Masque of the Red Death, The** (1964, GBR/USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roger Corman. Starring Vincent Price, Hazel Court, Jane Asher, David Weston, Nigel Green, Patrick Magee. Director Corman's next-to-last Poe adaptation is about nobleman Price, who is entertaining his aristocratic guests while the plague is ravaging the countryside. He takes pleasure in torturing and humiliating people, among them innocent farmer's girl Asher, who is shocked to learn that he is also a devil's worshipper. Plot lacks focus, especially in mid-section, but film is very well-staged and has splendid color cinematography by Nicolas Roeg. Remade in 1989. Followed by *THE TOMB OF LIGEIA* (1965).

**Masquerade** (1965, GBR) **C-102m.** \*\* D: Basil Dearden. Starring Cliff Robertson, Jack Hawkins, Marisa Mell, Michel Piccoli, Bill Fraser, Charles Gray. Rather cheap, lifeless attempt to copy the James Bond movies at the time with Robertson an American spy, who should protect 14-year-old Arab, destined to become heir to an empire, whose uncle would rather have the inheritance for himself. Mell provides the mysterious love interest. Not really bad, but too unspectacular as a copy and too tame as a spoof. Based on a novel by Victor Canning. Also known as *A SHABBY TIGER*, and *OPERATION MASQUERADE*.

**Masques** (1987, FRA) **C-104m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Philippe Noiret, Robin Renucci, Bernadette Lafont, Monique Chaumette, Anne Brochet, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Good satirical comedy about showman Noiret, whose contempt for his audience is slowly revealed to journalist Renucci, who stays at the rich man's house to write his biography. Aptly titled, typical Chabrol movie, with a powerhouse performance by Noiret. Fine score by Matthieu Chabrol, photography by Jean Rabier. International title: *MASKS*.

**Massacre** (1989, ITA) **C-89m**.  $\square$  D: Andrea Bianchi. Starring Maurice Poli, Patrizia Falcone, Pier Maria Cecchini, Paul Muller. Tired slasher movie, produced by Lucio Fulci. A film crew is shocked when inexplicable murders start happening. Who is the killer? You've seen the same story a thousand times before. Movies like this killed the Italian horror film. Some scenes were used in UN GATO NEL CERVELLO (1990).

**Massacre at Central High** (1976, USA) **C-88m**.  $**\frac{1}{2}$  D: René Daalder. Starring Derrel Maury, Andrew Stevens, Robert Carradine, Kimberly Beck, Ray Underwood, Steve Bond. Maury, newcomer at an L.A. high school is faced with a ruthless gang, who eventually cripples his leg. He then proceeds to take revenge on the bullies. Thriller drama has acquired a cult reputation, mainly for being one of the first Nerd/Revenge pictures. It *does* take unusual twists and turns but it's also poorly produced, badly paced and lacks suspense. B-movie fans are advised to have a look at this, but don't expect a gory slasher movie (as the title may suggest). Aka BLACKBOARD MASSACRE.

**Master, The** (1989, HGK) **C-86m**.  $*\frac{1}{2}$  D: Tsui Hark. Starring Jet Li, Wah Yuen, Crystal Kwok, Jerry Trimble, Anne Rickets, Ruben Gonzales, Corey Yuen. Action misfire about a young student (Li) who comes to the States to find his martial arts master, who is hiding from another master. Unappealing characters, lame fight scenes, weak plot, it seems Hark and Li made this while on holiday in the U.S.

**Master, The** (2012, USA) **C-144m**.  $***$  D: Paul Thomas Anderson. Starring Joaquin Phoenix, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams, Laura Dern. Impressive drama driven by great character work about drifter Phoenix, who's shellshocked after WW2 and joins philanthropic leader Hoffman and his group of followers. He becomes his bodyguard of sorts, being obsessed with defending his strange beliefs and rituals. Fascinating but rather heavy-going and sluggish, too. Well-worth watching drama that just didn't make the Oscar shortlist (Phoenix and Hoffman were both nominated).

**Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World** (2003, USA) **C-138m**. **SCOPE**  $**\frac{1}{2}$  D: Peter Weir. Starring Russell Crowe, Paul Bettany, James D'Arcy, Edward Woodall, Chris Larkin. 19<sup>th</sup> century sea-faring tale centers around unconventional title character Crowe, who motivates his crew to pursue French battleship, which may decide the war against Napoleon. Well-filmed action drama, with a literally commanding performance by Crowe, is too simple, too long to spark a genuine interest. Based on the novels by Patrick O'Brian. Cinematographer Russell Boyd deservedly won an Oscar for his work.

**Master Killer** (1980, HGK) **C-79m**. **SCOPE**  $\square$  D: Wang Hong-Chiang. Starring Yuan Lung. Two brothers reunite to avenge the death of their father. Silly comic scenes take all the momentum out of this eastern. Even the action is comparatively lame. Don't confuse this one with the acceptable THE 36TH CHAMBER OF SHAOLIN, which was released in the U.S. as MASTER KILLER.

**Masterminds** (2016, USA) **C-95m**.  $**\frac{1}{2}$  D: Jared Hess. Starring Zach Galifianakis, Kristen Wiig, Owen Wilson. Quite funny comedy about security guy Galifianakis, who falls in love with Wiig and is used by her brother Wilson to pull off a robbery. Some truly funny bits, but generally not enough, often also tasteless. For fans of Galifianakis, who is really good here.

**Master Strikes, The** (1980, HGK) **C-95m**. **SCOPE**  $\square$  D: Kao Pao-Shu. Starring Meng Yuan-Wen, Meg Lam, Ka Sa-Fa. Stupid kung fu comedy about three idiots in search of a stolen jade statuette. Film disintegrates after an OK first 15 minutes.

**Master With Cracked Fingers** (1971, HGK) **C-82m**. **SCOPE**  $**$  D: Chin Hsin. Starring Jackie Chan, Simon Yuen, Shih Tien, Tien Feng, Casanova Wong. Jackie Chan's first starring vehicle is simply an incoherent martial arts movie. Jackie plays a young fighter who is educated by a Drunken Master and later gets involved with the 'bad guys' in a restaurant, where he works

as a waiter. Plot is really impossible to describe (scenes without Jackie were added for the release in the late 70s). The fight scenes are okay and make the movie watchable. Also known as LITTLE TIGER FROM CANTON, SNAKE FIST FIGHTER, STRANGER IN HONG KONG, TEN FINGERS OF DEATH.

**Matador, The** (2005, USA/EIR/GER) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Richard Shepard. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Greg Kinnear, Hope Davis, Philip Baker Hall, Dylan Baker, Adam Scott. Off-beat comedy drama about immoral, burned-out hitman Brosnan, who travels the world killing people. One day he meets businessman Kinnear, whose life is at a crossroads. Movie examines their relationship with ironic touches. Brosnan, obviously spoofing his James Bond roles, gives a great performance, but script is too tentative and hardly exciting. Written by the director.

**Matango** (1963, JAP) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ishiro Honda. Starring Akira Kubo, Kumi Mizuno, Hiroshi Koizumi, Kenji Sahara, Hiroshi Tachikawa. Slowly paced but not uninteresting horror film from the GOJIRA director about a group of people, who are shipwrecked on an island after a storm. It turns out the gigantic mushrooms growing on the island are of a deadly, infectious kind. Good score, quite well-acted, atmospheric (studio) sets and cinematography, but frustratingly slow. Worth a look for horror buffs, especially in remastered 2.55:1 Tohoscope print. Based on a story by William Hope Hodgson. English titles: ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE, CURSE OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE, and FUNGUS OF TERROR.

**Matchless** (1966, ITA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Alberto Lattuada. Starring Patrick O'Neal, Donald Pleasence, Henry Silva, Ira Fürstenberg, Jacques Herlin, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Howard St. John. Italian James Bond imitation – or spoof – about journalist O'Neal, who is transformed into a special agent, also because he has a magical ring which makes him invisible (*Lord of the Rings*, anybody?). Wildly plotted, mostly silly adventure. Some funny scenes make it watchable. Pleasence plays the bad guy, one year before becoming a Bond villain in *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE* (1967). Score by Ennio Morricone. Edited by Franco Fraticelli.

**Matchmaker, The** (1997, USA/EIR) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Mark Joffe. Starring Janeane Garofalo, David O'Hara, Milo O'Shea, Denis Leary, Jay O. Sanders, Rosaleen Linehan, Paul Hickey. Funny romantic comedy about a woman who travels to Ireland to find the relatives of her boss, a U.S. Senator, who is in the middle of an election campaign. She arrives there during the annual matchmaking festival and falls in love despite her initial aversion against the folks there. Not very credible but very entertaining and with a beautiful country setting.

**Match Point** (2005, GBR/USA/LUX) **C-124m. \*\*½ D:** Woody Allen. Starring Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Emily Mortimer, Scarlett Johansson, Matthew Goode, Brian Cox, Penelope Wilton, James Nesbitt. Rhys Meyers, a former tennis pro, becomes involved with British upper-class family, becomes engaged with Mortimer, but jeopardizes things when he starts an affair with her brother's fiancé Johansson. Allen's first film made outside the U.S. makes good use of British locations, is well-acted and solidly told, but later twists make it unsatisfying, and it goes on too long (it's also Woody's longest movie to date). Woodyphiles might boost the rating by half a star.

**Matchstick Men** (2003, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ridley Scott. Starring Nicolas Cage, Sam Rockwell, Alison Lohman, Bruce Altman, Bruce McGill, Jenny O'Hara. Cage plays a trickster, a fraud, who runs a "business" with his pal Rockwell. He is also highly psychotic and keeps everything in his house painstakingly clean. His life gets a spin when he meets his 14-year-old daughter for the first time, a girl who'd rather spend her life learning his fraudulent methods than staying with her mum. Well-acted slice-of-life with a criminal twist is also well-directed and edited. The only thing putting you off is the soundtrack, which tries to

incorporate just too many different styles. The ending also disappoints a little, but Cage is really something to see – again. Scott also coproduced this film, based on the book by Eric Garcia. Score by Hans Zimmer.

**Matilda** (1996, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Danny DeVito. Starring Mara Wilson, Danny DeVito, Rhea Perlman, Embeth Davidtz, Pam Ferris, Paul Reuben, Jon Lovitz. Children's fantasy, based on the Roald Dahl story about super-intelligent girl (Wilson), who grows up in a family of morons and is ultimately sent to a despotic girls' school run by Ferris. Starts out very nicely, with lots of funny bits but once Matilda is separated from her parents, film descends a spiral of violent and dark humor. Well-photographed (just like a children's fantasy should be), but this is more for older kids.

**Matinee** (1990, CDN) **C-91m. \*\* D:** Richard Martin. Starring Ron White, Gillian Barber, Jeff Schultz, Beatrice Boepple, Timothy Webber. Two years after someone was killed during a horror movie festival, the event is brought back to the town, and – guess what - the killer might also return. Tame, unexciting TV movie that calls itself a horror thriller. Ambitious, solidly filmed but far too self-conscious. Also called MIDNIGHT MATINEE sometimes.

**Matrix, The** (1999, USA) **C-136m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Larry and Andy Wachowski. Starring Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, Gloria Foster, Joe Pantoliano, Marcus Chong, Paul Goddard. Ultra-cool hi-tech sci-fi thriller with Keanu Reeves playing a hacker-turned-messiah, who discovers the world to be a computer simulation brought about by artificial intelligence, which has taken over since World War III. Together with rebel leaders Fishburne and Moss he battles seemingly indestructable androids in a computer world where all forces of nature can be overcome. Bustling with H.R. Gigeresque imagery and not-to-be believed computer stunts, film is extremely well-directed and takes the concept of artificial intelligence into new directions. Script is overlong, however, and its characters superficial (especially Reeves). Still, an intriguing sci-fi cross between *BLADE RUNNER* (1982) and *STRANGE DAYS* (1995), followed by two sequels in 2003.

**Matrix Reloaded, The** (2003, USA) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Larry and Andy Wachowski. Starring Keanu Reeves, Carrie Ann-Moss, Laurence Fishburne, Hugo Weaving, Monica Bellucci, Anthony Zerbe, Jada Pinkett Smith, Gloria Foster. Sequel to the 1999 blockbuster features more of the same computer stunts and technical wizardry. Reeves, the messiah of the ailing human race, must help to defend their last outpost, called Zion, from evil scourers. Once in a while they drop into the Matrix to make contact and find a solution to their problems. A slight disappointment plotwise (especially in the first hour), in so much as it often seems like a mere transition to Part Three, but incredibly smooth and thrilling, well-made. Immediately followed by *THE MATRIX REVELATIONS*.

**Matter of Life and Death, A** (1946, GBR) **C/B&W-104m. \*\*\*½ D:** Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. Starring David Niven, Kim Hunter, Robert Coote, Kathleen Byron, Richard Attenborough. Extravagant, innovative romantic drama by the famous duo Powell and Pressburger. British WW2 pilot Niven is going to crash with his plane and die in a matter of minutes, and just then becomes infatuated with Hunter, a woman who happens to catch his voice on the radio. By a heavenly mistake Niven doesn't die and goes on to fall in love with Hunter. Should Heaven reclaim him or give him a second chance? Beautifully realized, marvelously photographed (by Jack Cardiff, in Technicolor), a post-war gem and a definite influence on the Coen brothers' brilliant *THE HUSUCKER PROXY* (1994). It has great effects, too. Geoffrey Unsworth is credited as camera operator. Released in the States as *STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN*.

**Maurice** (1987, GBR) **C-140m. \*\*\* D:** James Ivory. Starring James Wilby, Hugh Grant, Rupert Graves, Denholm Elliott, Simon Callow, Billie Whitelaw, Ben Kingsley, Judy Parfitt. Good

drama about the homosexual awakening of a Cambridge student, who is devastated upon his lover's decision to marry in order to regain his place in society, but finds romance and love soon later in a gamekeeper. Based on E.M. Forster's novel, which represents Forster's coming to terms with his own homosexuality. The book, written and set in the 1910s, was published posthumously in 1971. A daring subject matter, brought to the screen with taste and skill. From the makers of A ROOM WITH A VIEW and HOWARDS END.

**Mauvais Sang** (1986, FRA) **C-128m. \*\*\* D:** Leos Carax. Starring Michel Piccoli, Juliette Binoche, Denis Lavant, Hans Meyer, Julie Delpy, Carroll Brooks, Hugo Pratt, Michelle Perrier, Serge Reggiani. Well-acted, brilliantly directed, photographed and edited sci-fi noir drama, a perfect example of form triumphing over content. Plot (Lavant's involvement with crime organisation that intends to steal important serum and his love affairs with Binoche and Delpy) loses importance in light of director Carax's artistry. Slightly pretentious and overlong, and a matter of taste, but artistically brilliant. Lavant is hypnotic in the lead role, rest of cast equally good. Features a hit song by David Bowie. English title: BAD BLOOD.

**Max et les Ferrailleurs** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-106m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Sautet. Starring Michel Piccoli, Romy Schneider, Bernard Fresson, Georges Wilson, Michel Creton, Philippe Léotard, Dominique Zardi. Acclaimed crime drama about frustrated police detective Piccoli, who plots to catch criminals by setting up a robbery for them. He befriends one of the gang's hangers-on, prostitute Schneider, and drops hints pretending to be a banker. Dialogue-driven character drama – a specialty of Sautet – cold but interesting to watch and well-acted. This film meant Schneider's international breakthrough. Good score by Philippe Sarde. Based on the novel by Claude Néron. English titles: MAX AND THE JUNKMEN.

**Maximum Overdrive** (1986, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Stephen King. Starring Emilio Estevez, Pat Hingle, Laura Harrington, Yeardley Smith, John Short, Giancarlo Esposito, Stephen King. Stupid horror movie marked the beginning and end of novelist Stephen King's career as a movie director. Based on his story, film deals with trucks that run wild and kill people at a truck stop, all of which might have something to do with a comet passing by. Some nice destruction work and AC/DC's songs save this from the scrap heap. Remade as TRUCKS (1997) for television.

**Maze Runner, The** (2014, USA/CDN/GBR) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Wes Ball. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Aml Ameen, Ki Hong Lee, Blake Cooper, Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Will Poulter, Kaya Scodelario. Science-fiction thriller, mostly along the lines of HUNGER GAMES. A group of amnesiac teenage boys are trapped in a glade surrounded by high walls of rock. They make a living like peasants and occasionally venture beyond the walls to map the gigantic maze beyond – and maybe find a way out – but are threatened by mutated spider-like bio-mech organisms. No world-beater, but interesting survival sci-fi with good action and a nice ending. Based on the novel by James Dashner. Followed by a sequel in 2015.

**Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials** (2015, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Wes Ball. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Ki Hong Lee, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Dexter Darden, Giancarlo Esposito, Patricia Clarkson, Lili Taylor. Sequel to the 2014 hit is more epic in scope. The escapees join a group of other survivors in a kind of underground or secret lab. When they find out that they are going to be 'harvested', they have no choice but to escape, outside into the ravaged, scorched apocalyptic desert world. Exciting, good-looking sci-fi adventure has some potent horror elements. It's long and not always on target, but generally a satisfying view.

**M. Butterfly** (1993, USA) **C-101m. \*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Jeremy Irons, John Lone, Barbara Sukowa, Ian Richardson, Annabel Leventon, Shizuko Hoshi, Richard McMillan. Drama about a French diplomat's affair with a Chinese opera singer in China of the 1960s is

unusual, if not entirely atypical Cronenberg fare. David Henry Hwang's play was a hit on stage, but on film the storytelling is weak and the surprising twist at the end not at all a surprise. What's left is another one of Irons compelling performances as the diplomat (he had worked with Cronenberg five years earlier on the superior DEAD RINGERS), some fine photography and a typically good score by Howard Shore. Like all of Cronenberg's later films deals with a destructive obsession, and his followers are advised to give this one a look.

**McCabe & Mrs. Miller** (1971, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Altman. Starring Warren Beatty, Julie Christie, Keith Carradine, William Devane. Good but not entirely successful western drama focusing on the lives of the title characters who become business partners running a saloon and a bordello. Well-photographed and acted, film is arresting from start to finish but Altman seems to have put in too much detail of Edmund Naughton's novel. Carradine's appearance, for example, is simply pointless. Still, an intelligent anti-western that reverses the usual clichés promoted by other Hollywood westerns. Leonard Cohen's songs on the soundtrack are used excessively in the first 30 minutes and then unfortunately disappear abruptly.

**Mean Creek** (2004, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\*½ D:** Jacob Aaron Estes. Starring Rory Culkin, Ryan Kelley, Scott Mechlowicz, Trevor Morgan, Josh Peck, Carly Schroeder. Adventure drama about school boy Culkin and his older brother, who along with other friends plan a scheme to take the local bully on a boating trip and teach him a lesson. On their way, they change their minds, realizing he is a vulnerable guy trying to be nice. Then a fatal accident happens... Interesting examination of teen sensitivities, dramatically uneven, but still quite powerful. Benefits from quiet score by tomandandy. Written by the director.

**Medea** (1969, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-110m. \*\*\* D:** Pier Paolo Pasolini. Starring Maria Callas, Massimo Girotti, Laurent Terzieff, Giuseppe Gentile, Margareth Clementi. The Euripides tragedy in an intellectually challenging film version by a director with theater experience. Callas plays the part of Medea, a woman who helps Iason to steal the Golden Fleece and subsequently becomes his wife. However, she is unable to adapt to the culture in her husband's home country. Good acting by Callas, who sang the part in an opera version in the early 1950s, excellent music (co-authored by Pasolini), impressive outdoor photography, but not easily accessible as a whole. Minimal dialogue, the pictures speak for themselves. Filmed again in 1988 by Lars von Trier for Danish television.

**Medea** (1988, DAN) **C-79m. \*\*\*½ D:** Lars von Trier. Starring Udo Kier, Kirsten Olesen, Henning Jensen, Solbjorg Hojfeldt, Preben Lerdorff Rye, Baard Ove, Ludmilla Glinska. Artistically stunning adaptation of the Greek tragedy by Euripides, originally conceived by Danish master director Carl Theodor Dreyer and Preben Thomsen. Unlike Pasolini's version, this one begins when Jason (Kier) has already left Medea (Olesen) to marry the King's daughter Glauce (Glinska). The script focuses on Medea's inner pain and need for revenge, which is most tragic. Director von Trier's brilliant visual style shapes this tragedy; it is backed by a superb dramatic score (by Joachim Holbek). A haunting experience, but mainly for a demanding audience. Von Trier refined his style even more for his next film, EUROPA. Made for TV.

**Medicine Ball Caravan** (1971, USA/FRA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** François Reichenbach. Starring B.B. King, Alice Cooper, Delaney and Bonnie, Doug Kershaw, David Peel. Documentary about a group of hippies touring the U.S., with concert footage of artists listed above. Sometimes interesting, but too obviously filmed without a script. A failed attempt at copying Michael Wadleigh's WOODSTOCK.

**Medusa Touch, The** (1978, GBR/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Jack Gold. Starring Richard Burton, Lino Ventura, Lee Remick, Harry Andrews, Alan Badel, Marie-Christine Barrault, Gordon

Jackson, Derek Jacobi. Interesting supernatural chiller about mystery writer Burton, who's convinced that he has telekinetic powers. When he is almost murdered, detective Ventura investigates and stumbles upon some startling evidence. Burton, lying in a coma, strangely doesn't want to die. Is he working his powers from his death bed? And can psychiatrist Remick shed light on the mystery? Uneven, slightly overlong, too realistic for its own sake, but consistently interesting, even intriguing. Based on the novel by Peter Van Greenaway.

**Meet Joe Black** (1998, USA) **C-181m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Martin Brest. Starring Brad Pitt, Anthony Hopkins, Claire Forlani, Jake Weber, Marcia Gay Harden, Jeffrey Tambor, David S. Howard. Death (Pitt) comes to Earth to learn what makes us human and wants billionaire Hopkins to show him "around". After he has seen everything, he will take his life. Hopkins can't believe his eyes and ears, and when Death falls in love with his daughter (Forlani), things get complicated. Second remake of the 1934 classic *DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY* (which ran 78m.!) is way too long and simple, though Brest's sensitive handling of the subject matter makes it seem shorter than it actually is. After a draggy mid-section, the film ends bombastically in a tear-jerking finale. Especially for fans of the attractive Pitt and the earnest Hopkins.

**Meet Me in St. Louis** (1944, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½ D:** Vincente Minelli. Starring Judy Garland, Margaret O'Brien, Lucille Bremer, Tom Drake, Mary Astor, Leon Ames, Marjorie Main, June Lockhart. Classic MGM musical about a St. Louis family, their loves, fears and general happiness. Colorful, endearing and filled with many great songs, this one's for musical buffs and anyone who is looking for "perfect" family entertainment. Based on the book by Sally Benson, which credibly recreates turn-of-the-century St. Louis. Child actress Margaret O'Brien won a special Oscar for her delightful performance.

**Meet the Feebles** (1989, NZL) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Jackson. Starring the voices and talents of Donna Akersten, Stuart Devenie, Mark Hadlow, Mark Wright, Danny Mulheron. ... if you dare! Outrageous horror comedy, really a gross-out spoof of *The Muppet Show*, about a variety show run and performed by animal puppets: Frustrated, aging hippo Heidi, the show's star; an elephant who refuses to accept a hen's child as his own (it's evident that it's his!); a sleazy rat that produced porn movies after hours; a dung-eating paparazzo fly; a puking rabbit; a love-sick hedgehog and a frog who's a drug-addicted knife-thrower with a vietnam trauma. Funny, gory (and rather tasteless) comedy is unlike anything you have ever seen before. Deliciously steps over the line, but also works a lot of drama into the plot! And the songs (by Peter Dament) aren't bad either! A must-see for those whose stomachs can take it. Personal favorite: *The Passage to India*. Director Jackson (*BAD TASTE*, *BRAINDEAD*) also cowrote the story and made some of the puppets.

**Meet the Fockers** (2004, USA) **C-115m. \*\*½ D:** Jay Roach. Starring Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller, Dustin Hoffman, Barbra Streisand, Blythe Danner, Teri Polo, Owen Wilson, Tim Blake Nelson. Follow-up to *MEET THE PARENTS* (2000) is similarly contrived but amusing comedy, where Stiller is taking Polo parents to meet his makers, Hoffman and Streisand, who are so unlike the conservative De Niro and Danner. Some tasteless gags mar the fun. Hoffman is incredibly energetic.

**Meet the Parents** (2000, USA) **C-107m. \*\* D:** Jay Roach. Starring Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller, Teri Polo, Blythe Danner, James Rebhorn, Owen Wilson. Male nurse Stiller travels with his love Polo to her parents' estate to attend her sister's marriage. Suspicious dad De Niro has doubts about his potential son-in-law, who, naturally, does everything to impress him. However, nothing seems to work that weekend. Comedy is quite funny in the beginning, then gets mean-spirited and finally *painfully* mean-spirited, as Stiller is presented as a

complete jerk, which he isn't at all. De Niro is simply delicious. Remake of a 1992 independent film.

**Meet the Robinsons** (2007, USA) **C-102m**. \*\* D: Stephen J. Anderson. Starring (the voices of) Angela Bassett, Daniel Hansen, Jordan Fry, Matthew Josten, Laurie Metcalf, Adam West, Tom Selleck. A twelve-year-old boy, abandoned by his mother at birth, grows up in an orphanage. His great talent at inventing things has kept him from finding suitable foster parents. One day he is whisked away into the future, where a certain family Robinson need his help against an evil guy who has stolen one of their time machines. Animated feature from Disney is so aggressively paced that the usual time-travel plot holes won't matter, but film is also violent, mean-spirited and exploits the underprivileged (some characters are truly grotesque!). Reconciles the viewer somewhat with a good finale. Danny Elfman collaborated on the score (inaudibly). John Lasseter co-executive produced this movie.

**Meilleure Façon de Marcher, La** (1976, FRA) **C-85m**. \*\*½ D: Claude Miller. Starring Patrick Dewaere, Patrick Bouchitey, Christine Pascal, Claude Piéplu, Marc Chapiteau, Michel Blanc. Several young men are working as instructors in a holiday camp for children. One of them (Bouchitey) cannot understand the low-brow humor and machismo of the others. When he is caught by fellow instructor Dewaere dressing up as a woman, the two men begin a very private feud, where Dewaere is out to humiliate, but keeps Bouchitey's preferences a secret towards the others. Interesting, low-key drama suffers from miscasting of Dewaere, who is simply not credible as a macho (his character is extremely vile). Debut feature by the director of the underground cult *MORTELLE RANDONNÉE* (1983) and *DITES-LUI QUE JE L'AIME* (1977). English titles: *THE BEST WAY*, *THE BEST WAY TO WALK*.

**Melancholia** (2011, DEN/SWE/FRA/GER) **C-136m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lars von Trier. Starring Kirsten Dunst, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Alexander Skarsgard, Charlotte Rampling, John Hurt, Stellan Skarsgard, Udo Kier, Kiefer Sutherland. Von Trier's follow-up to the brilliant *ANTICHRIST*(2009) \*\*\*\* is equally atmospheric, pondering drama about bride Dunst, who suffers from depression, which spoils her otherwise beautiful wedding at her sister Gainsbourg's castle-like estate. In this dystopian setting, no one seems to be aware of, or care about, a planet called Melancholia, which is about to crash into the Earth. This apocalyptic backdrop serves well as a mirror of Dunst's depression, all the performances are good, and von Trier makes great use of slow-motion and Richard Wagner classical music. What makes this less successful than *ANTICHRIST* is the lack of dramatic development and the fact that Dunst's depression is automatically passed on to the viewer. Still, highly recommended to buffs, with extensive references to Tarkovsky's *NOSTALGHIA* (1983).

**Mélie en Sous-Sol** (1963, FRA/ITA) **107m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean Gabin, Alain Delon, Viviane Romance, Claude Cerval, José Luis de Villalonga, Jean Carmet. Standard heist thriller, a disappointment given the involvement of director Verneuil and stars Gabin and Delon. Gabin plays an ex-con who joins forces with delinquent Delon, both wanting to steal a large sum of money from a casino in Cannes. Occasionally stylish, with a rich, bouncy score, but plot fails to create much interest, let alone suspense. Several alternative titles, the most common seeming to be *ANY NUMBER CAN WIN*.

**Memento** (2000, USA) **C/B&W-113m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Christopher Nolan. Starring Guy Pearce, Carrie-Anne Moss, Joe Pantoliano, Mark Boone Junior, Stephen Tobolowsky, Jorja Fox. Gripping if overlong thriller about insurance salesman Pearce, who has lost control over his life after his wife was raped and killed. He is suffering from short-term memory loss and is unable to remember anything after the accident. Using notes and tattoos, he tries to track down the killer. Who can he trust? Story unfolds *backwards*, resulting in a highly

complicated and complex plot. Pay attention or get lost. Has cult film possibilities. Written by director Nolan and his brother Jonathan.

**Mémés Cannibales, Les** (1989, BEL/NED/FRA) **C-89m.** \*\* D : Emmanuel Kervyn. Starring Catherine Aymerie, Caroline Braeckman, Rochard Cotica, Danielle Daven, Patricia Davia, Robert Du Bois. Well, what can you expect from RABID GRANNIES? A family gathering to celebrate grannies' birthdays turns into a bloodfest when the old ladies become infected with a zombie virus. Quite funny and rather nasty, too. Understandably received great acclaim among gorehounds, others needn't bother. This is about as demented as BRAINDEAD (1992), only not as stylish or clever. Distributed by Troma Films in the U.S.

**Men Behind the Sun** (1988, HGK/CHI) **C-105m.** \*½ D: T.F. Mous(=Tun Fei Mou). Starring Jianxing Chen, Hsu Gou. Infamous exploitation disguised as a war drama set in 1945. In a Japanese P.O.W. camp, prisoners are subjected to unspeakable tortures like freezing, gassing and live dissection. Documentary-style film is extremely difficult to watch. It's also fairly during the standard plot. Followed by several sequels. Also known as SQUADRON 731.

**Men in Black** (1997, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Barry Sonnenfeld. Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Will Smith, Linda Fiorentino, Rip Torn, Vincent D'Onofrio. Loud, special effects-ridden sci-fi comedy about secret government agency which „protects the world from the scum of the universe“. Sometimes funny, sometimes not, this comic book adaptation would be perfect for kids under 13 but some of the violence makes it unsuitable for just that audience. The roach man (the baddie of the movie), looking like a zombie, belongs into a horror film! Entertaining but pretty illogical sci-fi, produced by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment. Based on a comic by Lowell Cunningham.

**Men in Black 3** (2012, USA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Barry Sonnenfeld. Starring Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones, Josh Brolin, Jemaine Clement, Emma Thompson, Nicole Scherzinger, David Rasche. Late sequel to the hit movies offers more of the same action and hilarity. This time Smith must travel back in time to 1969 to prevent the murder of his colleague by Boris the Animal, an angry extra-terrestrial bent on destroying the world. Some cleverness in the plot, fairly funny. A must, if you are a fan.

**Men Who Stare at Goats, The** (2009, USA/GBR) **C-94m. SCOPE** \*½ D: Grant Heslov. Starring George Clooney, Ewan McGregor, Jeff Bridges, Kevin Spacey, Stephen Lang, Robert Patrick. Barely funny satire based on the book by Joe Ronson about reporter McGregor, who travels to Iraq and chances to meet crackpot Clooney, who used to be on a secret ESP team for the CIA. Together they go on an odyssey through the war-torn country and in flashbacks we learn how the team was founded. One-joke movie has stars to offer but little more. Some liked it anyway.

**Mépris, Le** (1963, FRA/ITA) **C-101m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Jean-Luc Godard. Starring Brigitte Bardot, Michel Piccoli, Jack Palance, Georgia Moll, Fritz Lang. Languid, poetic, absolutely fascinating satirical drama about unsuccessful writer Piccoli, who is hired by film producer Palance to make a few changes in a script (Homer's *Odyssey*) which Lang (playing himself!) is supposed to direct. Piccoli, however, is plagued by private problems with wife Bardot. Story-line is unconventional, the plot seems superficial at the beginning, but film is carried by brilliant, haunting Georges Delerue score and expertly entangles the audience. Beautiful Mediterranean location filming is breathtaking in color and widescreen. Based on a novel by Alberto Moravia. English title: CONTEMPT.

**Meraviglie di Aladino, Le** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Henry Levin, Mario Bava. Starring Donald O'Connor, Noelle Adam, Fausto Tozzi, Vittorio De Sica, Mario Girotti (=Terence Hill), Aldo Fabrizi, Michèle Mercier, Marco Tullio. Agreeable, colorful fantasy adventure about Aladdin (O'Connor), a boy from Bagdad, who discovers a genie inside his

oil lamp and travels to a wedding, which an evil schemer (Tozzi) intends to foil. Interesting for the involvement of Mario Bava, who gave the film a nice look. O'Connor is quite funny but one wishes this was a little more serious and less whimsical. Still, quite violent for a kiddie film. Photographed by Tonino delli Colli (C'ERA UNA VOLTA IL WEST). Ducio Tessari and Franco Prospero were among the screenwriters. English title: THE WONDERS OF ALADDIN.

**Mercenario, Il** (1968, ITA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Sergio Corbucci. Starring Franco Nero, Tony Musante, Jack Palance, Giovanna Ralli. Loosely plotted but entertaining spaghetti western about mercenary Nero and Mexican revolutionary Musante who join forces against mine owners and rich people in general. Nothing special, yet surprisingly watchable. More or less remade as LOS COMPANEROS in 1970. Fine score by Ennio Morricone. U.S. titles: THE MERCENARY and A PROFESSIONAL GUN.

**Merci Pour le Chocolat** (2000, FRA/SUI) **C-99m. \*\*\* D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Jacques Dutronc, Anna Mouglalis, Rodolphe Pauly, Brigitte Catillon, Isolde Barth. At 70 director Chabrol proves he is still in great form making his bourgeois crime dramas. Young Mouglalis learns that she may have been mixed up with another baby on the day of her birth and finds out her possible father is a concert pianist – like herself! She befriends the family, unknowing that they have a dark secret to protect. Good, thoughtful direction by Chabrol, well-acted by the entire cast, an unusual story adapted from Charlotte Armstrong's *The Chocolate Cobweb*. Chabrol had filmed an Armstrong novel before in LA RUPTURE (1970). English title: NIGHTCAP.

**Mercury Rising** (1998, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Harold Becker. Starring Bruce Willis, Alec Baldwin, Miko Hughes, Chi McBride, Kim Dickens, Robert Stanton, Peter Stormare. Fair thriller about FBI secret agent Willis, who has to protect an autistic boy who happens to have cracked a secret government code worth \$2 billion. Baldwin plays an NSA executive who orders the boy to be killed. Unexceptional but well-paced, fairly exciting film. About as forgettable as director Becker's last one, CITY HALL. Based on the novel *Simple Simon* by Ryne Douglas Pearson. Score by John Barry (James Bond).

**Mermaid Chronicles Part 1: She Creature** (2001, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Sebastian Gutierrez. Starring Rufus Sewell, Carla Gugino, Jim Piddock, Reno Wilson, Mark Aiken, Gil Bellows. Atmospheric, generally well-made fantasy about side show artists Sewell and Gugino, who discover a mermaid in turn-of-the-century Ireland and plan to abduct it. Little do they know about the danger they involve themselves in. Made-for-TV movie (obviously the first of an entire series) is flawed by slow pace and simple script, which draws its inspiration from ALIEN (1979).

**Mermaids** (1990, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Benjamin. Starring Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, Michael Schoeffling, Christina Ricci. Entertaining, bittersweet comedy drama about mum Cher and her two daughters Ricci and Ryder, the latter being a virgin who falls in love for the first time. Cher herself is romancing Hoskins. Likeable, touching film, set in the 1960s, based on a novel by Patty Dann.

**Mesogios Flegete, I** (1970, GRE) **C-86m. \*\*½ D:** Dimis Dadiras. Starring Costas Precas, Costas Carras, Olga Politou, Lycourgos Calergis. Greek war movie set in Greece of the early 1940s. Resistance fighters try to undermine the Nazi occupance, Politou even has an affair with a German lieutenant in order to steal classified information. Her lover is one of her own brother's fiercest enemies. Earnest performances in poorly paced war drama, overall an okay view. English titles: THE MEDITERRANEAN IN FLAMES, and WARFLAMES.

**Message in a Bottle** (1999, USA) **C-126m. \*\*\* D:** Luis Mandoki. Starring Kevin Costner, Robin Wright Penn, Paul Newman, John Savage, Illeana Douglas, Robbie Coltrane, Jesse James. A

divorced researcher for a New York newspaper (Wright Penn) one day finds a bottled message on the beach and immediately falls in love with its author (Costner). It turns out his wife has died of an illness, and they both begin a hesitant romance. Old-fashioned love story suffers from a languid and sometimes predictable presentation, but it's wonderfully acted by the stars and manages to put a lot of truth in the budding relationship of Wright Penn and Costner. A sensitively-handled tear-jerker, based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks.

**Messengers, The** (2007, USA/CDN) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Danny and Oxide Pang. Starring Kristen Stewart, Dylan McDermott, Penelope Ann Miller, John Corbett, Dustin Milligan, Brent Briscoe. US-debut for Asian shock artists the Pang Brothers is needlessly stupid and illogical ghost story set in rural North Dakota, where McDermott and his family have just bought a derelict farm that turns out to be haunted. Dozens of potent scares and shocks, kudos to the directors, but it's all for naught with such a contrived, conventional story. Worst of all, perhaps, the title is never explained. Coproduced by Sam Raimi.

**Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc, The** (1999, FRA/USA) **C-160m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Luc Besson. Starring Milla Jovovich, Dustin Hoffman, Faye Dunaway, John Malkovich, Tchéky Karyo, Pascal Greggory, Vincent Cassel, Timonthy West, Andrew Birkin. Historical spectacle about the title character, a young French farmers' girl who claims to have been chosen by God in order to help France to defeat the English circa 1430. Distinctly 20<sup>th</sup> century dialogue and the fact that film doesn't take itself seriously instantly disqualify this "epic". Despite involvement of top talents, this seems more like a medieval version of TANK GIRL. Fast pace keeps this one alive. Hoffman, Malkovich and Dunaway have cameos at best. Not that bad, but war/religion theme and comic approach seem incompatible. Cowritten by director Besson and Andrew Birkin.

**Metallica: Through the Never** (2013, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Nimród Antal. Starring Dane DeHaan, James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett, Robert Trujillo. Concert movie mix featuring one of the most successful heavy metal bands, Metallica. The band are performing a live concert, while one of their roadies must go and get something important for them. He drives across the city and stumbles into an apocalyptic battle between street gangs and the police. Good-looking, good-sounding film has too much music and too little narrative. Metallica fans won't mind.

**Meteor** (1979, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Ronald Neame. Starring Sean Connery, Natalie Wood, Karl Malden, Brian Keith, Martin Landau, Trevor Howard, Henry Fonda, Ronald Neame, Sybil Danning. A meteor is on a collision course with Earth and scientist Connery is persuaded by hot-shot exec Malden to use the nuclear space weapon designed by him. One of the last big Hollywood disaster epics, but short on logic and – unfortunately – money. Effects are rather poor, attempts at some POSEIDON-esque drama are laughable at best. Only if you are a star-gazing disaster freak.

**Metropolis** (2001, JAP) **C-107m. \*\*\*** D: Rintaro (=Hayashi Shigeyuki). Starring (the voices of) Kei Kobayashi, Yuka Imoto, Kouki Okada, Tarô Ishida, Toshio Furukawa. Eye-popping anime is an updating of Fritz Lang's classic METROPOLIS (1927). A young boy accompanies his private detective uncle to Metropolis, a megalopolis that is divided into several zones, with robots doing many basic jobs. During the search for a wanted scientist, amid the chaos and confusion of the city, they meet a mysterious android girl, who is supposed to become the city's new leader. Marvelous, atmospheric settings and bombastic action set-pieces easily outdo relative coldness of the plot. Based on a comic book by Osamu Tezuka. Elaborate score makes odd use of songs sometimes. English titles: METROPOLIS, and ROBOTIC ANGEL.

**Meurtrier, Le** (1962, FRA/ITA/GER) **110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Claude Autant-Lara. Starring Gert Fröbe, Maurice Ronet, Robert Hossein, Marina Vlady, Yvonne Furneaux. Ronet's marriage is at breaking point but his wife Furneaux won't divorce him, so he seeks inspiration from Fröbe, who was suspected of having killed his wife a few months earlier. When Ronet's wife really dies, inspector Hossein enters the scene and sees in Ronet the prime suspect — but he denies all charges. First-rate crime drama (adapted from Patricia Highsmith's *The Blunderer*) acted out by a first-rate cast. Slightly overlong, though, especially in painting Ronet's marital problems. Great score by René Cloerec. Italian title: L'HOMICIDA. English title: ENOUGH ROPE. Released in the U.S. in 1966.

**Mexican, The** (2001, USA) **C-123m. \*\*½** D: Gore Verbinski. Starring Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, James Gandolfini, J.K. Simmons, Pedro Armendáriz Jr., Gene Hackman. Amusing crime comedy about loser Pitt, whose relationship with Roberts is going down the drain, especially after he must accept an assignment to pick up and bring back a legendary pistol from Mexico. Of course, things go awry and Roberts is kidnapped so that he doesn't get any strange ideas. Overlong thriller is a perfect vehicle for Pitt. Some nice scenes and a fine score by Alan Silvestri (reminiscent of Ennio Morricone's work for the Leone westerns) make this worthwhile.

**Michael Angel** (1998, USA) **C-116m. \*½** D: William Gove. Starring Dennis Hopper, Richard Grieco, Perri Lister, Michael Cole, Jesus M. Alvarez, Ivonne Coll, Jaime Bello. Hopper plays a serial killer who uses the blood of his victims for his abstract paintings. When priest Grieco's homosexual brother is found murdered, he goes after the slasher however uncertain whether this is not breaking his faith in God. This one sounds much more interesting than it plays. It's extremely slow, overlong, poorly produced and terribly pretentious. No wonder it premiered on cable television. Written by the director.

**Mickey Blue Eyes** (1999, USA/GBR) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Kelly Makin. Starring Hugh Grant, James Caan, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Burt Young, James Fox, Joe Viterelli. Amusing, entertaining comedy about auctioneer Grant, who is about to marry the daughter of an Italian businessman. It turns out her family are mobsters and unhappy Grant gets involved in their crimes and schemes. Most of the characters are stereotypes, but cast and funny script pull it off. Produced by Grant's ex-girlfriend Elizabeth Hurley.

**Micmacs à Tire-Larigot** (2009, FRA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Danny Boon, André Dussolier, Yolande Moreau, Dominique Pinon, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Nicolas Marié. Lesser but still funny and stylish Jeunet satire typically places a disadvantaged character in its center. Video store clerk Boon lost his father to a landmine thirty years ago, then he himself is injured by a stray bullet. After losing his job, he becomes homeless and ultimately joins a group of scrap-metal artists who live in a junkyard. Together they plot his revenge against big weapons and landmine producers Dussolier and Marié. Amusing, well-made. English title: MICMACS.

**Microcosme** (1996, FRA/SUI/ITA) **C-75m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Nuridsany, Marie Perennou. Fascinating documentary, filmed with special zoom lenses, takes the viewer into the world of the insects, butter-flies, beetles, bees, and many others. Almost no narration and rather incoherent, but incredible photography never lets it get boring. A must for documentary buffs; prize winner at the Cannes Film Festival.

**Midnight** (1982, USA) **C-94m. 2** D: James Russo. Starring Monica Verliin (=Verlin), Lawrence Tierney, John Hall, Charles Jackson, Doris Hackney. Grade-Z slasher movie about a devil-cult family who abducts women and sacrifices them, all under the command of their mother. Young Verliin runs away from home and ends up with them. Strictly amateur night in terms of writing, acting, directing. Even the score is awful. Effects by Tom Savini are surprisingly

not very good. Written by director Russo, based on his own novel. Followed by a sequel in 1993. Also known as BACKWOODS MASSACRE.

**Midnight Cowboy** (1969, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½ D:** John Schlesinger. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight. Extraordinary character study with Voight a Texan hot shot who comes to New York expecting 'to make' it as a stud. He befriends sleazy 'Ratso' Hoffman and has to find out that life in the city is tougher than he thought. Outstanding drama has many stunning sequences and completely convincing per-formances by its stars. Film director Paul Morrissey is among the party guests.

**Midnight Express** (1978, USA) **C-121m. \*\*\*½ D:** Alan Parker. Starring Brad Davis, Irene Miracle, Bo Hopkins, Randy Quaid, John Hurt, Mike Kellin, Paul Smith. Penetrating true story about an American tourist (Davis) in Turkey who is caught smuggling hashish and put into a Turkish jail where the inmates are treated inhumanely. Arresting, compelling prison thriller, one of the best of its kind. Oscars went to Giorgio Moroder for his heart-pounding score and Oliver Stone for his fine screenplay.

**Midnight in Paris** (2011, USA/SPA) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Woody Allen. Starring Owen Wilson, Rachel McAdams, Kurt Fuller, Mimi Kennedy, Carla Bruni. Amusing Woody Allen fantasy about Owen Wilson, who has travelled to Paris, France, with his fiancée and her parents and finds himself inspired by the old-world charm. As they mutually neglect each other, his wife-to-be even romanticising a French know-it-all, Wilson wishes himself to be in the 1920s among literary and artistic geniuses who all spent time in Paris. And one night, this time-warp really happens! Be warned: Don't take this seriously, just go along with it. Wilson is just right.

**Midnight Movies: From the Margin to the Mainstream** (2005, CDN/USA) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Stuart Samuels. Featuring interviews with George A. Romero, Alejandro Jodorowsky, John Waters, Perry Henzell, David Lynch, Richard O'Brien, Roger Ebert, Lou Adler, Ben Barenholtz. Highly interesting documentary about the midnight movie phenomenon, which turned unusual, unconventional movies into cult hits in the early 1970s by placing them on the midnight spot in theaters (sometimes long after their initial release). Film focuses on six films that have become some of the biggest cult movies ever: NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968), EL TOPO (1970), PINK FLAMINGOS (1972), THE HARDER THEY COME (1972), THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (1975), and ERASERHEAD (1977). It turns out EL TOPO started it all! The directors appear in interviews and the phenomenon is examined in detail up to the time when home video put an end to it. A must for anyone interested in cult movies (=you!). From the director of VISIONS OF LIGHT (1992).

**Midnight Special** (2016, USA/GRE) **C-112m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Jeff Nichols. Starring Michael Shannon, Joel Edgerton, Kirsten Dunst, Adam Driver, Jaeden Lieberher. Leaden science-fiction drama about two men who go on the run from the government with a little boy who has special powers. They believe he must be brought to a certain place for a rendez-vous with extra-terrestrials. Intriguing at first, film loses itself in trivial depictions of waiting, frustration and more waiting. This, of course, transfers to the viewer. Written by the director (MUD).

**Midsummer Night's Dream, A** (1999, USA/ITA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Michael Hoffman. Starring Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer, Rupert Everett, Stanley Tucci, Calista Flockhart, Anna Friel, Christian Bale, Dominic West, David Strathairn, Sophie Marceau, Roger Rees, Bernard Hill. Fourth film version of the Shakespeare play about love and intrigues in the world of humans and elves has nice production design but a very strange cast. Tucci is not so bad as Puck, Pfeiffer odd as Oberon's wife, and the pair of lovers is inauspicious (excepting

Flockhart). Comes across as nice, but is neither very funny nor romantic. Kline makes the most of his comic part. Written by the director.

**Miele del Diavolo, Il** (1986, ITA/SPA) **C-83m.** \*\*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Corinne Clery, Brett Halsey, Blanca Marsillach, Stefano Madia, Lucio Fulci. Rare Lucio Fulci effort is a tale of sexual perversion about young Marsillach, who is in love with sexually insatiable saxophonist Madia. When he dies after a motorcycle accident, because of (sexually perverted) doctor Halsey, Marsillach starts harassing him and a sadistic-masochistic relationship between the two develops. Definitely not bad, despite subject matter, this even tries to be poetic. Well-worth a look for Fulci completists. Cowritten by the director, photographed by Alejandro Ulloa. English titles: THE DEVIL'S HONEY, DANGEROUS OBSESSION, DIVINE OBSESSION.

**Mientras Duermes** (2011, SPA) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Jaume Balagueró. Starring Luis Tosar, Marta Etura, Alberto San Juan. From the director of the [REC] movies comes this creepy thriller, in many ways a throwback to Spanish giallos of the 1970s. Concierge Tosar knows more about the people living in his apartment building than they suspect. Having keys to all the flats, he even spends the nights with Etura, a happy young resident, without her knowing it – using chloroform while she is sleeping. It turns out his quest is to make people just as unhappy just as he is. Interesting, suspenseful throughout, movie builds to a conclusion that is a bit of a letdown. Still, worth watching. Aka SLEEP TIGHT.

**Mighty, The** (1998, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Peter Chelsom. Starring Sharon Stone, Gena Rowlands, Harry Dean Stanton, Gillian Anderson, James Gandolfini, Kieran Culkin, Elden Ratliff, Meat Loaf. Endearing, moving drama based on Rodman Philbrick's novel *Freak the Mighty* about the unusual relationship between a physically handicapped but extremely intelligent boy (Culkin) and a dumb giant (Ratliff), who suffers from the fact that his father has murdered his mother. Bitter-sweet film works thanks to colourful supporting cast and a good score, but could have been much better. Recommended to children of all ages.

**Mighty Joe Young** (1998, USA) **C-114m.** \*\*\* D: Ron Underwood. Starring Bill Paxton, Charlize Theron, Rade Serbedzija, Regina King, Peter Firth, Naveen Andrews, Lawrence Pressman, Terry Moore, Ray Harryhausen. Well-produced, well-filmed remake of the 1949 monster movie classic (itself a variation of KING KONG). Paxton plays a kind-hearted scientist, who is fascinated by an African legend of a giant gorilla and travels to the place where he is said to roam. He finds a young woman (Theron), who grew up with the beast. He manages to convince her to ship the ape to the U.S., where predictable complications ensue. Rousing adventure, good for kids and adults, though a bit long. Impressive monster created by Rick Baker.

**Mi Gran Noche** (2015, SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Alex de la Iglesia. Starring Raphael, Mario Casas, Pepón Nieto, Blanca Suárez, Hugo Silva, Carmen Machi, Luis Callejo. Acidic showbiz satire set during the filming of a New Year's Eve TV special, where the extras have been working for a week and there's no end in sight. When one of them is killed in a freak accident, Nieto is called to replace him and rushes to the studio, despite having his senile mom waiting for him at home. Several other plot strands deal with aging pop star Raphael and his own son's plans to kill him during the show, the verbal and physical fights between the (married) hosts, and rock star Casas, whose semen are robbed backstage. Lightning-paced comedy with dialogue that is fired like a machine gun. Some excellent directorial touches and staccato editing (which might also put you off, so beware). English title: MY BIG NIGHT.

**Milano Calibro 9** (1972, ITA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Fernando Di Leo. Starring Gastone Moschin, Barbara Bouchet, Mario Adorf, Frank Wolff, Luigi Pistilli, Ivo Garrani, Philippe Leroy, Lionel Stander, Fernando Di Leo. Above-average Italian police thriller, quite an early example of its

time. Moschi is released from prison and immediately under attack from mobsters. Where are the \$300,000 that he stole before being arrested? Meanwhile, the police are fighting their own war against crime. Ambitious crime melodrama lacks a compelling, fast-paced plotline, but good score by Luis Bacalov still provides depth. English titles: CALIBER 9, and THE CONTRACT.

**Milano Odissea: La Polizia Non Può Sparare** (1974, ITA) **C-99m.SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Tomas Milian, Laura Belli, Henry Silva, Gino Santercole, Anita Strindberg, Guido Alberti, Ray Lovelock. Gritty, violent, fast-paced crime thriller about sadistic, ruthless crook Milian, who conspires to kidnap the daughter of a wealthy businessman and coldbloodedly kills everyone in the way. Frustrated cop Silva makes this case his personal crusade against the Milanese crime scene. Milian is perfect as the villain (one of the most sadistic in film history), Lenzi's direction is fluid and his social commentary not that unrealistic or out of place (as some critics believed). Unsettling score by Ennio Morricone. One of the best Italian crime films (poliziotto) of the period. Do not view if easily offended, though. A cult film for those who don't object to film's morale. Released abroad in 1980 as ALMOST HUMAN and THE KIDNAP OF MARY LOU.

**Mille et Une Recettes du Cuisinier Amoureux, Les** (1996, FRA/GRG/GER) **C-97m. \*\*\*** D: Nana Djordjaze. Starring Pierre Richard. A gallery owner stumbles by chance upon some documents written by famous cook Pascal Ichak, which prove that his mother had an affair with the man. In flashback sequences, which make up the most part of the film, we are told Ichak's life in Georgia, the place he chose to live in his older days. He fell in love with the country's cuisine and became a cook and a restaurant owner himself. Fine, titillating drama with a wonderful performance by Richard as Ichak, a man who always knew how to enjoy life. He even tried to defy the rise of Communism as it threatened his happiness. Highly recommended to lovers of European art cinema and gourmets of any conviction. Title means 'A Thousand and One Recipes of a Cook in Love'.

**Mille Milliards de Dollars** (1982, FRA) **C-132m. \*\*\*½** D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Patrick Dewaere, Michel Auclair, Caroline Cellier, Charles Denner, Anny Duperey, Jeanne Moreau, Mel Ferrer, André Falcon. Dewaere (in his next-to-last film before his suicide) plays a journalist, who receives mysterious information about an industrial magnate and begins to investigate. It turns out that the man had connections to a world-wide operating conglomerate... and their methods are more than questionable. Is Dewaere on to a conspiracy? Riveting political thriller, much in the vein of Verneuil's masterpiece, the brilliant I... COMME ICARE (1979), poses intriguing questions about the nature and the ethics of such global players. Not always on target, but very well-told, a winner. Verneuil based his script on novels by Robert Lattes and Lawrence Meyer. Excellent piano score by Philippe Sarde. English title: A THOUSAND BILLION DOLLARS.

**Miller's Crossing** (1990, USA) **C-115m. \*\*\*** D: Joel Coen. Starring Gabriel Byrne, Marcia Gay Harden, John Turturro, Jon Polito, J.E. Freeman, Albert Finney, Steve Buscemi, Michael Badalucco, Sam Raimi, Frances McDormand. Elegant, stylish homage to gangster films a la THE GODFATHER trilogy, set in the late 1920s. Byrne is mafia boss Finney's bookie/counselor, but can't keep his hands off his boss's dame Harden. To complicate matters further, Finney is about to start a war with kingpin Polito, and Byrne may change sides. The Coen Brothers' third film has some magnificent cinematography (by Barry Sonnenfeld), a first-rate score (Carter Burwell) and some truly astonishing sequences (the dead man's hairpiece, the scenes at Miller's Crossing, The Dane's demise etc.), it's too bad that the plot lacks dramatic impact. Byrne's character is underwritten and too cold, perhaps as calculating as the movie itself. Still, a must for Coen fans, if only to indulge in their visual

style. All the supporting actors are excellent, especially Polito, Turturro and Freeman. Supposedly, a loose adaptation of Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest* and *Glass Key*.

**Million Dollar Baby** (2004, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Hilary Swank, Morgan Freeman, Jay Baruchel, Mike Colter. Quiet but powerful drama about aged boxing instructor Eastwood, who reluctantly agrees to coach determined 31-year-old woman Swank. A movie about friendship, love and determination, extremely well-told. Almost a throwback to 1970s character dramas, but its deliberate pace is not a flaw. Winner of 4 Oscars including Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Actress (Swank) and Best Supporting Actor (for Freeman, who is terrific). Eastwood also did the music for this one and coproduced.

**Million Dollar Hotel, The** (2000, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Wim Wenders. Starring Milla Jovovich, Jeremy Davies, Mel Gibson, Jimmy Smits, Peter Stormare, Amanda Plummer, Gloria Stuart, Tom Bower, Donal Logue, Bud Cort, Julian Sands. Weird, eccentric drama written by Bono Vox (lead singer of the pop group U2) about a bunch of social drop-outs, most of them crazy, who live in the house of the title. Gibson plays a CIA special agent who intends to clear up the mystery of one inhabitant's suicide. In his investigations he is urged by the dead man's rich father to find someone who is responsible. Worth watching for some truly wacked-out performances (Stormare is a hoot), but script goes absolutely nowhere. Obviously a matter of taste, aided by director Wenders stylish approach. Bono also contributed some songs to the soundtrack.

**Millions** (2004, GBR/USA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Danny Boyle. Starring Alex Etel, Lewis McGibbon, James Nesbitt, Daisy Donovan, Christopher Fulford. Quite an unlikely follow-up to Boyle's own *28 DAYS LATER...* (2002), this is set in suburban England, where a little boy, who has just moved to a new neighborhood with his father and brother, finds a suitcase full of money just before Christmas. With only days before the British pound switches to the Euro (fictionally only!), rendering the bills useless, the boys have to make up their minds fast what to do with the money. Interesting, telling examination of morals and religious implications, done in the same inimitable style as Boyle's *A LIFE LESS ORDINARY* (1997). Good score by John Murphy.

**Mimic** (1997, USA) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Guillermo del Toro. Starring Mira Sorvino, Jeremy Northam, Charles S. Dutton, Alexander Goodwin, Giancarlo Giannini, Josh Brolin, F. Murray Abraham. Mira Sorvino plays a scientist who creates genetically changed cockroaches in order to wipe out the normal ones, which are carrying a disease that is affecting small children. Three years after the successful experiment, she is faced with what has become of these creatures: giant, man-eating insects that are inhabiting New York's subway and sewer channels. Tense, scary horror from the director of the acclaimed *CRONOS*. Well-made, suspenseful, if not entirely logical. Highly recommended to fans of the genre. After such an oppressively atmospheric film you'll be happy to return to your everyday life (stepping on each cockroach you'll see)! Cowritten by del Toro. Coproduced by Ole Bornedal (*NATTEVAGTEN*).

**Mimi wo Sumaseba** (1995, JAP) **C-111m. \*\*\*\* D:** Yoshifumi Kondo. Starring (the voices of) Youko Honna, Kazuo Takahashi, Takashi Tachibana, Shigeru Muroi, Shigeru Tsuyuguchi, Keiju Kobayashi. Bookworm Honna, on the verge of puberty, finds out there's somebody who has checked out the same books that she's been reading and sets out to find him, her soulmate? Although she really ought to study for her school entrance exams, she finds herself drawn to an old antique shop and the owner's son, a violin-maker. Simply wonderful drama about love, friendship, growing-up, the pangs of puberty, and most importantly, self-confidence, is lovingly animated and beautifully scored. A masterpiece, written and

produced by Hayao Miyazaki for Studio Ghibli, one of their very best achievements. The story within the story is a gem! Based on a one-volume manga by Aoi Hiragi. Sadly, this was Miyazaki protégé Kondo's only film as a director. He died of an aneurysm in 1998. Two of the characters (The Baron and Muta) returned in the 2002 Ghibli feature NEKO NO ONGAESHI (THE CAT RETURNS). English title: WHISPER OF THE HEART.

**Minagoroshi no Reika** (1968, JAP) **B&W-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tai Kato. Starring Chieko Baisho, Yuki Kawamura, Sanae Nakahara, Ran Fan O, Makoto Satô. Five women become the target of a killer, but the motive or reason is more than obscure. It may have something to do with the suicide of a delivery boy. Difficult to watch and not really enjoyable (also due to slow pace and labored plotting), but psycho drama has a way of creeping up to you and has some powerful moments towards the end. Fine black-and-white cinematography and good score make this worthwhile for buffs. Also known as I, THE EXECUTIONER, and GOSPEL FOR GENOCIDE.

**Mind of Mr. Soames, The** (1969, GBR) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Alan Cooke. Starring Terence Stamp, Robert Vaughn, Nigel Davenport, Christian Roberts, Jody Parfitt. Unspectacular science-fiction about a man (Stamp) who has spent his whole life (30 years) in a coma and is woken up by scientists Vaughn and Davenport. The two differ in their opinion about how to teach him all the knowledge necessary and Vaughn slowly finds access to the child-like man. Intriguing premise might have been played out more intelligently and lacks certain technical and dramatic elegance, but basic points do come across. Based on the novel by N.N.

**Ming Patriots, The** (1975, HGK) **C-87m. SCOPE \*½** D: Au Yeung-Chuen. Starring Li Shiao-Lung (=Bruce Li), Bruce Chen, Chang Yu, Ka Ling. In the 17th century a princess of the Ming dynasty is on the run from Manchu warriors who have killed her family. A 'drunken master' comes to her aid. One-dimensional eastern with a violent finale.

**Minions** (2015, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Kyle Balda, Pierre Coffin. Starring (the voices of) Sandra Bullock, Jon Hamm, Michael Keaton, Allison Janney, Steve Coogan, Geoffrey Rush. Prequel to the DESPICABLE ME movies is set in the late 1960s. The cute yellow creatures have managed to kill every single one of their evil bosses since the stone age. Now, three minions are chosen to select a new villain at the Villain-Con in London, England. Some truly funny scenes stand out in otherwise really silly story. It's also a destruction orgy and makes (embarrassing) fun of Queen Elizabeth. Animation is excellent.

**Minnesota Clay** (1964, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Corbucci. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Fernando Sancho, Alberto Cevenini, Georges Rivière, Ethel Rojo. Lackluster spaghetti western about the title character (played by Mitchell), who escapes from prison and seeks out the man who can prove his innocence. However, Clay is going blind and this complicates things. Ambitious plot, but poor dialogues and pace, this lacks the finesse of later westerns. Corbucci followed this with the classic DJANGO (1966). Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Reportedly, Mario Bava gave (uncredited) technical advice.

**Minority Report** (2002, USA) **C-145m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Tom Cruise, Max von Sydow, Colin Farrell, Steve Harris, Neal McDonough, Patrick Kilpatrick, Samantha Morton, Jessica Capshaw, Jessica Harper, Peter Stormare, cameos by Cameron Crowe, Cameron Diaz. In the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century, a so-called pre-crime organization makes use of psychics to intercept criminals *before* they commit a murder. One day, pre-crime exec Cruise is forced to run for it when he finds out that he himself is going to kill somebody. Big-scale adaptation of Philip K. Dick's short story is cold and calculated for most of the way and provides a technical overkill (although some of the ideas *are* impressive). Should have been much more intriguing and suspenseful. Also, it owes more than a bit to the superior STRANGE DAYS (1996). Coproduced by Jan de Bont.

**Minus Man, The** (1999, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*½ D: Hampton Fancher. Starring Owen Wilson, Sheryl Crow, Dwight Yoakam, Dennis Haysbert, Alex Warren, Brian Cox, Mercedes Ruehl, Janeane Garofalo. Quiet psycho drama about friendly but mentally disturbed serial killer Wilson, who travels from town to town, ending up as a tenant in Cox and Ruehl's house. He soon carries on with his murders without being particularly auspicious. Quite well-filmed and appealing but basically shapeless and even pointless. Written by director Fancher (scriptwriter for BLADE RUNNER), based on the novel by Lew McCreary.

**Minuto per Pregare, un Instante per Morire, Un** (1968, ITA/SPA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Franco Giraldi. Starring Alex Cord, Arthur Kennedy, Mario Brega, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Robert Ryan. Low-key spaghetti western about handicapped outlaw Cord, whose exploits take him to the city of Escondido in New Mexico, where he attempts to gain amnesty from governor Ryan. Unusually mild-mannered and serious for the genre, this western has its defenders and is definitely worth a look. However, if you want action, look elsewhere. Produced and cowritten by Albert Band. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. Also known as A MINUTE TO PRAY, A SECOND TO DIE and OUTLAW GUN.

**Mio Caro Assassino** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Tonino Valerii. Starring George Hilton, Salvo Randone, William Berger, Manuel Zarzo, Patty Shepard, Piero Lulli, Tullio Valli, Marilù Tolo. Police detective Hilton investigates a series of grisly killings, all possibly linked to a kidnapping case. Mediocre, rather talky and quite violent giallo is elevated by one of Ennio Morricone's more sinister scores. Worth a look, especially for genre fans. Edited by Franco Fraticelli, cowritten by director Valerii. English title: MY DEAR KILLER.

**Mio Min Mio** (1987, SWE/NOR/RUS) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Vladimir Grammatikov. Starring Nick Pickard, Christian Bale, Timothy Bottoms, Susannah York, Christopher Lee. Adaptation of the children's fantasy by Swedish author Astrid Lindgren about an orphan who feels unloved by his foster parents and escapes to a medieval fantasy world, where his father is king and he has to defeat an evil knight (Lee). A bit naive and slowly paced, but a welcome change from Hollywood sensibilities. Kids will find this exciting. Pickard is not fully up to the lead role, Bale plays his friend and helper in the quest. Filmed in English. English title: MIO IN THE LAND OF FARAWAY.

**Mio Nome è Nessuno, Il** (1973, ITA/GER/SPA) **C-130m. SCOPE** \*\*\*D: Tonino Valerii. Starring Terence Hill, Henry Fonda, Jean Martin, Piero Lulli, Leo Gordon, R.G. Armstrong, Mario Brega. Retiring gunslinger Fonda faces his last challenge in super-fast aspiring revolverman Hill. Latter-day spaghetti western wavers rather uncomfortably between melancholy drama and outright parody but remains likable and entertaining throughout. Overlong, even in the shorter German version, but Ennio Morricone's self-parodying score keeps it afloat. Story credited to Sergio Leone. English title: MY NAME IS NOBODY.

**Miracle Mile** (1989, USA) **C-80m.** \*½ D: Steve DeJarnatt. Starring Anthony Edwards, Mare Winningham, John Agar, Lou Hancock, Denise Crosby. Incredible, at times even ridiculous sci-fi about nerdish Edwards, who learns by chance that an atomic war has been started and the end of the world is only 75 minutes away. Film tries to look at mass hysteria, but fails miserably. Originally shown at 87m.

**Mirage** (1965, USA) **B&W-108m.** \*\*½ D: Edward Dmytryk. Starring Gregory Peck, Diane Baker, Walter Matthau, Kevin McCarthy, Jack Weston, Leif Erickson, George Kennedy. Mystery thriller about accountant Peck, who realizes in the wake of a colleague's suicide that he is an amnesiac. He investigates but becomes increasingly frustrated with his search for his identity. Film's success mostly depends on how you like Peck's clueless, suffering performance. Aside from that, it's quite long and never really thrilling. Best thing is Matthau's much too brief role as a private eye. From a novel by Howard Fast.

**MirrorMask** (2005, GBR/USA) **C-101m. \*\*½ D:** Dave McKean. Starring Jason Barry, Rob Brydon, Stephanie Leonidas, Gina McKee, Dora Bryan, Stephen Fry, Dave McKean. Brilliantly designed film about down-to-earth young teenager Leonidas, whose mother has an impending operation and whose family circus is about to break apart. In this critical situation the artistically gifted girl flees into a dream world that she has created with her drawings, where people wear masks and she must save the life of a queen. Bizarre visuals carry the stamp of writer Neil Gaiman, who penned the screenplay with director McKean. Leonidas is remarkable. Unfortunately, overall bizarreness generally outweighs the plot, so that many viewers will be put off. Still, an interesting, ambitious film that recalls fantasy films like LABYRINTH or even THE WIZARD OF OZ.

**Mirrors** (2008, USA/FRA/ROM/SPA/GER) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Alexandre Aja. Starring Kiefer Sutherland, Paula Patton, Cameron Boyce, Amy Smart, Jason Flemyng, Julian Glover. Troubled ex-cop Sutherland takes up a job as a nightwatchman in a burned-out ex-hotel cum department store. At night, the mirrors and the mannequins seem strangely alive, and indeed there is something malevolent in the mirror world trying to find its way into Sutherland's reality. Good-looking, gory horror film is unfortunately rather silly, incredible and overlong. Benefits from Sutherland's performance and Javier Navarrete's fine score. Loosely based on the 2003 Korean chiller GEOUL SOKEURO (INTO THE MIRROR). Followed by a video sequel in 2010.

**Miss Congeniality** (2000, USA) **C-109m. \*\*½ D:** Donald Petrie. Starring Sandra Bullock, Michael Caine, Benjamin Bratt, William Shatner, Ernie Hudson, William Shatner. Bullock plays an FBI agent, who's after an elusive criminal and is persuaded to go undercover as a contestant for the Miss United States show, where the next killing is presumed to take place. Quite funny, fast-paced comedy is enjoyable on a non-think basis. Bullock looks adorable, and Caine lends her professional support as the expert who tries to get her into shape. Climactic show is best part. Produced by Bullock.

**Missen Massaker, Das** (2012, SUI) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Steiner. Starring Sabrina Meier, Patrick Rapold, Lisa Maria Bärenbold, Anouschka Renzi, Mike Müller. From the team that brought you the mystery drama SENNENTUNTSCHI (2010) comes this slasher movie spoof set in a Thai holiday resort, where a group of young hopeful models fall prey to a killer that wears a different horror mask every time he kills (Freddy, Jason, Michael Myers, SAW, TCM). Enjoyable, funny, with an attractive cast and location, this comedy almost overstays its welcome and becomes silly at times, but it's well-worth watching, as the filmmakers obviously know the horror genre well.

**Mission, The** (1999, HGK) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Johnny To. Starring Anthony Wong Chau-Sang, Francis Ng, Jackie Lui Chung-Yin, Roy Cheung, Simon Yam. One of literally hundreds of gangster movies produced in Hong Kong after the (re-)creation of the genre by John Woo. This one has a novel twist: Five bodyguards are followed in their daily (really mostly nightly) routines. Nothing to get excited about, though the direction and camerawork show some style (especially in the use of wide-angle lenses). Original title: CHEUNG FO.

**Mission: Impossible** (1996, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Brian De Palma. Starring Tom Cruise, Jon Voight, Emmanuelle Béart, Henry Czerny, Jean Reno, Ving Rhames, Kristin Scott Thomas, Vanessa Redgrave, Emilio Estevez. Danny Elfman's reworking of Lalo Schifrin's score is best thing about this attempt to turn the long-running TV series of the 60s and 70s into a feature film. Cruise stars as Ethan Hunt, a specialist for extremely difficult missions issued by a secret branch of the government. In Prague, he is framed for betraying his own 'firm' and along with colleague Béart tries to find out who brought him into this situation. Gadget-laden, at times exciting, but also confusing and filled with stereotypes. The finale is

spectacular, but weak script dulls its effect. Fans of the series would do better to rewatch some old episodes.

**Mission: Impossible II** (2000, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Woo. Starring Tom Cruise, Dougray Scott, Thandie Newton, Ving Rhames, Richard Roxburgh, Brendan Gleeson, Rade Serbedzija, Anthony Hopkins. Sequel to the 1996 blockbuster is even louder and more annoying, as secret agent Ethan Hunt (Cruise) must recover deadly virus stolen by rival spy Scott. Starts okay, but you'll want to walk out on the movie after an hour. Stay, if you want to catch the bombastic final fight. Relatively little action, hardly anything interesting in the plot – what's left is expert Woo's usually stylish direction. Written by Robert Towne(!).

**Mission: Impossible III** (2006, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: J.J. Abrams. Starring Tom Cruise, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Ving Rhames, Billy Crudup, Michelle Monaghan, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Keri Russell, Maggie Q, Simon Pegg, Eddie Marsan, Laurence Fishburne, Sasha Alexander. Second sequel to the TV series' big-screen adaptation is okay action fare as Cruise investigates the death of a partner, who died spying on weapons dealer Hoffman. What is the villain's next move? The mission brings Cruise into the Vatican and Shanghai, but the action and the plot are so removed from reality they qualify as pure fantasy. You watch things at an emotional distance and don't really care about anything.

**Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation** (2015, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Christopher McQuarrie. Starring Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg, Rebecca Ferguson, Ving Rhames, Sean Harris, Alex Baldwin. Fifth installment in the film series starts out well with an over-the-top stunt and remains quite entertaining until the final third, when the viewer's suspension of disbelief is put to an extreme test. Cruise's organisation are pitted against another organisation which is trying to discredit them. This leads Cruise and his team to travel the world, including Vienna, Morocco and Malaysia. Ferguson is a nice heroine, the rest of the cast works expectedly well.

**Mission to Mars** (2000, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brian De Palma. Starring Gary Sinise, Tim Robbins, Don Cheadle, Connie Nielsen, Jerry O'Donnell, Kim Delaney, Elise Neal, Armin Müller-Stahl. Uneven, muddled space drama, a failed attempt to create the movie magic from better movies such as CONTACT or even 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. First Mars mission encounters strange phenomena, rescue mission headed by Robbins are out to help. Film is not at all interesting for the first 40 minutes, then manages to create some suspense, only to end in an incredibly overblown finale. Only occasionally fascinating, not the space opera intended.

**Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children** (2016, USA/GBR/BEL) **C-127m. \*\*** D: Tim Burton. Starring Eva Green, Asa Butterfield, Samuel L. Jackson, Judi Dench, Rupert Everett, Terence Stamp, Ella Purnell. Teenager Butterfield follows clues left by his late grandfather Stamp to a British island, where he ultimately meets the title character and her children, who live in a time loop, constantly afraid of monsters sent by villain Jackson. Fantasy adventure packs too much of its source novel into the plot, with often plodding results. It's also a CGI fest, with its weird effects likely to scare, if not traumatize, smaller children. Butterfield does a Frodo turn, suffering and looking unhappy throughout the film... which also transfers to the viewer. That said, the film has a sardonic Green performance to its credit, if not much else. Based on the novel by Ransom Riggs.

**Mister Dynamit – Morgen Küßt Euch der Tod** (1967, GER/AUT/ITA/SPA) **C-107m. \*\*** D: F. J. Gottlieb. Starring Lex Barker, Maria Perschy, Amedeo Nazzari, José Suárez, Wolfgang Preiss, Ralf Wolter, Siegfried Rauch, Eddi Arent, Joachim Fuchsberger. After Barker's success in the Old Shatterhand role, the Germans thought they could use him as a James Bond clone (replete with Arent as a bumbling 'Q'!), but results are weak. Story is about a villain who

steals an atomic bomb and CIA agent Barker's attempt to thwart his plans. Clearly Barker isn't taking it seriously at all. Best thing about it is Armando Trovajoli's easy listening score (though even that is not all that catchy). English titles: DIE SLOWLY... YOU'LL ENJOY IT MORE, and SPY TODAY, DIE TOMORROW.

**Mister X** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Piero Vivarelli. Starring Norman Clark (=Pier Paolo Capponi), Franco Fantasia, Armando Calvi, Helga Liné, Umberto Raho. Endlessly talky spy drama about a DIABOLIK-like spy, who baffles the police and criminals. He takes revenge on a crime boss who killed his girlfriend. Even for fans, a most tiresome venture. Score is one long jazz impro. Vivarelli (co-writer of DJANGO) followed this with SATANIK (1968). Also known as AVENGER X.

**Modern Vampyres** (1999, USA) **C-95m. \*½ D:** Richard Elfman. Starring Caspar Van Dien, Natasha Wagner, Rod Steiger, Udo Kier, Robert Pastorelli, Kim Cattrall, Gabriel Casseus. Yet another vampire movie, and this time pure trash. Rod Steiger plays Dr. Frederick Van Helsing, vampire hunter, who has come to L.A. to exterminate some bloodsuckers. It turns out the Count (Pastorelli) is at odds with some of the resident vampires. Trashy, gory, realized on a meager budget. Score by Danny Elfman(!). Alternative title: REVENANT.

**Modesty Blaise** (1966, GBR) **C-120m. \*\* D:** Joseph Losey. Starring Monica Vitti, Terence Stamp, Dirk Bogarde, Harry Andrews, Clive Revill, Alexander Knox, Rossella Falk, Tina Marquand (=Tina Aumont). Comic-book adaptation made at the height of the Bond craze has an incredibly muddled plot. Beautiful Vitti plays the title character, a female spy, who is hired to steal a stash of diamonds. Her antagonist Bogarde tries to thwart her plans from his mediterranean fortress. Some striking shots by Losey (SECRET CEREMONY), stylish sets, interesting cast, but the story is plodding and boring, not to mention confusing. A disappointment, considering the talent involved.

**Moebius** (2013, KOR) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Kim Ki-duk. Starring Jo Jae-hyeon, Seo Young-ju, Lee Eun-woo, Kim Jae-hong. Controversial, experimental psycho drama plays out without a word of dialogue: Film focuses on a married couple and their teenage son. The woman becomes mentally undone and attacks first the adulterous husband, then cuts off the son's penis. Film follows the father's and the son's ways of dealing with the loss of this body part. Extremely painful at times, the film is watchable despite the absence of spoken language, but it's far from enjoyable or intriguing. It's an interesting experiment at best. Similar in tone to Lars von Trier's NYMPHOMANIAC (2013). English title: MOEBIUS.

**Môjû** (1969, JAP) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Yasuko Masamura. Starring Eiji Funakoshi, Mako Midori, Noriko Sengoku. Raw, powerful drama about a young, ambitious fashion model, who finds herself kidnapped one day by a blind sculptor, who intends to keep her in his bizarre studio until he has completed the perfect sculpture. He is aided by his overbearing mother in this crazy scheme. Stylishly shot psycho drama has a fine, creepy score and three brilliantly intense performances. Hard to take at times and slightly uneven, but packs a wallop, especially for cult movie fans. From a story by horror/mystery writer Rampo Edogawa, an interesting, darker, typically Japanese variation of William Wyler's THE COLLECTOR (1965). English titles: BLIND BEAST, WAREHOUSE.

**mommy** (1995, USA) **C-89m. 7 D:** Max Allan Collins. Starring Patricia McCormack, Rachel Lemieux, Jason Miller, Brinke Stevens, Kevin McCarthy, Mickey Spillane. Atrocious "thriller" about mother McCormack, who loves her daughter so much she doesn't shy away from murder. Slowly paced low-budget movie that telegraphs its punches. Features what is probably the most idiotic mother-daughter relationship put on film. Inspired by THE BAD SEED (1956) and incredibly followed by a sequel in 1997.

**Momo e no Tegami** (2011, JAP) **C-120m.** \*\*\*½ D: Hiroyuki Okiura. Starring (the voices of) Karen Miyama, Yuka, Daizaburo Arakawa, Toshiyuki Nishida. Endearing family film about a girl, who moves to an island with her mother because her late father's parents live there. She is deeply troubled by her father's death and has an unfinished letter from him that simply reads 'Dear Momo'. At first she refuses to get accustomed, then she mistakenly wakes up three bumbling spirits that turn her life upside down. Great scenery animation is the film's strength, the plot is often aimless and depressing. Tries too hard to be a second TONARI NO TOTORO (1988). English title: A LETTER TO MOMO.

**Monaca nel Peccato, La** (1986, ITA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: Dario Donati (=Joe D'Amato). Starring Eva Grimaldi, Karin Well, Gabriele Gori, Jessica Moore, Gabriele Tinti. Rather terrible sex drama set in a convent, where newcomer Grimaldi is subject to all kinds of sexual molestation. Film has shades of a real plot, but episodic scenes are repetitive, and overwhelming nudity (in a semi-serious film) becomes off-putting. For those who think D'Amato is a good director. He also edited and photographed this film, whose English title was THE CONVENT OF SINNERS. Based on the novel *Le Religieuse* by Denis Diderot.

**Monday** (2000, JAP) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Starring Shin'ichi Tsutsumi, Yasuko Matsuyuki, Ren Osugi, Masanobu Ando, Hideki Noda. Another one of director Sabu's off-beat comedy dramas, this one is very close to the loser portrayals of Jim Jarmusch. Clerk Tsutsumi wakes up in a hotel room one day, without any memory. It turns out he freaked out during a funeral and got mixed up with the local Yakuza. Not consistently funny, but Sabu's fans should get their money's worth.

**Mondo dell'Orrore di Dario Argento, Il** (1985, ITA) **C-70m.** \*\*\* D: Michele Soavi. Featuring Dario Argento, Luciano Tovoli. Early documentary on the leading European horror film director Dario Argento. Argento himself speaks about his films, the techniques he used in them and his fascination with horror in general. Enlightening for his fans, interesting for film buffs in general. Clips of all his films are shown, starting with L'UCCELLO DALLE PIUME DI CRISTALLO (1970) and ending with PHENOMENA (1984) and DEMONI (1985). Unfortunately also reveals the climaxes of all these movies, so you should stay away if you plan to watch the films. Director Soavi was Argento's assistant and went on to make the stylish slasher AQUARIUS (1986). Followed by two more documentaries: DARIO ARGENTO – MASTER OF HORROR (1991) and IL MONDO DI DARIO ARGENTO 3 (1997).

**Mondo Macabro: The Erotic Empire** (2002, GBR) **C-24m.** n/r D: Andrew Starke, Peter Tombs. Featuring Seijun Suzuki, Toshiyuki Matsushima, Kazuko Shirakawa. Last episode of eight-part documentary series discussing different regional subgenres of exploitation cinema. This entry focuses on the Japanese pink cinema, which emerged in the mid-1960s, and one of its most prominent studios, Nikkatsu, and their directors. Quite interesting, but names only a handful of films.

**Money From Home** (1953, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: George Marshall. Starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Pat Crowley, Robert Strauss, Jack Kruschen. Typical Martin/Lewis vehicle, but not so funny as others: Martin flees from gangsters, taking bumbling idiot Lewis with him. They get involved in the kidnapping of a jockey and fall in love. Episodic plot, good for some laughs. Originally released in 3-D.

**MonkeyBone** (2001, USA) **C-92m.** ☒ D: Henry Selick. Starring Brendan Fraser, Bridget Fonda, Chris Kattan, Dave Foley, Whoopi Goldberg, Giancarlo Esposito, Rose McGowan, Lisa Zane, Stephen King. Just when he's ready to take a break from work, famous comic book artist Fraser has an accident which puts him in a coma. He enters a strange dream world, from which only his creation, the mischievous chimp MonkeyBone manages to escape – using Fraser's body. Absolutely annoying fantasy comedy with painful gags. One of those

children's (or: childish) movies that should be R-rated. Almost unwatchable, a major disappointment from the director of such instant classics as NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1993) and JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH (1996). Based on the graphic novel *Dark Town*.

**Monkey Shines** (1988, USA) **C-113m.** \*\*½ D: George A. Romero. Starring Jason Beghe, John Pankow, Kate McNeil, Joyce Van Patten, Christine Forrest, Stanley Tucci. Relatively unexciting horror about paralyzed Beghe, who takes in little pet monkey to help him, then pays price for Pankow's tampering with its brain. Solidly made, ambitious (for 80s horror), but too slow and/or too long. Scripted by Romero, from a novel by Michael Stewart. Also called MONKEY SHINES: AN EXPERIMENT IN FEAR.

**Monkey's Mask, The** (2000, AUS/FRA/ITA/CDN/JAP) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Samantha Lang. Starring Susie Porter, Kelly McGillis, Marton Csokas, Abbie Cornish, William Zappa, Brendan Cowell, John Noble. Quite atmospheric crime drama and character study set in Sydney about lesbian private eye Porter, who takes on case of young poet, who has been missing for some time and gets involved with university professor McGillis, who was one of her teachers. Interesting, well-scored adaptation of the novel by Dorothy Porter gives you what you expect.

**Mon Seung** (2006, HGK/THA) **C-85m.** \*\*\* D: Oxide Pang Chun. Starring Charlene Choi, Shawn Yue, Isabella Leong. Psycho drama about a young woman (Choi), who's just been left by her boyfriend without a word. She starts despairing and cannot seem to be consoled by her only friend. Then she meets someone who looks just like her ex-lover. The starting point for a new relationship? Or is she imagining things? At first one-note and simplistic, but this drama becomes darkly stylish, with enough evidence of Pang's cinematic virtuosity to make it satisfying for cult movie fans. The screenwriting is dizzyingly creative, with the narrative shifting back and forth in time. Pang also cowrote and coproduced. Also known as DIARY, and WISHFUL THINKING.

**Monsieur Klein** (1976, FRA/ITA) **C-123m.** \*\*½ D: Joseph Losey. Starring Alain Delon, Jeanne Moreau, Francine Bergé, Juliet Berto, Massimo Girotti, Michel Lonsdale, Gérard Jugnot, Francine Racette, Raymond Danon. Rambling account of Catholic arts dealer Delon, who takes advantage of Jews in WW2 France but finds tables turned on him, when he is mistaken for a Jew of the same name. He sets out to find the man or uncover any conspiracy against his person. Largely disappointing, cold psycho drama keeps the plot at a slow pace and none too involving. It's Delon and a fine supporting cast who make the film endurable. No match for Losey's 60s cult classics ACCIDENT and SECRET CEREMONY. Costa-Gavras cowrote the screenplay sans credit, Delon also coproduced. César winner for Best Film, Best Director. English title: MR. KLEIN.

**Monsieur Verdoux** (1947, USA) **C-124m.** \*\*\* D: Charles Chaplin. Starring Charles Chaplin, Mady Correll, Allison Roddan, Robert Lewis, Audrey Betz. Unusual comedy drama, written, directed, produced and scored by mastermind Chaplin. He plays a French serial killer, who marries elderly women and kills them, hoping to cash in their fortune. At the same time, he has a wife and son waiting for their 'sea-faring' husband and father to return. Broad comedy doesn't always gel with ultimately serious subject matter, which hampers the effect, though Chaplin's sardonic performance is brilliant in its innocence. Uneven but intriguing, well-worth a look.

**Monster** (2003, USA) **C-109m.** \*\*\* D: Patty Jenkins. Starring Charlize Theron, Christina Ricci, Bruce Dern, Lee Tergesen, Annie Corley, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Kane Hodder. Searing drama based on a real case, about a street hooker (Theron), who befriends a lesbian loner (Ricci) and takes it on the lam with her when she shoots one of her customers, a sadistic rapist.

More serious than NATURAL BORN KILLERS (which was a satire), film is also worthy of comparison to HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER (1986). Oscar-winning performance by Theron. Written by the director.

**Monster, The** (2016, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Bryan Bertino. Starring Zoe Kazan, Ella Ballentine, Scott Speedman. Horror movie with a psycho drama touch about white trash Kazan, who intends to take her headstrong pre-teen daughter to her father. When their car hits something in the middle of the rainy night, they are stranded. It turns out a monster is roaming the woods and looking for prey. Okay on the technical side, the poorly paced plot puts your patience to an extreme test – some scenes never seem to end, and the little girl is going through too much abuse (Ballentine is amazing, however).

**Monster Calls, A** (2016, SPA/GBR/USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: J.A. Bayona. Starring Lewis MacDougall, Sigourney Weaver, Felicity Jones, Toby Kebbell, the voice of Liam Neeson. Powerfully cinematic, immensely moving tale of a twelve-year-old boy (MacDougall), who stands by his mother, who is suffering from cancer. One night a tree monster is summoned by his anger and frustration and tells him three tales – in return the boy must reveal his worst nightmare. Imaginative, beautifully directed and shot fantasy drama with striking animated sequences is a heart-breaking story of love and loss. MacDougall is incredibly good. From the director of the excellent EL ORFANATO / THE ORPHANAGE (2007). Based on the novel by Patrick Ness.

**Monster Squad, The** (1987, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Fred Dekker. Starring Andre Gower, Robby Kiger, Stephen Macht, Duncan Regehr, Tom Noonan. Enjoyable horror comedy: A group of suburban kids are the only ones who realize that Dracula is gathering an army of monsters to take over the world. Typical 80s gloss, not always on target, but has become a cult item for the appearance of most classic filmdom monsters. It's also fairly creepy and thus not for small kids. Cowritten by director Dekker (NIGHT OF THE CREEPS).

**Monster House** (2006, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Gil Kenan. Starring (the voices of) Mitchell Musso, Sam Lerner, Spencer Locke, Steve Buscemi, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jason Lee, Kevin James, Nick Cannon, Catherine O'Hara, Fred Willard, Kathleen Turner. Two neighbourhood pals are wondering what's wrong with the resident of the house across the street – a grumpy old man whose mansion seems strangely alive. Together with a girl scout they investigate the disappearance of objects and even people. Animated horror comedy for older children has great design and animation, but the explanation for the going-ons must be incomprehensible for kids – it's even strange for adults. Otherwise, you are in for a roller-coaster ride. Coproduced by Steven Spielberg.

**Monster-in-Law** (2005, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*½** D: Robert Luketic. Starring Jennifer Lopez, Jane Fonda, Michael Vartan, Wanda Sykes, Adam Scott. Almost unwatchable comedy marks Fonda's return to motion pictures after a hiatus of 15 years. Surgeon Vartan meets and falls in love with aspiring artist Lopez, just then his mother gets fired from her immensely popular talk show because they want a younger host. Guess which mother instinct is awakened next. Painful, unfunny, sappy romance, even more contrived than the Hollywood standard. Fonda is thoroughly thrashing her image with this (although she tries hard to be radiant).

**Monster in the Closet** (1986, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Bob Dahlin. Starring Donald Grant, Denise DuBarry, Claude Akins, Howard Duff, Henry Gibson, Donald Moffat, Paul Dooley, John Carradine, Jesse White, Stella Stevens. Hilariously funny monster horror spoof about an ugly Californian creature attacking innocent people in their closets. Grant is the nerdish reporter investigating the case. Intelligent, well-directed, well-written by Dahlin, film has more to offer than the usual Troma schlock. Crammed with movie references from PSYCHO to the

THE EXORCIST. Those gargling sound effects are a scream. Executive produced by Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz, of THE TOXIC AVENGER-fame.

**Monsters University** (2013, USA) **C-104m. \*\*** D: Dan Scanlon. Starring (the voices of) Billy Crystal, John Goodman, Steve Buscemi, Helen Mirren. Weak sequel (actually prequel) to MONSTERS, INC. (2001) is set at a university campus, where an underdog wants to become a scarer in the human world. An evil dean ousts him from the course, so he assembles a group of monster nerds to compete in and win a tournament. Predictable, formulaic, with barely any laughs. Even the animated short that precedes it is dull.

**Monsters Vs. Aliens** (2009, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Rob Letterman, Conrad Vernon. Starring (the voices of) Reese Witherspoon, Seth Rogen, Hugh Laurie, Will Arnett, Kiefer Sutherland, Rainn Wilson, Stephen Colbert, Paul Rudd, Jeffrey Tambor, Renée Zellweger, John Krasinski. Exciting 3D-animated Dreamworks movie about a young woman, who is hit by a meteorite with a special substance and grows into a 50-foot giant. She joins a group of monsters, who are kept secret by the government, but have to be released to battle alien invasion. Lots of fun references to sci-fi and monster movies, even Japanese ones, but if it wasn't for the excellent 3D effects, the movie wouldn't be so good. It's the plot again that fails to convince. Reduce the rating by half a star if you watch it in 2D.

**Monstre a Paris, Un** (2010, FRA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Bibi Bergeron. Starring (the voices of) Vanessa Paradis, Adam Goldberg, Danny Huston, Sean Lennon. Fairly entertaining animated feature set in turn-of-the-century France, where two ne'er-do-wells enter a secret laboratory and accidentally spill enlarging fluid on a flea, which subsequently becomes the title character. Has some funny moments, but characters are under-developed, and pace is poor. With a better script this could have hit bull's-eye. Aka A MONSTER IN PARIS.

**Montagna del Dio Cannibale, La** (1978, ITA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Martino. Starring Ursula Andress, Stacy Keach, Claudio Cassinelli, Antonio Marsina, Helmut Berger. Keach joins Andress in the search for her husband, who disappeared in the jungle near a cannibal tribe. Production values make this superior to other cannibal flicks like MANGIATI VIVI or CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST, but this is still trivial and very violent. Incredible how the producers could sign up two international stars. English titles: SLAVE OF THE CANNIBAL GOD, MOUNTAIN OF CANNIBAL GODS.

**Montagna di Luce, La** (1965, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Richard Harrison, Luciana Gilli, Wilbert Bradley, Daniele Vargas. Quite engaging exotic adventure set in India, where American thief Harrison has lost a lot of money to Rajah Vargas in a poker game. He can only pay it back by stealing a priceless diamond off the forehead of a giant buddha statue. Tongue-in-cheek, competently made and acted, with a nice score by Francesco Di Masi, a low-budget precursor to Indiana Jones. English titles: JUNGLE ADVENTURER, TEMPLE OF A THOUSAND LIGHTS, and SANDOK.

**Montagna Sacra** (1975, MEX) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Alejandro Jodorowsky, Horacio Salinas, Ramona Saunders, Juan Ferrara, Adriana Page, Bert Kleiner. Jodorowsky's third feature film, following FANDO Y LIS and EL TOPO, is almost impossible to rate or describe. A thief wanders around aimlessly in the slums, acts in a toad show with an amputee, is used as a model for hundreds of Jesus figures, and crawls into a mysterious tower, where a guru turns his excrement into gold. He joins forces with a group of wealthy industrialists, who want to ascend the Holy Mountain and steal the secret of eternal life from the druids. Loosely told, not consistently interesting, but filled with odd, surreal images of visionary quality. Good score, good camerawork. Drawbacks: The meaning is difficult to decipher, and audiences may be put off by Jodorowsky's radical style, which

emphasizes that freaks are normal and normal people are freaks. English title: THE HOLY MOUNTAIN.

**Monte Carlo or Bust** (1969, GBR/ITA/FRA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ken Annakin. Starring Terry-Thomas, Tony Curtis, Bourvil, Mireille Darc, Gert Fröbe, Jack Hawkins, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Dudley Moore, Eric Sykes, Derren Nesbitt, Marie Dubois. Game cast in attempt at a big comedy a la IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD (1963). Several competitors take part in 1500-mile race from several European cities to Monte Carlo. Lots of slapstick ensues. Typically engaging comedy is not particularly funny, nor too cleverly plotted, but its set-pieces provide agreeable entertainment. A follow-up to Annakin's THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN IN THEIR FLYING MACHINES (1965). Titled THOSE DARING YOUNG MEN IN THE JAUNTY JALOPIES for U.S. release. Also known as MONTE CARLO RALLYE.

**Monte Walsh** (1970, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** William A. Fraker. Starring Lee Marvin, Jeanne Moreau, Jack Palance, Mitch Ryan, Jim Davis, G.D. Spradlin, Bo Hopkins, Richard Farnsworth. Marvin plays an aging cowboy in a dying West in this offbeat, melancholy western. Not much plotwise, but moody, atmospheric and well-acted. Excellent main theme by John Barry.

**Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl** (1980, GBR) **C-80m. \*\*½D:** Terry Hughes and Monty Python. Starring Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin, Carol Cleveland, Neil Innes. A recording of a live performance by the cult comedians in Los Angeles in September 1980. Funny, but not throughout. A must for fans, however. Shot on video, then transferred to film and theatrically released in 1982.

**Monty Python's The Meaning of Life** (1983, GBR) **C-107m. \*\*½ D:** Terry Jones. Starring Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin, Carol Cleveland, Simon Jones. Episodic satire on the meaning of life - structured in 7 parts, from the miracle of birth to the Grim Reaper himself. Anyone who knows the eccentric, irreverent British comedy troupe Monty Python will know what to expect. Includes some funny sketches, with the restaurant bit the funniest (and grossest) of them all. Python fans will howl, others may quibble about the unevenness of the presentation. Not continually funny enough to score a higher rating. Animation and special sequences by Terry Gilliam. Some prints may be without the short film THE CRIMSON PERMANENT ASSURANCE.

**Moomins, The** (TV series, 1979-1982, POL/AUT) **C-8m. (78 episodes) n/r D:** none credited. Narrated by Hans Clarin (German version), Richard Murdoch (English version). Finnish children's book author Tove Jansson's beloved Mumin or Moomin characters are featured in this television series. In the first episode the Mumin friends find a hat belonging to a Hobgoblin that can transform things inside. Later they go on a trip to an island and find strange inhabitants who worship a barometer. A bit gloomy, but highly imaginative, adventurous and peopled with interesting characters. The fourth(!) TV series about the Mumin, done in cut-out stop-motion style. Edited down to 5 minutes per episode for some showings. Finnish title: MUMINTROLLET.

**Moon** (2009, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Duncan Jones. Starring Sam Rockwell, Dominique McElligott, voice of Kevin Spacey. Science-fiction drama centering on Rockwell, who runs an important mining operation on the moon all by himself. He is aided by a computer (voiced by Spacey), which is his only communication partner. Then, weeks before his three-year contract runs out, he has an accident and wakes up in the infirmary. All of a sudden everything has changed and a terrible realization dawns on him. Acclaimed sc-fi takes its cue from famous films such as BLADE RUNNER and 2001, and it *is* interesting to watch, but the humor seems out of place, and there could have been more suspense. Fine score by Clint Mansell.

**Moonfleet** (1955, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Fritz Lang. Starring Stewart Granger, George Sanders, Joan Greenwood, Viveca Lindfors, Jon Whiteley. Alan Napier, Jack Elam. Beautifully filmed adventure drama about penniless orphan Whiteley, who comes to title castle and is taken in by smuggler Granger and his crew. Granger develops a liking for the boy, whereas his men consider him a danger to their operations. Film doesn't hold up due to listless plotting, but should be watched alone for its striking cinematography (by Robert Planck), which lends the film a dark, brooding atmosphere. Director Lang reportedly disliked this project. Based on a novel by J. Meade Falkner, but seems more like Dickens or Hawthorne. Filmed in 2.55:1 CinemaScope. Score by Miklós Rózsa.

**Moonlight & Valentino** (1995, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Anspaugh. Starring Elizabeth Perkins, Whoopi Goldberg, Kathleen Turner, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jon Bon Jovi, Peter Coyote. A film to please women, if there ever was one: Perkins, newly widowed after her husband dies in a car crash, is faced with loneliness and the inability to cope with this new situation. Friend Goldberg, sister Paltrow and step mom Turner try to help her get over it. And - wouldn't you know it - there's a cute Italian painter (Bon Jovi) in town, just when Perkins' house needs a face-lift. Not as bad as it sounds, in fact quite good, with fine performances (especially by Goldberg) and nice subject handling. Based on Ellen Simon's stageplay.

**Moonraker** (1979, GBR/FRA/USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lewis Gilbert. Starring Roger Moore, Lois Chiles, Michael Lonsdale, Richard Kiel, Corinne Clery, Bernard Lee, Desmond Llewelyn, Alfie Bass, Albert R. Broccoli, Lewis Gilbert. Amusing James Bond adventure pits the superspy against industrial mogul Drax (Lonsdale), who is about to conquer space with sophisticated spaceships. Episodic like most films of the series, but delivers enough cliffhanger stunts and chases to make this a fine entry. Good production values, incredible sets, a lot of fun. Some did not like this; judge for yourself if you can enjoy Moore's sardonic performance. Followed by FOR YOUR EYES ONLY.

**Moonrise Kingdom** (2012, USA) **C-94m. \*\*½** D: Wes Anderson. Starring Bruce Willis, Edward Norton, Bill Murray, Frances McDormand, Tilda Swinton, Jared Gilman, Kara Hayward, Jason Schwartzman, Harvey Keitel, narrated by Bob Balaban. Stellar cast in static drama set in 1965, when on a remote island a troubled 12-year-old khaki scout Gilman conspired to run away into the wilderness with Hayward, a depressed girl from a well-to-do family. Anderson's yellow-green color scheme adds to great production design, and most of the characters get to face the camera frontally, resulting in a kind of surreal atmosphere, but the film stays emotionally distant. Worth a look. Score by Alexandre Desplat.

**Moonshine County Express** (1977, USA) **C-95m. \*\*** D: Gus Trikonis. Starring John Saxon, Susan Howard, William Conrad, Morgan Woodward, Claudia Jennings, Jeff Corey, Dub Taylor, Albert Salmi, Bruce Kimball. Fair enough B-movie drama about feuding whiskey distilleries. Howard's father dies and leaves his distillery to his daughters. Competitor Conrad gives them a hard time until race car driver and womanizer Saxon lends them a hand. Predictable, not too entertaining, for those interested in the veteran cast. Also known as SHINE.

**Moonwalkers** (2015, FRA/BEL) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Antoine Bardou-Jacquet. Starring Rupert Grint, Ron Perlman, Robert Sheehan, Stephen Campbell Moore, James Cosmo. Perlman is great as gruffy, shell-shocked vietnam vet, who works for the CIA and travels to London in 1969 to track down Stanley Kubrick to stage the moon landing in case the original Apollo mission goes wrong. He ends up with unsuccessful music manager Grint, who pretends to know Kubrick and presents his stoner friend Sheehan as the filmmaker.

Complicating things are some violent British thugs and a totally incapable filmcrew who prefer partying to serious work. Entertaining, with comic-book gore and some nudity.

**Morbo** (1972, SPA) **C-86m. \*\*\* D:** Gonzalo Suarez. Starring Ana Belen, Victor Manuel, Michael J. Pollard, Maria Vico. Subtle psycho drama about a newly-wed couple, who go on a no-budget honeymoon with their caravan. They set up camp in a clearing and are soon confronted with inexplicable going-ons. Eerie horror drama, kind of like a Spanish version of *PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK* (1975), examines the burdens of matrimony. Rather low-budget, technically not very elaborate but captivating, also as a time capsule to the early 70s. Belen is a classic beauty, she really got married to co-star Manuel in 1972. English title: *MORBIDNESS*.

**Mordi e Fuggie** (1973, ITA/FRA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Dino Risi. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Oliver Reed, Carole André, Lionel Stander, Bruno Cirino, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Jacques Herlin, Gian Carlo Fusco. Businessman Mastroianni intends to spend a pleasure-filled weekend with his lover André but is taken hostage by ruthless criminal Reed and his gang, who have just robbed a bank and flee with the couple in a car. Soon the cops and the media are hot on their trail. Crime drama with comic elements features a brilliant performance by Mastroianni and a completely convincing one by Reed. The ending is especially good. Sort of the Italian counterpiece to Steven Spielberg's *SUGARLAND EXPRESS* (1974), though it rather tends to be more politically motivated – like perhaps Claude Chabrol's *NADA* (1974). Good score by Carlo Rustichelli, photography by Luciano Tovoli. English title: *DIRTY WEEKEND*.

**More** (1969, GER/FRA/LUX) **C-117m. \*\*\* D:** Barbet Schroeder. Starring Klaus Grünberg, Mimsy Farmer, Heinz Engelmann, Michel Chanderli. Director Schroeder's debut feature is free-wheeling, well-told drama about German mathematics student Grünberg, who takes a break from his studies to get to know the real world. He goes to Paris and falls in love with Farmer, a hippie girl with a liberal attitude towards drugs. Some consider this romance boring, and as a treatise on addiction it is not very illuminating, but characters are interesting and atmosphere is well-captured. A free-spirited time capsule, perhaps a matter of taste. The music is by Pink Floyd. Script by Schroeder and Paul Gégauff, produced by Schroeder. Photographed by Néstor Almendros.

**Morfalous, Les** (1984, FRA/TUN) **C-93m. \*\* D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jacques Villeret, Michel Constantin, Francois Perrot. Action drama set in 1943 Tunisia, where Belmondo's Foreign Legion battailon is almost completely wiped out when trying to claim gold worth 6 billion Francs. Belmondo and three remaining soldiers go against the Germans to get the gold for themselves. Poor thriller, a disappointment from cowriter-director Verneuil. Perhaps the inspiration for *THREE KINGS* (1999). Score by Georges Delerue.

**Morirai a Mezzanotte** (1986, ITA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Valeria D'Obici, Leonardo Treviglio, Paolo Malco, Lara Wendel, Lea Martino. Typical giallo (made well after the genre's heyday) about police inspector Malco, who must deal with a killer that is after women. Can he get help from profiler D'Obici, especially since his own daughter may be among those targeted? Mario Bava's son Lamberto pays tribute to his close colleague Dario Argento by including references to his films, and the result is an interesting thriller. Some heavy-handed scenes are offset by pulsating score by Claudio Simonetti (member of Goblin). For fans of this kind of stuff (who won't mind the second-rate plot). Script by Dardano Sacchetti and Lamberto Bava (as John Old Jr.). English titles: *MIDNIGHT KILLER*, and *YOU'LL DIE AT MIDNIGHT*.

**Morituris** (2011, ITA) **C-83m. BOMB** D: Raffaele Picchio. Starring Valentina D'Andrea, Andrea De Bruyn, Désirée Giorgetti. Almost unwatchable horror film about three men who take two women to a Rave party in the woods. It turns out there is no party, but the men proceed to rape and humiliate the girls. To make things even worse, some gladiators are resurrected and go on a bloody rampage. Endless, pointless, unpleasant, even the effects by Sergio Stivaletti are drab.

**Morke** (2005, DEN/GBR) **C-120m. \*\*½** D: Jannik Johansen. Starring Nikolaj Lie Kaas, Nicolas Bro, Laura Drasbaek, Lisbet Lundquist. Fair thriller drama about journalist Kaas, whose suicidal handicapped sister is about to marry an internet acquaintance, chubby Bro. On their wedding night she really kills herself, but when Kaas learns a few weeks later that Bro is about to marry again - another handicapped woman - he is alerted and travels to the community of Morke to investigate. Longish thriller has interesting moments, Bro's performance is too one-note. English title: MURK.

**Morozko** (1964, RUS) **C-84m. \*\*½** D: Aleksandr Rou. Starring Aleksandr Khvylya, Natalya Sedykh, Eduard Izotov, Inna Churikova. Children's fantasy, based on a Russian fairy tale, about the adventures of a girl and a boy, who pass several adventures in a forest before finding themselves. Film is peopled by odd, almost grotesque characters, which makes it interesting to watch, but its sensibility is equally strange and color cinematography is sometimes so washed out it looks like black-and-white. Non-Russian audiences may find this difficult to connect to. English titles: FATHER FROST, THE CRYSTAL STAR, THE FROSTY, JACK FROST.

**Mortal Instruments, The: City of Bones** (2013, USA/CDN/GER) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Harald Zwart. Starring Lily Collins, Jamie Campbell Bower, Kevin Zegers, Jemima West, Lena Headey, CCH Pounder, Jared Harris, Jonathan Rhys Meyers. Fantasy action aimed at the TWILIGHT crowd, based on the book series by Cassandra Clare. Teenager Collins learns that she may be a shadow hunter, and her mother has been hiding a very important artifact from an evil army. Not bad, with some surprisingly violent, even gory elements, but storyline is predictable and has little merit, like the PERCY JACKSON films of the time.

**Morte Accarezza a Mezzanotte, La** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Luciano Ercoli. Starring Susan Scott (=Nieves Navarro), Simón Andreu, Peter Martell (=Pietro Martellanza), Carlo Gentili, Luciano Rossi. Sequel to the slightly better DEATH WALKS ON HIGH HEELS (LA MORTE CAMMINA CON I TACCHI ALTI) also stars Susan Scott (née Nieves Navarro). She plays a fashion model who experiments with drugs for her tabloid reporter boyfriend Andreu. During the trip she suddenly remembers witnessing a murder and starts to investigate. Then she is stalked herself. Serpentine story by Sergio Corbucci and Ernesto Gastaldi is interesting enough to keep you watching, works best as a time capsule. Scott, by then married to director Ercoli, keeps her clothes on this time. Score by Gianni Ferrio is inferior to Stelvio Cipriani's for DEATH WALKS ON HIGH HEELS. English titles: DEATH WALKS AT MIDNIGHT, DEATH CARESSES AT MIDNIGHT.

**Morte Cammina Con i Tacchi Alti, La** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Luciano Ercoli. Starring Frank Wolff, Susan Scott (=Nieves Navarro), Simón Andreu, Carlo Gentili, George Rigaud, José Manuel Martín, Luciano Rossi. Strip-dancer Scott is followed by a blue-eyed killer, who wants to get his hands on her father's diamonds. Not knowing their whereabouts, she faces death. When she starts suspecting her loser-boyfriend Andreu, she flees the country with admirer Wolff and hides out at his sea-side cottage. Uneven but interestingly plotted giallo has many twists and turns. This one was even followed by a sequel, LA MORTE ACCAREZZA A MEZZANOTTE (DEATH WALKS AT MIDNIGHT). Well-photographed by Fernando Arribas, nice score by Stelvio Cipriani. Actor Wolff committed suicide three weeks

after this was released. Ernesto Gastaldi was among the writers. English title: DEATH WALKS ON HIGH HEELS.

**Morte Ha Fatto L'Uovo, La** (1968, ITA/FRA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Giulio Questi. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Gina Lollobrigida, Ewa Aulin, Jean Sobieski, Renato Romano, Giulio Donnini. Fascinating, unique film about Trintignant, who runs a poultry farm with his wife Lollobrigida, but obviously also enjoys an affair with their 'guest', beautiful Aulin. Trintignant slowly seems to lose his wits... does he want to kill his wife? And is he the prostitute killer of late? Unconventional, partly surreal thriller that could only have been made in the late 60s. Good, creative direction by Questi (SE SEI VIVO SPARA), bizarre experimental score by Bruno Maderna in a much sought-after film that is an interesting precursor to the giallo. Edited by cowriter Franco Arcalli, who went on to work with Fellini, Bertolucci, Antonioni. Only available on Japanese DVD. English titles: DEATH LAID AN EGG, PLUCKED, and A CURIOUS WAY TO LOVE.

**Morte Ha Sorriso all'Assassino, La** (1973, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*½** D: Joe D'Amato (=Aristide Massaccesi). Starring Ewa Aulin, Klaus Kinski, Sergio Doria, Angela Bo, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. Horror film, not a giallo (the title is illogical), set in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with a gothic touch. Aulin has an accident with a horse carriage and is taken in by castle owners Doria and Bo. They wonder how she survived the crash, and doctor Kinski examines her. What is this strange mark on the neck about? Extremely weak, incoherent plot and D'Amato's trademark bludgeon style ruin this film. One wonders why Aulin signed up for it; this might have ruined her career, as 1973 was the last year she appeared in films. English titles: DEATH SMILED AT MURDER, DEATH SMILES ON A MURDERER.

**Mortelle Randonnée** (1983, FRA) **C-121m. \*\*\*½** D: Claude Miller. Starring Michel Serrault, Isabelle Adjani, Guy Marchand, Stéphane Audran, Geneviève Page, Sami Frey, Jean-Claude Brialy. Fascinating psycho drama about troubled private eye Serrault's growing obsession with the woman he is observing. Stars give top performances and film is absolutely spellbinding. Adapted from Marc Behm's novel *The Eye of the Beholder*. Also known as DEADLY CIRCUIT and DEADLY RUN. Remade in 1999 as EYE OF THE BEHOLDER.

**Mort en Direct, La** (1980, FRA/GBR/GER) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Bertrand Tavernier. Starring Romy Schneider, Harvey Keitel, Harry Dean Stanton, Thérèse Liotard, Max von Sydow, Vadim Glowna, Bernhard Wicki, Robbie Coltrane. Initially intriguing, low-key science-fiction drama set in the near future, where television shows have become taboo-breaking. Famous writer Schneider learns that she is terminally ill, and Keitel – with a hidden camera implanted in his eye – befriends her to film her secretly for a TV show. Effect is muted by film's slow pace, turning it into a ponderous and depressing chore to watch. The actors are terrific, especially Schneider in one of her last film appearances. Based on David Compton's novel *The Continuous Katherine Mortenhoe, or The Unsleeping Eye*. Filmed in Scotland. Also shown at 128m. English titles: DEATH WATCH, DEATH IN FULL VIEW.

**Morte Negli Occhi del Gato, La** (1973, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Jane Birkin, Doris Kunstmann, Anton Diffring, Konrad Georg, Hiram Keller, Françoise Christophe, Dana Ghia, Venantino Venantini, Serge Gainsbourg. Gothic horror/giallo-mix has beautiful Birkin travel to family's castle in Scotland, where a murderer is stalking her relatives. A cat is the only witness to the killings. Good direction, atmosphere, film even manages to be suspenseful at times, though plot lacks momentum and does not add up to much. Director Dawson cowrote the screenplay, based on a novel by Peter Bryan. English title: SEVEN DEATHS IN THE CAT'S EYE.

**Morte Risale a Ieri Sera, La** (1971, ITA/GER) **C-93m. \*½** D: Duccio Tessari. Starring Raf Vallone, Eva Renzi, Gabriele Tinti, Frank Wolff. When his daughter, a 25 year-old who

behaves like a 3-year-old(!), goes missing, Vallone asks the police for help. When they fail to come up with results, he takes justice into his own hands. Not a giallo, just an uninteresting crime drama with some nudity. English title: DEATH OCCURRED LAST NIGHT.

**Morte Viene dallo Spazio, La** (1958, ITA/FRA) **B&W-78m.** \*\* D: Paolo Heusch. Starring Paul Hubschmid, Fiorella Mari, Madeleine Fischer, Ivo Garrani, Dario Michaelis, Gérard Landry, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. During the first space mission something goes wrong and sends the rocket off into space, with astronaut Hubschmid returning to the Earth in an emergency capsule. Days later, strange occurrences light up the sky. It turns out the renegade rocket has sent a meteorite shower on collision course with our planet. Is this the end of the world? Interesting, not-bad sci-fi disaster movie, brought down by talkiness (accounted for by low budget). Pace and direction agreeable, DP Mario Bava responsible for some stylish bits. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. English titles: THE DAY THE SKY EXPLODED, DEATH COMES FROM SPACE, and DEATH FROM OUTER SPACE.

**Mosquito der Schänder** (1977, SUI) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Marijan Vajda. Starring Werner Pochath, Ellen Umlauf, Birgit Zamulo. Poor, unpleasant horror shocker about traumatized, deaf-and-dumb young man Pochath, who has an office job, but is constantly pecked on by his colleagues. Unfulfilled love then makes him abuse dead bodies and drink their blood. Quite disgusting without being overly gory, this is depressing and boring. English titles: MOSQUITO THE RAPIST, and BLOOD LUST.

**Most Dangerous Game, The** (1932, USA) **63m.** \*\*\* D: Ernest B. Schoedsack, Irving Pichel. Starring Joel McCrea, Fay Wray, Leslie Banks, Robert Armstrong, Noble Johnson. Adventure classic from the makers of the original KING KONG (1933). After a shipwreck writer/hunter McCrea is washed ashore on a tiny island. Soon he discovers there's a Russian count living in a fortress-like castle, who has a special way of treating his guests... he hunts them to death. Occasionally hokey and over-acted but well-made, with some effective sequences. Adapted from a story by Richard Connell. Excellent score by Max Steiner. Originally intended to be twenty minutes longer, footage was filmed but never inserted, is now regarded as lost. Remade several times, as for example A GAME OF DEATH (1945), RUN FOR THE SUN (1956), HARD TARGET (1993) or SURVIVING THE GAME (1994).

**Most Wanted Man, A** (2014, USA/GBR/GER) **C-122m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Anton Corbijn. Starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, Rachel McAdams, Grogoryi Dobrygin, Willem Dafoe, Robin Wright, Nina Hoss, Daniel Brühl, Herbert Grönemeyer, Political thriller about an illegal Chechen immigrant to Hamburg, Germany, who is tracked by Hoffman's clandestine organisation. The police want him apprehended, but Hoffman hopes that he will lead them to his terrorist contacts. Plot never catches fire, but Hoffman (in one of his last films) is the main show here, he's fascinating. Based on a novel by John le Carré, who also served as executive producer and has a cameo.

**Mostro dell'Opera, Il** (1964, ITA) **B&W-80m.** \*\*½ D: Renato Polsellì. Starring Marco Mariani, Giuseppe Addobbati, Barbara Howard, Albert Archetti, Milena Vukotic. Not-bad 60s horror set in contemporary Italy about a group of stage actors, who start work in an abandoned theater, where the caretaker is giving them warnings of all kinds. It turns out a vampire is lurking in the shadows... Fairly atmospheric, filmed with gusto despite small budget. A watchable hybrid of DRACULA and THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi and director Polsellì (DELIRIO CALDO). English title: THE MONSTER OF THE OPERA.

**Mostro di Firenze, Il** (1986, ITA) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Cesare Ferrario. Starring Leonard Mann, Bettina Giovannini, Gabriele Tinti, Francesca Muzio. Unusual crime drama about writer Mann, who is researching some killings of the year 1968 and tries to link them to the present. Who is behind it all? Interesting, quite well-directed, though it is too slow and

redundant at times. Good score by Paolo Rustichelli (son of Carlo?) is reminiscent of the A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1984) main theme. English title: THE MONSTER OF FLORENCE.

**Mostro di Venezia, Il** (1965, ITA) **B&W-77m.** \*½ D: Dino Tavella. Starring Maureen Lidgard Brown, Gin Mart (=Luigi Martocci), Luciano Gasper, Anita Todesco. Relentlessly talky, slow “thriller” about a madman who abducts, kills and stuffs/embalms young women. The police are clueless but news reporter Martocci has his eyes and ears open. Much too harmless, plays like a tourist video of Venice. Difficult to believe this was made in the 1960s, the tone and style would better suit to the 50s. Some people consider this a giallo; there’s a bit of gothic atmosphere (a la German Edgar Wallace films) and a touch of 50s comedy, it’s a distant relative at best. Director Tavella’s second and last film, he died in 1969 aged 49. English titles: THE EMBALMER, and THE MONSTER OF VENICE.

**Motel Hell** (1980, USA) **C-101m.** \*\*\* D: Kevin Connor. Starring Rory Calhoun, Paul Linke, Nancy Parsons, Nina Axelrod, Wolfman Jack, John Ratzenberger. Bizarre, disquieting horror thriller about farmer Calhoun and his fat sister Parsons, whose meats are famous in the whole county. The reason for this – a very special one – is about to be discovered by naïve maid Axelrod, who is taken in by the two weirdos, after her partner died in a motorcycle crash (or did he?). Unpredictable (if occasionally implausible) horror with comic touches maintains interest until showstopping chainsaw finale. Recommended to cult movie buffs. Surprisingly elaborate orchestral score (by Lance Rubin) is first-rate. From the director of FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE (1973).

**Mother’s Day** (1980, USA) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Charles Kaufman. Starring Holden McGuire, Billy Ray McQuade, Rose Ross, Nancy Hendrickson, Deborah Luce, Tiana Pierce. One of Troma Films first outings, this nasty horror movie is a comic bastardization of DELIVERANCE and THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE. Three friends spend the weekend in the woods and are harassed by a mother and her two demented sons. Violent revenge pic, competently filmed but extremely stupid and idiotic plotwise. Coproduced by Michael Herz and Lloyd Kaufman.

**Mothman Prophecies, The** (2002, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Mark Pellington. Starring Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Will Patten, Debra Messing, Bill Laing, Mark Pellington. Writer-director Pellington’s follow-up to the good ARLINGTON ROAD (1999) is ideally mounted horror mystery about journalist Gere, whose (much too) happy marriage to his wife is brought to an end when she dies after a car crash. Obviously something irritated her. Two years later, Gere goes on a business trip and ends up somewhere completely else... and the people here report similar sightings. Who is the mysterious mothman? Imaginative direction and camerawork, as well as Gere’s convincing performance make this work, despite overlength and some logical loopholes. For mystery fans. Based on the novel by John A. Keel, which in turn is based on some real occurrences in West Virginia in 1966/1967. Good score by tomandandy (KILLING ZOE).

**Motorpsycho** (1965, USA) **74m.** \*\* D: Russ Meyer. Starring Haji, Alex Rocco, Thomas Scott, Coleman Francis, Arshalouis Aivazian, Holle K. Winters, Russ Meyer. Pulp melodrama, a lesser one from cult director Meyer: Vet Rocco pursues gang of ruthless juvenile delinquents after they raped his wife. He is joined by voluptuous Haji, whose husband they murdered. Plot is overly simple and poorly constructed, all other Meyer trademarks are here. Finale in canyon best part. Photographed and cowritten by the director, whose similar FASTER, PUSSYCAT! KILL!KILL! was much better. Alternatively spelled as MOTOR PSYCHO. Also known as MOTOR MODS AND ROCKERS and RIO VENGEANCE.

**Mountain Family Robinson** (1979, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: John Cotter (=Jack Couffer). Starring Robert Logan, Susan Damante-Shaw, Heather Rattray, Ham Larsen, George ‘Buck’ Flower, William Bryant. Follow-up to two WILDERNESS FAMILY movies with the same cast,

more like a remake than something new. Logan and his family live in the Rockies until they are warned by a local sheriff that their cabin has been built on government property. Some nice wildlife scenes, but adventure factor is rather low.

**Mountaintop Motel Massacre** (1986, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*\*½ D: Jim McCulloch Sr. Starring Bill Thurman, Anna Chappell, Will Mitchel, Virginia Lorigans. Chappell brings conviction to her role of quietly disturbed motel owner, who already spent some time in an asylum. Here, she returns home, slays her similarly demented daughter and proceeds to terrorize and ultimately slaughter some motel guests from her subterranean maze. Quite bizarre T.C.M./PSYCHO hybrid that horror fans might want to give a look; attempts for atmosphere are there, the effects and the plotting are rather lame. Roger Corman reportedly coproduced this one. Filmed in 1983.

**Mouton à Cinq Pattes, Le** (1954, FRA) **93m.** \*\*\* D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Fernandel, Delmont, Françoise Arnoul, Paulette Dubost, Louis de Funès. Fernandel gives one of his best performances as father of quintuplets (all played by Fernandel!), who each gather for a family reunion in a small provincial town. Funny characterizations make this thoroughly enjoyable. English title: THE SHEEP HAS FIVE LEGS.

**Mr. & Mrs. Smith** (2005, USA) **C-120m.** SCOPE 7 D: Doug Liman. Starring Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Vince Vaughn, Adam Brody, Kerry Washington, Keith David, Chris Weitz, voice of Angela Bassett. Preposterous action comedy about married couple Pitt and Jolie, who are both hitmen but know nothing of each other's profession. One day their paths cross during an assignment, and then they become targets themselves. Completely contrived, over-the-top, incredible, and the stars lack chemistry. Some effective action sequences cannot save it.

**Mr. Bean's Holiday** (2007, GBR/USA/FRA/GER) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Steve Bendelack. Starring Rowan Atkinson, Emma de Caunes, Willem Dafoe, Jean Rochefort, Max Baldry. Mr. Bean returns to the big screen after a break of ten years (the 1997 BEAN), winning a prize draw and a trip to Cannes, France. Along the way he picks up a little Russian boy, who was lost by his dad on the way to the Côte d'Azur. Some funny bits, but most of the gags aren't funny enough. Then again, if you like Mr. Bean...

**Mr. Boo 2: The Private Eyes** (1976, HGK) **C-95m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Michael Hui. Starring Michael Hui, Samuel Hui, Ricky Hui, Angie Chiu, Richard Ng, Shih Kien. Action comedy (with the emphasis on comedy), about bumbling private detective Mr. Boo (Michael Hui), who hires a new assistant, and together they solve several unrelated cases. Mild, episodic Hong Kong comedy has only a few scattered laughs. Produced by Raymond Chow. John Woo is credited as associate producer.

**Mr. Holland's Opus** (1995, USA) **C-142m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Stephen Herek. Starring Richard Dreyfuss, Glenna Headley, Jay Thomas, Olympia Dukakis, William H. Macy, Alicia Witt, Joanna Gleason. Soft-spoken drama about composer Dreyfuss who takes up a job as a music teacher at a high school and discovers his passion for teaching. Fine ensemble cast makes up for pathetic Americana. The story is believable, and despite its length the film is always worthwhile.

**Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium** (2007, USA) **C-93m.** SCOPE \*\*D: Zach Helm. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman, Jason Bateman, Zach Mills, Ted Ludzik. Children's fantasy drama about a 243-year-old toy store owner (Hoffman), who feels his time has come, hires accountant Bateman and wants his self-conscious store manager (Portman) to take over his magical store. Sounds intriguing but film's a misfire, it never reaches its full potential. Portman's character remains flat, and there's not enough humor or excitement. Written by the director.

**Mr. Stitch** (1995, USA/FRA) **C-98m.** Ⓜ D: Roger Avary. Starring Rutger Hauer, Wil Wheaton, Ron Perlman, Tom Savini. Post-modernist approach to the Frankenstein myth fails in all compartments as scientist Hauer creates a (laughable) human being out of 88 body parts. The movie's criticism of the abuse of science for military purposes is drowned in pretentious plot. Avary's 'I am so cool'-attitude after PULP FICTION (which he coscripted) led him to make this mess of a movie. Special effects by Tom Savini.

**Mr Wrong** (1985, NZL) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Gaylene Preston. Starring Heather Bolton, David Letch, Margaret Umbers, Gary Stalker. After having left home, young Bolton buys a Jaguar that should ensure mobility. It turns out that the car is haunted by its former owner – a murdered woman. Chiller creates interest, which is then obliterated when the director keeps revelling in ordinary, every-day matters – not exactly helpful when trying to create suspense. Worth a look, but the similar thriller TRIAL RUN (1984) was better. Cowritten by Geoff Murphy. Alternatively known as DARK OF THE NIGHT.

**Ms. 45** (1981, USA) **C-81m.** \*\*\* D: Abel Ferrara. Starring Zoe Tamerlis (=Lund), Bogey, Albert Sinkys, Editta Sherman, Darlene Stuto, Jimmy Laine (=Abel Ferrara). Cult movie about mute girl Tamerlis, who works as a helper at a fashion studio. One day she is raped twice by two different men, which leads her to become a psychotic killer, seeing all men as evil. Rape-and-revenge B-movie works so well because of Tamerlis' hypnotic performance. Violent, stylish showdown in slow-motion is also a plus. Sherman is fun as Tamerlis' crazy landlady – it was her only acting credit; she died in 2013, aged 101, in Manhattan where this is set.

**Much Ado About Nothing** (1993, USA/GBR) **C-111m.** \*\*\* D: Kenneth Branagh. Starring Kenneth Branagh, Emma Thompson, Robert Sean Leonard, Denzel Washington, Keanu Reeves, Richard Briers, Kate Beckinsale, Brian Blessed. Faithful rendering of one of William Shakespeare's later comedies (written in 1598) about four lovers-to-be, Benedick & Beatrice and Claudio & Hero. Fine cast is having fun in wonderful Italian setting, with the stupid watch (led by Michael Keaton) providing the comic highlight. Another respectable adaptation of a Shakespeare play by Branagh (HENRY V., HAMLET).

**Mudhoney** (1965, USA) **92m.** \*\*\* D: Russ Meyer. Starring Hal Hopper, Marla Maitland, Stuart Lancaster, John Furlong. Early Russ Meyer film follows the impact of the arrival of a stranger in a rural village during Prohibition. He finds work at a farm and meets many oddball characters, among them two randy blondes. Well-filmed adult drama with strong characterizations has more to say than the director's notorious nudie films. Maybe not for all tastes (and slowly paced) but very dramatic and typically American. Furlong is menacing as the sleazy villain. See also FASTER, PUSSYCAT! KILL! KILL!

**Muerte Llama a las Diez, La** (1974, SPA/ITA) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Juan Bosch. Starring Gillian Hills, Angel del Pozo, Carlos Otero, Orchidea de Santis. Mild, sloppily acted thriller about London lady Hills, whose husband is away in Vietnam. One day she takes in a stranger, who is then pushed off the balcony. From then on, a maniac seems to stalk the inhabitants of the house. Poorly constructed and paced, film is too vague but remains watchable. Interesting score by Marcello Giombini. This Spanish giallo was based on a novel by Luisa María de Linares. English titles: THE KILLER WORE GLOVES, HOT LIPS OF THE KILLER, SATAN'S LAST SUPPER.

**Muerto Hace las Maletas, El** (1972, SPA/GER) **C-78m.** \*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring Fred Williams, Elisa Montés, Horst Tappert, Luis Morris, Barbara Rütting, Rainer Basedow, Wolfgang Kieling, Jess Franco. One of the last German (Brian Edgar) Wallace adaptations vaguely resembles a giallo. A black-gloved killer is roaming the streets of London by night, carefully packing his victims' suitcases before dispatching them (the victims). Incredibly muddled, confused plot sinks this early on. Manuel Merino's camerawork, using unusual

lenses and angles, is the only thing worth seeing here. English title: THE CORPSE PACKS HIS BAGS.

**Mulan** (1998, USA) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Barry Cook, Tony Bancroft. Starring (the voices of) Ming-Na Wen, Lea Salonga, Eddie Murphy, B.D. Wong, Donny Osmond, Harvey Fierstein, Miguel Ferrer, Pat Morita, George Takei, James Hong. Entertaining and funny animated feature from Disney, turning an ancient Chinese legend into a dramatic powerhouse of epic scope. Chinese girl Mulan defends the honor of her crippled father by enlisting in the army to fight in the war against the terrible Huns. Plotting is not perfect, but dramatic scenes and hilarious situations (mostly springing from Mulan's mini-dragon Mushu) make this a satisfying view. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. Followed by a video sequel in 2004.

**Mulan II** (2004, USA) **C-79m**. \*\*½ D: Darrell Rooney, Lynne Southerland. Starring (the voices of) Ming-Na, B.D. Wong, Mark Moseley, Lucy Liu, Harvey Fierstein, Pat Morita, George Takei. OK sequel to Disney's 1998 animated feature has Mulan and her fiancé accompany the emperor's daughters to their bridegrooms-to-be. The arranged marriages are supposed to help China against invaders. Mushu, the pet dragon, tries to bring the lovers apart for selfish reasons. Lacks the dramatic impact of the original.

**Mulberry Street** (2006, USA) **C-85m**. \*\* D: Jim Mickle. Starring Nick Damici, Kim Blair, Ron Brice, Bo Corre, Tim House, Larry Fleischman. In a shabby New York neighborhood, several people living in the same run-down apartment building are faced with carnivorous rats that turn people into blood-thirsty zombies. Overly reminiscent of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968), with some effective attack scenes, but plot doesn't measure up. Worth a look for horror fans, others needn't bother.

**Mulholland Dr.** (2001, USA/FRA) **C-147m**. \*\*\* D: David Lynch. Starring Justin Theroux, Jeanne Bates, Naomi Watts, Dan Birnbaum, Laura Elena Harring, Sean Everett, Scott Wulff, Robert Forster, Brent Briscoe, Lee Grant, Billy Ray Cyrus, Michael J. Anderson, Chad Everett, Rita Taggart, Angelo Badalamenti, Dan Hedaya, Mark Pellegrino. Mystery drama about an amnesiac woman (Harring), who finds refuge at the apartment of an aspiring actress (Watts), who has just come to Los Angeles, hoping to make it to stardom. The two women investigate and a pool of other, mysterious characters soon complicate the plot. Multi-layered, multi-dimensional Lynchian concoction is fascinating to some degree, though there is probably no rational explanation for the last thirty minutes of the movie. Surreal, consistently interesting, a must for followers of the director and cineastes in general. Reminiscent of Lynch's TV series 'Twin Peaks', this was originally conceived as a pilot but was rejected by producers! Garnered an Oscar nomination for Best Direction and won that prize at the Cannes Festival. Also known as MULHOLLAND DRIVE.

**Mulino delle Donne di Pietra, Il** (1960, ITA/FRA) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Giorgio Ferroni. Starring Pierre Brice, Scilla Gabel, Wolfgang Preiss, Dany Carrel, Herbert Böhme, Liana Orfei. Beautifully atmospheric highlight of Italian gothic chillers: Brice comes to a remote mill in order to do some research on resident professor Böhme's work. He finds the mill shrouded in mystery, with a strangely sick daughter and a bizarre show of wax figures. What is the doctor experimenting on? Well-photographed horror chiller is reminiscent of the work of Roger Corman and Mario Bava. It's too bad Ferroni only returned to the horror genre once (for the good 1972 NOTTE DEI DIAVOLI) and did not make a single giallo. Good score by Carlo Innocenzi. A must for horror fans, even if pacing flaws mar it in the second half. English titles: MILL OF THE STONE WOMEN, DROPS OF BLOOD, HORROR OF THE STONE WOMEN, ICON, and THE HORRIBLE MILL WOMEN. French original title: LE MOULIN DES SUPPLICES.

**Mummy, The** (1932, USA) **73m**. \*\*\* D: Karl Freund. Starring Boris Karloff, Zita Johann, David Manners, Arthur Byron, Edward Van Sloan, Bramwell Fletcher, Noble Johnson. Karloff is

unforgettable as a mummy accidentally resurrected by excavators and its attempts to be reconciled with his lover who is reincarnated in Johann. Tops in atmosphere and lighting, but awfully slow. Characters seem to move in slow-motion. Still, a horror classic and a must. Director Freund also made MAD LOVE (1935).

**Mummy, The** (1959, GBR) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Yvonne Furneaux, Eddie Byrne, Felix Aylmer. Diligently produced Hammer horror, where the studio tackled their third major film monster, after HORROR OF DRACULA and CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN. Cushing is part of excavations in Egypt, becomes involved in curse that follows them to England. Beware the Mummy! Beautiful lighting and camerawork offset pedestrian plot partly. Lee, as the Mummy, has the best scenes. Written by Jimmy Sangster. Followed by two sequels, starting with THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1964).

**Mummy, The** (1999, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Stephen Sommers. Starring Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz, John Hannah, Arnold Vosloo, Kevin J. O'Connor, Jonathan Hyde, Oded Fehr, Erick Avari. Big, loud – and hollow – adventure spectacle in the vein of the INDIANA JONES films, with Fraser a legionnaire who helps archaeologist Weisz to find a valuable book in an Egyptian pharaoh's tomb, and – wouldn't you know it – awakens the mummy and a curse along the way. Premise serves as a showcase for special effects, and kinetic editing and direction hardly camouflage the non-existence of the plot.

**Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor, The** (2008, USA/GER) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Rob Cohen. Starring Brendan Fraser, Jet Li, Maria Bello, John Hannah, Michelle Yeoh, Luke Ford, Anthony Wong, Isabella Leong, Liam Cunningham, David Calder, Russell Wong. Fairly entertaining sequel to the 1999 and 2001 MUMMY films bring Fraser and his wife back from retirement to deliver a gem stone to China, where their son has discovered the tomb of the dragon emperor. Needless to say, the villain gets resurrected and heads for Shangri-La to claim his superpowers. Fast-paced, with exotic locations and excellent effects. Too bad the plot is only second-rate.

**Mumsy, Nanny, Sonny & Girly** (1970, GBR) **C-102m. \*\*½ D:** Freddie Francis. Starring Michael Bryant, Ursula Howells, Pat Heywood, Howard Trevor, Vanessa Howard, Michael Ripper. Black comedy about a weird family consisting of the title characters. Wicked teenagers Sonny & Girly lure men to their derelict estate (Oakley Court in reality), where they play 'the perfect family'. If the men don't follow the rules, they are 'sent to the angels'. Intriguing morbidity highlighted by pretty Howard, who turns in a sensational performance as the childish yet sexy, immensely seductive Girly. Recommended for cult film lovers. Also known as GIRLY (1970).

**Muppet Family Christmas, A** (1987, USA) **C-42m. n/r D:** Peter Harris, Eric Till. Starring Gerry Parkes, voices of Jim Henson, Frank Oz, Dave Goelz, Richard Hunt, Jerry Nelson. TV special for the Christmas season: Fozzie brings the Muppets home to his mother's farm, only Miss Piggy is still Xmas shopping. Even the guys from Sesamestreet and the Fraggles show up! The Swedish chef tries to cook Big Bird. Quite nice, with some funny jokes and classic songs. Followed by THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL (1992).

**Muppets, The** (2011, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** James Bobin. Starring Amy Adams, Jason Segel, Chris Cooper, Alan Arkin, Zach Galifianakis. Surprisingly good, engaging return of the Muppets, with even some tender moments. Walter is a puppet, who grows up with Jason Segel and becomes an admirer of the Muppets, when he realizes that he doesn't grow up like his 'brother' does. When Segel takes his fiancée Amy Adams on a trip to L.A., Walter tags along to see the famous Muppet studios. But what a run-down, deserted place they have become! It turns out oil magnate Chris Cooper wants to tear the place down to drill for

oil. The only way to prevent that would be to reunite the Muppet characters and put on a show. Great piece of entertainment even has some nice songs. Cameo appearances by stars are also fun. Recommended!

**Muppets Most Wanted** (2014, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*½ D: James Bobin. Starring Ricky Gervais, Ty Burrell, Tina Fey, Christoph Waltz, Celine Dion, Zach Galifianakis, Salma Hayek, Frank Langella, Danny Trejo, Ray Liotta, Stanley Tucci. The Muppets return in this slight comedy about the world's most dangerous frog, a Siberian prisoner, who breaks out and replaces Kermit (he's a lookalike) and the showman gets sent to the Gulag instead. Gervais plays their new manager, who wants to rob the crown jewels. Songs are mostly unmemorable, there is no movie magic at work here. Very few laughs, if it wasn't for the likable stars, this would be a dud. Some cameos are ridiculous, especially Trejo's and Liotta's.

**Murder by Death** (1976, USA) **C-94m.** \*\*\*\* D: Robert Moore. Starring Peter Sellers, Peter Falk, David Niven, Maggie Smith, James Coco, Alec Guinness, Elsa Lanchester, Eileen Brennan, Nancy Walker, Estelle Winwood, Truman Capote, James Cromwell. Classic comedy with an all-star cast hasn't aged one bit. An eccentric millionaire (Capote) invites the world's greatest detectives to his castle in the middle of nowhere. They are supposed to solve a crime that will be committed at midnight. Who will prove to be the most resourceful sleuth? Neil Simon's script is a great parody of the classic detectives of filmdom, brilliantly portrayed (and spoofed) by Sellers as Mr. Wang (Charlie Chan), Niven as Mr. Charleston ('The Thin Man'), Falk as Sam Diamond (Sam Spade), Coco as Monsieur Perrier (Hercule Poirot) and Lanchester as Mrs. Marbles (Mrs. Marple). Guinness also scores as the blind butler. Filled with crazy ideas and unforgettable set-pieces. A perfect example of how crucial a setting (and the sets!) can be for the success of a film. Follow-up *THE CHEAP DETECTIVE*, also by Simon and Moore, is not nearly as good. Film debut of the 26 year-old James Cromwell (BABE) as Coco's butler. Four short scenes were deleted from original theatrical print.

**Murder by Phone** (1980, CDN/USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Michael Anderson. Starring Richard Chamberlain, John Houseman, Sara Botsford, Robin Gammell, Gary Reineke. By no means bad but hardly credible thriller about a killer who murders people via the telephone line(!), sending through a high voltage. Chamberlain is trying to find out who's behind it. Some good shock scenes and an acceptable pace almost overcome laughable plot. Score by John Barry is barely there. Also available in a 79m. version. Alternative titles: *BELLS, THE CALLING, and HELL'S BELLS.*

**Murder Obsession (Follia Omicida)** (1981, ITA/FRA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Riccardo Freda. Starring Stefano Patrizi, Martine Brochard, Henri Garcin, Laura Gemser, John Richardson, Anita Strindberg. Barely okay, barely seen thriller about an actor, who returns to his mother's estate intending to overcome his childhood trauma. As a little boy he killed his father with a knife. He brings his girlfriend and film crew with him and soon they start dying one by one. Freda makes nods to *PROFONDO ROSSO* and *SUSPIRIA*, and he creates a handful of frightening, sometimes ultra-gory images, but film is poorly written, with shoddy acting and gratuitous sex scenes. Too bad. Both Freda and Strindberg's last film. Freda died in 1999 without directing another movie, Strindberg merely retired from acting. Also known as *FEAR, DELIRIUM, MURDER SYNDROME, L'OSSESSIONE CHE UCCIDE, PAURA, SATAN'S ALTAR, THE WAILING, and UNCONSCIOUS.*

**Murderock – Uccide a Passo di Danza** (1984, ITA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Claudio Cassinelli, Olga Karlatos, Ray Lovelock, Janna Ryann, Lucio Fulci. At a dance school, a murderer is stalking beautiful students, and police inspector Cassinelli must find out who it is. Stylish direction fails to enliven typical giallo-like plot. Thriller is crammed with references

to Argento and Bava, making it interesting for genre buffs. Not very violent, despite the director's reputation. Also known as MURDER ROCK, SLASHDANCE and GIALLO A DISCO.

**Murder of Crows, A** (1999, USA) **C-102m**. \*\*\* D: Rowdy Herrington. Starring Cuba Gooding Jr., Tom Berenger, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Eric Stoltz, Mark Pellegrino, Ashley Laurence, Carmen Argenziano, Renée Estevez. Well-plotted thriller with a serpentine story: Righteous lawyer Gooding Jr. loses his job and licence when he refuses to defend guilty but wealthy Stoltz. A few months later in Florida he meets an old loner, who has written a novel and asks him to read the manuscript. Before Gooding Jr. can give it back to the man, he learns of his death. Despite some moral pangs he decides to publish it under his own name. And it's a success. Some more surprises in this sleeper will keep you on the edge of your seat, although it's also a little contrived, a bit unlikely. No world-beater but well-done, kudos to writer/director Herrington. Released directly to video.

**Murder on the Orient Express** (1974, GBR) **C-127m**. \*\*\* D: Sidney Lumet. Starring Albert Finney, Lauren Bacall, Martin Balsam, Ingrid Bergman, Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Cassel, Sean Connery, John Gielgud, Wendy Hiller, Anthony Perkins, Rachel Roberts, Richard Widmark, Michael York, Colin Blakely, George Coulouris. Top cast in sublime Agatha Christie whodunit, set aboard the Orient Express, where businessman Widmark's murder poses a challenge to master detective Poirot (Finney). Well-produced, fine suspense, although not really ingeniously plotted. Bergman won a Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her role as a Swedish missionary. The first modern-day Christie adaptation, followed by DEATH ON THE NILE (with Ustinov as Poirot).

**Murder Party** (2007, USA) **C-80m**. \*\* D: Jeremy Saulnier. Starring Chris Sharp, Macon Blair, Stacy Rock, Skei Saulnier, William Lacey. Horror comedy made on a shoestring budget. On Halloween, Sharp finds an invitation to the title event in the street, then dresses up and goes to the location, where several weirdos are waiting for their prey. A few freak accidents later lots of people have ended up dead, but not Sharp. Amateurish debut film can best be compared to (the better) BAD TASTE (1987); it's occasionally funny, with attempts at style. This was BLUE RUIN (2013) and GREEN ROOM (2015) director Saulnier's first feature.

**Murders in the Rue Morgue, The** (1986, USA) **C-92m**. \*\*\* D: Jeannot Szwarc. Starring George C. Scott, Rebecca de Mornay, Ian McShane, Neil Dickson, Val Kilmer. Fifth film version of the Edgar Allan Poe story is enjoyable chiller about Scott trying to solve a most puzzling murder case. Some directorial shortcomings, but still worthwhile. Made for television.

**Murder Story** (1989, GBR/NED) **C-89m**. \*\* D: Arno Innocenti. Starring Christopher Lee, Bruce Boa. Acceptable suspenser set in Amsterdam about ambitious young man who investigates a murder case with mystery writer Lee. Modest plot, Lee's interesting casting helps.

**Murder: Ultimate Grounds for Divorce** (1984, USA) **C-81m**. \*½ D: Morris Barry. Starring Roger Daltrey, Leslie Ash, Terry Raven, Toyah Willcox. "The Who"-lead singer Daltrey plays a rough guy, who takes his wife and two of their friends on a camping trip. Once there, bottled up emotions and aggressions cause violence and profanity. A pointless and unpleasant movie.

**Muriel's Wedding** (1994, AUS) **C-105m**. \*\*\* D: P. J. Hogan. Starring Toni Collette, Bill Hunter, Rachel Griffiths, Jeanie Drynan, Gennie Nevinson, Matt Day, Chris Haywood, Daniel Lapaine. Unusual comedy-drama about twenty year-old Muriel, who wastes away her life spending time in her room listening to ABBA songs and seems to be unable to succeed in any job. Her only goal in life is to marry one day, and she indulges in fantasies about her wedding – but who would want to marry an ugly, lazy and rather fat girl? When she runs away from

her dysfunctional family to Sydney, she thinks a new life for her has begun. Unpredictable, offbeat drama with comic touches leaves an incredibly bitter after-taste. Highly original film is not for all tastes sometimes but should keep you interested all the way. Written by the director.

**Musarañas** (2014, SPA/FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: Juanfer Andrés, Esteban Roel. Starring Macarena Gomez, Nadia de Santiago, Hugo Silva, Luis Tosar, Gracia Olayo, Carolina Bang. In 1950s Spain, 18-year-old de Santiago lives with her deeply religious older sister Gomez in an apartment, ever since her mother died giving birth to her and the father left the family. When the upstairs neighbour breaks his leg on the stairs, agoraphobic Gomez takes the man in, cares for him – and falls in love – with disastrous consequences. Well-scripted, Hitchcockian psycho drama evolves into a bloody psycho thriller and delivers a chilling finale. Recommended! Gomez is brilliant. Coproduced by Alex de la Iglesia. Fine score by Joan Valent. English title: SHREW'S NEST.

**Muse, The** (1999, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Albert Brooks. Starring Albert Brooks, Sharon Stone, Andie MacDowell, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Lorenzo Lamas, Jennifer Tilly, Rob Reiner, Wolfgang Puck, James Cameron, Michael Scorsese. Witty, funny comedy drama Albert-Brooks-style about a scriptwriter (Brooks), who is told one day that he's lost his bite and goes on to hire a muse (Stone), who shall boost his creativity. His wife (MacDowell) can't seem to agree. Satirical, hilarious sleeper, cowritten by Brooks. Many of the (famous) cast members appear as themselves. Music by Elton John.

**Mushrooms** (1995, AUS) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Alan Madden. Starring Julia Blake, Simon Chilvers, Lynette Curran, Brandon Burke, George Shevtsov, Boris Brkic, John Gaden. Delicious black comedy about two weird elderly sisters, one of them agoraphobic, who one day are surprised by a criminal at large looking for a hideout. When the inspector on the case becomes their new lodger(!) and the criminal is accidentally gassed(!!) one night, they are faced with a lot of troubles. How should they dispose of the dead body without making the detective suspicious? Does not hold up to the very end, but film is very well-acted by the whole cast. Amusing, unconventional, but not for every taste (literally!).

**Music & Lyrics** (2007, USA) **C-104m. \*\*½** D: Marc Lawrence. Starring Hugh Grant, Drew Barrymore, Brad Garrett, Kristen Johnston, Campbell Scott, Scott Porter. Contrived but quite enjoyable romantic comedy about faded 80s pop star Grant, who gets the chance to make a comeback in a duet with a current superstar but needs a new song idea fast. Chance acquaintance Barrymore seems to have a talent for writing lyrics. Never rises above the mire, but has some funny moments. Features a great fake 80s pop song and video. Written by the director.

**Music Lovers, The** (1970, GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ken Russell. Starring Richard Chamberlain, Glenda Jackson, Max Adrian, Christopher Gable, Kenneth Colley, Isabella Telezynska, Maureen Pryor. Impressive, passionate bio-pic of world-famous Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Chamberlain). His relationship to two women is examined and his passion for music is vividly brought to the screen. Impressionistic film relies heavily on performances and direction, and succeeds. Extensive use of classical music a further asset. Based on the book *Beloved Friend*. Cinematography by Douglas Slocombe. Russell returned to composers of classical music for MAHLER (1974) and LISZTOMANIA (1975).

**Music of the Heart** (1999, USA) **C-124m. \*\*\*** D: Wes Craven. Starring Meryl Streep, Kieran Culkin, Aidan Quinn, Cloris Leachman, Angela Bassett. Conventional but engrossing drama about violin teacher Streep, who believes that every kid – even those in the ghetto – can learn to play the instrument. The single mother encounters many problems at the beginning and

must fight for acceptance. Well-acted, well-scripted drama that was directed by an old horror pro! Overlength shows in typical Hollywoodesque finale, otherwise this is well-worth watching (also for horror fans).

**Mussolini: Ultimo Atto** (1974, ITA) **C-114m.** \*\* D: Carlo Lizzani. Starring Rod Steiger, Franco Nero, Lisa Gastoni, Lino Capolicchio, Umberto Raho, Henry Fonda, Tom Felleghy, Luciano Pigozzi, John Stacy, Bill Vanders, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. Big-scale but disappointing war drama recounts the last four days in the life of Il Duce, the Fascist leader Benito Mussolini. Steiger's presence gives film a boost, but it is relentlessly talky and never manages to convey the high tension of the final days of WW2. Score by Ennio Morricone is hardly ever used. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Originally shown at 125m. or 126m. English titles: MUSSOLINI: THE LAST ACT, MUSSOLINI: THE LAST FOUR DAYS, THE LAST DAYS OF MUSSOLINI, THE LAST TYRANT.

**Must Love Dogs** (2005, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Gary David Goldberg. Starring Diane Lane, John Cusack, Elizabeth Perkins, Christopher Plummer, Dermot Mulroney, Stockard Channing. MUST LOVE CONTRIVED ROMANCES: Lane, a divorced woman in her thirties, is urged by her family to find a new partner, then finds herself torn between two men: Mulroney, the father of one of her pre-school pupils, and Cusack, an eccentric boat-builder, who's been left by his wife. Predictable, by-the-numbers romantic comedy, only Plummer shines. At least it makes you want to watch DOCTOR ZHIVAGO (1965) again. Based on the novel by Claire Cook.

**Mutant Hunt** (1987, USA) **C-76m.** \*½ D: Tim Kincaid. Starring Rick Gianasi, Mary Fahey, Ron Reynaldi, Taunie Vrenon, Bill Peterson. Cheap, amateurishly directed splatter horror set in the near future, where androids run rampant after being injected a certain drug. Some kind of super-hero walks through cardboard sets to stop them. Some of the gore effects are not bad, but that's not a reason to watch this mess. Produced for the video market. Uncut print may run 80m.

**Mutations, The** (1972, GBR) **C-92m.** \*\* D: Jack Cardiff. Starring Donald Pleasence, Tom Baker, Brad Harris, Julie Ege, Michael Dunn, Jill Haworth. Boring horror film about scientist Pleasence and his attempts to crossbreed humans and plants. The professor's students meet terrible fates, ending up in a freak circus. Score and direction are ambitious, but fail to enliven tired, poorly paced plot. Circus scenes are reminiscent of Tod Browning's FREAKS. Released on video as THE FREAKMAKER.

**Mute Witness** (1995, GBR/GER/RUS) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Anthony Waller. Starring Marina Sudina, Fay Ripley, Evan Richards. Psycho-thriller set in Russia, where a mute make-up artist, who works there on an American movie, sees a snuff movie being shot after-hours. She soon finds herself pursued by all kinds of underworld characters, including the 'Ripper', a master criminal, played by Alec Guinness, who appears unbilled (his scenes were reportedly shot in 1985). First-time director Waller creates terrific suspense, but film fails to bring up a carefully planned and believable plot.

**Mutilator, The** (1983, USA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Buddy Cooper. Starring Matt Mitler, Ruth Martinez, Bill Hitchcock, Connie Rogers, Frances Raines. Straight-forward slasher movie with a chilling premise: Young boy accidentally shoots his mother when cleaning one of his gun-crazy father's rifles. Years later he and his friends are stalked by a maniac at a beach house. Some slow stretches, but also some potent (and gory) effects. For slasher fans, others may find plot too stupid. Main theme (the song) is quite good but completely unsuitable for a horror film. Alternatively titled FALL BREAK.

**Muttertag** (1994, AUT) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Harald Sicheritz. Starring Alfred Dorfer, Reinhard Nowak, Andrea Händler, Roland Düringer, Lukas Resetarits, Willi Resetarits, I Stangl. Meet

the Neugebauers, a typically Viennese family who lives its life like the harmless people next door. Or do they? Daddy is entertaining a mistress, Mummy is a shoplifter, Grampa is a senile old fart and the little son is watching pornographic pictures on the personal computer while changing an electric kitchen knife into a deadly weapon. And by the way, Mother's Day is coming up next Sunday... Funny satire, characterized by the blackest of humors. Comes close to John Waters' work for the cinema. Well-acted, especially by Nowak as the nervous, stressed father. Originally a stand-up comedy. May appeal only to Austrian audiences, who will know what is spoofed here. Düringer appears in no less than eight roles. **Muumi ja Vaarallinen Juhannus** (2008, FIN/AUT/POL) **C-71m**. \*\*\* D: Maria Lindberg. Starring (the voices of) Tapani Perttu, Jasper Pääkkönen, Johanna Viksten, Outi Alanen. Compilation of the 1979 TV series THE MOOMINS about hippo-like creatures who live on an island and must abandon their house, when the water level keeps on rising after a volcano erupts nearby. They find refuge on a floating theater. Advertised as a 'new' adventure of the Moomins, but this is clearly taken from the original 2D stop-motion episodes. Still, a lot of nostalgic fun. Recommended, as almost everything is offbeat here. Also known as MOONIN [sic!] AND THE MIDSUMMER MADNESS.

**My Best Friend's Wedding** (1997, USA) **C-105m**. \*\*\* D: P.J. Hogan. Starring Julia Roberts, Dermot Mulroney, Cameron Diaz, Rupert Everett, Philip Bosco, M. Emmet Walsh, Rachel Griffiths. Good romantic comedy about Julia Roberts' panic after her best friend (and former lover) Mulroney announces that he is going to be married in four days. Roberts tries to spoil the wedding, but realizes that she herself may not be the bridegroom's perfect match. Amusing, but also quite serious – good entertainment. From the director of MURIEL'S WEDDING (no, *Hogandidn't* direct FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL).

**My Big Fat Greek Wedding** (2002, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Joel Zwick. Starring Nia Vardalos, Michael Constantine, John Corbett, Lainie Kazan, Jayne Eastwood. Waitress Vardalos is part of a Greek immigrant family in Chicago but unlike her sister has remained a boring spinster much to the chagrin of her parents. At 30, she decides to change her life, train for a non-traditional job, and finally meets Mr Right. Well-acted romantic comedy is refreshingly cliché-free, steering clear of all typical make-up/break-up twists. It became a huge box-office hit. Produced by Tom Hanks and his wife Rita Wilson, based on Vardalos' own stage play.

**My Bloody Valentine** (1981, CDN) **C-91m**. \*\* D: George Mihalka. Starring Paul Kelman, Lori Hallier, Neil Affleck, Keith Knight, Alf Humphreys, Cynthia Dale. Slasher movie, clearly derived from HALLOWEEN and FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup>, about a demented coalminer, who wants to avenge an accident that happened twenty years ago. Lots of gruesome murders follow. Despite familiar subject matter, this one is not badly made.

**My Dog Skip** (2000, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Jay Russell. Starring Frankie Muniz, Diane Lane, Luke Wilson, Kevin Bacon, Clint Howard, narrated by Harry Connick Jr. Sweet-natured, well-cast family movie set in the 1940s, a childhood reminiscence and piece of immaculate Americana. Muniz, a nine-year-old only child is given a little dog on his birthday, little dreaming that the dog would become his companion for the most important years of his life. Great production design for story that has few ups and downs but is a crowd-pleaser nevertheless. Fine score by William Ross.

**My Husband's Secret Life** (1998, USA) **C-93m**. \*\* D: Graeme Clifford. Starring Anne Archer, James Russo, Maria Conchita Alonso, Marguerite Moreau, Gerard Plunkett, Gary Chalk, Henry Beckman. Made-for-television drama about Archer, widow of a policeman who investigates the death of her husband, which was covered up because he died in an illegal night club. All she wants is a higher pension, in order to afford her 17 year-old daughter's university education. Not at all interesting. For the Wednesday night TV crowd.

**My Lucky Stars** (1986, HGK) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Samo Hung. Starring Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Yuen Biao, Eric Tsang, Richard Ng, Charlie Ching, Fung Shui Fan, Sibelle Hu, Lau Kar Wing, Paul Chang, James Tien, Wu Ma. Action comedy with an all-star cast about Samo and his gang travelling to Japan in order to help out friends Jackie and Yuen. Plot is abandoned early on for slapstick scenes (some of which work but go on for too long). The action is okay. Mindless entertainment for indiscriminating fans.

**My Name is Modesty: A Modesty Blaise Adventure** (2003, USA) **C-78m.** \*½ D: Scott Spiegel. Starring Alexandra Staden, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Raymond Cruz, Fred Pearson. Quentin Tarantino executive produced this low-budget, low-grade action film that offers very little action. Title character Staden works in a casino for a rich Russian, who is assassinated one day by vengeful Coster-Waldau. At the roulette table Modesty tells him her life story and learns why he had such a hatred for her boss. A prequel to the comic strip from the 60s (filmed before by Joseph Losey as *MODESTY BLAISE*) but pretty ridiculous, neither action film nor adventure. Stay away.

**My Soul To Take** (2010, USA) **C-107m.** **SCOPE** \*½ D: Wes Craven. Starring Max Thieriot, John Magaro, Denzel Whitaker, Jessica Hecht. Craven's first self-scripted horror film in 16 years(!) is almost a complete dud. The opening sequence that sets up the story is so fast-paced it's almost confusing: A family father, obviously suffering from a split personality, is the town's dreaded serial killer. The night he is killed (or the night he disappears) seven children are born prematurely. 16 years later these seven children are targeted by a killer... is it the serial killer's own son, who is among the seven? Thematically links several films from Craven's oeuvre (*SHOCKER*, *SCREAM*), but adds little new to the formula, with uninteresting characters and no cleverness or humor.

**Mystère Picasso, Le** (1956, FRA) **C-78m.** \*\*½ D: Henri-Georges Clouzot. Starring Pablo Picasso. Documentary by master filmmaker Clouzot, who films the 75-year-old Picasso as he is creating some paintings and collages especially for this film. Entirely focuses on the process of creation, which makes it fascinating but also quite monotonous. Most (perhaps all) paintings were destroyed after filming, meaning they now only exist on celluloid. For the final twenty minutes film expands into the CinemaScope format. Photographed by Claude Renoir, who like director Clouzot appears in some scenes. English title: *THE MYSTERY OF PICASSO*.

**Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello, The** (2005, AUS) **C-26m.** n/r D: Anthony Lucas. Starring (the voices of) Joel Edgerton, Helmut Bakaitis, Jude Beaumont, Tommy Dysart. Oscar-nominated animated short subject about a navigator who travels around in his airship looking for a cure for viral disease that is wiping out humanity. By chance they stumble upon island in the sky with strange creatures. Beautifully designed, intriguing science-fiction, although it does have an industrial, gothic touch recalling the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Reminiscent of the bizarre worlds of Tim Burton and Henry Selick, warmly recommended to genre fans.

**Mysterious Island** (1961, USA/GBR) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Cy Endfield. Starring Michael Craig, Joan Greenwood, Michael Callan, Gary Merrill, Herbert Lom, Beth Rogan, Percy Herbert. Jules Verne fantasy about some P.O.W.s who escape in a balloon, which carries them to remote island where they joins forces with two female shipwrecks, and ultimately, Captain Nemo (Lom). They soon notice that the island is inhabited by giant animals, which threaten their lives. Kind-of a sequel to *20000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* (1954), but rather slowly-paced and talky, anti-climactic most of the way. You think something is going to happen, but it doesn't. Only four Ray Harryhausen stop-motion monsters appear. All in all, it's an old-fashioned, colorful adventure, if you like this kind of thing. Score by Bernard Herrmann.

**Mystery of the Wax Museum** (1933, USA) **C-77m. \*\*\*** D: Michael Curtiz. Starring Lionel Atwill, Fay Wray, Glenda Farrell, Frank McHugh, Allen Vincent. Stunning horror film by the man who would later direct CASABLANCA. Wax sculptor Atwill's work is destroyed by a fire, but the artist returns with puppets that look frighteningly real... Early Technicolor movie looks very good. The first horror film with a contemporary urban setting (N.Y.C.). Based on a play by Charles Belden. Remade as HOUSE OF WAX (1953) with Vincent Price and MASCHERA DI CERA (1997) cowritten by Dario Argento and Lucio Fulci.

**Mystery Train** (1989, USA/JAP) **C-110m. \*\*\*** D: Jim Jarmusch. Starring Masatoshi Nagase, Youki Kudoh, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Cinque Lee, Nicoletta Braschi, Elizabeth Bracco, Joe Strummer, Rick Aviles, Steve Buscemi, Tom Noonan, Rockets Redglare, Rufus Thomas, and the voice of Tom Waits. Small independent gem by cult director Jarmusch about characters whose lives intertwine in Memphis, Tennessee, the city of the King Elvis Presley. Three-part film depicts the director's America, a mysterious country of great inspiration, whose legends continue to live even in the shabbiest of places. As most cult films not for all tastes, but unique situations, intelligent observations add up to a cinematic treat.

**Mystic River** (2003, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, Kevin Bacon, Laurence Fishburne, Marcia Gay Harden, Laura Linney, Kevin Chapman, Tom Guiry, Eli Wallach. Downbeat crime drama about three childhood friends, who are reunited when Penn's daughter is found murdered in the park. Bacon, who is now a cop, investigates and Robbins, a victim of sexual abuse, may be among the suspects. Somber, conventional, deliberately paced drama, based on a novel by Dennis Lehane, buoyed by three strong performances, most notably Robbins'. He and Penn won Academy Awards.

**My Super Ex-Girlfriend** (2006, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ivan Reitman. Starring Uma Thurman, Luke Wilson, Anna Faris, Rainn Wilson, Eddie Izzard, Wanda Sykes. Well, spoof of SUPERMAN RETURNS (2006) or not? Wilson is looking for a new girlfriend and finds it in Thurman, who's not just like the girl next door, she's also a superhero, who flies out to save the world from disaster. Can this relationship work out? Anyone willing to buy into that might have an okay time, the plot is unimaginative not to mention silly.

**Myth of Fingerprints, The** (1997, USA) **C-91m. \*½** D: Bart Freundlich. Starring Blythe Danner, Roy Scheider, Julianne Moore, Noah Wyle, Arija Bareikis, Brian Kerwin, Hope Davis, James Le Gros. Completely inauspicious drama about a family reunion at Thanksgiving and the conflict among the members that are brooding below the surface. Despite interesting cast a complete lull. This film may pass without you noticing. Have a good sleep.

**Nabbeun Namja** (2001, KOR) **C-100m. \*\*\*** D: Kim Ki-duk. Starring Jo Jae-hyeon, Seo Won, Kim Yun-tae, Choi Duek-mun, Choi Yun-young. Psycho drama from master Kim, about a young woman, who humiliates a man in public when he tries to steal a kiss. The man, a quiet loner living in the red light district of Seoul, then sets up a theft and blackmails her into becoming a prostitute in order to pay back the money. All this time, he remains in the background, watching her through a mirror in her bedroom. Difficult to watch, often heavy-going, but has some powerful scenes towards the end. Written by the director. English title: BAD GUY.

**Naboer** (2005, NOR/SWE/DEN) **C-75m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Pal Sletaune. Starring Kristoffer Joner, Cecilie A. Mosli, Julia Schacht. Psycho thriller set in an old apartment building. Twenty-something Joner has been dumped by his girlfriend, when the next-door neighbors, two sexy young women, ask him to help them to move furniture. He is then drawn into their world, as their flat becomes a labyrinth of obsessions. Recalls other, better movies, from Polanski's REPULSION (1965) and THE TENANT (1976) to BOUND (1996). Not bad, with some good

elements, but not the knock-out it wants to be. Good score by Simon Boswell. English title: NEXT-DOOR.

**Nada** (1974, FRA/ITA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Fabio Testi, Maurice Garrel, Lou Castel, Mariangela Melato, Michel Duchaussoy. Aggressive Chabrol drama about extremist left-wing political group 'Nada', who kidnap the American ambassador in Paris, hoping to initiate a revolution. Film cleverly juxtaposes the kidnappers' increasing disillusion and the police's straight-forward, brutal methods to track them down. A strong political statement (too strong for some) about the incompatibility of ideologies, which climaxes in a violent shoot-out that is the logical consequence of the lack of understanding between the parties involved. Director Chabrol adapted the novel *Nada* with the author Jean-Patrick Manchette himself. Film has earned the reputation of a cult film (among left-wing sympathizers, understandably). Usually shown in a cut version. Original running time: 132m.

**Nadie Oyó Gritar** (1973, SPA) **C-88m. \*\*\*** D: Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Carmen Sevilla, Vicente Parra, María Asquerino, Antonio Casas, Tony Isbert. Irresistible little sleeper about beautiful Sevilla, who skips a weekend with a lover in London only to witness new neighbor Parra getting rid of his murdered wife in their apartment house's elevator shaft. He then forces her to help him get rid of the corpse properly, or he will kill her. Loaded with intriguing twists, film slows down in second half, only to deliver a startling conclusion. Well-directed by the maker of *EL TECHO DI CRISTAL* (1971), which can be seen as a perfect companion piece to this one. English title: NO ONE HEARD THE SCREAM.

**Nae-Ga Sal-In-Beom-I-Da** (2012, KOR) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jeong Byeong-gil. Starring Choi Won-yeong, Gwang Jang, Jeong Jae-yeong, Jo Eun-ji, Kim Yeong-ae. Odd mixture of crime drama and comedy about a cop and his nemesis, a serial killer, who seventeen years after his crimes confesses in public, knowing that he can't be convicted for them anymore, and becomes a kind of star. And then there are some relatives of his victims, who want to kill him. Has some good action sequences, but sacrifices its serious premise for crowd-pleasing whimsy and throws all credibility overboard early on. Returns to form with a good twist in over-the-top finale. English title: CONFESSION OF MURDER.

**Nadja** (1994, USA/FRA) **B&W-92m. \*\*\*** D: Michael Almereyda. Starring Elina Löwensohn, Martin Donovan, Galaxy Craze, Peter Fonda, Suzy Amis, Jared Harris, David Lynch. Bizarre, stylish transportation of the Dracula myth to modern-day New York, where Van Helsing (Fonda) is an eccentric, long-haired vampire hunter, who has just impaled Löwensohn's father Dracula. The vampire lady is stalking the streets of N.Y.C. and has found a new victim in Craze. Low-budget, ponderous, but hypnotic (kudos to Simon Fisher-Turner's chilling score) and with an effective use of black-and-white. The grainy sequences were shot with a plastic toy camera! Written by director Almereyda (*TRANCE*). Executive producer David Lynch appears as a morgue attendant.

**Nagagutsu o Haita Neko** (1969, JAP) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kimio Yabuki. Starring (the voices of) Susumu Ishikawa, Toshiko Fujita, Rumi Sakakibara, Asao Koike. Japanese version of the popular Charles Perrault fairy tale *PUSS'N BOOTS* (also English title) about a clever cat who turns a poor farmer's son into a nobleman to win the heart of the princess. Along the way he has to beat one of her suitors, none other than the Devil himself. Fairy tale is surprisingly Disney-like (including some songs!), animation has some good, funny ideas, though plot lacks spark. Hayao Miyazaki was one of the animators, and it shows in the scenery and architecture. Has acquired a cult following, especially in German-speaking countries, where the original East German dub is apparently lost. Followed by two sequels in 1972 and 1976. Also known as *THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF PUSS 'N BOOTS*.

**Nail Gun Massacre, The** (1985, USA) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Bill Leslie, Terry Lofton. Starring Rocky Patterson, Ron Queen, Beau Leland, Michelle Meyer, Sebrina Lawless. Slasher/revenge movie along the lines of DAY OF THE WOMAN (1978). A woman is raped by a group of construction workers, then a mysterious masked stranger with a distorted voice starts killing the perpetrators with a nailgun. Cheap, poorly done. Made for video.

**Naked Lunch** (1991, CDN/GBR) **C-115m.** \*\*\* D: David Cronenberg. Starring Peter Weller, Judy Davis, Ian Holm, Julian Sands, Roy Scheider, Robert A. Silverman. Stylish adaptation of William Burroughs' controversial novel uses facts from the author's life and meshes them with the book's surreal, insane 'plot'. Peter Weller plays William Lee, an exterminator, whose life gets a twist when he kills his wife (by accident?). He travels to Interzone, a surreal place where typewriters turn into bugs, and a powder made from centipedes is the ultimate drug. Film is well-acted (especially by Weller) and superbly lighted, which lends it a unique atmosphere. Deliberately paced and filled with graphic imagery, which may make it inaccessible for conservative audiences.

**Naked Weapon** (2002, HGK) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Tony Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Marit Thoresen, Almen Wong, Daniel Wu, Maggy Q, Anya, Jewel Lee, Cheng Pei-Pei, Andrew Lin. On a remote island forty 12-year-old girls are trained to be assassins – over a period of six years. Little do they know that only one of them will survive the training and become a professional hitman. Special agent Wu is trying to solve the mystery of the girls' disappearances and will make the acquaintance of a killer lady six years later. Fast-paced B-movie with stylish direction is not very credible but sexy, violent, well-scored and entertaining. A winner from the expert director of the SWORDSMAN films. Watch this one.

**Name of the Rose, The** (1986, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-127m.** \*\*\* D: Jean-Jacques Annaud. Starring Sean Connery, F. Murray Abraham, Christian Slater, Elya Baskin, Feodor Chaliapin, Jr., William Hickey, Michel Lonsdale, Ron Perlman, Helmut Qualtinger. Dark filmization of Umberto Eco's novel about a travelling monk (Connery) who gets tangled in mysterious going-ons in a monastery in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Gruesome murders happen, each seemingly linked to an enigmatic book that is hidden somewhere in the monastery's vast library. Great period flavor, a stylish and suspenseful film. Cinematography by Tonino delli Colli (C'ERA UNA VOLTA IL WEST).

**Nam's Angels** (1970, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Jack Starrett. Starring William Smith, Bernie Hamilton, Adam Roarke, Houston Savage, Eugene Cornelius, John Garwood, Jack Starrett. A group of hippie bikers in Vietnam(!) are assigned to free a P.O.W. at a Vietcong camp. Lots of mayhem ensues. Utterly trivial but not bad, even occasionally exciting, with shades of THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN. Violent action scenes are quite good. At the same time film manages to work some love stories into the plot! A real curio, a cult movie for some. Also known as THE LOSERS.

**Nang Nak** (1999, THA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Nonzee Nimibutr. Starring Intira Jaroenpura, Winai Kraibutr. Atmospheric ghost story, one of Thailand's most successful films ever, this charts an ancient legend, in which a soldier returns from war and refuses to believe that his wife has died and he is only seeing her ghost. Suffers from its one-note plot, but worth watching for Asian horror fans. Previously filmed as the short MAE NAK (1997) and remade as THE GHOST OF MAE NAK (2005). Director Nimibutr coproduced the Pang brothers hit BANGKOK DANGEROUS (1999).

**Nanny McPhee** (2005, GBR/USA/FRA) **C-98m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Kirk Jones. Starring Emma Thompson, Colin Firth, Kelly Macdonald, Thomas Sangster, Eliza Bennett, Jennifer Rae Daykin, Raphael Coleman, Angela Lansbury, Imelda Staunton, Derek Jacobi. Update of MARY POPPINS (1964) finds single father Firth in trouble with his seven naughty children. All the

available nannies have resigned, so it's up to mysterious, ugly-looking nanny Thompson to teach them some manners. Colorfully designed fantasy comedy is well-acted, though some of the subplots are rather mild. Emma Thompson based her script on the books by Christianne Brand. Good score by Patrick Doyle. Director Jones' first film since his debut *WAKING NED* (1998).

**Napoli Spara!** (1977, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mario Caiano. Starring Leonard Mann, Ida Galli, Henry Silva, Jeff Blynn, Massimo Deda, Adolfo Lastretti. Above-average Italian crime movie about commissario Mann, who desperately wants to catch criminal Silva. Not much more plot, but Mann's dedicated performance and some good action scenes make it worthwhile for buffs. English title: *WEAPONS OF DEATH*.

**Napoli Violenta** (1976, ITA/FRA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Maurizio Merli, John Saxon, Barry Sullivan, Elio Zamuto, Maria Grazia Spina, Silvano Tranquilli, Tom Felleggy. Cop Merli is transferred to Naples, where he instantly becomes involved in the fight against crime. Average Italian actioner with fairly good score by Franco Micalizzi was one of three movies with Merli doing his Commissario Betti character. His acting is substandard as usual. English titles: *VIOLENT NAPLES*, *VIOLENT PROTECTION*, and *DEATH DEALERS*.

**Nascondiglio, Il** (2007, ITA/USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Pupi Avati. Starring Laura Morante, Rita Tushingham, Treat Williams, Burt Young, Yvonne Sciò, Giovanni Lombardo Radice, Sydne Rome, Venantino Venantini. Creepy, complicated mystery about an unsolved murder that happened in Snakeshall mansion in 1957 in the middle of a snow storm. 50 years later, a troubled Italian woman, just released after spending 15 years in a mental hospital after her husband died, rents the house planning to open a restaurant. Then she starts hearing mysterious voices coming from between the walls and she starts to investigate the half-a-century old crime. Undermined somewhat by a slew of unimportant supporting characters, and certainly not flawless, but excellent cast, perfect location filming and a superbly creepy finale make this a superior movie experience. Fine score by veteran composer Riz Ortolani. Written by the director. English title: *THE HIDE-OUT*.

**Nasty Baby** (2015, USA/CHL) **C-101m. BOMB** D: Sebastián Silva. Starring Sebastián Silva, Tunde Adebimpe, Kristen Wiig, Mark Margolis. Unwatchable drama about a woman who is trying to find a sperm donor. When Silva's semen turn out inappropriate, his boyfriend Adebimpe agrees to be the stand-in. Filled with pointless, endless scenes that make no sense.

**National Treasure** (2004, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jon Turteltaub. Starring Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger, Justin Bartha, Sean Bean, Jon Voight, Harvey Keitel, Christopher Plummer, Mark Pellegrino. Typically contrived Jerry Bruckheimer production about treasure hunter Cage, who has spent his entire life searching for a legendary treasure. When he learns that the map to it may be on the back of the original Declaration of Independence, he must find a way to get hold of it – before his rival Bean steals it. Fast-paced adventure is never boring, although proceedings are extremely far-fetched and things fall into place much too conveniently for the plot.

**National Treasure: Book of Secrets** (2007, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jon Turteltaub. Starring Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger, Justin Bartha, Jon Voight, Helen Mirren, Ed Harris, Harvey Keitel, Bruce Greenwood. Cage is back as treasure hunter Ben Gates, who wants to prove that one of his ancestors did not have a hand in killing Abraham Lincoln, and he must find a legendary city of gold for that. His rival this time: a determined Ed Harris. A globe-trotting, whale of an adventure that makes very little sense, but fast pace and humor excuse these flaws. The sets are astounding and so are the effects. It's well-acted, too.

**Nattevagten** (1994, DAN) **C-107m. \*\*\*½ D:** Ole Bornedal. Starring Nikolaus Coster-Waldau, Sofie Grabol, Kim Bodnia, Lotte Andersen, Ulf Pilgaard. Superb thriller about law student Coster-Waldau, who takes up job as a night watchman in a mortuary (gulp!) and must contend with eerie atmosphere and morbid jokes of his buddy Bodnia. However, there's a real serial killer on the loose in Oslo, which inspector Pilgaard is trying to catch. First-rate exercise in suspense, all the more impressive as this was Bornedal's debut feature. He sort-of undermined this great film with the mediocre Hollywood remake in 1998 (which slowed down his career). Score is excellent. The director also scripted. English title: NIGHTWATCH.

**Natural Born Killers** (1994, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\*\* D:** Oliver Stone. Starring Woody Harrelson, Juliette Lewis, Tom Sizemore, Robert Downey Jr., Tommy Lee Jones, Rodney Dangerfield, Jared Harris, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Russell Means, Balthazar Getty, Emmanuel Xuereb, Lorraine Faris, Mark Harmon, Arliss Howard, Denis Leary. Oliver Stone's controversial masterpiece is *the* horror film for the 1990s: Mickey and Mallory Knox (Harrelson and Lewis) are two lovers who take it on the lam after breaking out of their low-class white-trash background by killing her abusive parents. On their 'honeymoon' they kill 52 people, before being captured by the police (in a psychotic role equally evil cop Sizemore). The media, foremost TV show host Downey Jr., eagerly embraces them and uses them for voyeuristic purposes. Delirious, sweat-inducing, graphically violent drama with a superb soundtrack (co-produced by Trent Reznor) is a mind-blowing assault on the senses, at times reminiscent of KOYAANISQATSI (1982). Much-discussed and blamed for violent outbreaks in the U.S., but artistically brilliant, an experience you will not easily be able to forget. From a story by Quentin Tarantino, who disowned the picture. Also shown in a cut version, which runs 118m. Cinematography by Robert Richardson.

**Navajo Joe** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sergio Corbucci. Starring Burt Reynolds, Aldo Sambrell, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Simón Arriaga, Fernando Rey. Cruel revenge western about Indian Reynolds, who seeks vengeance on killers who wiped out his clan. Tries to make up lack of plot cleverness by staging lots of violent shoot-outs. Most interesting for its involvement of Reynolds, Corbucci (DJANGO), Ennio Morricone (score), Fernando di Leo (screenwriter) and Ruggero Deodato (assistant director). Italian title: UN DOLLARO A TESTA.

**Nebraska** (2013, USA) **B&W-115m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alexander Payne. Starring Bruce Dern, Will Forte, June Squibb, Bob Odenkirk, Stacy Keach, Tim Driscoll. Amiable road movie drama with dry humor, very much like the director's SIDEWAYS (2004) or ABOUT SCHMIDT (2002). Dern (in an Oscar-nominated performance) plays a forlorn, borderline-Alzheimer old-age pensioner, who insists on travelling to Nebraska to collect a million-dollar prize promised to him by a dubious lottery company. His son Forte, who cannot convince him this is a scam, ultimately takes him there in his car. Along the way they meet old relatives and friends. Quiet, low-key drama, shot in bleak black-and-white, is buoyed by Dern's wonderful performance. Nominated for 6 Academy Awards.

**Necromancy** (1972, USA) **C-79m. \*\* D:** Bert I. Gordon. Starring Orsno Welles, Pamela Franklin, Lee Purcell, Michael Ontkian, Harvey Jayson. Obvious witchcraft thriller about Franklin, who naively moves into Welles' remote community to be prepared to become a witch in his coven. Quite ambitious direction (like in Gordon's later FOOD OF THE GODS), rousing score, but film is a low-grade ROSEMARY'S BABY clone, nothing more. Some prints run 83m. Alternative titles: A LIFE FOR A LIFE, ROSEMARY'S DISCIPLES, THE TOY FACTORY. Re-released in 1983 as THE WITCHING.

**Negotiator, The** (1998, USA) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** F. Gary Gray. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Kevion Spacey, David Morse, Ron Rifkin, John Spencer, J.T. Walsh. Hostage negotiator Jackson is framed for a murder he didn't commit and takes several hostages

himself, one of whom may have something to do with the case. By doing this, he hopes to clear himself but must contend with another top negotiator, Spacey. Interesting premise, excellent performances by Jackson and Spacey, some exciting set pieces, but otherwise this is a highly improbable and overlong thriller. J.T. Walsh's last film.

**Neighbors** (1981, USA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: John G. Avildsen. Starring John Belushi, Kathryn Walker, Cathy Moriarty, Dan Aykroyd, Igors Gavon. Big come-down for the BLUES BROTHERS boys: Belushi mostly plays it straight in this dud about the arrival of new neighbors Aykroyd and Moriarty and how they disrupt his family's life entirely within hours. Consists almost completely of pain and destruction gags, extremely mean-spirited. Based on the novel by Thomas Berger. Belushi's last film; he died of a drug overdose 11 weeks after film's premiere.

**Neighbors** (2014, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Nicholas Stoller. Starring Seth Rogen, Rose Byrne, Zac Efron, Dave Franco, Ike Barinholtz, Lisa Kudrow. Rogen and Byrne have just become parents and bought a house in a quiet suburban neighbourhood when Efron's fraternity moves in next door and starts to make parties every night. At first the couple try to 'howl with the wolves', but then this develops into a war. Typical Seth Rogen comedy, really indefensible plotwise, but has some great, laugh-out-loud gags. Everyone seems to be having fun, which adds to the subdued mood of the film.

**Neither the Sea Nor the Sand** (1972, GBR) **C-95m.** ☑ D: Fred Burnley. Starring Susanne Hampshire, Frank Finlay, Michael Petrovitch, Michael Craze. Horrible romantic drama about woman (Hampshire) who cheats on her husband – even with her dead(!) lover (Finlay). Goes on and on and on, without making a point. Don't expect a horror film or a chiller. Gordon Honeycombe scripted, from his novel. Aka THE EXORCISM OF HUGH.

**Neko no Ongaeshi** (2002, JAP) **C-75m.** \*\*½ D: Hiroyuki Morita. Starring (the voices of) Chizuru Ikewaki, Yoshihiko Hakamada, Aki Maeda, Takayuki Yamada, Hitomi Sato, Tetsu Watanabe. Spin-off of the wonderful MIMI WO SUMASEBA (1995) gives the cat baron his own movie: Teenage Ikewaki saves a cat from certain death, then finds herself addressed by a cat, who tells her she just saved the prince of the kingdom of the cats. Which means that she has won the right to marry him! Can the baron help her? Plot suffers from loud and hectic proceedings, dialogue and score seem to compete, not complement each other. Also, the main character is a bit too old to make her identifiable for the film's target audience. Animation is nice as always. Executive produced by Hayao Miyazaki for Studio Ghibli. English title: THE CAT RETURNS.

**Nella Città l'Inferno** (1958, ITA) **95m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Renato Castellani. Starring Anna Magnani, Giulietta Masina, Myriam Bru, Cristina Gaioni, Milly Monti, Renato Salvatori, Alberto Sordi. Fine prison drama focusing on the lives of several female inmates, some of whom have come to terms with their situation, others who have just arrived are shattered and see no way out. Made compelling by superb performances, notably Magnani's, who is sensational as cynical, disillusioned prostitute who makes friends with innocent Masina, whose life is irrevocably changed by her stay in Mantellate, the Roman prison for women. Based on *Roma, Via delle Mantellate* by Isa Mari. Aka AND THE WILD, WILD WOMEN.

**Nella Pieghe della Carne** (1970, ITA/SPA) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Sergio Bergonzelli. Starring Eleanora Rossi Drago, (Anna Maria) Pier Angeli, Fernando Sancho, Alfredo Mayo, Emilio Gutiérrez Caba, María Rosa Sclauzero, Victor Alcazar (=Barrera), Giancarlo Sisti. Giallo-variation with Freudian touches about a family who live in a sea-side villa with two vultures. One by one their visitors die, as the daughter (Pier Angeli) suffers from a psychosis that originated when she was raped by her father and subsequently killed him. Partly

illogical plot comes up with insane twists, but giallo fans might find this a welcome addition to the oeuvre. From an idea by Mario Caiano. Spanish title: LAS ENDEMONIADAS. English title: IN THE FOLDS OF THE FLESH.

**Nella Stretta Morsa del Ragno** (1971, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-97m. SCOPE \*½** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Anthony Franciosa, Michele Mercier, Peter Carsten, Karen Field, Klaus Kinski. Edgar Allen Poe (Kinski) spins wild tales of a haunted castle and journalist Franciosa accepts a wager to spend a night there. He encounters spirits who are doomed to live in all eternity. Boring, 'unspirited' gothic horror film whose pretentious approach cannot be offset by stylish direction. Even horror fans will be bored. U.S. title: WEB OF THE SPIDER.

**Nelly et Monsieur Arnaud** (1995, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-106m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Sautet. Starring Emmanuel Béart, Michel Serrault, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Claire Nadeau, Michel Lonsdale. Fine, subtle drama about recently separated, 25-year old Nelly (Béart) who takes up a job typing the memoirs of Monsieur Arnaud (Serrault), who is some 40 years her senior. Well-acted film traces their relationship in unusual detail, the characters are very well-drawn. Sautet also co-wrote the screenplay.

**Ne Nous Fâchons Pas** (1966, FRA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Georges Lautner. Starring Lino Ventura, Mireille Darc, Jean Lefebvre, Michel Constantin, Sylvia Sorrente. Crime comedy about Ventura, a retired crook, who is asked back into action after 15 years, when some British thugs try to get control of the area. Eventually, dynamite proves to be the solution to all their problems. Amusing spoof of British lifestyles (including a little bit of James Bond), gorgeously shot in widescreen. Unfortunately, plot goes nowhere. Good score by Bernard Gérard. Ventura would re-team with Darc for the America spoof FANTASIA CHEZ LES PLOUCS (1971). English title: LET'S NOT GET ANGRY.

**Neon Demon, The** (2016, DEN/FRA/USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Nicolas Windig Refn. Starring Elle Fanning, Karl Glusman, Jena Malone, Bella Heathcote, Abbey Lee, Keanu Reeves. Outstanding, hypnotic art drama from the director of ONLY GOD FORGIVES (2013), with the same powerful, brilliant direction. In the cold world of fashion models, newcomer Fanning is turning a few heads, including those of jealous rivals. Camerawork and direction is everything here, plot withdraws at times, but not to the film's disadvantage. Refn is a genius filmmaker at the peak of his powers; this will not – and should not – appeal to mass audiences. Symbolism, symmetry everywhere. Excellent score by Cliff Martinez.

**Neptune Factor, The** (1973, CDN) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Daniel Petrie. Starring Ben Gazzara, Walter Pidgeon, Ernest Borgnine, Yvette Mimieux, Donnelly Rhodes, Chris Wiggins, Michael J. Reynolds. Canadian addition to the disaster film canon of the 1970s, this is little-known because its budget and cast weren't quite as big as that of the other pictures. An ocean lab falls into an abyss after an earthquake, and Gazzara's submarine is the only chance to rescue the crew. Some unconvincing effects spoil the movie that was not exciting to begin with. If it wasn't for that Lalo Schifrin score, they'd find themselves in even deeper water. Okay for kids. Also known as AN UNDERWATER ODYSSEY, THE NEPTUNE DISASTER.

**Nero Veneziano** (1978, ITA) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Ugo Liberatore. Starring Renato Cestiè, Rena Niehaus, Yorgo Voyagis, Fabio Gamma, José Quaglio, Ely Galleani, Olga Karlatos, Tom Felleghy. Flawed mix between ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968) and DON'T LOOK NOW (1973). A 14-year-old blind boy, who lives with his sister in Venice, starts having odd visions(!), which get worse when he moves into his uncle's house. Soon he learns of the coming of a Black Man in early June. Is it the devil? Confusing, oddly engrossing, but interest wanes dangerously in final third. Poorly timed horror also veers toward drama in some parts.

Worth a look for horror buffs, though. Starts out with a beautiful Pino Donaggio score, which is used too infrequently in the rest of the film. English title: DAMNED IN VENICE.

**Nerve** (2016, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Henry Joost, Ariel Schulman. Starring Emma Roberts, Dave Franco, Emily Meade, Miles Heizer, Juliette Lewis. Modern-day romance with a sci-fi touch is perfect teen fodder. Down-to-earth student Roberts can't understand why her daredevil friend Meade is so into the new game Nerve, which divides the users into watchers and players. Players get to perform dares to stay in and ultimately win the game. When Roberts finally joins, she meets Franco and together they become an internet sensation, performing dare after dare in one exhilarating night in New York City. Engaging, visually arresting thriller with a message. Doesn't hold up to the very end but well worth watching. Based on the novel by Jeanne Ryan.

**Nesting, The** (1981, USA) **C-104m. \*\*** D: Armand Weston. Starring Robin Groves, Christopher Loomis, Michael David Lally, John Carradine, Gloria Grahame, Bill Rowley. Longish chiller about agoraphobic mystery writer Groves who moves into an old house in the country and discovers that it is haunted. Not bad despite familiar plotline.

**4 (Net) Inyong Shiktak** (2003, KOR) **C-127m. SCOPE \*½** D: Lee Su-yeon. Starring Park Shin-yeon, Jun Ji-hyun (=Gianna Jun), Yu Seon, Jeong Ok. Korean drama about an interior architect, who is about to be married, when he starts having visions of two dead girls that he saw in a subway train. It turns out a troubled woman also sees them, and she may help him to find out the mystery behind his own childhood. Sounds interesting, and starts quite well, but turns into a lumbering, esoteric mess, moving at a deadly pace. English title: UNINVITED.

**Never Been Kissed** (1999, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Raja Gosnell. Starring Drew Barrymore, David Arquette, Michael Vartan, Molly Shannon, Leelee Sobieski, Jeremy Jordan, John C. Reilly, Jessica Alba, James Franco. Good-natured but terribly uneven comedy drama about newspaper reporter Barrymore, who's [see title] and gets her chance at picking up on some teenage action, when she's assigned to go undercover at her old high school. Quite unbelievable time-filler is a fashion disaster (or at least 'shrill'), but sweet Barrymore remains likable. This is mainly for her fans.

**NeverEnding Story, The** (1984, USA/GER) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Wolfgang Petersen. Starring Noah Hathaway, Barret Oliver, Tami Stronach, Patricia Hayes, Sydney Bromley, Tilo Prückner, Moses Gunn, voice of Alan Oppenheimer. Remarkable fantasy adventure, the decade's best alongside Ridley Scott's LEGEND (1982) and Neil Jordan's THE COMPANY OF WOLVES (1984). Adaptation of Michael Ende's book is lovingly detailed story of a sad boy (Oliver), who starts reading a book that will involve him more than he can imagine: In the land of Fantasia, the Big Nothing is threatening to devour everything, unless a young warrior (Hathaway) can find a cure for the ailing child-empress. Dazzling special effects, compelling plot with a clever message at its core, this is pure movie magic. Fine score by Giorgio Moroder and Klaus Doldinger includes title hit by Limahl. Followed by two sequels and an animated TV series. German title: DIE UNENDLICHE GESCHICHTE.

**Never Ever** (1996, USA/GBR) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Charles Finch. Starring Charles Finch, Sandrine Bonnaire, James Fox, Jane March, Jean Rochefort, Julian Sands, Patrick Le Barz. Good cast is main attraction in this leisurely paced romantic drama set in and around Paris. British businessman Finch quarrels with his wife, leaves, gets to know Frenchwoman Bonnaire and falls in love. Not exactly innovative but pleasant enough. Watch it on a rainy afternoon. Aka CIRCLE OF PASSION.

**Never Say Never Again** (1983, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Irvin Kershner. Starring Sean Connery, Klaus Maria Brandauer, Max von Sydow, Barbara Carrera, Kim Basinger, Bernie

Casey, Alex McCowen, Edward Fox, Rowan Atkinson. Connery returns as special agent 007 in this unofficial entry in the series. The story turns out to be the same one as in THUNDERBALL: Bond must destroy the plans of villain Largo (Brandauer) who has stolen two nuclear warheads. The head of *SPECTRE* (von Sydow) is running the operation. Connery is fine and he makes the film entertaining, but good action scenes are rare and the climax is a disappointment. Brandauer is good as Bond's opponent. Photographed by Douglas Slocombe, score by Michel Legrand. Original running time: 137m.

**New Daughter, The** (2009, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Luiso Berdejo. Starring Kevin Costner, Ivana Baquero, Samantha Mathis, Gattlin Griffith, Noah Taylor. Supernatural horror thriller about single dad Costner, who moves into a South Carolina villa with his 13-year-old daughter and 8-year-old son. There's an old Indian burial mound in the backyard, and somebody – or something – seems to be walking through the house with muddy feet. Quite unsettling, especially the finale, but overlength and an abundance of pointless supporting characters weigh it down. Might also have worked better *without* Costner in the lead, he seems too laid back. Still, an interesting view, and quite bizarre. Theatrical debut of Berdejo, writer of the successful [REC] movies.

**New Fist of Fury** (1976, HGK) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Lo Wei. Starring Jackie Chan, Nora Miao, Chang Sing, Han Yin-Chieh, Cheng Siu Siu, Lo Wei. So-called sequel to the Bruce Lee classic FIST OF FURY is intended kung-fu epic and presents Jackie Chan as the successor of the master. Chan plays a thief who decides to study martial arts in order to help Chinese expatriates in Taiwan against the Japanese. Miao plays the same character as in FIST OF FURY, and stills of Bruce Lee are shown in flashbacks, but Chan lacks his edge and charisma. German PG-13 version is cut by 40 minutes(!), which makes it difficult to discuss the value of the film. What's left is a poorly paced plot that fails to generate much interest (and very few fight scenes). Cowritten and executive produced by director Lo Wei.

**News – Bericht über eine Reise in eine Strahlende Zukunft** (1986, GER/GBR/AUS) **C-131m. \*\*½** D: Rainer Erlen. Starring Birgit Doll, Albert Fortell, James Armstrong, Bob Cunningham. Typically ambitious Erlen thriller about mother Doll, whose reporter husband goes missing after doing some research on the dumping of radioactive waste. She is aided by photographer Fortell in her search and soon finds herself threatened and attacked. Is there a major cover-up? Works intermittently, but overlength and Fortell's obnoxious character hamper things. English titles: NUCLEAR CONSPIRACY, SINGAPORE CONNECTION.

**Newton Boys, The** (1998, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Richard Linklater. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Skeet Ulrich, Ethan Hawke, Vincent D'Onofrio, Dwight Yoakam, Bo Hopkins, Luke Askew, Johnny Carson. Disappointing neo-western by Generation X director Linklater about the (real) life and times of the Newton Boys, a band of criminals (and brothers), who got rich by robbing banks and trains from 1919-1924. No narrative momentum or dramatic impact, a forgettable action drama. The stars are okay. Cowritten by Linklater, based on the book by Claude Stanush.

**New World, The** (2005, USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Terrence Malick. Starring Colin Farrell, Q'orianka Kilcher, Christopher Plummer, Christian Bale, Wes Studi, David Thewlis, Ben Mendelsohn, John Savage, Jamie Harris, Alex Rice, Noah Taylor, Ben Chaplin, Jonathan Pryce. Exceptional drama set in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, when ships from England arrive at the new world, confounding the native inhabitants, among them beautiful princess Kilcher. When the settlers fail to initiate trade with the natives, their leader Plummer returns to England, leaving captain Farrell in command. Farrell falls in love with the princess, who as a consequence is expelled from her tribe. However, their love is not to last... Strikingly directed, emotionally powerful epic, much along the lines of Malick's earlier features (this

was only his fourth in more than 30 years!). Emmanuel Lubezki's cinematography is pure bliss! Film is perfectly accompanied by quiet classical score by James Horner (using themes from Mozart and Wagner). Irresistible fare, if tuned in to it. Similar in mood and artistry to Kubick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968). Malick wrote the screenplay for this in the late 1970s! It based on an old legend that also inspired the Disney feature POCAHONTAS (1995). Fatally ignored at the Oscars.

**New York Chiama Superdrago** (1966, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-98m**. \*½ D: Giorgio Ferroni. Starring Ray Danton, Marisa Mell, Margaret Lee, Jess Hahn, Solvi Stubing, Jacques Herlin, Pinkas Braun. Cast provides sole interest in this James-Bond-type crime movie about gentleman spy Danton, who goes against secret organization, which wants to rule the world. No action or imagination, just talk, talk, talk. Too bad, the title suggests something else. English titles: NEW YORK CALLING SUPERDRAGON, SECRET AGENT SUPER DRAGON, and SUPER DRAGON.

**Next Man, The** (1976, USA) **C-108m**. \*\*½ D: Richard C. Sarafian. Starring Sean Connery, Cornelia Sharpe, Albert Paulsen, Adolfo Celi, Marco St. John, Maurice Copeland, Lance Henriksen, Richard C. Sarafian. International political thriller drama about a crisis in the Near East, which follows the announcement of a creation of a huge conglomerate of oil-producing countries. Three important Arab leaders are assassinated, and it's up to Saudi Arabian(!) Connery to take over. Naturally, he becomes a target himself. Relentlessly talky, only the locations and Connery spark some interest. Score by Michael Kamen, photography by Michael Chapman. Alternative titles: DOUBLE HIT, THE ARAB CONSPIRACY.

**Next of Kin** (1982, AUS/NZL) **C-89m**. \*\*½ D: Tony Williams. Starring Jackie Kerin, John Jarrat, Alex Scott, Gerda Nicolson, Charles McCallum. Quite creepy but dead slow horror thriller about a young woman, who inherits a nursing home for elderly people, and soon finds herself stalked by a mysterious figure, and inexplicable things start to happen, including deaths. Some effective scenes, but main character and her exploits are off-putting. Film has its defenders, though, among them Quentin Tarantino. Film buffs might want to check it out for its SHINING and Argento references.

**Nicholas Nickleby** (1947, GBR) **108m**. \*\*\* D: (Alberto) Cavalcanti. Starring Derek Bond, Cedric Hardwicke, Mary Merrall, Sally Ann Howes, Bernard Miles. Fine Charles Dickens adaptation about the title character, who must help and protect his mother and sister from his scheming uncle after his father has died. Wonderfully atmospheric, highly cinematic (kudos to director Cavalcanti). A well-acted, little-known British gem. Filmed before in 1912, remade twice for television.

**Nido del Ragno, Il** (1988, ITA) **C-86m**. \*\*½ D: Gianfranco Giagni. Starring Roland Wybenga, Paola Rinaldi, Margareta von Krauss, Claudia Muzi, Stépphane Audran, William Berger. Little-seen horror film about an American (Wybenga), who is sent to Hungary to a professor conducting secret research. Once there he realizes that a mysterious society are doing their best prevent him from getting any information. Watchable mystery with interesting views of deserted Budapest streets. A bit Kafkaesque perhaps, if it wasn't for a none-too-clever plot. Finale, with effects by Sergio Stivaletti, compensates somewhat. Produced and cowritten by Tonino Cervi, from his story. English title: SPIDER LABYRINTH, and CURSE LABYRINTH: LABYRINTH IN THE DARK.

**Night Angel** (1990, USA) **C-87m**. \*\* D: Dominique Othenin-Girard. Starring Isa Andersen, Linden Ashby, Debra Feuer, Karen Black. Okay horror film about the coming of 'Lilith', a mystical creature that seduces and kills men. One by one she knocks off the makers of a fashion magazine. Who will stop her? Not terribly clever, but nicely lighted and edited, film follows its storyline consequently to the very end.

**Night at the Museum** (2006, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*\* D: Shawn Levy. Starring Ben Stiller, Carla Gugino, Dick Van Dyke, Mickey Rooney, Bill Cobbs, Jake Cherry, Ricky Gervais, Robin Williams, Patrick Gallagher, Steve Coogan, Paul Rudd, Owen Wilson. Stiller plays a divorced dad who wants to impress his 10-year-old son and takes up a job in a museum as a night watchman. His three aged predecessors (Van Dyke, Rooney, Cherry, all great fun) should have let him know that all the exhibits (animals and people, even statues) come alive during the night! Lots of impressive effects, some laughs in this typical blockbuster. Enjoyable, if you can excuse the rather conventional plotting and lapses in logic. This was Van Dyke's first theatrical role since *DICK TRACY* (1990)! Good score by Alan Silvestri. Photographed by Guillermo Navarro.

**Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian** (2009, USA/CDN)**C-105m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Shawn Levy. Starring Ben Stiller, Amy Adams, Ricky Gervais, Owen Wilson, Hank Azaria, Robin Williams, Christopher Guest, Alain Chabat, Steve Coogan, Paul Rudd, Shawn Levy, the Jonas Brothers, voice of Eugene Levy. Inevitable sequel brings now-successful Stiller to the Smithsonian in Washington, where most of the exhibits have been transferred to because the old museum will close. Then the original pharaoh's brother is resurrected and wants to summon an army to become the ruler of the world. Lots of action and effects, but it seems the movie is only buoyed some nice performances (*not* the Pharaoh's) and Alan Silvestri's majestic score, the plot is wearing dangerously thin.

**Nightbreed** (1990, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: Clive Barker. Starring Crag Sheffer, Anne Bobby, David Cronenberg, Charles Haid, Hugh Quarshie, Oliver Parker, John Agar. Imaginative, gruesome horror spectacle by mastermind Clive Barker. Sheffer is the prime suspect in a ghastly murder case, an opinion shared by his psychiatrist Cronenberg. Sheffer's nightmares center around mystical place of Midian, which turns out to be an old cemetery inhabited by monsters, the "Nightbreed". Serpentine story, stunning visual and make-up effects, and a delicious performance by cult filmmaker Cronenberg make this a delight for horror fans. Only some unnecessary comic relief distracts from highly creative achievement. Written by Barker, who adapted his own novel. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Night Caller** (1985, HGC) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Philip Chan. Starring Melvin Wong, Philip Chan, Pat Ha, Terry Hu, Pauline Wong. Ordinary crime thriller about two policemen trying to catch murderer of a fashion model, the only witness being her six-year-old daughter. Steals its murder scenes from Dario Argento's *PROFONDO ROSSO* (1975) and *SUSPIRIA* (1977), but is far less stylish. Little action, fair suspense, an okay view. Written by the director.

**Nightcrawler** (2014, USA) **C-117m.** **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Dan Gilroy. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Rene Russo, Bill Paxton, Rick Garcia. Psycho drama set in L.A. where Gyllenhaal, a psychopathic loner, realizes that there's money to be made in filming crime-scenes. He then sets up a business, listening to police radio at night and selling his footage to a local TV station. All this time he does not care about morale. Interesting drama remains fairly predictable, also it sorely lacks any explanation for Gyllenhaal's motivations. Written by the director.

**Night Digger, The** (1971, GBR) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Alastair Reid. Starring Patricia Neal, Pamela Brown, Nicholas Clay, Jean Anderson, Graham Crowden. Odd, macabre psycho drama, not a horror film, as some believe. Neal is taking care of her blind mother, but the two women are mostly at odds with each other. Handyman Clay is chosen by Brown to take care of their house. Little do they know that by night he prowls the streets on his motorbike... Highly unusual, not entirely successful fare, written (quite recognizably) by Roald Dahl, from the novel *Nest in a Falling Tree* by Joy Cowley. Uncut print is said to run 110m. and may improve the plotting a little. Fine score by Bernard Herrmann. Alternatively known as *THE ROAD BUILDER*.

**Night Flier, The** (1997, USA) **C-93m**. \*\*\*½ D: Mark Pavia. Starring Miguel Ferrer, Julie Entwisle, Dan Monahan, Merton H. Moss. Adaptation of a short story by Stephen King about a blood-sucking demon, who flies a black Cessna and seemingly kills people at random. Tabloid reporter Ferrer wants to track him down, which is not as easy as expected. Film cleverly withholds any explanation as to the reason for the demon's existence, let alone his identity, but still manages hardly to be better than B-movie horror. Still, manages to create interest and may become a springboard for first-time director Pavia's career. Alternative title: STEPHEN KING'S THE NIGHT FLIER.

**Night Gallery** (1969, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Boris Sagal, Steven Spielberg, Barry Shear. Starring Joan Crawford, Ossie Davis, Richard Kiley, Roddy McDowall, Barry Sullivan, Tom Bosley, Sam Jaffe, Rod Serling (presenter). Interesting three-part horror film that launched the popular television series of the same name. All three tales of the macabre deal with the eerie influence of pictures on the main characters (hence the title). Well-directed and quite creepy. The second story was directed by a young Steven Spielberg; this was his directorial debut. However, all three directors display talent. Made for television. Coproduced by John Badham.

**Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square, A** (1979, GBR/USA) **C-106m**. \*\* D: Ralph Thomas. Starring Richard Jordan, Oliver Tobias, David Niven, Elke Sommer, Gloria Grahame, Richard Johnson, Hugh Griffith, John Rhys-Davies, Bruce Boa, Alfred Molina. Tame, boring caper about ex-con Jordan, who gets a job as an electrician working after hours at a bank (!) and Niven, who plans a robbery with his help. Remains watchable despite slow pace. Sommer's nude scene among the most gratuitous of her career. Alfred Molina debuts in a bit part. Director Thomas' last film as a director. Alternative titles: THE BIG SCAM, THE BIGGEST BANK ROBBERY, and THE MAYFAIR BANK CAPER.

**Night Listener, The** (2006, USA) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Patrick Stettner. Starring Robin Williams, Toni Collette, Rory Culkin, Bobby Canavale, Sandra Oh. Intriguing little thriller about gay radio talk show host Williams, who is contacted by two fans, a 14-year-old boy and his foster mother, who has written a book about the sexual abuse the boy had to take at his parents' home. Williams wants to help promote the book, but then it becomes almost impossible to meet the boy. Moody, well-acted psycho drama is not entirely satisfying but engrossing, especially because of the fine score (by Peter Nashel). Based on the novel by Amistead Maupin, who also cowrote the script and coproduced the picture.

**Nightmare** (1981, USA) **C-99m**. \*½ D: Romano Scavolini. Starring Baird Stafford, Sharon Smith, C.J. Cooke, Mik Cribben. Gory slasher movie about a mentally disturbed psycho, who goes on to molest a family of five over a period of five days. Extremely weak (albeit ambitious) script complemented by extremely violent effects. A minor cult film for *trying* to be clever (it fails miserably). Direction is not bad, though. Effects by Tom Savini. Also known as SCHIZO, BLOOD SPLASH and NIGHTMARE IN A DAMAGED BRAIN.

**Nightmare Before Christmas** (1993, USA) **C-76m**. \*\*\*½ D: Henry Selick. Voices of Danny Elfman, Chris Sarandon, Catherine O'Hara. Brilliantly conceived stop-motion animated feature about Jack Skellington, the Pumpkin King, who becomes dissatisfied with the Halloween routine and discovers Christmas after a long walk through the forest. He is baffled by the merriment of everybody and decides to steal it ☹ by abducting Santa Claus! Watching this film once is not enough; there's too much that would escape you. Produced (and designed) by creative mastermind Tim Burton.

**Nightmare Honeymoon** (1973, USA) **C-89m**. \*½ D: Elliot Silverstein. Starring Dack Rambo, Rebecca Dianna Smith, John Beck, Pat Hingle, Walter Koenig. Awkward thriller melodrama about two honeymooners, who accidentally witness a murder. The woman is then raped

brutally by Beck, but she manages to escape with her husband. Their relationship is put to an extreme test until the man decides to take revenge. Some unbelievable dialogue in this pretentious film. Climax is not bad, though. Based on the book by Lawrence Sanders. Score by Elmer Bernstein, photography by Harry Stradling Jr. Also known as DEADLY HONEYMOON.

**Nightmare in Wax** (1969, USA) **C-96m.** \*½ D: Bud Townsend. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Anne Helm, Scott Brady, Berry Kroeger, Victoria Carrol. Corny and - since it was not intended as a spoof - also very pretentious horror thriller about former make-up artist Mitchell's revenge on several actors, starlets and movie producers. Unpleasant, boring remake of MYSTERY OF THE WAY MUSEUM and HOUSE OF WAX. Only novelty: Mitchell's victims are only temporarily paralyzed. For die-hard horror aficionados only. Bud Cardos is credited as production manager. Also known as CRIMES IN THE WAX MUSEUM.

**Nightmare on Elm Street, A** (1984, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Wes Craven. Starring John Saxon, Ronee Blakley, Heather Langenkamp, Amanda Wyss, Nick Corri, Johnny Depp, Charles Fleischer, Robert Englund. Horror shocker, good of its type, about demon Freddy Kruger (Englund), who enters innocent teenagers' dreams and kills them (for real). Director Craven does his best, but his script is only so-so. Start and end are most effective parts, mid-section is too one-dimensional. Still, this cult movie was very successful at the box-office and spawned six sequels (plus a related television series).

**Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors, A** (1987, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Chuck (Charles) Russell. Starring Heather Langenkamp, Craig Wasson, Patricia Arquette, Robert Englund, Ken Sagoes, Rodney Eastman, Jennifer Rubin, Laurence Fishburne, John Saxon, Zsa Zsa Gabor. Second sequel features a welcome return of stars Langenkamp and Saxon. Wasson researches horrible dreams of troubled teenagers in clinic, discovers that Freddy Kruger is behind it. Langenkamp offers her experience with the monster to finally destroy him for good. Uneven horror film has some great moments (Kevin Yagher's fine effects are imaginatively staged by director Russell), is childish at its worst. Too bad. Jennifer Rubin's first film, Patricia Arquette's second (at 18 or 19). Score by Angelo Badalamenti, story cowritten by Wes Craven, Frank Darabont and Chuck Russell. Wes Craven also co-produced.

**Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master, A** (1988, USA) **C-92m.** \*½ D: Renny Harlin. Starring Robert Englund, Tuesday Knight, Ken Sagoes, Rodney Eastman, Lisa Wilcox. Third sequel to Wes Craven's box-office hit. Freddy is resurrected yet again (by a urinating dog!) and kills some teenies before he is sent to hell again. Cardboard characters, few surprises, has only some good effects and Harlin's stylish direction to recommend it.

**Nightmares** (1980, AUS) **C-81m.** \*\*½ D: John D. Lamond. Starring Jenny Neumann, Gary Sweet, Nina Landis, Max Phipps, John Michael Howson. Rather graphic Australian slasher movie about a young, inexperienced actress, whose childhood trauma now takes effect twenty years after she caused her mother to die while being sexually harassed. During the rehearsals for a play, the crew fall prey to her schizophrenic fits. Welcome deviation from usual slasher paths, though still rather dumb. Full-blown score by Brian May (MAD MAX) adds to film's effect. Video title: STAGE FRIGHT.

**Nightmare Sisters** (1987, USA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: David DeCoteau. Starring Linnea Quigley, Brinke Stevens, Michelle Bauer, Timothy Kauffman, Matthew Phelps. Horror comedy about three nerds who are invited to a party by equally nerdish trio of college girls. After a séance, the women turn into sex-hungry, deadly monsters. Trash movie is so bad it's funny – really! Direction is atrocious. Also known as SORORITY SUCCUBUS SISTERS.

**Nightmare Weekend** (1985, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-85m.** ☐ D: Henry Sala. Starring Debbie Laster, Debra Hunter, Lori Lewis. Ultra-bad horror flick about inventor who turns teenagers into

monsters with his computer(!). Gratuitous sex scenes abound. Allegedly runs 88m., but German video version was uncut.

**Night Moves** (1975, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Arthur Penn. Starring Gene Hackman, Jennifer Warren, Susan Clark, James Woods, Melanie Griffith. Private investigator Hackman is in a complicated situation. First he must settle things with his wife, who's having an affair and then there's 16-year-old Griffith, who's run away from home, and Hackman takes up the job of finding her and bringing her back. Little action but fine suspense in unusual thriller drama that's never boring. It's well-acted, too.

**Night My Number Came Up, The** (1955, GBR) **B&W-94m.** \*\*\* D: Leslie Norman. Starring Michael Redgrave, Sheila Sim, Alexander Knox, Denholm Elliott, Ursula Jeans, Ralph Truman, Alfie Bass. Air marshal Redgrave tells someone about a terrifying dream about a plane crash he had last night, and then it seems that every little detail of that dream is coming true on a flight from Hong Kong to Japan. Are the passengers going to die? Chilling premise, typically witty execution for Ealing Studios, the ultimate movie about a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some consider this brilliant.

**Night of Bloody Horror** (1969, USA) **C-77m.** \*\* D: Joy N. Houck Jr. Starring Gerald McRaney, Gaye Yellen, Evelyn Hendricks. Not uninteresting horror thriller about youth McRaney, who wonders why all the women he has an affair with end up dead. Some potent horror and gore scenes provide a certain cult appeal, but film is slowly paced, even at this running time. Worth a look for cult film fans (who might wonder what kind of a giallo this would have become in Italy), others beware.

**Night of the Big Heat** (1967, GBR) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Terence Fisher. Starring Christopher Lee, Patrick Allen, Peter Cushing, Jane Merrow, Sarah Lawson, William Lucas. On a British island a heatwave in the middle of winter is causing confusion. Scientist Lee seems to be studying the phenomenon. When the first people die mysteriously, he discloses that they may be under alien attack. Unexciting sci-fi horror mix is self-consciously made, with Cushing wasted in a supporting role. Still, his and Lee's presence keep this from sinking completely. Based on a novel by John Lymington, which was filmed before for British TV in 1960. Also known as ISLAND OF THE BURNING DOOMED/DAMNED.

**Night of the Creeps** (1986, USA) **C-88m.** \*\*½ D: Fred Dekker. Starring Jason Lively, Steve Marshall, Jill Whitlow, Tom Atkins, Wally Taylor, Bruce Solomon. An extra-terrestrial organism makes its way to our planet and infects several people, among them a maniac. The people turn into zombies, and only cop Atkins is tough enough to battle them. Second-rate, muddled script outdone by some effectively gory special effects. Understandably, quite a cult movie among horror fans. Most of the characters bear names of famous horror movie directors. Surprisingly, this was NOT followed by any sequels. Effects by Robert Kurtzman. Steve Miner directed the second unit.

**Night of the Demon** (1958, GBR) **95m.** \*\*\* D: Jacques Tourneur. Starring Dana Andrews, Peggy Cummins, Niall MacGinnis, Maurice Denham, Athene Seyler. Fine, atmospheric horror film about an American scientist (Andrews) who comes to England to investigate a devil cult, but refuses to believe in the occult, not even when he himself is cursed and everything seems to indicate that he will die in three days time. Well-done by the director of the classics I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE and CAT PEOPLE (1942). Only the monster is not very convincing. Adapted from the story 'Casting the Runes' by Montague R. James. Also known as CURSE OF THE DEMON (in the U.S.).

**Night of the Demon** (1983, USA) **C-96m.** ☒ D: James C. Wasson. Starring Michael Cutt, Jay Allen. Stupefying 'video nasty' about group of high school idiots who go on an expedition to find out the truth about a monster which is said to be roaming the woods somewhere. It

turns out to be a laughable, furry Big Foot that knocks them off one by one. Ludicrous script, amateurish acting, gruesome and boring at the same time. One of the worst horror films I have ever seen.

**Night of the Generals, The** (1967, GBR/FRA) **C-145m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Anatole Litvak. Starring Peter O'Toole, Omar Sharif, Tom Courtenay, Donald Pleasence, Joanna Pettet, Philippe Noiret, Charles Gray, Christopher Plummer, Juliette Gréco, Sacha Pitoeff, Pierre Mondy, Gordon Jackson, Howard Vernon. Remarkable cast in unusual production which merges war and crime genres. Sharif plays a German Major, who is investigating the killing of a Polish prostitute by a Nazi general. The three suspects – O'Toole, Gray and Pleasence – each may have had a reason to commit the crime, but the war situation and the generals' power make the investigation difficult. Meandering, somewhat aimless storyline is not the reason to tune in. It's the production values, the settings, the costumes, and most importantly, the hypnotic performance of O'Toole and the fine performances of the other actors. Score by Maurice Jarre, cinematography by Henri Decae.

**Night of the Living Dead** (1968, USA) **96m. \*\*\*½ D:** George A. Romero. Starring Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea, Karl Hardman, Marilyn Eastman, Keith Wayne, Judith Ridley, Kyra Schon, William (Bill) Hinzman, George A. Romero, John A. Russo. It's getting dark and the Zombies are coming out of their graves... Watch out! Romero's story of six people barricading in a farmhouse from flesh-eating corpses is a milestone in modern horror-filmmaking, scaring people out of their wits when originally released – and still packs a wallop today. Romero's social criticism warns of a new barbarity that might eventually destroy civilization and is thus far less obvious and disgusting than later imitations. A modern horror classic. The first part of a trilogy, followed by DAWN OF THE DEAD in 1978 and DAY OF THE DEAD in 1985. Remade by Tom Savini in 1990. Also shown in a computer-colored version.

**Night of the Living Dead** (1990, USA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Tom Savini. Starring Tony Todd, Patricia Tallman, Tom Towles, McKee Anderson, William Butler, Kate Finneran, Bill Moseley. Surprisingly watchable remake of George Romero's classic horror film unfortunately makes too few changes to the original script. Tony Todd (in a pre-CANDYMAN performance) leads a group of survivors in their fight against an army of zombies. Some good scenes, generally an estimable attempt at resurrecting the zombie genre. Make-up artist Savini's direction is not bad. George Romero wrote the screenplay; he also coproduced with Menahem Golan.

**Night of the Zombies** (1981, USA) **C-78m. \*\* D:** Joel M. Reed. Starring Jamie Gillis, Samantha Grey, Ryan Hilliard, Ron Armstrong, Joel M. Reed. Odd little curio about two researchers who are trying to locate missing WW2 battalion of G.I.s in Germany. When they disappear, Gillis joins a scientist in search of a biochemical gas that was reportedly used in 1944. Did it turn the soldiers into zombies? Weird, occasionally confusing horror film is leagues better than Reed's Troma-produced splatter trash BLOODSUCKING FREAKS (1976), but still rather cheap and not really convincing. Gillis performance achieves a kind of Elliott Gould-like coolness or detachment. Has some cult movie possibilities. Alternative titles: BATTALION OF THE LIVING DEAD, THE CHILLING, GAMMA 693, NIGHT OF THE WEHRMACHT ZOMBIES, and SISTER OF DEATH.

**Night Shadows** (1984, USA) **C-99m. \*\* D:** John 'Bud' Cardos. Starring Wings Hauser, Bo Hopkins, Jennifer Warren. Something is turning people into zombie-like creatures in a small town Hauser is just visiting. He investigates and pretty Warren tags along. Well-paced, well-scored (by Richard Band) and fairly exciting but plot is a yawn. Sloppily acted horror is better than the rest of its kind but what exactly is the point of having birds twitter ceaselessly in the background? Cardos has done better.

**Night Shift** (1982, USA) **C-105m**. \*\*\* D: Ron Howard. Starring Henry Winkler, Michael Keaton, Shelley Long, Gina Hecht, Pat Corley, Bobby Di Cicco, Clint Howard, Joe Spinell, Tom Mahoney, Vincent Schiavelli, Kevin Costner, Shannen Doherty, Ron Howard. Far-fetched but mostly funny comedy about morgue attendant Winkler, who's down on his luck, when a new colleague (Keaton) enters his life. Together they hatch a plan and eventually wind up running a prostitution business in the morgue. Keaton's spirited performance made him a star. A popular early 80s comedy, that's also a little bit of a time capsule. First films of Costner and Doherty.

**Night Stalker, The** (1972, USA) **C-74m**. \*\*½ D: John Llewellyn Moxey. Starring Darren McGavin, Carol Lynley, Simon Oakland, Ralph Meeker, Claude Akins, Charles McGraw, Elisha Cook Jr., Barry Atwater. Made-for-TV chiller about manhunt for a killer in modern-day Las Vegas, who drains his victims of their blood. McGavin plays a reporter who believes the night stalker to be a vampire. Highly regarded thriller isn't very imaginative and McGavin hardly likable (a major drawback in my opinion) but suspenseful and Atwater's villain quite menacing. Director Moxey is a veteran TV director, whose first feature, *THE CITY OF THE DEAD* (1960) has a similar theme. Written by Richard Matheson.

**Night Terrors** (1993, USA/CDN/EGY) **C-86m**. \*\* D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Robert Englund, Zoe Trilling, Alona Kimhi, Juliano Mer, Chandra West, William Finley, Zach Noy. Not-bad horror thriller about young Trilling, who has come to visit her busy father, an archaeologist, in Egypt. Soon she is drawn into a mystical circle that is led by Englund, a direct descendant of the Marquis de Sade. Quite atmospheric, enigmatic, but also nonsensical; its B-origins show too soon. Also available in a 98m. version. Alternative titles: *TOBE HOOPER'S NIGHT TERRORS*, *NIGHTMARE*.

**Night Train to Lisbon** (2013, GER/SUI/POR) **C-111m**. \*\*\* D: Bille August. Starring Jeremy Irons, Mélanie Laurent, Jack Huston, Martina Gedeck, Tom Courtenay, August Diehl, Bruno Ganz, Lena Olin, Christopher Lee, Charlotte Rampling. Twenty years after *THE HOUSE OF SPIRITS* comes another decade-spanning drama framed by a story about Swiss lecturer Irons, who saves a girl from throwing herself off a bridge and becomes intrigued by a book he finds in her left-behind coat. He also finds and uses a night train ticket to Lisbon. In the historical old town he tries to find the author and discovers a story about a doctor, who played a prominent role in the civil war resistance. Not much narrative momentum, but scenery, acting by a most remarkable cast make it worthwhile. It also improves in the second half. Still, don't expect a mystery/romance/thriller, as the IMDb suggests, it's not Hitchcockian in any way, but a thoughtful, philosophical drama. Based on the novel by Pascal Mercier.

**Night Visions** (1990, USA) **C-94m**. \*\* D: Wes Craven. Starring James Remar, Loryn Locklin, Penny Johnson, Francis X. McCarthy. Hardly exciting thriller made for television about a frustrated cop, who must team up with (and here is where the novelty comes in) sort-of schizophrenic psychologist(!) Locklin, in order to solve the case of a serial killer. Ordinary plot, okay for TV. This was a pilot for a series that never materialised. Craven also cowrote the script, this is a disappointment considering he made *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS* after this. Also known as *CHAMELEON BLUE*.

**Night Walker, The** (1964, USA) **B&W-86m**. \*\*\* D: William Castle. Starring Robert Taylor, Barbara Stanwyck, Judith Meredith, Hayden Rorke, Lloyd Bochner. Nicely suspenseful mystery thriller about Stanwyck, whose blind, jealous husband Rorke suspects her of adultery. Then one night he dies in an accidental explosion. Stanwyck then starts having nightmares about him and the mysterious title character. Script by Robert Bloch will keep

you guessing. Well-worth watching. Stanwyck's last theatrical film. Castle also produced. Also known as THE DREAM KILLER.

**Nihon Chinbotsu** (2005, JAP) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Shinji Higuchi. Starring Tsuyoshi Kusanagi, Kou Shibasaki, Etsushi Toyokawa, Mao Daichi, Mitsuhiro Oikawa. Big-scale remake of the Japanese disaster epic NIPPON JINBOTSU (1973) is well-made and thrilling. Scientists find out that part of the Earth's crust near Japan is about to sink below another, which will result in a complete sinking of the Japanese islands within three years. Can this be stopped at all? Competently filmed and scored, with welcome drama in the plot, and the effects are astounding, of course. English title: THE SINKING OF JAPAN.

**Nikki, Wild Dog of the North** (1961, USA) **C-74m. \*\*\*½** D: Jack Couffer, Don Haldane. Starring Jean Coutu, Emile Genest, Don Haldane, narrated by Jacques Fauteux. Disney adventure about a wolf-dog, who gets separated from his owner and must try to fend for himself in Canadian wilderness. Rather similar to the Jack London adaptations, if based on a novel by James Oliver Curwood. An okay family movie that becomes quite dramatic towards the end. Beautiful scenery compensates for somewhat familiar storyline (it is based on a novel by James Oliver Curwood, not Jack London).

**Nil By Mouth** (1997, GBR) **C-134m. \*\*\*** D: Gary Oldman. Starring Ray Winstone, Kathy Burke, Charlie Creed-Miles, Laila Morse, Edna Dore, Chrissie Coterill, Jon Morrison. Oldman's directing debut is an unrelenting drama about a working-class family in South London and their affiliation to alcohol, drugs and violence, realistically presented and sometimes really hard to watch. At the center of the plot is the alienated couple Winstone and Burke. Uncomfortable, bleak and ultimately powerful thanks to Oldman's knowing direction, which keeps the viewer as emotionally close to the characters as possible. A difficult but important film of raw power, stunningly acted (if a little overlong). Winner of two Bafta awards and the Best Actress prize at the Cannes film festival for actress Burke.

**Nim's Island** (2008, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mark Levin, Jennifer Flackett. Starring Abigail Breslin, Jodie Foster, Gerard Butler, Michael Carman. Good family adventure about marine biologist Butler, who has set up an existence for himself and his 11-year-old daughter Breslin on a remote island in the South Pacific. When he goes missing after a storm, the girl contacts her favorite adventurer Alex Rover, not knowing that the person behind the character is actually neurotic, agoraphobic writer Foster. The woman makes it her plight to try and save the girl, who doesn't even think she's in trouble. Well-made, well-paced adventure with a satisfying storyline. Excellent score by Patrick Doyle. Based on the novel by Wendy Orr.

**Nina Forever** (2015, GBR) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ben Blaine, Chris Blaine. Starring Fiona O'Shaughnessy, Abigail Hardingham, Cian Barry, David Troughton, Elizabeth Elvin. Weird horror drama about shopgirl Hardingham, who falls in love with coworker Barry. When they make love for the first time, his dead ex O'Shaughnessy appears as a zombie, and continues to haunt them every time they become intimate. Some interesting visuals, narrative experiments, but film takes too long to make its point. It's often merely a sequence of scenes that don't make sense.

**9** (2009, USA/LUX) **C-79m. \*\*\*\*½** D: Shane Acker. Starring (the voices of) Elijah Wood, Martin Landau, Christopher Plummer, Jennifer Connelly, John C. Reilly, Crispin Glover, Alan Oppenheimer. Brilliantly designed, enthralling fantasy horror film about a pint-sized doll, which awakens in a post-apocalyptic wasteland. It seems its maker, a dead scientist, has created it for a reason, which it's about to find out. There are more of its kind and they are afraid of giant robotic war machines that roam the devastated city, having overthrown and wiped out humanity. Well-directed, superbly scored (Deborah Lurie, with themes by Danny Elfman), an exciting adventure, which was expanded from director Acker's 2005 Oscar-

nominated short of the same name. Suffers from a lack of character development much like Focus Features' earlier CORALINE (2009), but explains it away in an intriguing twist near the end. Produced by Timur Bekmambetov and Tim Burton, who leaves a distinct stamp on this movie, which references and echoes a lot of his own films.

**976-EVIL** (1988, USA) **C-105m**. \*½ D: Robert Englund. Starring Stephen Geoffreys, Patrick O'Bryan, Sandy Dennis, Jim Metzler, María Rubell. Poor horror movie, directed by the man who achieved fame as Freddy Kruger in the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET films. Nerd Geoffreys dials satanic helpline and finds himself transformed into a demon. Predictable killings ensue. Poorly acted, badly written, a typical 80s horror movie (if perhaps not as gruesome). Followed by a sequel in 1991.

**Nine Months** (1995, USA) **C-103m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Chris Columbus. Starring Hugh Grant, Julianne Moore, Jeff Goldblum, Tom Arnold, Joan Cusack, Robin Williams. Moore realizes she is pregnant, but her nervous boyfriend Grant isn't at all happy with that. He seeks advice from friend Goldblum. Formulaic comedy, predictable but also quite funny. Williams, appearing near the end, steals the film. Grant is miscast. A remake of the French comedy hit NEUF MOIS.

**Nineteen Eighty-Four** (1984, GBR) **C-110m**. \*\*\*½ D: Michael Radford. Starring John Hurt, Richard Burton, Suzanna Hamilton, Cyril Cusack, Gregor Fisher, James Walker. Outstanding adaptation of George Orwell's classic utopia about post-apocalyptic society which constantly observes its members and keeps their spirits high by reporting about and propagating a war that really doesn't exist. Superbly photographed by Roger Deakins, sensitively handled by writer-director Radford. A must see, fascinating all the way. Next to BRAZIL the best science-fiction film of the decade. Burton's last film. Alternative spelling: 1984.

**Ninja's Deadly Trap** (1985, TIW) **C-88m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Philip Kwok. Starring Yasuaki Kurata, Chiang Sheng, Philip Kwok, Lu Feng. When a group of ninja warriors try to assassinate a Chinese general, he sends his son to an old ninja master for help. The son then teams up with three of the master's students to fend off the assassins. Plot takes second chair to phenomenally choreographed fight scenes (by the director himself). Violent eastern will appeal to martial arts fans. Also known as HERO DEFEATING JAPS(!!!).

**Ninja Thunderbolt** (1985, HGK) **C-86m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Godfrey Ho. Starring Richard Harrison, Don Wong, Tao Wang, Yasuaki Kurata, Barbara Yuen. Worthless actioner about Harrison, who's a ninja, and a stolen jade statuette. Lots of martial arts mayhem, no coherency at all. Fans might want to check out the next-to-last fight, which is quite vicious. Credits list Jackie Chan, but he doesn't appear here. Also shown at 92m. Alternative title: TO CATCH A NINJA.

**Nino de Barro, El** (2007, ARG/SPA) **C-103m**. \*\*\*½ D: Jorge Algora. Starring Maribel Verdú, Daniel Freire, Chete Lera, Abel Ayala, Rolly Serrano. Interesting mystery drama set in 1912 Buenos Aires, where a young boy has frightening visions and is soon confronted with a real serial killer. Sounds much more interesting than it plays out, the pacing is flat and entire film suffers. Worth a look for buffs. English title: THE MUD BOY.

**Nino de la Luna, El** (1989, SPA) **C-115m**. \*\*½ D: Agustí Villaronga. Starring Maribel Martín, Lisa Gerrard, Enrique Saldana, Lucia Bosé, Günter Meisner, David Sust, Jack Birkett. Writer-director Villaronga's follow-up to his brilliant TRAS EL CRISTAL (1986) is ethereal story of a 12-year-old orphan, who is adopted by an organization to study his telekinetic powers. He befriends a woman in the facility, who has been chosen to bear the 'moon child', which the boy believes he is himself. Together they plot an escape to Africa. Art drama is interesting to watch but remains too vague for the most part. English title: THE MOON CHILD.

**Ninth Configuration, The** (1980, USA) **C-115m.** \*\*\*½ D: William Peter Blatty. Starring Stacy Keach, Scott Wilson, Jason Miller, Ed Flanders, Neville Brand, Moses Gunn, George Di Cenzo, Robert Loggia, Tom Atkins, Joe Spinell. Outstanding, fascinating film, based on writer-director Blatty's novel *Twinkle, Twinkle Killer Kane*. Keach plays a psychiatrist assigned to treat inmates of an insane asylum populated by mad vietnam vets. Are they faking? And how "normal" is the new psychiatrist? Brilliantly acted (especially by Wilson), touching psycho drama manages to make valid statements on war, religion, life and death (not to mention insanity). Hilarious and dead-serious at the same time, a real gem, not to be missed. Disturbing bar room fight sequence is usually cut from most prints. Originally 118m., but alternate versions (running as long as 140m.!) may still be in circulation.

**Ninth Gate, The** (1999, FRA/SPA) **C-143m.** \*\*\* D: Roman Polanski. Starring Johnny Depp, Frank Langella, Lena Olin, Emmanuelle Seigner, Barbara Jefford, José López Roderó, James Russo, Tony Amoni, Willy Holt, Maria Ducceschi, Jacques Collard. Supernatural thriller, based on Arturo Pérez Reverte's novel *El Club Dumas*, cowritten by producer/director Polanski. Depp is convincing as an expert on antique books, who is asked by collector Langella to trace the only existing copies of a 17<sup>th</sup> century epic, which the author, a monk, is said to have written in collaboration with none other than Lucifer himself. Only one of the three copies is said to be genuine, and Depp soon finds himself in jeopardy in Europe, since not only Langella is after the books. Superbly crafted, atmospheric chiller does not resort to popular clichés, is well-cast and tops in storytelling. Only flaws: Overlength and a poor finale, that will leave most viewers dissatisfied, because it is very vague. Still, highly interesting and well-made, most warmly recommended to fans of the director (and genre). Also shown in cut versions. French original title: LA NEUVIÈME PORTE. Spanish title: LA NOVENA PUERTA.

**9th Life of Louis Drax, The** (2016, USA/CDN/GBR) **C-108m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Alexandre Aja. Starring Jamie Dornan, Aiden Longworth, Sarah Gadon, Aaron Paul, Oliver Platt, Barbara Hershey. 9-year-old boy with personal issues suffers an accident and falls into a coma. His doctor Dornan learns about his visits to psychologist Platt and more from the boy's seductive mother. The boy dreams vividly during the coma, which mysteriously transfers to the doctor. Can he give him a clue as to what really happened on the day of the accident? Interesting, partly intriguing mystery doesn't fully work but gels nicely at the end. Scripted by Max Minghella, based on the novel by Liz Jensen.

**Ni Pour, Ni Contre (Bien au Contraire)** (2003, FRA) **C-111m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Cédric Klapisch. Starring Marie Gillain, Vincent Elbaz, Simon Abkarian, Dimitri Storage, Zinedine Soualem, Diane Kruger, Cédric Klapisch. Unsuccessful crime drama or character study about a camerawoman, who gets involved with crooks from the Parisian netherworld. First she is asked to film one of their robberies, then she finds she can't leave them anymore. Draggy film must not be seen as a thriller. Has resonances of the director's superior CHACUN CHERCHE SON CHAT (1996), but otherwise this lives up to its title: It's neither good, nor bad. English title: NOT FOR OR AGAINST.

**Nirgendwo in Afrika** (2001, GER) **C-141m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Caroline Link. Starring Juliane Köhler, Regine Zimmermann, Merab Ninidze, Matthias Habich, Kaorline Eckertz, Lea Kurka. During the early days of World War Two, Jewish judge Ninidze manages to get his wife and daughter from Germany to Kenya. The woman soon feels stuck in this nowhere-land, especially since they have lost their wealth and status. Adaptation of Stefan Zweig's novel (by the director herself) is beautiful to look at and quite well-directed but moves at a slow pace and becomes unnecessarily overlong without being compelling or making a point. English title: NOWHERE IN AFRICA.

**Ni Vu, Ni Connu** (1958, FRA) **B&W-88m.** \*\*½ D: Yves Robert. Starring Louis de Funès, Noelle Adam, Moustache, Pierre Mondy, Pierre Stéphane, Robert Vattier, Yves Robert. Montpaillard, the 'calmest village in France', has one big problem, mischief-maker de Funès. The hermit is a poacher, cheater and black market seller. That's why the mayor would rather see him in prison. Then he is really locked up for a crime he didn't commit – and the community realizes what he means to their lives. Uneven comedy has little appeal at the beginning, then improves. Of main interest for an early starring role of the energetic-as-ever de Funès. Based on a play by Alphonse Allais, filmed before in 1923 and 1931. Also known as VIVE MONSIEUR BLAIREAU, and NEITHER SEEN NOR RECOGNIZED.

**Noces Rouges, Les** (1973, FRA/ITA) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Michel Piccoli, Stéphane Audran, Cloilde Joano, Eliana De Santis, Claude Piéplu.. Piccoli and Audran are both cheating on their spouses, in a flashback we are shown the beginnings of their affair. Are they contemplating murder? Nowhere near Chabrol's major achievements, his directorial style is barely visible. Still, easy-to-take, perhaps a thematic introduction to Chabrol's works to newcomers. Costumes by Karl Lagerfeld. English title: WEDDING IN BLOOD.

**Noche de las Gaviotas, La** (1975, SPA) **C-89m.** \*½ D: Amando de Ossorio. Starring Victor Petit, Maria Kosti, Sandra Mazarosky, Julie James, José Antonio Calvo. Fourth and final installment in the horror series about the Templar Knights (the follow-up to EL BUQUE MALDITO) is set in a coastal village, whose inhabitants are sacrificing virgins to the undead. Poorly paced, rather lucidous, all in all the weakest entry in the BLIND DEAD-series. English title: NIGHT OF THE SEAGULLS.

**Noche de los Asesinos, La** (1976, SPA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jess Franco. Starring Alberto Dalbés, Evelyn Scott, William Berger, Maribel Hidalgo, Lina Romay, Jess Franco. Infamous director Jess (Jesus) Franco rips off the Italian giallo and gothic horror film with this Edgar Allan Poe adaptation, which is – admittedly – not bad. After the murder of a count, friends and family are invited to the reading of the will. It turns out that the count's illegitimate daughter is the sole heir, but then a second will turns up and the count's murderer starts stalking the guests. Some surprisingly atmospheric scenes (from a talent-free director), acceptable fare. Score by Carlo Savina. Also known as SUSPIRI and SOSPIRI.

**Noche del Terror Ciego, La** (1971, SPA/POR) **C-100m.** \*½ D: Amando de Ossorio. Starring Lone Fleming, Cesar Burner, Helen Harp, Joseph Thelman, Maria Silva, Juan Cortès, Antonio Orenge. In modern-day Spain, 13<sup>th</sup> century Templar Knights rise from their graves to kill innocent victims in their castle. Some beautiful photography, an eerie score, ... and a truly deadly pace. Film moves as slow as its zombie-like monsters. Notable only in so far as it is regarded as a cult film in some circles and spawned three sequels (starting with EL ATAQUE DE LOS MUERTOS SIN OJOS). Also shown in cut versions, although the film is not very violent. English title: TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD.

**Noche de Walpurgis, La** (1971, SPA/GER) **C-95m.** \*½ D: León Klimovsky. Starring Paul Naschy (=Jacinto Molina), Gaby Fuchs, Barbara Capell, Patty Shepard, Julio Pena. Almost totally inept horror movie, cowritten by Naschy, his fourth appearance as Waldemar Daninsky, a count who turns into a werewolf by night. Two beautiful ladies, stopping by at his castle, accidentally (foolishly) resurrect a vampire lady (a la LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO) which he has to battle. Uneasy combination of vampire and werewolf myths, atrociously acted. Only the score is of note here. Followed by several sequels. Also known as BLOOD MOON, SHADOW OF THE WEREWOLF, THE WEREWOLF VERSUS VAMPIRE WOMEN, THE WEREWOLF'S SHADOW.

**Nochnoy Dozor** (2004, RUS) **C-114m. \*\*½ D:** Timur Bekmambetov. Starring Konstantin Khabensky, Valeri Zolotukhin, Mariya Poroshina, Galina Tyunina, Yuri Kutsenko, Aleksei Chadov, Viktor Verzhbitsky, Mariya Mironova. Centuries ago the forces of good and evil formed a truce. An ancient prophecy says that this delicate balance will be shifted to one side by a special being, who may decide for the evil ones and thrust the world into darkness. Seer Khabensky is one of the night watch men, who can walk in the twilight and protect the world from bloodthirsty vampires. Russian horror blockbuster provides a wild mix of mythologies and horror ideas (not all of them make sense). Flashy and stylish, yet still somewhat sloppy and grungy. For fans of the unusual. Based on the novel by Sergei Lukyanenko. Followed by two sequels. English title: NIGHT WATCH.

**No Country for Old Men** (2007, USA) **C-122m. \*\*½ D:** Joel and Ethan Coen. Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, Josh Brolin, Woody Harrelson, Kelly Macdonald, Garret Dillahunt, Tess Harper, Barry Corbin, Stephen Root, Rodger Boyce. The movie that won the Coens a Best Picture and Best Director(s) Oscar is also a summary of their career. Poacher Brolin is the first to discover the corpses after a botched drug deal in the desert, takes off with \$2 million in cash. Hot on his trail are brutal Mexican killer Bardem, and weary sheriff Jones. Dead-pan, languid adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's novel, never inches away from its defeatist tone. It's peopled with bizarre characters (as is customary with the Coens), and the grotesque dialogues between them is what makes this movie tick. The plot is less original, resorting to chase and stalk too often. The Coens revisit settings and themes of their previous hits: opportunist criminals, trailer parks, shabby hotels/motels, killers straight from hell, tired cops. This will please the filmmakers' fans, but remains a slight pick for a Best Picture Academy Award – maybe a nod to their previous achievements. Almost unnoticeable score by Carter Burwell, good cinematography by Roger Deakins.

**No-Do** (2009, SPA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Elio Quiroga. Starring Ana Torrent, Francisco Boira, Héctor Colomé. A troubled ER nurse takes a break from her job after finding it still difficult to cope with the death of her baby several years ago. So she moves with her family, her husband, daughter and baby into a house in the country. It used to be a school for priests, and soon there are strange manifestations and hauntings driving her to the brink of madness. Can a priest shed light on the mystery? Story drags a little occasionally, but this mystery horror is atmospheric and stylishly made. Aka THE HAUNTING.

**No Escape** (2015, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Erick Dowdle. Starring Owen Wilson, Lake Bell, Pierce Brosnan, Sahajak Boonthanakit. Crackling thriller set in Thailand, where engineer Wilson has brought his family to start a new job for a water company. Soon after their arrival the Prime Minister is assassinated and an angry mob start attacking and killing all foreigners. With their hotel under siege, Wilson must try and bring his wife and little daughters to safety. Violent, pulse-pounding thriller is mostly edge-of-your-seat entertainment. At times it plays like a (terrific) disaster thriller. Well-directed by Dowdle (AS ABOVE, SO BELOW), who also scripted with his brother Drew. Fine performances, especially by Brosnan in a very interesting role as a fellow hotel guest.

**Non Aver Paura della Zia Marta** (1988, ITA) **C-88m. BOMB D:** Mario Bianchi. Starring Adriana Russo, Gabriele Tinti, Anna Maria Placido, Jessica Moore, Maurice Poli. Amateurish, terrible horror movie about a family of four, who travel to the countryside to visit their aunt (the title character), but never meet her. Instead they meet her strange caretaker (Poli). Totally unconvincing, almost laughable. Some gory effects. Supervised by Lucio Fulci. English title: THE MURDER SECRET.

**Non Es Nada, Mamá, ... Solo un Juego** (1974, SPA/VEN) **C-86m. \*\* D:** José Maria Forqué. Starring David Hemmings, Alida Valli, Francisco Rabal, Andrea Rau, Nuria Gimeno.

Interesting curio that doesn't live up to its intriguing premise: Neurotic, sadistic Hemmings lives with his domineering mother Valli on a South American plantation. She provides him with lovers from the populace, who are abused and killed after some time. This bizarre behavior stems from a traumatic childhood experience. Unfortunately, plot isn't very involving. Worth a look for buffs. Photographed by Alejandro Ulloa. Also known as BEYOND EROTICA, LOLA, and IT'S NOTHING, ONLY A GAME.

**Nonhosonno** (2001, ITA) **C-117m.** **\*\*½ D:** Dario Argento. Starring Max von Sydow, Stefano Diosini, Chiara Caselli, Rossella Falk, Paolo Maria Scalondro, Roberto Zibetti, Gabriele Lavia. An aging, retired detective (von Sydow) is faced with murders awfully similar to those that happened 17 years ago, when a dwarf killer sliced up women, following the pattern of a nursery rhyme. The dwarf is said to be dead – has he returned from his grave? Von Sydow finds his fading memory a hard challenge. Horror thriller starts furiously, then bogs down, as Argento (cowriter) includes too many “realistic” scenes to make this atmospheric enough. Excellent soundtrack by Goblin, with terrific subliminal sound effects, ultra-gory special effects by Sergio Stivaletti. Not entirely successful but interesting, especially for Argentophiles, who will have fun spotting the director's trademarks. Argento actually copied von Sydow's role from the giallo LA RAGAZZA DAL PIGIAMA GIALLO (1977). Trivia: Asia Argento, the filmmaker's daughter composed the nursery rhyme; a picture of her as a child appears briefly next to a newspaper article about the original murders. English titles: I CAN'T SLEEP and SLEEPLESS.

**Non Si Deve Profanare il Sonno dei Morti** (1974, ITA/SPA) **C-93m.** **\*\* D:** Jorge Grau. Starring Cristina Galbó, Ray Lovelock, Arthur Kennedy, Aldo Massasso, Giorgio Trestini. Italo-Spanish zombie-horror movie (a minor cult classic) set in England about Galbó and Lovelock, two twens who meet by chance and must deal with an army of zombies in a rural village, raised by a radiation machine from the Department of Agriculture. Director Grau adapts George A. Romero's eco-disaster formula and pessimistic world-view from the classic NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) but adds hardly any excitement or thrills. Plot is relatively ambitious for a zombie movie of the 1970s, and score and eerie sound effects (by Giuliano Sorgini) make it an okay view for fans. Also known as LET THE SLEEPING CORPSES LIE, THE LIVING DEAD AT THE MANCHESTER MORGUE and DON'T OPEN THE WINDOW (to state a few).

**Non Si Servizio un Paperino** (1972, ITA) **C-102m.** **SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Florinda Bolkan, Barbara Bouchet, Tomas Milian, Irene Papas, Marc Porel, Georges Wilson. A child murderer terrorizes a small village in Sicily. As the police are incapable of finding the culprit, the villagers apply their own laws. However, there are at least three suspects. Fulci's last giallo is highly regarded by most of his admirers but dramatically uneven and poorly paced. The forceful direction almost camouflages these flaws and the acting (especially Bouchet's) is not bad either. Well-worth a look, despite ultimately unpleasant subject matter. Score by Riz Ortolani. English title: DON'T TORTURE A DUCKLING.

**Non-Stop** (2014, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-106m.** **SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jaume Collet-Serra. Starring Liam Neeson, Julianne Moore, Scoot McNairy, Michelle Dockery, Nate Parker, Lupita Nyong'o, Linus Roache. Neeson brings credibility to his role as a troubled air marshal, who boards a trans-atlantic flight to London, during which he receives mysterious text messages (from *within* the plane!) asking \$150 million from the airline or else a passenger will die every 20 minutes. Straight-forward thriller is essentially a whodunit, contrived to some degree, but suspenseful and exciting, kudos to Neeson, who brings success to this formula like he did in the TAKEN movies.

**No Reservations** (2007, USA/AUS) **C-104m.** **SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Scott Hicks. Starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, Aaron Eckhart, Abigail Breslin, Patricia Clarkson, Jenny Wade, Bob Balaban.

Pleasant-enough romantic comedy about career-oriented chef Zeta-Jones, whose life spins out of control when her sister dies in a car accident, leaving behind her 9-year-old niece Breslin. At work, she finds competition in unconventional rival – or potential love interest? – Eckhart. Predictable stuff, but the stars are good. Score by Philip Glass.

**Normal Life** (1996, USA) **C-102m**. \*\*\*½ D: John McNaughton. Starring Ashley Judd, Luke Perry, Bruce A. Young, Jim True, Edmund Wyson. Crime drama from the maker of *HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER* (1990) and not that dissimilar from the cult classic. Perry plays a conservative policeman who falls in love with psychotic Judd and tries to make their relationship (and later matrimony) work – at all costs. Judd gives a brave performance as a self-destructive, ultimately sad woman, but film is unpleasant and downbeat. Based on a true story.

**Nosferatu** (1922, GER) **97m**. \*\*\* D: F. W. Murnau. Starring Max Schreck, Alexander Granach, Gustav von Wangenheim, Greta Schroeder. One of the first film versions of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is a classic itself, with creepy lighting and eerie sets. Schreck's *Nosferatu* is probably the scariest monster in film history. A must for film historians, horror fans and *Dracula* cultists. 97m. version restored in 1988, unfortunately with an electronic music score, which doesn't fit at all. Released in the U.S. at 84m.

**Nosferatu a Venezia** (1987, ITA) **C-93m**. \*½ D: Augusto Caminito. Starring Klaus Kinski, Barbara de Rossi, Christopher Plummer, Yorgo Voyagis, Donald Pleasence. Very weak reworking of the *Nosferatu* legend with Kinski reprising his role from Werner Herzog's classic *NOSFERATU: PHANTOM DER NACHT*. This time the vampire is roaming Venice - for reasons known to the filmmakers only. Good cast is wasted, Kinski most unconvincing in one of his last films. Trash value cannot be denied, however. Fast-Forward-Factor is high in this slowly paced, pretentious horror film. Bombastic opera score is based on a Vangelis album. Director Caminito cowrote the screenplay for the good spaghetti western *OGNUNO PER SE* in 1967; he should have refrained from directing this dud. English title: *VAMPIRES IN VENICE*.

**Nosferatu: Phantom der Nacht** (1979, GER/FRA) **C-107m**. \*\*\*½ D: Werner Herzog. Starring Klaus Kinski, Isabelle Adjani, Bruno Ganz, Roland Topor, Walter Ladengast. Beautiful rendition of the classic Bram Stoker novel with Kinski a formidable Count *Dracula* and Adjani an enchanting Lucy. Low-key, slowly paced but magically shot and directed, if not the best, certainly the most melancholy and moody *Dracula* version. Highly recommended. Kinski returned as *Dracula* in the 1987 horror movie *NOSFERATU A VENEZIA*. English version, titled *NOSFERATU THE VAMPYRE*, runs 96m.

**Nostalghia** (1983, ITA/RUS) **C/B&W-125m**. \*\*\*½ D: Andrei Tarkovsky. Starring Oleg Yankovskiy, Erland Josephson, Domiziana Giordano, Milena Vukotic. Russian master director Tarkovsky's next-to-last film was produced in Italy. The plot, which unfolds slowly, remains fragmented and symbolical. A Russian poet is doing research on an 18th century Russian composer, who spent time in an Italian spa village. Then he meets a local madman, who once kept his family locked up for seven years. There's an interpreter accompanying the poet, but she soon becomes frustrated by his indulgences. Hypnotic cinematic poem on decay, frustration, and nostalgia. Not easy to access, but worth it. Masterfully directed and shot, with emphasis on spatial depth, has many striking images. Lars von Trier paid tribute to this in his 2011 movie *MELANCHOLIA*.

**Nosutoradamusu no Daiyogen** (1974, JAP) **C-114m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Toshio Masuda. Starring Tetsurô Tanba, Toshio Kurosawa, Kaoru Yumi, Yôko Tsukasa. Infamous disaster movie from Japan deals with the end of the world, brought about by mankind's irresponsible behaviour and destruction of nature. Scenes of environmental disasters and mutations are framed by story of professor and his family, who are in possession of the famous book by Nostradamus.

Serious and fairly well-made, but talky and overlong, film is most interesting as a curio. The production company Toho was heavily criticized for showing victims of radiation (Hiroshima!), which led them to pull it from the market. Some truncated versions were released in the U.S. and Europe. Original 114m. edit is almost impossible to obtain. It's surprising how timely this subject matter still is. In a way this movie predicted the Fukushima disaster! English titles: THE PROPHECIES OF NOSTRADAMUS, THE LAST DAYS OF PLANET EARTH, and CATASTROPHE 1999.

**Not Another Teen Movie** (2001, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Joel Gallen. Starring Chyler Leigh, Chris Evans, Jaime Pressly, Eric Christian Olsen, Mia Kirshner, Paul Gleason, Mr T, Molly Ringwald, Randy Quaid, Melissa Joan Hart, Sean Patrick Thomas. Amusing spoof of teenager comedies a la SHE'S ALL THAT and AMERICAN PIE or even earlier ones like BREAKFAST CLUB. Plot is a combination of themes from these films, and the gags that are added are sometimes silly, sometimes funny. An okay view, but nothing the world really needed. Many cameos by stars from 80s teen movies make it fun for buffs.

**Notebook, The** (2004, USA) **C-123m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Nick Cassavetes. Starring Ryan Gosling, Rachel McAdams, James Garner, Gena Rowlands, Sam Shepard, Joan Allen, James Marsden. Romantic drama based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks about Garner, who reads a story to Rowlands in a nursing home. The tale is about a love affair in the 1940s between Gosling and McAdams, who are from different social backgrounds. Can they find true love and happiness? The romance may be sappy at times, but it's extremely well acted and touching. Recommended.

**Notes on a Scandal** (2006, GBR) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Richard Eyre. Starring Judi Dench, Cate Blanchett, Bill Nighy, Andrew Simpson, Juno Temple. Fine drama about elderly school teacher Dench, who befriends new colleague Blanchett and takes her under her wing. The wife and mother of two then makes the mistake of commencing an affair with a 15-year-old student. When Dench finds out, her true intentions surface. Intelligent character-driven drama based on a novel by Zoe Heller has some powerful moments and offers two exceptional roles for two exceptional actresses. Excellent score by Phillip Glass is omnipresent and improves film's pace and dramatic impact. Photographed by Chris Menges.

**Nothing to Lose** (1997, USA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Steve Oedekerk. Starring Tim Robbins, Martin Lawrence, John C. McGinley, Giancarlo Esposito, Kelly Preston, Steve Oedekerk. Formulaic, contrived buddy movie about business exec Robbins, who one day finds his wife in bed with his boss and then sets out to drive anywhere. Just then small-time crook Lawrence tries to rob him. Together they take it on the lam. Some funny one-liners, okay performances, a typical Hollywood serving. Written by the director.

**Notte al Cimitero, Una** (1987, ITA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Lamberto Bava. Starring Beatrice Ring, Lino Salemme, Lea Martino, Gianmarco Tognazzi, Karl Zinny, Lamberto Bava. Fair horror film about a group of teenagers, who get lost in the woods and stumble into a strange tavern, whose landlord has a creepy wager for them. Quite atmospheric chiller with good make-up and effects is less gruesome than Bava's DEMONI films (if as stupid in terms of plot). Watchable for genre fans, but don't expect this to be a splatter movie. Simon Boswell's score provides the touch of fantasy needed for this to work. Made for television. International title: GRAVEYARD DISTURBANCE.

**Notte Che Evelyn Uscì dalla Tomba, La** (1971, ITA) **C-82m.** \*\*½ D: Emilio P. Miraglia. Starring Anthony Steffen, Erika Blanc, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. Marina Malfatti, Rod Murdock. Wealthy Londoner (Steffen) is haunted by visions of his dead wife and intends to get over the loss by luring beautiful women to his castle and killing them in a rage. While his deceased bride's

brother is blackmailing him for this, Steffen's brother, a psychiatrist, is treating him for possible insanity. Interesting mix of giallo and gothic elements (in contemporary setting) should make this worthwhile for genre buffs, but direction is too conventional, too static. Good score by Bruno Nicolai. Other versions reportedly run 88m., 95m., 96m. or even 103m.! Also known as THE NIGHT EVELYN CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE.

**Notti dei Diavoli, La** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Giorgio Ferroni. Starring Gianni Garko, Agostina Belli, Mark Roberts (=Roberto Maldera), Cinzia De Carolis, Teresa Gimpera, Bill Vanders, Umberto Raho, John Bartha, Tom Felleghy. Atmospheric horror chiller based on the same A. Tolstoi story as the Vurdalak segment in Mario Bava's I TRE VOLTI DELLA PAURA (1963). In fact, direction rivals Bava's gothic style in this tale of tourist Garko, who stumbles upon small village in rural Yugoslavia whose residents are afraid of something, especially at night. Not everything gels in the movie, but it's fairly creepy, also because of low budget, and Garko gives one of his best performances. Grisly effects by Carlo Rambaldi. Good score by Giorgio Gaslini. English title: NIGHT OF THE DEVILS.

**Notti del Terrore, Le** (1980, ITA) **C-84m.** D: Andrea Bianchi. Starring Maria Angela Giordan, Gianluigi Chirizzi, Karin Well. No plot, just a premise: Several people go to a house in the country and soon find themselves under attack by the living dead. Disgusting, stomach-churning splatter film is almost depressing in its nihilism. Alternative titles: ZOMBI 3, which identifies it as a Romero rip-off and BURIAL GROUND, which is the film's American release title of 1985.

**Notti Erotiche dei Morti Viventi, Le** (1980, ITA) **C-112m.** D: Joe D'Amato. Starring George Eastman, Laura Gemser, Dirce Funari, Mark Shannon, Lucia Ramirez. One of the 'crimes' that director D'Amato committed together with star (and writer) Eastman: A mixture between hard-core sex and zombie movie, absolutely mindless and scriptless, at a preposterous running time with amateur actors (and that includes Eastman and Gemser). If you liked this, check out PORNO HOLOCAUST. English titles: EROTIC NIGHTS OF THE LIVING DEAD, NITE OF THE ZOMBIES, QUEEN OF THE ZOMBIES, SEXY NIGHTS OF THE LIVING DEAD.

**Notting Hill** (1999, USA/GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Roger Michell. Starring Julia Roberts, Hugh Grant, Rhys Ifans, Richard McCabe, Hugh Bonneville, James Dreyfus, Emma Chambers, William Baldwin, Matthew Modine. Lightweight, predictable romantic comedy about a smashing Hollywood star (Roberts), who falls in love with a shy British bookseller (Grant) and begins a romance despite knowing that such a fling does not have a future. It goes without saying that he is head over heels in love. Tacked-on happy ending deprives this pleasant-enough film of any point. The supporting characters, Grant's ordinary relatives, are much more interesting than Roberts' character and film's overlength is preposterous. Rhys Ifans, as Grant's chaotic roommate has the funniest bits, but otherwise this is (slightly below) standard.

**Nous Irons à Deauville** (1962, FRA) **B&W-81m. \*\*½** D: Francis Rigaud. Starring Michel Serrault, Louis de Funès, Claude Brasseur, Pascale Roberts, Colette Castel, Jean Carmet, Sacha Distel, Michel Galabru. A 'Who's Who' of French comedy in rather mild satire about several people on holiday in French seaside resort of Deauville: Family man Serrault, energetic rival de Funès, ladykiller Brasseur and their wives. Not very funny, but an okay view. De Funès has the funniest bits, again. Eddie Constantine has a cameo alongside a girl who looks like Eva or Zsa Zsa Gabor. English title: WE WILL GO TO DEAUVILLE, or rather LET'S GO TO DEAUVILLE.

**Nous Ne Vieillirons Pas Ensemble** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-106m.** D: Maurice Pialat. Starring Marlène Jobert, Jean Yanne, Christine Fabréga, Patricia Perangeli, Jacques Galland, Maurice Risch. Dreary drama about cameraman Yanne and his lover Jobert, who quarrel, break up

and make up throughout this movie. Every-day situations between lovers are frustratingly drawn out and nothing, absolutely nothing is made interesting here. Reminiscent of some boring Liz Taylor dramas of the 1970s, only without the glamour. Written by the director, based on his novel. Photography by the great Luciano Tovoli is as bland as the rest of the film. Still, this won Yanne the Best Actor prize in Cannes! English titles: BREAK-UP, WE WON'T GROW OLD TOGETHER.

**99 Mujeres** (1969, SPA/GER/ITA/GBR/LIE) **C-82m.** \*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring Maria Schell, Herbert Lom, Mercedes McCambridge, Luciana Paluzzi, Maria Rohm, Rosalba Neri, Elisa Montés, Jess Franco. Unusually good cast in typically shoddy Franco production. Schell investigates on a prison island, where Lom and McCambridge are running a correctional facility for young women. There are 99 prisoners in total. Tedious, sloppily made, semi-serious w.i.p. movie without any nudity. Score by Bruno Nicolai, edited by Bruno Mattei, who also directed some hardcore inserts for the French version (which runs 86m.). Also known as DER HEISSE TOD (THE HOT DEATH), 99 WOMEN, ISLE OF LOST WOMEN, PROSTITUTES IN PRISON, ISLAND OF DESPAIR.

**99.9** (1997, SPA) **C-106m.** \*\*\* D: Agustí Villaronga. Starring María Barranco, Terele Pávez, Ruth Gabriel, Angel de Andrés López, Gustavo Salmerón, Juan Márquez, Simón Andreu. Powerful mystery by the director of the fascinating TRAS EL CRISTAL (1987). A radio show host, specializing in debunking paranormal phenomena, is shocked to hear of her estranged lover's death. He had been experimenting with recording thoughts and dreams. When a mysterious package with some of his belongings (among them a videotape) arrives on her doorstep, she is compelled to go investigate in the small rural community where he died. It turns out that one of the huts there is said to be haunted, and there's a madwoman in an asylum nearby who tells of eerie faces. Horror mystery is a bit difficult to access, but it's well-directed, well-photographed (by Javier Aguirresarobe) and has an excellent, unsettling score (by Javier Navarrete). This little-known gem might improve with multiple viewings. English title: THE FREQUENCY OF TERROR.

**Novia Ensangrentada, La** (1972, SPA) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Vicente Aranda. Starring Simón Andreu, Maribel Martín, Alexandra Bastedo, Dean Selmier. Fairly atmospheric adaptation of the Sheridan LeFanu novel *Carmilla*. Newly-wed couple Andreu and Martín celebrate their honeymoon, when she becomes increasingly disgusted by his fantasies. She has visions of a mysterious woman, who forces her to commit acts of violence. Psycho horror drama with elements of vampirism and lesbianism. If that last sentence sold it for you, you will tolerate the film's slightly draggy pace. Beware 83m. version called TIL DEATH DO US PART. Also known as THE BLOODY FIANCEE, BLOOD CASTLE, and most commonly THE BLOOD SPATTERED BRIDE.

**No Way to Treat a Lady** (1968, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*\*½ D: Jack Smight. Starring Rod Steiger, George Segal, Lee Remick, Eileen Heckart, Murray Hamilton. Superb thriller, based on a novel by William Goldman (MARATHON MAN, DREAMCATCHER). Steiger excels in role of psychotic strangler, who terrifies the Manhattan neighborhood. Cop Segal is assigned to this case and a cat and mouse game begins. Remick is Segal's love interest and possible next victim. Well-directed, superbly paced, a first-rate novel adaptation (by John Gay) that effortlessly includes humoristic, romantic, suspenseful elements in the plot. Quite possibly also an influence on the Italian giallo.

**Now You See Me** (2013, USA/FRA) **C-125m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Louis Leterrier. Starring Jesse Eisenberg, Mark Ruffalo, Woody Harrelson, Isla Fisher, Dave Franco, Mélanie Laurent, Morgan Freeman, Michael Caine, Michael J. Kelly. Fast-paced thriller about four magicians, who call themselves the 'Four Horsemen'. During their shows they perform daring heists, all

the while Freeman is trying to debunk them. Even the FBI (agent Ruffalo) is baffled by their deeds. Plot is not consistent, but entertainment and star value is high, the score by Brian Tyler is excellent.

**Noz w Wodzie** (1962, POL) **94m.** \*\*\*½ D: Roman Polanski. Starring Leon Niemczyk, Jolanta Umecka, Zygmunt Malanovics. Brilliant feature film debut of Roman Polanski, who had appeared previously in minor productions as an actor only. A couple who is plagued by marital woes, takes a young hitchhiker with them on a sailing trip, which leads to conflicts aboard the ship. Subtle script (co-written by Polanski) is perhaps *toosubtle*, but storytelling will give you more than enough time to ponder about the going-ons. Unusual drama rightly established Polanski as a first-rate director. English title: KNIFE IN THE WATER.

**Nuda Per Satana** (1974, ITA) **C-81m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Paolo Solvay (=Luigi Batzella). Starring Rita Calderoni, Stelio Candelli, James Harris, Renato Lupi. Rather silly and pretentious gothic horror film about a man who seeks help in a nearby castle, when a woman is injured in a car accident. Everyone then starts behaving strangely, and everything becomes surreal. Cheap, almost ridiculous film with a terrible lead actor. Calderoni's body is the only reason to watch this. Some versions include adult scenes. English title: NUDE FOR SATAN.

**Nude per l'Assassino** (1975, ITA) **C-93m.** SCOPE \*\* D: Andrea Bianchi. Starring Edwige Fenech, Nino Castelnuovo, Femi Benussi, Solvi Stubing. Giallo set in the world of photographing and fashion models. A leather-clad killer is knocking off related people; it seems they are all on the same photo. Photographer Castelnuovo and model Fenech try to crack the case. Poorly conceived, hardly suspenseful thriller contains the usual giallo ingredients but fails to excite, despite ravishing Audrey Hepburn-ish Fenech and good score by Berto Pisano. Below par for this cult genre. Photographed by Franco Delli Colli. English title: STRIP NUDE FOR YOUR KILLER.

**Nude... Si Muore** (1967, ITA/USA) **C-97m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Mark Damon, Eleonora Brown, Michael Rennie, Sally Smith, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi). Quite enjoyable whodunit, a typical early giallo. At an exclusive school for girls, the arrival of a new teacher coincides with the beginning of a murder series. Inspector Rennie to the rescue! Colorful sets, nicely plotted, almost good. For fans of the genre (although this is more of the old-fashioned type). Mario Bava cowrote the story. Quite elaborate score by Carlo Savina. In Germany this was released in black-and-white. English titles: THE SCHOOL GIRL KILLER, THE YOUNG, THE EVIL & THE SAVAGE. Also known as SETTE VERGINI PER IL DIAVOLO (SIEBEN JUNGFRAUEN FÜR DEN TEUFEL).

**Nuit d'Or** (1976, FRA/GER) **C-81m.** \*\*\* D: Serge Moati. Starring Klaus Kinski, Bernard Blier, Marie Dubois, Jean-Luc Bideau, Charles Vanel, Anny Duperey, Elisabeth Flickenschildt, Raymond Bussieres, Valerie Pascale, Maurice Ronet. Disturbing psycho-drama about madman Kinski, who was thought dead by his family and now wants to get his revenge on them. Uneasy, surreal atmosphere created by fine direction and photography (by André Neau). A little vague plotwise, but well-acted and fascinating all the way. Originally 95m., edited for television showings. Cowritten by the director.

**Numb** (2003, USA) **C-77m.** \*½ D: Michael Ferris Gibson. Starring Jennifer West Savitch, Dominik Overstreet, Anne Goldmann, Peter Abraham, John Randolph. Low-budget sci-fi independent feature about a young woman, who sets out to find her father in a drug-controlled world. Alternating grainy color sequences and black-and-white scenes adds up to very little. You can feel it wants to be meaningful, but ends up being pretentious instead.

**Number 23, The** (2007, USA/GER) **C-101m.** SCOPE \*\*\* D: Joel Schumacher. Starring Jim Carrey, Virginia Madsen, Logan Lerman, Danny Huston, Lynn Collins, Rhona Mitra, Michelle Arthur, Mark Pellegrino. Intriguing mystery thriller about family father Carrey, a dog catcher,

whose wife Madsen gives him a book for his birthday. The book's main character turns out to be like his alter ego, and soon he is obsessed with the number 23 that seems to be everywhere. A bit convoluted tale but fascinating and stylishly done by director Schumacher, well-acted, too. Written by Fernley Phillips.

**Nurse** (2013, USA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Douglas Aarniokoski. Starring Paz de la Huerta, Katrina Bowden, Judd Nelson, Kathleen Turner, Martin Donovan, Michael Eklund. Corny B-movie thriller about the title character (super-hot Huerta), who punishes cheating husbands in most cruel ways. She also tries to seduce sexy colleague Bowden, who's troubled by her cheating stepfather. Guess who has a solution to the problem! Pretty crazy, extremely sexy thriller with some over-the-top gore. If that sold it for you, you might be ready to overlook the trashy plot. A guilty pleasure. Also known as NURSE 3-D.

**Nurse Betty** (2000, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Neil LaBute. Starring Morgan Freeman, Renée Zellweger, Chris Rock, Greg Kinnear, Aaron Eckhart, Tia Texada, Crispin Glover. Offensively strange comedy/thriller drama about naïve waitress, who is traumatized when her husband is killed by Freeman and Rock, and dreams herself into her favorite soap opera. She goes on to track down the TV show's star (Kinnear), always being pursued by the killers. Wildly plotted, off-beat drama is unpleasant, even pointless (if you think about it) and not terribly entertaining. A matter of taste. Some found this brilliant.

**Nutcracker Fantasy** (1979, JAP/USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Takeo Nakamura. Starring (the voices of) Christopher Lee, Jack Angel, Eva Gabor, Melissa Gilbert, Roddy McDowall, Dick Van Patten. Adaptation of the E.T.A. Hoffmann fairy tale about a little girl who lives with her uncle and aunt, both of whom believe in the Ragman, who turns children into mice if they are not in bed by nightfall. And indeed, she meets the queen of mice and enters a magical land through her uncle's clock. Interesting fantasy with music by Tchaikovsky, plot is slightly unfocused, though. Stop-motion animation with puppets is okay. Mainly for Christopher Lee fans, as the man sings here!

**Nutty Professor, The** (1963, USA) **C-107m. \*\*\* D:** Jerry Lewis. Starring Jerry Lewis, Stella Stevens, Del Moore, Kathleen Freeman, Milton Frome, Buddy Lester, Henry Gibson, Richard Kiel. Another Lewis one-man-show: Jerry plays a nerdish chemistry professor, who one day decides to change his appearance and behavior and does so by inventing a potion. This results in a temporary change a la Jekyll & Hyde. Unusually subtle humor makes this one of Lewis' most mature films. Remade in 1996. A title at one time was DR. JERKYLL AND MR. HYDE.

**Nymphomaniac: Vol. I** (2013, DEN/GER/BEL/GBR/FRA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lars von Trier. Starring Charlotte Gainsbourg, Stellan Skarsgard, Stacy Martin, Shia LaBeouf, Christian Slater, Uma Thurman, Willem Dafoe, Jean-Marc Barr, Udo Kier. Controversial sex drama about title character Gainsbourg, who is taken in by Skarsgard after he finds her lying injured in the streets at night. She begins to relate her story, how she grew up and her obsession with sex. In the frame narrative, the two begin a philosophical discussion. Sexually explicit psycho drama about masochism and obsession is interesting to watch but never becomes compelling. Ultimately it could even be considered downbeat and depressing. Skarsgard's character remains a mystery, his polished English and audible accent are not compatible, and the credibility of the entire frame situation suffers. The performances are good. Director's cut runs 145m. Immediately followed by NYMPHOMANIAC VOL.2 (2013). The title was also spelled NYMPH()MANIAC. Written by the director.

**Nymphomaniac: Vol. II** (2013, DEN/GER/BEL/GBR/FRA/SWE) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lars von Trier. Starring Charlotte Gainsbourg, Stellan Skarsgard, Stacy Martin, Shia LaBeouf, Christian Slater, Jamie Bell, Uma Thurman, Willem Dafoe, Jean-Marc Barr, Udo Kier.

Continuation of VOL. I (both films were originally conceived as one long movie) starts with Skarsgard revealing that he is a virgin – the opposite of Gainsbourg. Their discussion remains highly philosophical, and in flashbacks we learn more about Gainsbourg's erotic (mis-)adventures. Frame story still feels fabricated, you wait in vain for the movie to become compelling. Von Trier's psychological examination is valid. Uncut version runs 180m., which makes the director's cut version of the entire story more than 5 hours long. The hardcore sex scenes were not performed by the credited actors, stunt doubles were digitally inserted.

**Object of My Affection, The** (1998, USA) **C-112m. \*\*\*½ D:** Nicholas Hytner. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Paul Rudd, Alan Alda, Nigel Hawthorne, John Pankow, Tim Daly, Allison Janney, Steve Zahn. Touching, warm and real romantic comedy about young woman, who takes a gay roommate who has just been left by his lover. Her boyfriend is not happy, and things begin to get more complicated when she discovers that she is pregnant ..... but in love with her roommate! Quick pace makes some decisions made by the main characters seem a little rash, but film is wonderfully acted by the entire cast. A compelling look at 1990s mores, based on the novel by Stephen McCauley.

**Oblivion** (2013, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joseph Kosinski. Starring Tom Cruise, Morgan Freeman, Olga Kurylenko, Andrea Riseborough, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Melissa Leo, Zoe Bell. Complicated but impressive science-fiction set sixty years in the future. The Earth has been devastated by aliens, and the remaining humans have withdrawn to a space station and the Saturn moon Titan. Cruise plays a repairman, who guards the extraction of raw materials on the planet. Then his world is shaken by inexplicable events that question everything he knows about himself. Seems long and contrived in some parts, but design is magnificent and the action scenes exciting. Touches upon some existentialist questions and references some sci-fi classics, but remains too mainstream to be in the cult movie realm.

**O Brother, Where Art Thou?** (2000, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joel Coen. Starring George Clooney, John Turturro, Tim Blake Nelson, Charles Durning, John Goodman, Michael Badalucco, Holly Hunter, Daniel von Bargaen. Clooney, Turturro and Nelson escape from a prison colony in 1930s Mississippi and find themselves on an odyssey through the state to find Clooney's loot of over a million dollars before the flooding of the valley where the money is hidden. On the way they meet countless oddball characters, the most vicious of those seeming to be one-eyed bible salesman Goodman. A hooray to the Coens! Epic comedy, loosely based on Homer's *Odyssey*, delights with hilarious episodes, marvelous cinematography and wonderful performances. Somewhat uneven but clever, corny and filled with terrific bluegrass songs. A must for those looking for originality in motion pictures. The brothers Coen's personal homage to the cinema of the 1930s and in particular to Preston Sturges. Ethan Coen produced and cowrote the script with brother Joel. This was their eighth film, the first one shot in widescreen.

**Obsession** (1976, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Brian De Palma. Starring Cliff Robertson, Geneviève Bujold, John Lithgow, Sylvia Kuumba Williams, Wanda Blackman. Effective mystery drama about businessman Robertson, who loses his wife and daughter in a kidnapping scheme and goes on to mourn their demise for the next 16 years. One day, however, he meets a woman that looks exactly like his late wife – is this his second chance at finding happiness? Interesting, engrossing variation of Hitchcock's classic *VERTIGO* (1958), with a dramatic, elaborate score by Bernard Herrmann. Screenplay by Paul Schrader, from a story by Schrader and De Palma. Well-photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond.

**Occhi di Cristallo** (2004, ITA/SPA/GBR) **C-112m. \*\*\* D:** Eros Puglielli. Starring Luigi Lo Cascio, Lucía Jiménez, José Angel Egido, Eusebio Poncela, Simón Andreu. Pretty good Italian thriller about a serial killer, who takes body parts of his victims and replaces them with the limbs of

an antique doll. Young cop Lo Cascio is on his trail, falls in love with potential victim Jiménez. Sounds familiar, but film has a complex structure, some good performances (especially Lo Cascio's), a good score, and is generally well-made. A mild surprise, this modern-day giallo, though closer in spirit to SE7EN (1995) or SAW (2004). Based on a novel by Luca Di Fulvio. English title: EYES OF CRISTAL.

**Occhi Freddi della Paura, Gli** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Giovanna Ralli, Frank Wolff, Fernando Rey, Julián Mateos, Karin Schubert, Gianni Garko. Psycho drama, a 'chamber' giallo perhaps, about solicitor Garko, who wants to spend the night with Italian prostitute Ralli but must contend with ruthless criminal who breaks into his father's house. Interesting plot twists, bizarre jazzy score by Ennio Morricone, but ultimately unsatisfying despite extravagant, stylish direction. Giallo fans should give this a try, others needn't bother. Set in London. English titles: COLD EYES OF FEAR and DESPERATE MOMENTS.

**Occhio nel Labirinto, L'** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Mario Caiano. Starring Rosemary Dexter, Adolfo Celi, Alida Valli, Horst Frank, Sybil Danning, Franco Ressel. A young woman goes in search of her psychiatrist, who – according to the opening scene – may have been murdered. She learns that he may be on an island nearby and travels there, meeting ex-gangster Celi and mansion owner Valli, who houses a bizarre troupe of artists. Sounds interesting, but this giallo is draggy, nonsensical and sloppily made (not counting some stylish camera perspectives). Worth only for some period flavor. English titles: THE EYE IN THE LABYRINTH, BLOOD.

**Ocean's Eleven** (1960, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Lewis Milestone. Starring Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Peter Lawford, Angie Dickinson, Richard Conte, Cesar Romero, Patrice Wymore, Joey Bishop, Akim Tamiroff, Henry Silva, Richard Benedict, Red Skelton, George Raft, Shirley MacLaine. Sinatra summons his WW2 pals to plan robbing five(!) Las Vegas casinos in one night (silvester). The burden of time is on this caper, which shows especially in first hour. Second half of picture is an improvement, but generally this is overlong and not too clever. For those who want to see Hollywood's Rat Pack. Script allegedly cowritten by Billy Wilder. Remade by Steven Soderbergh in 2001.

**Ocean's Eleven** (2001, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia, Carl Reiner, Elliott Gould, Bernie Mac, Scott Caan, Casey Affleck, Edward James Olmos. Loosely based on the 1960 original, entertaining heist comedy concerns plan concocted by Clooney to rob three Las Vegas casinos simultaneously. For this, he gathers ten experts, who should make the impossible possible. First 30 minutes are a drag and make you fear for the worst, but picture improves, with some cool star performances and a nice sense of humor. The actual heist is the best part of the film. The casino metropolis Las Vegas is vividly brought to the screen. Cameos include Henry Silva, Angie Dickinson (of the 1960 cast), Jerry Weintraub and Don Cheadle.

**Ocean's Twelve** (2004, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring Brad Pitt, Catherine Zeta-Jones, George Clooney, Julia Roberts, Andy Garcia, Casey Affleck, Scott Caan, Don Cheadle, Matt Damon, Carl Reiner, Elliott Gould, Robbie Coltrane, Vincent Cassel, Eddie Izzard, Jerry Weintraub, Albert Finney, Bruce Willis. Inevitable sequel throws in even more stars but also puts in even more plot contrivances: Clooney gathers his helpers from the casino heist, because Garcia is forcing them to pay back(!) the sum robbed. So they're off to Amsterdam and Rome, but crime expert Zeta-Jones is on their tracks and rival thief Cassel is taunting them. Shaggy-dog script, where everything is possible and nothing is logical, is worse than that of INDEPENDENCE DAY. Writer George Nolfi must have written it drunk in

the course of one long evening. The stars and some funny dialogue keep this from being a complete wash-out.

**Ocean's Thirteen** (2007, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Michael Mantell, Elliott Gould, Al Pacino, Don Cheadle, Casey Affleck, Scott Caan, Bernie Mac, Carl Reiner, Eddie Izzard, Ellen Barkin, Jerry Weintraub, Julian Sands, Vincent Cassel, Andy Garcia. Another send-up to the funny, smart original is just as sloppy as the first sequel, perhaps a tad less absurd. Clooney and company want to help out Gould, who has been cheated out of a fortune by casino boss Pacino, and so they go after his new casino to get their revenge. There couldn't have been a reason other than to make this for the money. Soderbergh should be ashamed of himself. Gives you a few chuckles at best.

**October Sky** (1999, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Joe Johnston. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Chris Cooper, Laura Dern, Chris Owen, William Lee Scott, Chad Lindberg. Good drama set in 1957, where a 17-year-old teen (Gyllenhaal) is inspired by the launch of Sputnik to become a rocket scientist. He makes experiments with his friends against the will of his father, who would rather see his son as a coalminer like him. Good performances, fine score (by Mark Isham), this is a very American movie, with a typical emotional crescendo at the end. Based on the book by Homer H. Hickam Jr.

**Octopussy** (1983, USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: John Glen. Starring Roger Moore, Maud Adams, Louis Jourdan, Kristina Wayborn, Steven Berkoff, Desmond Llewelyn, Lois Maxwell. James Bond's last great adventure pits 007 against Russian army general who is threatening to blow up a stolen atom bomb. Incredible over-the-top action outdoes plot easily. Possibly Moore's best performance as 007, and the decade's best Bond film.

**Oculus** (2013, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mike Flanagan. Starring Karen Gillan, Brenton Thwaites, Katee Sackhoff, Rory Cochrane, Annalise Basso, Garrett Ryan. Horror chiller about a determined young woman, who has minutely planned her revenge against an ancient mirror, which has caused death and insanity over the centuries of its existence, including her own family 11 years ago. Her traumatized brother, now recently released from a mental facility, becomes her assistant. Interestingly structured narrative holds your attention for about an hour, but then film turns into a harrowing drama about domestic violence and starts to awkwardly interweave the two different time levels. It's also difficult to believe anything you see, when the mirror obviously has the power to alter reality. Still, worth a look. Well-acted, especially by young Basso. From the director of *ABSENTIA* (2011).

**Odd One Dies, The** (1997, HGK) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Patrick Yau. Starring Kaneshiro Takeshi, Carman Lee, Byun Woo Nin, Kenneth Choi. Due to gambling debts a young small-time crook agrees to assassinate a businessman from Thailand. When he wins a lot of money he passes on the mission to a young woman who has recently been released from prison. Soon they discover their affection for each other. Post-modern, grungy little action movie with flawed storytelling is made more fascinating by interesting direction and camerawork than this story would allow. The lead actors Takeshi and Lee are very appealing. Score is unconventional but nice. Has cult film possibilities.

**Odeur des Fauves, L'** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Richard Balducci. Starring Maurice Ronet, Josephine Chaplin, Vittorio De Sica, Tanya Lopert, Raymond Pellegrin, Francis Blanche, Dominique Zardi. Ambitious thriller drama about frustrated tabloid reporter Ronet, who's latest photograph causes an uproar since it depicts a black man kissing the daughter of a racist businessman. Film details the journalist's flight from hired killers as well as his disenchantment with his job. Not bad and certainly worth watching (not just for reporters), but direction isn't up to the challenge of the script.

**Ôdishon** (1999, JAP) **C-115m. \*\*\*** D: Takashi Miike. Starring Ryo Ishibashi, Eihi Shiina, Tetsu Sawaki, Jun Kunimura, Renji Ishibashi, Ren Osugi. Cult hit from Japanese shock artist Miike about single father Ishibashi, who years after the death of his wife starts thinking about remarrying. His colleague at work (a film production company) suggests faking a movie casting for a female starring role. Ishibashi is instantly infatuated with one of the candidates, but knows little or nothing about her past. A mistake? First-half is a romance in the classic sense, the second half becomes a surreal, grossly violent nightmare. Watch this one! Based on a novel by Ryû Murakami. English title: AUDITION.

**Ceil du Malin, L'** (1961, FRA/ITA) **79m. \*\*½** D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jacques Charrier, Stéphane Audran, Walther Reyer, Daniel Boulanger. A young journalist, researching for an article on the renewed friendship between the German and the French in Bavaria, meets a happy couple and decides to become their friend. It becomes clear that he is jealous of their happiness and has plans to destroy everything. Early Chabrol drama remains cold and undramatic throughout. Jean Rabier's black-and-white cinematography is excellent, though. Released in the U.S. as THE THIRD LOVER in 1963.

**Of Cooks and Kung Fu** (1979, HGK) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Starring Jackie Chen Shao Lung, Ga Hoi, Cheung Lee Koon, Suen Yuet, Wu Ma. Standard eastern with comic touches about a violent assassin who seeks out a cook (called Master Glutton) for reasons specified later. The cook lives with his grandson, who learns Kung Fu from him. First hour drags on, although in the final twenty minutes the acrobatics get better. Also known as FISTS OF VENGEANCE.

**Offender** (2012, GBR) **C-102m. \*\*½** D: Ron Scalpello. Starring Joe Cole, English Frank, Kimberely Nixon, Shaun Dooley. A hybrid between prison drama and revenge thriller about young Cole, who is sent to a prison of young offenders for attacking a policeman. In flashbacks we learn that his pregnant girlfriend, a probation officer, was attacked and Cole might take revenge on her assailant behind bars. Intensely acted by Cole, quite violent, but doesn't hold up to the very end.

**Offspring, The** (1986, USA) **C-99m. \*½** D: Jeff Burr. Starring Vincent Price, Clu Gulager, Susan Tyrrell, Lawrence Tierney. Pointless, pretentious horror film about old man (Price) who tells stories to a woman, which shall demonstrate that the town he lives in is evil. They forgot to make this intelligent. Also known as FROM A WHISPER TO A SCREAM.

**Of Unknown Origin** (1983, CDN/USA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: George Pan Cosmatos. Starring Peter Weller, Jennifer Dale, Lawrence Dane, Kenneth Welsh, Shannon Tweed. Weller plays a manager-type yuppie, who wants to spend a few days without his family in their N.Y.C. apartment. However, a giant rat has found its way up, and Weller's attempts to get rid of it will turn the flat into a battlefield. Some cleverly directed sequences highlight picture, although credibility is abandoned early on. OK of its type. Based on the novel by Chauncey G. Parker III. Produced by Pierre David.

**Oggi a Me ... Domani a Te** (1968, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tonino Cervi. Starring Brent Halsey, Bud Spencer, Montgomery Ford, William Berger. Following his release from prison a convict hires four gunslingers to help him do in the man who killed his wife. Exciting, no-nonsense spaghetti western was scripted by Cervi and Dario Argento, who includes several motives of ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST, which he worked on earlier that year. English title: TODAY IT'S ME... TOMORROW YOU?

**Ogon Batto** (1966, JAP) **B&W-73m. \*\*½** D: Hajime Sato. Starring Sonny Chiba, Andrew Hughes, Hirohisa Nakata, Kosaku Okanu. Comic-book-like science-fiction/fantasy movie about a team of scientists, who realize that planet Icarus is on a collision course with the Earth and an extra-terrestrial villain bent on world destruction is behind it all. On their search for a crystal that would make a powerful weapon work, they find the lost continent

of Atlantis and on it the tomb of Golden Bat, a superhero that was asleep for 10,000 years and is resurrected by a little girl. Even though his face looks menacingly like a skull, he wants to save mankind. If this isn't enough to turn you on, you get the most maniacal laughs ever in a movie and a villain in a funny giant pig or rabbit costume. Perfect cult movie fodder, though some trashy, cheesy moments spoil the fun (or do they?). Why didn't they shoot this in color? From the director of KYUKETSUKI GOKEMIDORO (GOKE, BODYSNATCHER FROM HELL). English titles: GOLD BAT, and THE GOLDEN BAT.

**Oily Maniac, The** (1976, HGK) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Hua Ho Meng. Starring, Li Hsiu-Hsien (=Danny Lee), Lily Li, Chen Ping, Ku Feng, Wang Hsia (=Wang Hsieh), Yuen Woo-Ping, Corey Yuen. Shaw Brothers curio, one of their few horror exploitation films. Polio-victim Lee learns of an ancient Malayan secret, tattooed on the back of a man on death row, then follows its instructions to become the title character, a kind-of oil-covered monster/hero. He uses his superpowers to knock off a few bad guys, one of them his backstabbing lawyer-boss. This melodramatic, Chinese type TOXIC AVENGER (1985) really has to be seen to be believed. Film and plot-wise this is nothing extraordinary, though. Original title: YOU GUI ZI.

**Ojo del Huracán, El** (1971, SPA/ITA) **C-94m. \*\*** D: José María Forqué. Starring Jean Sorel, Analía Gadé, Tony Kendall, Rosanna Yanni. Obscure Spanish giallo variation about Gadé, who is separating from her estranged husband as she has fallen in love with Sorel. The romance between the two seems to good to be true, and indeed there is a twist half-way through that turns things upside down. Tame and a bit sappy, with an almost 80s-like use of songs on the soundtrack, but interesting for buffs. Photographed by Alejandro Ulloa. English title: IN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE, LUSTY LOVERS, and SUSPICION.

**Ojos Azules de la Muneca Rota, Los** (1973, SPA) **C-89m. \*\*** D: Carlos Aured. Starring Paul Naschy, Diana Lorys, Eduardo Calvo, Eva León, Inés Morales, Antonio Pica, Maria Perschy. Spanish giallo about drifter Naschy, who arrives in a small town and starts working for Lorys and her two weird sisters, sex-hungry León and wheelchair-bound Perschy. Soon bodies are found dead with their eyeballs missing. Technically a notch below your typical Italian genre piece, film drags along but surprises you with a twist ending that you don't seen coming for once. Naschy (who delivers one of his non-acting performances) also cowrote the screenplay with director Aured. English title: BLUE EYES OF THE BROKEN DOLL, HOUSE OF DOOM and HOUSE OF PSYCHOTIC WOMEN.

**Ojos de Julia, Los \*\***

**Okami Kodomo no Ame to Yuki** (2012, JAP) **C-117m \*\*\*** D: Mamoru Hosoda. Starring (the voices of) Kumiko Asô, Megumi Hyashibara, Takuma Hiraoka. From the director of SUMMER WARS and THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME comes this visually beautiful story about a young woman who falls in love with a wolf man and raises their children alone when he dies. As the children also turn into little wolves occasionally, she moves into a dilapidated house in the country to avoid the authorities. Raising the children proves a difficult task, as is making a living growing vegetables. Lacks a certain narrative thrust, but it's always beautiful to watch the idyllic scenery and Hosoda's color scheme, and the score is also good. English title: THE WOLF CHILDREN AME AND YUKI.

**Okasareta Hakui** (1967, JAP) **C/B&W-56m. SCOPE n/r** D: Kôji Wakamatsu. Starring Juro Kara, Keiko Koyanagi, Miki Hayashi, Ayako Kidowaki. One of Pinku director Wakamatsu's most infamous films, this sexploitation movie was based on the 1966 mass murder case of Richard Speck. An intruder kills some resident nurses one by one. Lots of sex and violence, unconvincingly acted, ultimately not even a guilty pleasure, even if Wakamatsu tries to make it artsy. Final minutes are in color. English title: VIOLATED ANGELS.

**OK Connery** (1967, ITA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alberto de Martino. Starring Neil Connery, Daniela Bianchi, Adolfo Celi, Bernard Lee, Anthony Dawson, Lois Maxwell, Dahlia Lavi. At the height of the Bond craze they made this interesting little curio: Connery (brother of Sean) plays the brother of James Bond(!), who gets involved with a villainous organization. Plot is terrible, but it features Anthony Dawson (DR. NO), Daniela Bianchi (FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE), Adolfo Celi (THUNDERBALL), and Lois Maxwell (Money Penny) and Bernard Lee (M) in bigger parts than they ever had in the regular series! It's an unabashed rip-off, to be sure, not even an Ennio Morricone / Bruno Nicolai score (their first collaboration) can save it, but it has to be seen to be believed! Also known as OPERATION KID BROTHER.

**Okja** (2017, KOR/USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Bong Joon-ho. Starring Tilda Swinton, Paul Dano, Ahn Seo-hyun, Jake Gyllenhaal, Giancarlo Esposito. Acclaimed director Bong's follow-up to SNOWPIERCER (2013) is an unfortunate misfire. A little girl in the Korean mountains is sad when her pet, a giant pig, is reclaimed by the corporation that genetically engineered it ten years ago. She refuses to give it up and travels to New York City with it. There she joins forces with the A.L.F. (Animal Liberation Front), who want to set it free, too. Grotesque fantasy comedy is too violent/disturbing for kids and too childish for adults. The story is only so-so. Produced by Netflix.

**O.K. Yevtushenko** (1968, SPA) **C-80m. \*½** D: José Luis Madrid. Starring Tom Adams, Tim Barrett, Diana Lorys, Maria Silva, Bernabe Barta Barri, Angel Menéndez, Ingrid Thulin. Secret agent Charles Vine is assigned to investigate kidnapping of Russian spy, realizes that it's the Chinese and Albanians (!) who are behind it. Totally unspectacular, unappealing, this has not aged well. Third part in a trilogy of spy movies, following (the British) LICENSED TO KILL (1965) and WHERE THE BULLETS FLY (1966). Original version might run longer. English title: SOMEBODY'S STOLEN OUR RUSSIAN SPY.

**Oldboy** (2003, KOR) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Chan-wook Park. Starring Min-sik Choi, Ji-Tae Yu, Hye-jeong Kang, Dae-han Ji, Dal-su Oh. One night a drunk man is kidnapped and he disappears for 15 years, locked into an apartment without a clue about the reason for his abduction. Now he is released and learns he has only a few days to find out who kidnapped him and why. Uncompromising, visceral, well-acted psycho drama, whose main character is such a tormented soul that identifying with him will leave you depressed. Movie becomes almost impossible to watch in the final thirty minutes, which nevertheless are its best part. Its attitude made this a multi-award winner (among them the Grand Prize at Cannes). Second part of director Chan-wook Park's Revenge trilogy, following SYMPATHY FOR MR. VENGEANCE, and followed by SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE. Remade in 2013 by Spike Lee. Also known as OLD BOY.

**Oldboy** (2013, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Spike Lee. Starring Josh Brolin, Elizabeth Olsen, Sharlto Copley, Samuel L. Jackson, Michael Imperioli. Remake of the 2003 Korean cult hit is basically a story well-told, about troubled alcoholic Brolin, who wakes up one day in a sealed-off hotel room and is kept there a prisoner for twenty years. Evidence has been planted to suggest he killed his wife. The surviving daughter remains his only reason to survive. When he is finally released, he sets out to find his perpetrator. Violent, fascinating, but when Brolin takes on dozens of henchmen at the same time, credibility goes overboard. Good score by Roque Banos.

**Old School** (2003, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Todd Phillips. Starring Luke Wilson, Will Ferrell, Vince Vaughn, Jeremy Piven, Ellen Pompeo, Juliette Lewis, Leah Rimini, Perrey Reeves, Craig Kilborn, Elisha Cuthbert, Seann William Scott, Harve Presnell, Andy Dick, Terry O'Quinn. Here's something for a novelty: A teen comedy starring three guys who are around 30, who go back to their wild roots, when Wilson breaks up with his girlfriend and rents a

house near a college campus. From then on it's binge drinking, jelly wrestling, and the like. Uneven, but often very funny, best enjoyed in company with a few beers. From the director of ROAD TRIP (2000).

**Old Shatterhand** (1964, GER/ITA/FRA/YUG) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Hugo Fregonese. Starring Lex Barker, Pierre Brice, Guy Madison, Dahlia Lavi, Rik Battaglia, Gustavo Rojo, Ralf Wolter, Kitty Mattern, Bill Ramsey, Gojko Mitic. German producer Artur Brauner's first stab at successful Karl May franchise is ambitious but fatally overlong and poorly paced 'adventure' about Old Shatterhand (Barker) and his attempt to find the murderers of a little child's parents. Less exciting than producer Horst Wendlandt's WINNETOU films, worthwhile only for (pre-Leone) Euro-western fans and those of Dahlia Lavi, who has a daring nude scene. Aka APACHES LAST BATTLE and SHATTERHAND.

**Oliver & Company** (1988, USA) **C-73m. \*\*\* D:** George Scribner. Voices of Joey Lawrence, Billy Joel, Cheech Marin, Richard Mulligan, Roscoe Lee Browne, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Dom DeLuise, Taurean Blacque, Robert Loggia, Bette Midler, Natalie Gregory. Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* is transported to New York City of the 1980s, where a small kitten lives through many adventures with its canine friends and their landlord/owner, who is in debt to a dangerous underworld character. Cute animated feature from Disney provides good entertainment for kids, although it bogs down during some of the unmemorable songs. Marin's lines are far and away the funniest of the picture.

**Oliver Twist** (2005, GBR/FRA/ITA/CZE) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Roman Polanski. Starring Ben Kingsley, Jamie Foreman, Barney Clark, Harry Eden, Leanne Rowe, Edward Hardwicke, Mark Strong. Somewhat disappointing adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic takes us into Victorian England, where orphan Clark (the title character) runs away to London, where he is taken up by nefarious Kingsley, who has trained some children as pickpockets. Script by Ronald Harwood never once manages to compell or engross you, what you're left with is fine production design and cinematography; too little to make this a satisfying view.

**Ombre Roventi** (1970, ITA/EGY) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Mario Caiano. Starring William Berger, Daniela Giordano, Krista Nell, Antonio Cantafora. Extremely rare mystery, not really a giallo, about Giordano, who travels to Egypt to get in contact with a cosmetics company. Soon she realizes that the company does not exist, and she may be targeted by a secret cult who worship ancient Egyptian gods. Bogs down in the second half, but the shoddiness of the print may account for that. In some scenes it's difficult to discern anything. English title: SHADOW OF ILLUSION.

**Omega Man, The** (1971, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Boris Sagal. Starring Charlton Heston, Anthony Zerbe, Rosalind Cash, Paul Koslo, Eric Laneuville, Lincoln Kilpatrick. Intriguing, but oddly uninvolved science-fiction about Heston, who is the only survivor of biological warfare that has wiped out all mankind except some zombie-like beings who conspire to break into Heston's fortress. Their disadvantage: They can only go out by night. Some impressive shots of deserted places, mummified corpses, but Heston's adversaries are far too human-like to be threatening, and film suffers. Strikingly similar to BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES (1970), which Heston (as key character from PLANET OF THE APES) only made a brief appearance in. Based on Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend*, filmed previously as L'ULTIMO UOMO DELLA TERRA (1964) with Vincent Price. Photographed by Russell Metty.

**Omen, The** (1976, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Richard Donner. Starring Gregory Peck, Lee Remick, David Warner, Billie Whitelaw, Harvey Stephens, Patrick Troughton, Martin Benson. Popular horror classic of the 1970s about U.S. ambassador Peck and wife Remick, whose baby dies upon birth. Peck then decides to "adopt" different baby without the knowledge

of his wife – only it turns out to be the antichrist! Rather manipulative chiller has a few unsettling sequences but plot is too talky, too simple. Still, has a way of getting to you. Jerry Goldsmith's elaborate score won an Oscar. Edited by Stuart Baird. Three sequels followed, starting with DAMIEN: OMEN II.

**Omicidio per Appuntamento** (1967, ITA/GER) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Mino Guerrini. Starring George Ardisson, Günther Stoll, Ella Karin, Hans von Borsody, Mario Brega, Mino Guerrini. European spy thriller about playboy Ardisson and his search for missing friend, which leads him to the illegal trading with chemical formulas. Plot is almost incomprehensible, but buffs should tune in for Franco delli Colli's first-rate camerawork and Franco Fraticelli's top editing. Cowriters Guerrini and Fernando Di Leo make this more gloomy than most of the genre's examples. Based on the novel *Tempo di Massacre* by Franco Enna. In Germany this was advertised as a sequel to Ardisson's AGENTE 353 movies.

**Omicidio Perfetto a Termini di Legge, Un** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Tonino Ricci. Starring Philippe Leroy, Elga Andersen, Ivan Rassimov, Rosanna Yanni, Franco Ressel, Franco Balducci. Slightly below-average Italian mystery about speed boat champion Leroy, who has an accident and must undergo complicated brain surgery. Weeks after that he returns to his mansion – considerably confused – but soon receives mysterious phone calls and some people around him are murdered. Some interesting plot elements in this typical giallo that never hits bull's-eye. Nice score by Giorgio Gaslini. Art direction by Flavio Mogherini. English titles: CROSS CURRENT, and A PERFECT MURDER AT THE BORDER OF LAW.

**Omohide Poro Poro** (1991, JAP) **C-118m. \*\*\*½ D:** Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Miki Imai, Toshirô Yanagiba, Youko Honna, Yuuki Masuda, Mayumi Iizuka, Masahiro Ito. Beautifully animated Ghibli feature made right after their success with TONARI NO TOTORO (1988) and MAJO NO TAKKYUBIN (1989). A young woman, pushing 30 and still single, is preparing for a holiday in the countryside when childhood memories seem to overwhelm her. Flashbacks to her 10-year-old self show us what her life was like in the 1960s. She remembers her often painful schooldays, her countryside holidays, her family troubles, and relates all that to her present-day life. Meticulously made film is an eloquent examination of childhood sensibility and its influence on our adult selves. Not always on target, a bit long, but completely wins you over during brilliant closing credits, through which you *must* stay tuned! A bit too mature for small children, who will not understand the references to puberty and adult problems. Written by the director. Hayao Miyazaki was executive producer. English titles: ONLY YESTERDAY, MEMORIES OF TEARDROPS, MEMORIES OF YESTERDAY.

**Omoide no Mânî** (2014, JAP) **C-103m. \*\*\*\* D:** Hiromasa Yonebayashi. Starring (the voices of) Sara Takatsuki, Kasumi Arimura, Nanako Matsushima. Impeccable Studio Ghibli production is simply wonderful. A troubled 12-year-old orphan girl is sent to a seaside resort to relieve her asthma, then feels intrigued by the so-called Marsh House, an old mansion that seems deserted. She makes the acquaintance of Marnie (or Mânî), a mysterious girl who lives there, and she becomes her companion. Stunningly beautiful (hand-drawn) animation, touching storyline, a knock-out. Subtle, well-directed fantasy, with an incredibly sensitive score (by Takatsugu Muramatsu). A must-see. Based on the novel by Joan G. Robinson. From the director of KARI-GURASHI NO ARIETTI (THE SECRET WORLD OF ARRIETTY). English title: WHEN MARNIE WAS THERE.

**Once a Thief** (1991, HGK) **C-90m. \*\* D:** John Woo. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Leslie Cheung, Cherie Chung, Ken Tsung. Action thriller set in France about three thieves who are hired to steal precious painting from impenetrable castle. Some good action scenes, but overall director Woo remains below his possibilities. The idiotic wrap-up causes the rating to sink

by half a star. Woo returned to the subgenre of the heist thriller in 1996 with VIOLENT TRADITION.

**Once Upon a Time in China** (1991, HGK) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tsui Hark. Starring Jet Li, Yuen Biao, Jacky Cheung, Rosamund Kwan, Ken Cheng, Wang Yu, Wu Ma, Simon Yam. Lavishly filmed action comedy about legendary Chinaman Wong Fei-Hung (Li), a doctor and Shaolin master. Together with his pupils he puts up resistance against western invaders and corrupt officials. Historical eastern suffers from a hopelessly muddled plot, which is set in one place only and remains episodic and not necessarily coherent. Director Hark also produced the film. The action scenes are average (and sometimes confusing). The comic bits work only intermittently. Original title: WONG FEI-HUNG. Followed by five sequels. Originally 133m.

**Once Upon a Time in China 4** (1994, HGK) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Yuen Bun. Starring Zhang Wen Zhang, Chin Kar Lok, Chiu Man Cheuk, Mok Siu Chung, Xiong Xin Xin. Continuation of the saga, based on the (legendary) adventures of Chinese folk hero Wong Fei-Hung, who battles eight allied armies this time, in order to defend the honor of the Chinese people. Strikingly filmed and choreographed, film neglects softer tones in the plot, but manages to excite, especially during the climax. Not quite in the league of the SWORDSMAN films but action fans will get their dose of adrenalin anyway. Preferably viewed in a theater. Tsui Hark co-scripted and co-produced, along with Raymond Chow of Golden Harvest Films.

**Once Upon a Time in Mexico** (2003, USA/MEX) **C-102m. \*½ D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Anotnio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Johnny Depp, Mickey Rourke, Eva Mendes, Danny Trejo, Enrique Iglesias, Cheech Marin, Rubén Blades, Willem Dafoe, Gerardo Vigil, Pedro Armendáriz Jr., Tito Larriva. Pointless sequel to EL MARIACHI (1992) and DESPERADO (1995) features guitar player / assassin Banderas, who is hired by CIA agent Depp to kill old nemesis Vigil, *after* that man has killed the President. Over-indulgent, self-absorbed actioner is almost completely worthless, if it wasn't for some dynamite editing by Rodriguez himself. Completed in 2001 but shelved for obvious reasons.

**Once Were Warriors** (1994, NZL) **C-103m. \*\*\*½ D:** Lee Tamahori. Starring Rena Owen, Temuera Morrison, Mamaengaroa Kerr-Bell, Julian Arahanga, Taungaroa Emile, Rachael Morris, Jr., Joseph Kairau. Gritty, realistic drama about a family of Maori descendants who live in modern-day New Zealand. Film depicts Owen's love-hate relationship with her ultra-violent husband Morrison, which eventually leads to the destruction of their family. Strong statement on the struggle of the lower classes, naturally acted, simply powerful, if lacking the kind of storytelling savvy that would make this a true knock-out. First-time director Tamahori went on to direct THE EDGE in Hollywood.

**One-Armed Boxer** (1971, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Wang Yu. Starring Wang Yu. Standard martial arts action about student Wang Yu, whose academy is threatened by a rival master, who has brought several kung fu experts with him in order to destroy the school. Wang Yu seems the only one able to face them, but then unfortunately loses one arm in the fight. Rather poorly plotted eastern contains enough fight scenes to please fans. The finale is quite vicious. Highly regarded by some. Followed by THE ONE-ARMED BOXER VS. THE FLYING GUILLOTINE in 1974.

**One-Armed Boxer vs. the Flying Guillotine, The** (1975, HGK) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Wang Yu. Starring Wang Yu. Sequel to the above is vicious martial arts extravaganza about a blind monk, who wants to avenge the death of his two nephews (Wang Yu's last opponents in ONE-ARMED BOXER) and kills every one-armed fighter with his awe-inspiring special weapon. Wang Yu, who runs an illegal school, must face countless enemies before going head to head with the seemingly invincible villain. Charismatic star performance, violent,

unusual fight scenes highlight this eastern, which is not that much better than its predecessor but has understandably acquired a cult status among martial arts fans. Written by Wang Yu. Also known as MASTER OF THE FLYING GUILLOTINE and ONE-ARMED BOXER II. **One Day in September** (1999, GBR/SUI/GER) **C-94m**. \*\*\*½ D: Kevin McDonald. Narrated by Michael Douglas. Fine documentary (an Academy Award winner) about the shocking act of terror committed by Palestinian terrorists during the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. In return for the release of 11 Israeli hostages the terrorists demanded that 200 of their men be released from prison. Chronological recounting of events makes this a suspenseful true-crime movie, without losing the balance between public and personal tragedy. Interviews of the victim's relatives and original footage ingeniously linked. Most shocking revelation: The inefficiency of German executive forces. Director Macdonald is the grandson of British film icon Emeric Pressburger.

**One Fine Day** (1996, USA) **C-108m**. \*\*½ D: Michael Hoffman. Starring Michelle Pfeiffer, George Clooney, Mae Whitman, Alex D. Linz, Charles Durning, Jon Robin Baitz, Ellen Greene, Joe Grifasi. During a hectic working day, career-obsessed Pfeiffer and Clooney have to take care of their children. Both are divorced, and since they have so much to do, they have to rely on each other by having the other look after the kids. Stressed people shouldn't watch this family film, there's too much bustling activity, and the children are in constant danger. Nice, if predictable, romantic comedy produced by Michelle Pfeiffer.

**One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest** (1975, USA) **C-133m**. \*\*\*½ D: Milos Forman. Starring Jack Nicholson, Louise Fletcher, William Redfield, Michael Berryman, Scatman Crothers, Danny DeVito, Christopher Lloyd, Will Sampson, Vincent Schiavelli, Brad Dourif, Saul Zaentz. Outstanding drama about misfit Nicholson, who has himself put into a mental institution and turns the hierarchy there upside down, much to the dismay of head nurse Fletcher. The other patients soon accept him as their leader. Nicholson is ingenious in the lead. Simultaneously funny and sad, and ultimately shattering, this original American classic went on to win all five important Oscars: Best Picture, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Actor and Actress (Fletcher). Based on the novel by Ken Kesey. Cinematography by Haskell Wexler. Dourif and Lloyd's film debuts.

**One Hour Photo** (2002, USA) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Mark Romanek. Starring Robin Williams, Connie Nielsen, Michael Vartan, Dylan Smith, Erin Daniels, Gary Cole, Eriq La Salle. A seemingly perfect family unknowingly shares their happiest moments with shop assistant Williams, who has developed all their photos for the past years. The terminally lonely man dreams of being part of their lives and sees himself forced to act, when he discovers (on film) that the husband has cheated on his wife. Rather simple psycho thriller drama is not sensationalistic but quietly engrosses the viewer and has interesting ideas. Williams is good in a difficult part. Auspicious second film by writer-director Romanek, whose only other feature film was made back in 1985 (STATIC).

**100 Girls** (2000, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*\* D: Michael Davis. Starring Jonathan Tucker, Emmanuelle Chriqui, James DeBello, Katherine Heigl, Jamie Pressly, Marissa Ribisi. Enjoyable teen comedy about handyman Tucker, who had sex with a stranger during a blackout and sets out to find the girl – in a sorority with dozens of chicks. A little inept sometimes, and lacks star appeal, but never takes itself too seriously. Tucker's final speech is great. Written by the director.

**101 Dalmatians** (1996, USA) **C-103m**. \*\*\* D: Stephen Herek. Starring Glenn Close, Jeff Daniels, Joely Richardson, Joan Plowright, Hugh Laurie, Mark Williams, John Shrapnell. Remake of the 1961 Disney classic is funny and very appealing in the first half, bogs down a little in the second. Daniels and Richardson play a couple whose Dalmatians would make a

perfect fur for fashion empress Cruella DeVil (flamboyantly played by Glenn Close). She abducts them and plans to have them skinned, but she hasn't reckoned with the Dalmatians' animal friends. Much more slapstick than in the original, thanks to John Hughes' script, but wonderful production design offsets these liabilities. Kids should be more than pleased with this adventure.

**127 Hours** (2010, GBR/USA) **C-94m.** \*\*\*½ D: Danny Boyle. Starring James Franco, Amber Tamblyn, Kata Mara, Treat Williams. Danny Boyle's follow-up to his Oscar-winning SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (2008) is equally heartfelt story about a climber who gets trapped in a crevasse in the Rocky Mountains and is faced with starvation and death. Incredible survival drama, based on a true story. Typically well-directed, well-paced, with a bravura performance by James Franco.

**One Million Years B.C.** (1966, GBR) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: Don Chaffey. Starring Raquel Welch, John Richardson, Percy Herbert, Robert Brown, Martine Beswick. Prehistoric adventure about two humans (Welch and Richardson) running for their life in the wild. They have to contend with dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures. Not terribly scriptwise, there is no intelligible dialogue. Has become a cult film for Welch's performance (or physique?), which made her an instant star. Good effects by Ray Harryhausen. A remake of the 1939 film ONE MILLION B.C.

**On Golden Pond** (1981, USA) **C-109m.** \*\*\*½ D: Mark Rydell. Starring Katharine Hepburn, Henry Fonda, Jane Fonda, Doug McKeon, Dabney Coleman, William Lanteau, Christopher Rydell. Charming, memorable comedy drama about old couple Hepburn and Fonda, who spend one of their last summers together at their holiday house by a large lake. Their peace is interrupted by the arrival of their estranged daughter Fonda, her lover Coleman and her lover's son McKeon. Little do they all know that this summer is going to change their lives forever. Beautifully acted drama was Fonda's last film, and what a performance he gives! Subtle, quiet (and Oscar-winning) adaptation of Ernest Thompson's witty play, well-scored by Dave Grusin and shot at perfect locations. One of those films that hardly age, like the memory of their stars. Both Hepburn and Fonda won Academy Awards.

**On Her Majesty's Secret Service** (1969, GBR) **C-142m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Peter R. Hunt. Starring George Lazenby, Diana Rigg, Gabriele Ferzetti, Telly Savalas, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn, Catharina von Schell, Bessie Love, Joanna Lumley. Stylish, sophisticated James Bond film with Lazenby replacing Sean Connery as secret agent 007, who picks up the trace of arch-enemy Blofeld (Savalas) by promising to marry Spanish comtessa Rigg. The villain intends to sterilize the world if his demands are not met. Lazenby, in his only appearance as the super spy, is acceptable, but film itself is superbly paced, yet not *fast-paced*. At times it even achieves a kind of poetic, melancholy quality, which is unique for a Bond movie. Superb, colorful sets by Peter Lamont; it's too bad only one film of this series was made in the late 1960s. Fine score by John Barry, Louis Armstrong's *We Have All the Time in the World* is especially lovely. While all action scenes are good, the final sequence is particularly stunning. Film is remarkably well edited by John Glen, who directed five Bond films himself in the 1980s. Director Hunt edited all five previous Bond movies, ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE, his first film as a director, is very probably the best of the whole series. That ending will chill you to the bone. Beware of shorter (European) prints.

**Oniroku Dan: Bikyoshi Jigokuzeme** (1985, JAP) **C-67m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Masahito Segawa. Starring Ran Masaki, Seiichirô Fukuyama, Nobutaka Masutomi. A young school teacher comes to a new community and meets several lurid characters, who subject her to rape and torture. Competently filmed exploitation drama with some bondage elements remains

moderate in its depiction and treatment of the female victim. English title: BEAUTIFUL TEACHER IN TORTURE HELL.

**Only God Forgives** (2013, DEN/FRA) **C-90m.** \*\*\*½ D: Nicolas Winding Refn. Starring Ryan Gosling, Kristin Scott Thomas, Vithaya Pansringarm, Gordon Brown, Yayaying Ratha Phongam. Powerful, flamboyant yet almost minimalistic revenge drama, highly artistic, shocking and hypnotic at the same time. In Thailand, drug dealer Gosling's brother kills an underage prostitute. Her father takes violent revenge, aided by a samurai sword-wielding, retired policeman, the Angel of Vengeance (Pansringarm). When their mother (ice-cold Scott Thomas) arrives, she immediately orders her son to seek out the cop and kill him. Brilliant, ultra-stylish direction and cinematography calls to mind the visions of Lars von Trier or Alejandro Jodorowsky (to whom this is dedicated). The score by Cliff Martinez is also outstanding. Pansringarm claims his place among the coldest villains in film history. From the director of DRIVE (2011).

**Only Lovers Left Alive** (2013, GBR/GER/GRE) **C-123m.** \*½ D: Jim Jarmusch. Starring Tilda Swinton, Tom Hiddleston, Anton Yelchin, Mia Wasikowska, John Hurt, Jeffrey Wright. Self-indulgent drama is an unfortunate dud from an otherwise film alternative filmmaker. Three vampires interact with each other in England and Morocco. Extravagant Swinton is the link between rock star Hiddleston and poet Hurt, who is none other than the 16<sup>th</sup> century playwright Christopher Marlowe. Plot is almost non-existent, film is a bore.

**Only You** (1994, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*\* D: Norman Jewison. Starring Marisa Tomei, Robert Downey Jr., Bonny Hunt, Billy Zane. Not very credible but enjoyable romantic comedy with Tomei a superstitious bride-to-be who (regardless of her wedding the following week) travels to Italy when she is phoned by someone called Damon Bradley, which is the name of the „soul mate“ predicted to her when she was a child. Rather shallow and sloppy in terms of characterization, but unpredictable plot twists make it fun to watch. Tomei is gorgeous in the lead. Photographed by the great Sven Nykvist.

**On Ne Meurt Que Deux Fois** (1985, FRA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Jacques Deray. Starring Michel Serrault, Charlotte Rampling, Xavier Delux, Elisabeth Depardieu, Maurice Barrier. When the body of a musician is found, inspector Serrault investigates and finds a suspect in femme fatale Rampling. Will he convict her or fall for her? Film noir-like psycho drama is quite engrossing but also low-key and slowly paced. Serrault is in fine form again. A slightly too literate adaptation of Robin Cook's novel. Aka HE DIED WITH HIS EYES OPEN.

**On the Run** (1988, HKG) **C-88m.** \*\*\* D: Alfred Cheung. Starring Yuen Biao, Patricia Ha, Yuen Wah. After his wife is killed by a professional hitman, young policeman sets out to find the murderer and soon learns that his own boss has something to do with it. The killer turns out to be a woman, who joins forces with the man whose wife she killed, when the chief of police tries to doublecross her. Well-made action drama with appealing characters, especially the beautiful heroine Pat Ha. Violent, but effects are realistic. Surprisingly sensitive for an action movie, which is actually what makes the film worth watching. Produced by Raymond Chow. Patricia Ha is said to have acted in NIGHT CALLER, a 1985 thriller. Aka HONGKONG CONNECTION - ON THE RUN.

**On the Yard** (1978, USA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Raphael D. Silver. Starring John Heard, Thomas G. Waites, Mike Kellin, Richard Bright. Okay drama focusing on prison life, based on the novel by Malcolm Braly. Some good performances, but otherwise flat.

**On Your Mark** (1995, JAP) **C-7m.** n/r D: Hayao Miyazaki. Music video written and directed by none other than animation master Miyazaki. Set to a pop-rock song by Chage & Aska, the story plays out like a trailer for a science-fiction/fantasy film: A young woman with wings is trapped by evil scientists. She is then rescued by two men, who want to set her free. Makes

you long to see a full movie version, which unfortunately doesn't exist. The only directorial effort of Miyazaki between KURENAI NO BUTA (1992) and MONONOKE-HIME (1997).

**Open Grave** (2013, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Gonzalez López-Gallego. Starring Sharlto Copley, Joseph Morgan, Thomas Kretschmann, Erin Richards, Josie Ho, Max Wrottesley. Horror thriller tries desperately at something 'new'. A group of people without any memory whatsoever finds themselves in the middle of a forest, with dead and/or crazy people all around them. Who are they, and what's going on? Very little plot momentum despite interesting premise, it's also rather downbeat and slow. The ending is the best part, but too late for a better rating. From the director of APOLLO 18 (2011).

**Open Season** (2006, USA) **C-99m. \*\*** D: Roger Allers, Jill Culton, Anthony Stacchi. Starring (the voices of) Martin Lawrence, Ashton Kutcher, Jon Favreau, Gary Sinise, Jane Krakowski, Debra Messing, Billy Connolly. Watchable animated feature about a grizzly bear, raised by a female park ranger as a pet, who is released into the wild and has to fend for himself there only with the help of a bumbling mule deer. And open season is only days away. Not bad, but generates relatively few laughs, and the two main characters are stolen from SHREK (2001).

**Opera** (1987, ITA) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Dario Argento. Starring Cristina Marsillach, Ian Charleson, Daria Nicolodi, Urbano Barberini, Michele Soavi. Muddled plot and impressive stylistics keep a balance in this horror opus about young opera singer who gets a break being allowed to sing in 'Macbeth', only to find herself pursued by an insane, black-gloved killer. Some very interesting set pieces make this film worth watching, especially for devotees of the director. Argento would make another opera-themed film in 1998 with IL FANTASMA DELL'OPERA. English title: TERROR AT THE OPERA. Original running time: 107m.

**Operation Can(n)on** (197?, ???) **C-80m. \*\*** D: N.N. Starring Donald C. Silver, William W. Byrum, James W. Tutko, David R. Heath, James A. Tucker. Solidly filmed but undistinguished war film about an American officer held prisoner in a P.O.W. camp during the Korean War. He holds some valuable information, and the Koreans try to identify him among the other prisoners, using special torture methods. Not bad; for war fanatics. An unidentifiable movie; the screen credits (apart from the actors) are in some Asiatic language.

**Operation Ganymed** (1977, GER) **C-124m. \*\*\*** D: Rainer Erlen. Starring Horst Frank, Uwe Friedrichsen, Claus Theo Gärtner, Dieter Laser, Jürgen Prochnow. Thoughtful adult science-fiction from the maker of DIE DELEGATION (1970). Years after the failure of their mission to the Jupiter moon Ganymed, a decimated crew are returning to the Earth. They are baffled when obviously nobody registers their approach. What is wrong on planet Earth? And what went wrong on Ganymed? Fascinating drama about mankind in extreme situations, almost in the league of Tarkovsky. Fine performances by all, only the score is sometimes inappropriate. Originally premiered on TV, later released theatrically. Also known as HELDEN – VERLOREN IM STAUB DER STERNE.

**Operation Hit Squad** (1987, SAF) **C-92m. 2** D: Tonie van der Merwe. Starring Nick Collis, Dale Cutts, Ralph Draper, Janet du Plessis. Terrible, amateurish action movie about two women who survive a plane crash in the wilderness and are picked up and held hostage by renegade soldiers. One woman's father, a millionaire, then hires a mercenary to free them. Atrocious direction, acting in this bomb from South Africa.

**Opération Lady Marlène** (1975, FRA/GER) **C-80m. \*\*** D: Robert Lamoureux. Starring Robert Lamoureux, Michel Serrault, Bernard Menez, Pierre Tornade, Sybil Danning, Eddie Arent, Eva Astor, Guy Grosso, Jacques Marin, Michel Modo. Second-rate comedy set during WW2, where Serrault breaks into people's apartments during bomb alerts. Together with a friend

he becomes involved in the resistance movement's attempt to thwart German invasion plans. Rather cheap, with only a few laughs.

**Opération Lune** (2002, FRA) **C-52m. n/r** D: William Karel. Featuring interviews with Buzz Aldrin, Alexander Haig, Jan Harlan, Christiane Kubrick, Henry Kissinger, Donald Rumsfeld. French documentary which presents an interesting conspiracy theory about the space race in the 1960s and the landing on the moon. Fearing that no live pictures could be transmitted from the first moon landing, President Nixon allegedly asked filmmaker Stanley Kubrick – whose *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* (1968) had provided much inspiration – to film the scenes in a studio! In return, Kubrick would get a special NASA lens for *BARRY LYNDON* (1975). Interesting, even intriguing weaving of fact and fiction, worth watching for film buffs. Also known as *DARK SIDE OF THE MOON*.

**Operazione Paura** (1966, ITA) **C-83m. \*\*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Erika Blanc, Fabienne Dali, Piero Lulli, Max Lawrence (=Luciano Catenacci), Gianna Vivaldi. Haunting, nightmarish horror tale set in a small Transylvanian village, where the ghost of a little girl is terrorizing the population. Coroner Rossi-Stuart is baffled when he finds gold coins embedded in the hearts of the victims. Atmospheric photography (by Antonio Rinaldi and Bava himself) and creative direction make this one of the director's finest, most chilling films, perhaps the pinnacle of gothic horror chillers. Contains sequences which are among the most frightening ever put on film! Only flaw: sluggish pacing. Coscripted by Bava, eerie score by Carlo Rustichelli. Referenced by none other than Federico Fellini in his 'Toby Dammit' sequence for *TRE PASSI NEL DELIRIO/SPIRITS OF THE DEAD* (1968). Also known as *KILL, BABY, ... KILL!* and *CURSE OF THE LIVING DEAD*. Original running time (allegedly) 85m.

**Operazione Poker** (1965, ITA/SPA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Osvaldo Civirani. Starring Roger Browne, José Greci, Sancho Gracia, Helga Liné. Brown is quite convincing as a secret agent, who investigates disappearance of Vietnamese politician. It all has something to do with a new invention that allows you to see through walls! Plot is merely an excuse for James Bond-like situations and characters. Cool 60s score by Piero Umiliani. English title: *OPERATION POKER*.

**Operazione San Gennaro** (1966, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½**D: Dino Risi. Starring Nino Manfredi, Senta Berger, Harry Guardino, Claudine Auger, Totò, Mario Adorf, Frank Wolff, Ralf Wolter. Satirical crime comedy about group of criminals' attempt to steal jewelry from a church in Naples. Amusing vignettes highlight this inconsistently plotted heist film. For fans of the genre. Score by Armando Trovajoli. Uncut version runs 102m. English titles: *OPERATION SAN GENNARO*, *THE TREASURE OF SAN GENNARO*.

**Opposite of Sex, The** (1998, USA) **C-105m. \*\*\*½** D: Don Roos. Starring Christina Ricci, Martin Donovan, Lisa Kudrow, Lyle Lovett, Johnny Galecki, William Lee Scott, Ivan Sergei. Black comedy about 16-year-old self-professed 'bitch' Ricci, who's from a dysfunctional family and decides to disrupt the life of her homosexual (and rich) half-brother Donovan. She steals his lover(!), becomes pregnant and appals Kudrow, the sister of Donovan's ex-lover, who has died of AIDS. Wild (and uneven) plot is deftly original and has witty dialogue to spare, but narrator Ricci sometimes drops out of the story altogether, so her omniscient wisecracks are not entirely credible. Still, very funny if you are in the mood. Written by the director.

**Optimists of Nine Elms, The** (1973, GBR) **C-111m. \*½** D: Anthony Simmons. Starring Peter Sellers, Donna Mullane, John Chaffey, David Daker, Marjorie Yates. Downbeat drama set in London, where impoverished street artist Sellers makes a living singing to people in the street. Two socially disadvantaged children become his friends. Worth watching only for Sellers enthusiasts, but he isn't funny here. The grimy setting of industrial London makes for

depressing viewing. The dialogue is barely intelligible, the direction weak. Also known as simply THE OPTIMISTS.

**Orange County** (2002, USA) **C-82m**. \*\*½ D: Jake Kasdan. Starring Colin Hanks, Kyle Howard, R.J. Knoll, Bret Harrison, Schuyler Fisk, Mike White, Jack Black, Lily Tomlin, Chevy Chase, John Lithgow, Garry Marshall, Kevin Kline, Ben Stiller, Harold Ramis. Quirky, amusing comedy about teenager Hanks (Tom's son), who feels stuck in his native Orange County, especially when he is rejected by the University of Stanford – by a mistake. However, he pursues his plans to become a writer consequently. Pretty shapeless in the first half, improves towards the end. Good to see a cool and hip teen movie that is not about getting laid. Cute Fisk, as Hanks girlfriend, is Sissy Spacek's daughter.

**Orchideen des Wahnsinns** (1986, GER) **C-79m**. \*\* D: Nikolai Müllerschön. Starring Diana Körner, Peter von Strombeck. Along with her lover (von Strombeck), a woman (Körner) visits the mansion of her father, whom she is supposed to meet there. It turns out he has died the night before her arrival, and the woman is soon haunted by his ghost - or is someone trying to drive her crazy? Low-budget chiller is stylish to some extent, but there are other scenes which don't work at all. Quite pretentious, but not bad all in all.

**Orc Wars** (2013, USA) **C-97m**. \*½ D: Kohl Glass. Starring Rusty Joiner, Masiela Lusha, Wesley John. Pretty ridiculous fantasy actioner about a portal that links the world of Orcs with ours. War veteran Joiner hopes for some peace and withdraws to a remote ranch. However, a horde of Orcs are trying to find and bring back an elf princess hiding out at his farm. Pretentious, low-budget. The orcs look ridiculous in the grassland backdrop, and there's no war or battle scenes.

**Ore di Terrore** (1971, ITA/GER) **C-82m**. ½ D: Robert Bradley. Starring Herbert Fux, Ann Smyrner, Karin Schubert, Rainer Basedow, Mario Novelli, John Barclay. Ridiculous thriller about several business-men and mistresses, who take three shipwrecked men on board of their sailing ship. It turns out they are deranged criminals. One of them, however, is also a superintelligent professor, who knows how to manipulate the decadent passengers. Filmmaking at the lowest level. At least the women are beautiful, and for those who care, there's enough period flavor (music, clothes). Fux, in a rare starring role, is acceptable. Film suggests unintentionally that much more is possible with such a story. For trash fans only.

**Orfanato, El** (2007, SPA/MEX) **C-105m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: J.A. Bayona. Starring Belén Rueda, Fernando Cayo, Roger Príncipe, Mabel Rivera, Montserrat Carulla, Edgar Vivar. Exceptional ghost story executive produced by Guillermo del Toro (EL LABERINTO DEL FAUNO). Rueda and her family move into an old mansion that used to be an orphanage, and they are planning to reopen it as a children's home. Their own adopted son (Príncipe) soon starts having imaginary friends; is it the old orphans trying to communicate something? Atmospheric, believable haunted-house story, well-acted and with chilling set-pieces and twists. Wonderful surprise cameo must not be revealed here. Film also references J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan in a beautiful way. Fine score by Fernando Velásquez. English title: THE ORPHANAGE.

**Orgía de los Muertos, La** (1973, SPA/ITA) **C-89m**. \*\*\* D: José Luis Merino. Starring Stan Cooper (=Stelvio Rosi), Maria Pia Conte, Dianik Zurakowska, Gérard Tichy, Paul Naschy (=Jacinto Molina). After the death of a count and his daughter, Cooper becomes the only living heir to his uncle's estate. Little does he know that his uncle was conducting secret experiments in his cellar to bring the dead back to life again. Above-average example of 70s Euro horror interestingly features zombies in a gothic setting. Script (albeit a bit talky) creates some suspense. Fine score by Francesco de Masi. Uncut print runs 94m. English

titles: BEYOND THE LIVING DEAD, DRACULA THE TERROR OF THE LIVING DEAD, THE HANGING WOMAN, THE ORGY OF THE DEAD, RETURN OF THE ZOMBIES.

**Orgía Nocturna de los Vampiros, La** (1973, SPA) **C-79m. SCOPE\*\*½** D: León Klimovsky. Starring Jack Taylor, Dyanik Zurakowska, Helga Liné, Manuel de Blas, Fernando Bilbao. Average Euro-horror with some redeeming features. A group of people travelling in an old bus are stranded in a remote village, where everybody seems to have disappeared. Wait for nightfall! Interesting vampire-zombie combination, obviously influenced by Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968), has some chilling moments. Some poorly paced sequences mar the fun (for fans), the score is overbearing and sometimes inappropriate but mostly quite creepy. English titles: THE VAMPIRES' NIGHT ORGY, ORGY OF THE VAMPIRES, and GRAVE DESIRES.

**Orlando** (1992, GBR/FRA/RUS) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Sally Potter. Starring Tilda Swinton, Billy Zane, Lothaire Bluteau, John Wood, Charlotte Valandrey, Heathcote Williams, Quentin Crisp, Jimmy Somerville. Exquisite adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel *Orlando*, a fictional biography about a nobleman who travels through the centuries, turning into a woman along the way. Excellent photography, absolutely impressive performance by Swinton, makes this a must for friends of literature and sophisticated cinema alike. Film, however, editing the plot quite a bit, does not manage to fully capture the tone and mood of Woolf's outstanding novel. Director Potter wrote the screenplay and also co-authored the fine music.

**Orme, Le** (1975, ITA) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Luigi Bazzoni. Starring Florinda Bolkan, Peter McEnery, Nicoletta Elmi, Caterina Boratto, John Karlsen, Evelyn Stewart (=Ida Galli), Klaus Kinski, Lila Kedrova. Strange psycho mystery drama about interpreter Bolkan, who cannot remember the last three days of her life and travels to seaside community of Garma, where everybody seems to know her. She investigates, but makes little headway. In a subplot, she seems to be haunted by an astronaut who is left for dead on the moon, and Professor Kinski, who is conducting an experiment. Slowly paced, quite intriguing fare from the director of the excellent LA DONNA DEL LAGO (1965). The ending is a let-down, however. Film buffs will savor Vittorio Storaro's fine cinematography. Filmed in Turkey. Based on the novel by Mario Fanelli. English titles: FOOTPRINTS, PRIMAL IMPULSE.

**Orochi, the Eight-Headed Dragon** (1994, JAP) **C-103m. \*\*½** D: Takao Okawara. Starring Masahiro Takashima. Visually impressive, fast-paced but superficial fantasy about the adventures of an emperor's son who battles the title creature and other monsters. Kids are likely to be thrilled by the action, adults won't rate it higher than passable entertainment.

**Oro di Londra, L'** (1967, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*½** D: Billy Moore (=Guglielmo Morandi). Starring John Bartha, Carlo De Mejo, Mario Di Pietro, John Karlsen, Bill Vanders. Lame heist film about a group of gangsters who intend to steal dozens of gold bars from London bank. No action, very little suspense. Watch only if you must. English title: THE GOLD OF LONDON.

**Orphan** (2009, USA) **C-123m. BOMB** D: Jaume Collet-Serra. Starring Vera Farmiga, Peter Sarsgaard, Isabelle Fuhrman, CCH Pounder. Absurd thriller about a family of four, who decide to adopt an older child, after their third child died during pregnancy. They end up with Russian 9-year-old Fuhrman, who turns out to be an orphan from hell. As straightforward and simple as its title. There's no way a 9-year-old would do things like this, and no way adopting parents are so stupid and blind. It's also much too long. Avoid.

**Orribile Segreto del Dottor Hitchcock, L'** (1962, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Riccardo Freda. Starring Robert Flemyng, Barbara Steele, Harriet Medin, Montgomery Glenn, Maria Teresa Vianello. Necrophiliac doctor Flemyng marries beautiful Steele after the death of his first wife. Soon the bride is confronted with her husband's horrible secret and dark obsession. Atmospheric, intriguing, well-acted Gothic chiller that is unfortunately much too slowly

paced. Similar to Corman's Poe adaptations. Enjoyable for fans. English titles: THE TERROR OF DR. HITCHCOCK, and THE HORRIBLE DR. HITCHCOCK, the latter being shown at 76m. Followed by LO SPETTRO (THE GHOST).

**Orrori del Castello di Norimberga, Gli** (1972, ITA) **C-98m**. \*\*½ D: Mario Bava. Starring Elke Sommer, Joseph Cotten, Massimo Girotti, Rada Rassimov, Antonio Cantafora, Alan Collins, Nicoletta Elmi. Atmospheric horror tale about two students who accidentally resurrect a 16th century baron, who was cursed because he used to kill people in his torture chamber. Weakly plotted horror is not as scary as it pretends to be. Bava's stylish direction is an asset. Filmed in Austria. Also known as BARON BLOOD and THE TORTURE CHAMBER OF BARON BLOOD. Cut by 8m. for U.S. release.

**Oscar** (1967, FRA) **C-83m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Edouard Molinaro. Starring Louis de Funès, Claude Gensac. In one of his most ambitious projects co-writer de Funès plays (as later in L'AVARE) a greedy father, whose daughter is causing him some headaches. Fast-paced, fast-talking comedy really belongs to the stage, for which it was originally conceived; the businessman's house is the only setting (recalling the 1971 JO). Try to watch it in its original French language version. Remade with Sylvester Stallone in 1991.

**Osoi Hito** (2004, JAP) **B&W-83m**. \*\*½ D: Gô Shibata. Starring Masakiyo Sumida, Mari Torii, Naozo Horita, Toshihisa Fukunaga, Sumiko Shirai. Experimental drama with an unusual protagonist, mentally and physically handicapped Sumida, who spends his life going to rock concerts and drinking beer with his pal. Then a pretty young nurse starts working for him and he obviously falls in love. His inability to express his feelings results in bursts of violence and soon he becomes a killer. Disturbing, downbeat, perhaps unique character study serves a few directorial experiments too many, but lovers of the unusual may find it worthwhile. Some arresting camerawork. Written by the director. English title: LATE BLOOMER.

**Ossessione** (1942, ITA) **140m**. \*\*\*½ D: Luchino Visconti. Starring Massimo Girotti, Clara Calamai, Juan deLanda, Elio Marcuzzo. Brilliant filmization of James Cain's novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice* of love triangle which yields tragic results. Calamai plays an unhappily married woman who falls in love with tramp Girotti. Together they plan to get rid of her husband, which leads to a crisis of conscience and makes them unhappier than before. Atmosphere is enhanced by superb score. Only flawed by slow pacing, but film remains fascinating throughout. Very well-directed by first-time director Visconti. Calamai had a supporting role in Dario Argento's PROFONDO ROSSO 33 years later.

**Osterman Weekend, The** (1983, USA) **C-103m**. \*\*½ D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring Rutger Hauer, John Hurt, Craig T. Nelson, Dennis Hopper, Chris Sarandon, Meg Foster, Cassie Yates, Burt Lancaster. Peckinpah's last film is middling spy thriller based on the book by Robert Ludlum. The Osterman weekend is a traditional get-together of several friends. This year, Hauer is forced by CIA agent Hurt to expose his friends as Soviet spies. From the beginning, there is tension to spare. Interesting subject matter, expectedly assured handling by Peckinpah (especially during the complicated bursts of violence), but film runs out of steam too often and remains dramatically flat. A slight disappointment. Score by Lalo Schifrin.

**Othello** (1952, ITA) **93m**. \*\*\* D: Orson Welles. Starring Orson Welles, Micheal MacLiammoir, Suzanne Cloutier, Robert Coote, Michael Lawrence, Fay Compton, Doris Dowling, Joan Fontaine, Joseph Cotten. After filming MACBETH in 1948, Orson Welles decided to put another Shakespeare tragedy, Othello, on celluloid. The title character, a moor from Venice falls prey to an intrigue of his ensign Iago who makes him believe that his young wife Desdemona has an affair with lieutenant Cassio. Welles' examination of jealousy as a destructive force is unusually directed, with many close-ups and fast cuts. The setting, like in MACBETH, is especially impressive; the heat of Cyprus seems to reflect Othello's state

of mind (Morocco stands in for original Cyprus setting). Film was reconstructed in 1992. Filmed again in 1965 (by Laurence Olivier), 1986 (filmization of the Verdi opera by Franco Zeffirelli) and 1995 (by Oliver Parker).

**Othello** (1995, USA/GBR) **C-123m.** \*\*\* D: Oliver Parker. Starring Laurence Fishburne, Irene Jacob, Kenneth Branagh, Nathaniel Parker, Michael Maloney, Anna Patrick, Nicholas Farrell, Indra Ove, Michael Sheen, Gabriele Ferzetti. Well-produced, well-filmed adaptation of the famous Shakespeare play about the Moor of Venice and his malevolent ensign Iago. Good-looking, modern version is well-acted, especially by Branagh and Fishburne, who is the first Afro-American to star in a film version of the play.

**Othello, el Comando Negro** (1982, SPA/FRA) **C-89m.** \*½ D: Max H. Bulois. Starring Tony Curtis, Joanna Pettet, Max H. Bulois, Ramiro Oliveros, Nadiuska, Fernando Sancho, Aldo Sambrell. Shakespeare's *Othello* is transferred to a mercenary camp in Africa, where super hero Bulois (also director and writer) falls in love with white Pettet (the Desdemona of the story). Why Curtis agreed to play Iago (a colonel here) is anyone's guess. Heavy-handed, pretentious, almost laughable; Shakespeare never had it so bad, even though his story is paired with music from Beethoven here. Also known as OTHELLO, OTHELLO, THE BLACK COMMANDO and simply THE BLACK COMMANDO.

**Other, The** (1972, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Robert Mulligan. Starring Uta Hagen, Diana Muldaur, Chris Udvarnoky, Martin Udvarnoky, Norma Connolly, Victor French, John Ritter. Largely unheralded psycho drama, unjustly labeled a horror film, about twins growing up on a farm in 1930s Connecticut. One of them seems to represent good, the other evil, and their Russian grandmother Hagen keeps playing a strange game with them. What's the mystery behind it all? Unusual puzzler, well-filmed by Mulligan (TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD), well-acted, too. May not always hold your attention, but highly interesting for buffs. Written by Thomas Tryon, based on his novel. Good score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**Others, The** (2001, USA/SPA) **C-104m.** \*\*\* D: Alejandro Amenábar. Starring Nicole Kidman, Fionnula Flanagan, Alakina Mann, James Bentley, Christopher Eccleston, Eric Sykes, Elaine Cassidy, Eduardo Noriega, Alejandro Amenábar. Chilling drama set in 1945 about single mother Kidman, who lives in Victorian mansion with her two kids, who are allergic to daylight. Matters get worse for the overly strict mother, when her daughter claims to have contact with a little boy, who may be a ghost. Thoughtful script, good cinematography in unusual ghost story that features a fine performance by Kidman. Slow pace and lapses in logic are flaws that are excused by spine-tingling finale. The director has a cameo on one of the photographs of dead people. Co-produced by Tom Cruise.

**Otoshimono** (2006, JAP) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Takeshi Furusawa. Starring Erika Sawajiri, Chinatsu Wakatsuki, Shun Oguri, Aya Sugimoto. A little boy disappears in the subway system and teenager Sawajiri's little brother. With their mother in hospital with heart problems, the girl starts investigating and finds a subway train driver who thinks he has seen a ghost. Horror chiller with familiar plot is quite okay, becomes more interesting in the finale, where there's a reference to H.P. Lovecraft. English titles: GHOST TRAIN, GHOST TUNNEL.

**Otto - Der Film** (1987, GER) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Xaver Schwarzenberger, Otto Waalkes. Starring Otto Waalkes, Jessika Cardinahl, Johannes Heesters. West German comedian Otto's film debut is funny comedy with the typical gags that made him a star in German-speaking countries. After having been ripped off by a loan shark, he is forced to get the money back from a rich family. He falls in love with beautiful Cardinahl, whose life he has saved. There are so many puns in the film that dubbing it in English, for example, would surely make it less funny. Otto's later comedies were not as successful.

**Ötztalman und Seine Welt, Der** (1999, AUT/GER) **C-91m. \*\*\*½ D:** Kurt Mündl. Starring Arthur Bürger. Semidocumentary about the life of a man who lived 5300 years ago in the Austrian/Italian Alps and whose mummified corpse was discovered in 1991. Film tries to reconstruct the last year of his life and chronicles (fictionally, of course) the events that led up to his death. Documentary filmmaker Mündl shows what life was like more than 5000 years ago and comes up with stunning animal photography, but the fictional parts of this film (which led some to believe that it was an adventure) are poorly told. Authentic, even fascinating (the documentary part), but unfortunately filmed on video, which explains the poor quality of the material. Mündl also edited, photographed and wrote this Discovery Channel coproduction.

**Ouija** (2014, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Stiles White. Starring Olivia Cooke, Ana Coto, Daren Kasagoff, Bianca Santos, Douglas Smith. OK PG-13 rated teen horror film about a girl, who dies shortly after using a so-called Ouija board that is used to communicate with ghosts. Her friend Cooke investigates why there seems to be a supernatural presence and soon even her friends are put in danger. Perfect fodder for the target audience, it was a box-office success. No novelties for horror fans.

**Our Mother's House** (1967, GBR) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Jack Clayton. Starring Dirk Bogarde, Margaret Brooks, Louis Sheldon-Williams, John Gulgolka, Pamela Franklin, Mark Lester, Sarah Nicholls. Interesting study of what happens when sick mother of seven dies in her bed, leaving the children alone in their house. They try to carry on normal life, which is only disrupted by the sudden appearance of their father (Bogarde). The children are uncertain whether to trust the shady character. Fine, well-acted drama, based on a novel by Julian Gloag. Score by Georges Delerue. Director Clayton also produced.

**Outfit, The** (1974, USA) **C-105m. \*\* D:** John Flynn. Starring Robert Duvall, Karen Black, Joe Don Baker, Robert Ryan, Timothy Carey, Richard Jaeckel, Sheree North, Jane Greer, Elisha Cook Jr. Ordinary action thriller about ex-con Duvall and his buddy Baker, who plan to wipe out crime syndicate headed by Ryan, who double-crossed them. Slow pace abandoned for occasional, violent action scenes. Nothing special. Director Flynn lacks the style of a Sam Peckinpah or the story-telling ability of a Francis Ford Coppola. Based on Donald E. Westlake's novel, not that dissimilar to his *The Hunter* (filmed as POINT BLANK and PAYBACK).

**Outland** (1981, GBR) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Peter Hyams. Starring Sean Connery, Peter Boyle, Frances Sternhagen, James B. Sikking, Kika Markham, Clarke Peters, John Ratzenberger. Quite good sci-fi thriller set on Jupiter moon Io. Connery plays a U.S. marshal who is faced with inexplicable suicides (murders?) of workers on a space station. Less compelling than it might have been, but technically well-made. Rumbling score by Jerry Goldsmith, effective editing by Stuart Baird (director of EXECUTIVE DECISION, U.S. MARSHALS). Written by Hyams, who fared better with 2010 (which is also set on Io).

**Out of Sight** (1998, USA) **C-123m. \*½ D:** Steven Soderbergh. Starring George Clooney, Jennifer Lopez, Ving Rhames, Dennis Farina, Steve Zahn, Don Cheadle, Albert Brooks, Manny Suárez, Michael Keaton, Samuel L. Jackson, Nancy Allen. Muddled, incoherent adaptation of the Elmore Leonard novel about an escaped convict (Clooney) who becomes involved with a detective (Lopez) and can't seem to forget about her, even while planning a new hold-up. Film leads nowhere, with many seemingly pointless sequences. Some funny bits and quite stylish, but it's all very hard to decipher the characters' motivations. Good score by David Holmes. Produced by Danny DeVito and Barry Sonnenfeld.

**Out of Time** (2003, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Carl Franklin. Starring Denzel Washington, Eva Mendes, Sanaa Lathan, Dean Cain, John Billingsley, Robert Baker, Terry Loughlin, Nora

Dunn. Film noir-like tale set in Florida, where chief-of-police Washington has an affair with sexy Lathan, the wife of ex-football pro Cain. He is going through a divorce with Mendes, which complicates everything when she starts investigating on a murder case, where he is the prime suspect. Improbable but enjoyable complications, played to the hilt by a fine cast.

**Out-of-Towners, The** (1999, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Sam Weisman. Starring Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, John Cleese, Mark McKinney, Oliver Hudson, Josh Mostel. Remake of a 1970 film scripted by Neil Simon and starring Jack Lemmon has Martin and Hawn spending a chaotic day (and night) in New York City, where he is supposed to apply for a job. Comedy has some funny moments, most notably those involving hotel manager Cleese (remember his Fawlty Towers?), but also some truly silly ones, which keep this from being a success.

**Outpost, The** (1995, USA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Joe Gayton. Starring Lance Henriksen, Claire Stansfield, John Diehl, Natasha Gregson Wagner, Giovanni Ribisi. In the middle of the desert, scientist Henriksen visits his former workplace, an underground lab, and must contend with secretly bred virus that has infected (and is transforming) a man found half-dead in the desert. Predictable mayhem ensues. Apart from okay direction and photography, this sci-fi horror flick recalls ALIEN (1979), PREDATOR (1987) and other films, and fails to work in any novelties. A bore, executive produced by Wes Craven (his son Jonathan coscripted). Also known as MIND RIPPER, or MINDRIPPER.

**Over the Hedge** (2006, USA) **C-83m.** \*\*\* D: Tim Johnson, Karey Kirkpatrick. Starring (the voices of) Bruce Willis, Garry Shandling, Steve Carell, Wanda Sykes, William Shatner, Nick Nolte, Thomas Haden Church, Allison Janney, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara, Avril Lavigne. Good DreamWorks feature about the misadventures of a group of animals who must discover after hibernation that their woodland has been taken over by suburbia. Along with a cunning raccoon (voiced by Willis) they try to take advantage of the situation. However, the raccoon is trying to doublecross them. Fine (computer) animation, not *too* funny, but well-scripted, with a lesson on friendship and trust. Based on a comic strip written by Michael Fry and T. Lewis.

**Oxygen** (1999, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Richard Shepard. Starring Maura Tierney, Adrien Brody, James Naughton, Laila Robins, Terry Kinney, Paul Calderon. Troubled cop Tierney is asked for help in kidnapping case, where a rich man's wife was buried alive in a coffin, with oxygen for 24 hours. The kidnapper himself (Brody) is caught early on, but will he reveal the victim's whereabouts? Thriller has its moments, but is too derivative (of THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, for example). Tierney and Brody cannot be faulted. Director Shepard also scripted.

**Oz the Great and Powerful** (2013, USA) **C/B&W-130m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Sam Raimi. Starring James Franco, Mila Kunis, Rachel Weisz, Michelle Williams, Zach Braff, Bill Cobbs, Bruce Campbell, Ted Raimi. Interesting variation of THE WIZARD OF OZ (1939): Down-on-his-luck magician Franco is caught in a tornado and transported to the wondrous land of Oz, where he has been expected by two sisters, who believe he is the chosen one to free them from the evil witch. He goes along with the scheme, hoping to be rich and powerful, but learns that the evil witch is not as evil as they say. Marvelous fantasy is a rollercoaster thrillride (especially in 3D), plot slows down occasionally, but Franco's great, tongue-in-cheek performance and some ingenious CGI (the china girl!) more than make up for the lulls. Fine score by Danny Elfman, and director Raimi has fun referencing some of his older movies.

**Pacific Rim** (2013, USA) **C-131m.** \*\*\* D: Guillermo del Toro. Starring Idris Elba, Charlie Hunnam, Rinko Kikuchi, Charlie Day, Ron Perlman. Spectacular may not be a word strong enough to describe this science-fiction action blockbuster about a raging war between mankind and monsters, so-called Kaiju, who have risen from a breach below the Pacific ocean. Giant robots have been created to match the Kaiju's strength, who are steered by

two humans at a time. Awe-inspiring sets and special effects, but the plot – about some soldiers who revive an old robot to beat the Kaiju – is almost completely drowned out. Watch it for the chuzpe of the action sequences.

**Pacifier, The** (2005, USA/CDN) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Adam Shankman. Starring Vin Diesel, Lauren Graham, Faith Ford, Brittany Snow, Max Thieriot, Chris Potter, Carol Kane, Tate Donovan, Adam Shankman. Change of pace for Diesel: Here he plays a Navy S.E.A.L., who is assigned to protect five children of a suburban family whose father has been kidnapped. Diesel is quite good in this utterly contrived, fairly entertaining family comedy produced by Disney.

**Pack, The** (1977, USA) **C-99m. \*\* D:** Robert Clouse. Starring Joe Don Baker, Hope Alexander-Willis, Richard B. Shull, R.G. Armstrong, Ned Wertimer, Bibi Besch. Horror thriller about several vacationers who find themselves under attack of a pack of abandoned, hungry dogs. Baker plays a local who handles the situation well. Poor, one-dimensional script moves at a pedestrian pace, but there are well-filmed attack scenes to make up for the lulls. Good use of slow-motion. Written by the director.

**Pact, The** (2012, USA) **C-89m. \*\*\* D:** Nicholas McCarthy. Starring Caity Lotz, Casper Van Dien, Mark Steger. Effective horror chiller, cleverly reveals its story bit by bit. After their mother's death, two star-crossed sisters make an appointment to meet for her funeral. Then one of them disappears - dragged into the closet by an unseen force - a ghost? The other sister (Lotz) is baffled by the disappearance and soon meets this ghost herself. Cop Van Dien doesn't believe her at first. Creepy horror film made in JU-ON style, doesn't stay logical all the way, but it's heart-poundingly suspenseful at times. Expanded from director McCarthy's own short.

**Pact II, The** (2014, USA) **C-96m. \*\* D:** Dallas Richard Hallam, Patrick Horvath. Starring Caity Lotz, Camilla Luddington, Scott Michael Foster, Patrick Fischler, Haley Hudson. Sequel to the 2012 hit is not nearly as good. A young woman, whose mother was a victim of the Judas killer, is obviously haunted by his ghost. Police inspector Fischler is a profiler on the case. Lotz, the star of the original movie, has a pointless supporting role. Poorly acted, delivers some suspense and thus remains watchable. The ending is silly. Written by the directors.

**Pacte des Loups, Le** (2001, FRA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Christophe Gans. Starring Samuel Le Bihan, Vincent Cassel, Emilie Dequenne, Monica Bellucci, Jérémie Rénier, Mark Dacascos, Jean Yanne, Jacques Perrin. In 18th century France a beast is roaming the countryside, killing young women and children. A nobleman is called upon, who tries to stop the killings with his friend, an Indian. Marvelous mix of fantasy and horror elements is long and has a simple story, but direction, photography, and especially editing are brilliantly stylish. Film hits bull's-eye during its action sequences, which are simply stunning. A noteworthy achievement by the director of *CRYING FREEMAN* (1995) and an interesting companion piece to Michael Wadleigh's horror film *WOLFEN* (1981). Originally released at 142m., later extended to present length. English title: *BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF*.

**Padroni della Città, I** (1976, ITA/GER) **C-86m. \*\* D:** Fernando Di Leo. Starring Jack Palance, Al Cliver, Harry Baer, Gisela Hahn, Edmund Purdom. Ordinary crime thriller about godfather Palance, who, apart from facing competition from a rival syndicate, must contend with a young man whose father he killed years ago. Plot is a yawn, but Palance looks menacing and Luis Enrique Bacalov's score is very rhythmical. English titles: *THE BIG BOSS*, *BLOOD AND BULLETS*, *MISTER SCARFACE*, *RULERS OF THE CITY*.

**Paese del Sesso Selvaggio, Il** (1972, ITA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Ivan Rassimov, Me Me Lai, Prasitsak Singhara. Photographer Rassimov travels to South East Asia to work, but is forced to flee into the jungle when he accidentally stabs a man in a brawl.

There he is captured by a primitive tribe and used as a slave laborer. Slowly he has to earn their respect, also by going through some gruesome rituals. Clearly inspired by THE MAN CALLED HORSE (1970), film is sometimes also seen as a predecessor to the cannibal films that would come out later that decade. It is more soft spoken in its plot, but also will not shy away from showing disgusting animal torture scenes. English titles: THE MAN FROM DEEP RIVER, DEEP RIVER SAVAGES, and SACRIFICE!

**Paganini Horror** (1989, ITA) **C-83m.** \*½ D: Luigi Cozzi. Starring Daria Nicolodi, Jasmine Main (=Maimone), Pascal Persiano, Maria Cristina Mastrangeli, Donald Pleasence. Italian violin master Niccola Paganini is the inspiration for this tedious horror film, cowritten by director Cozzi and star Nicolodi. During a music video shoot, the ghost of Paganini is resurrected and he kills members of the crew. Quite gory, not without atmosphere, but inept direction kills it. Entire sequences just don't work at all. Don't mix this up with the Klaus Kinski production KINSKI PAGANINI, made that same year. Aka THE KILLING VIOLIN.

**Paidia tou Diavolou, Ta** (1975, GRE) **C-102m.** \*½ D: Nico Mastorakis. Starring Bob Behling, Jane Lyle, Jessica Dublin, Gerard Gonalons, Jannice McConnell, Nikos Tsachiridis, Nico Mastorakis. A young couple spend their holiday on the idyllic Greek island of Mykonos, but they turn out to be immoral, perverted and sadistic and start abusing and killing the people around them. Infamous video nasty, banned in many countries, but film is not very explicit. Lack of character depth and motivation identify this as pure exploitation. Unfortunately it is also rather boring. Dublin's 'sex' scene must be among the most embarrassing things ever put on celluloid. English titles: ISLAND OF DEATH, DEVILS IN MYKONOS, A CRAVING FOR LUST, CRUEL DESTINATION, ISLAND OF PERVERSION, and PSYCHIC KILLER 2.

**Painted Faces** (1989, H GK) **C-112m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alex Law. Starring Samo Hung, Lan Ching-Ying, Cheng Pei-Pei. Melancholy look back at a Peking Opera school in the 1960s, whose teacher (Hung) is faced with the decline of the popularity of his art. Memorable film has fine acting and screenplay, along with a superb music score (by Lowell Lo) to recommend it. Based on autobiographical events of Samo Hung's life, who was to become a famous martial arts star in the 1970s and 1980s.

**Palabras Encadenadas** (2003, SPA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Laura Maná. Starring Dario Grandinetti, Goya Toledo, Fernando Guillén, Eric Bonicatto. Interesting but artificial psycho thriller drama about professor Grandinetti, who has abducted his ex-wife, a psychiatrist, and tells her that he has become a serial killer and she will be his 19<sup>th</sup> victim. This leads to a psycho-battle a la Starling and Lecter. Some intriguing twists throughout keep this bubbling. From the producer of THE MACHINIST (2004). English title: KILLING WORDS.

**Pale Rider** (1985, USA) **C-115m.** SCOPE \*\*½ D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Michael Moriarty, Carrie Snodgrass, Chris Penn, Richard A. Dysart, Sydney Penny, Richard Kiel, Billy Drago, Budyd Van Horn. Typical Eastwood western, although his formula started to show aging signs. The archetypal 'Man With No Name', in the guise of a preacher, reappears in a small gold mining town, which is terrorized by a landowner. Good performance by Moriarty, otherwise film is hardly rousing. Okay, for Eastwood fans. Inexplicably, this was nominated for the Golden Palm in Cannes!

**Palindromes** (2004, USA) **C-100m.** \*½ D: Todd Solondz. Starring Ellen Barkin, Rachel Corr, Richard Masur, Alexander Brickel, Jennifer Jason Leigh. Daring drama from the maker of HAPPINESS (1998) and STORYTELLING (2001). Story deals with 12 or 13-year old girl, who wants to get pregnant just for the hell of it and the repercussions of her choice. Beware: The girl is played by several child actresses, who couldn't be more different! Obviously a comment on the bigotry of society and the nihilism that rules part of today's youth, but most of it is thoroughly off-putting, not to say perverted. View only if you like Solondz' work.

**Pallbearer, The** (1996, USA) **C-98m. \*\*½ D:** Matt Reeves. Starring David Schwimmer, Gwyneth Paltrow, Barbara Hershey, Michael Rapaport, Toni Collette, Carol Kane. Self-conscious single Schwimmer, who still lives with his mother, is asked to be pallbearer at a long-forgotten friend's funeral. He is soon torn between the dead pal's sexy mother (Hershey) and a girl he was unhappily in love with in high school (Paltrow). Comedy-drama casts *Friends* star Schwimmer and gorgeous Paltrow in the lead roles, but script makes no points at all and unfortunately remains superficially romantic. Schwimmer's dumb look is simply annoying after a while.

**Palmetto** (1998, USA/GER) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Volker Schlöndorff. Starring Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Shue, Gina Gershon, Rolf Hoppe, Michael Rapaport, Chloë Sevigny, Tom Wright. Atmospheric noir-like thriller, adapted from James Hadley Chase's novel *Just Another Sucker*. Harrelson plays an ex-journalist who has just been released from prison. He meets 'femme fatale' Shue, who persuades him to 'kidnap' her stepdaughter, so she can cash in \$500,000 from her old and sick husband Hoppe. Unpredictable complications ensue, which are best not revealed here. Outstanding cinematography (by Thomas Kloss) recreates the 40s *noir* atmosphere, although the film is set in the 1990s. Thriller maintains suspense despite a few inconsistencies in the plot. The intimate scenes involving Shue and Harrelson are pretty steamy. Gershon, playing Harrelson's girlfriend, is given very little to do.

**Palookaville** (1996, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Alan Taylor. Starring William Forsythe, Vincent Gallo, Adam Trese, Frances McDormand, Robert LuPone, Lisa Gay Hamilton, Kim Dickens, Bridgit Ryan, Douglas Seale. Three unemployed friends decide to turn to a world of crime but seem to be too idiotic to complete any job. Slight but likable comedy that is too self-conscious and unfocused for a better rating.

**Panda Kopanda** (1972/73, JAP) **C-71m. \*\*\* D:** Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Kazuko Sugiyama, Kazuo Kumakura, Yoshiko Ohta, Yasuo Yamada. Compilation of two cute animated shorts marks another collaboration of Hayao Miyazaki (writer) and Isao Takahata (director) after their work for the LUPIN III TV series. The first of the two shorts introduces a little girl whose grandmother goes away for a few days, leaving her alone in the house. She is visited by a Panda bear baby and his father, who turn out to be fugitives from a zoo. Intended for small children, who will find this very cute and funny. The second short, released in 1973 and titled PANDA KOPANDA AMEFURI SAKASU NO MAKI, continues the girl's adventures with the Panda bears and is superior to the first, as Miyazaki's creative genius is given full reign. Our protagonists are joined by a tiger baby from a circus and are surprised by a monstrous flood. Yoshifumi Kondo (MIMI WO SUMASEBA) was among the crew. English titles: PANDA! GO PANDA!, and PANDA, LITTLE PANDA.

**Pane e Cioccolata** (1973, ITA) **C-115m. \*\*\* D:** Franco Brusati. Starring Nino Manfredi, Anna Karina, Johnny Dorelli, Paolo Turco, Max Delys. Bittersweet comedy about bumbling Italian Manfredi who goes to Switzerland to find a job but has to realize that he is not accepted there. Well-acted, funny, but also dramatically uneven. Photographed by Luciano Tovoli (SUSPIRIA). Titled BREAD AND CHOCOLATE and cut to 107m. for film's U.S. release in 1978.

**Panic Room** (2002, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Fincher. Starring Jodie Foster, Kristen Stewart, Forest Whitaker, Dwight Yoakam, Jared Leto, Patrick Bauchau. Recently divorced Foster moves into a new apartment with her daughter. It has a so-called Panic Room, which is supposed to protect them from burglars, muggers and the like. Needless to say, things go wrong in the first night already. Thriller is overly simplistic at the beginning but beautifully mounted by screenwriter David Koepp. Well-directed, well-scored by Howard Shore. Cinematographer Darius Khondji was replaced by Conrad W. Hall (Conrad Hall's son).

Nevertheless, movie marks a continuation of director Fincher's dark visual style. That's Nicole Kidman's voice on the phone as Bauchau's lover.

**Paper Moon** (1973, USA) **102m**. \*\*\*\* D: Peter Bogdanovich. Starring Ryan O'Neal, Tatum O'Neal, Madeleine Kahn, John Hillerman, Randy Quaid. Brilliantly entertaining road-movie drama about small-time crook O'Neal who travels the country with a wise-cracking little girl (Tatum O'Neal), who may be his daughter (and *is* in real life!). Together they live through unforgettable vignettes as slowly a deep friendship develops between them. One of the best comedy-dramas of the 1970s. Plot apparently lifted from a German comedy of 1955, which starred Heinz Rühmann.

**Paper Planes** (2014, AUS) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Robert Connolly. Starring Ed Oxenbould, Sam Worthington, Julian Dennison, Peter Rowsthorn, Alex Williams, David Wenham, Terry Norris. Inspiring family movie about 12-year-old Oxenbould (from the ALEXANDER movie), who enters a paper plane competition without getting any support from his depressed father Worthington. This eventually takes him to Tokyo, Japan, where he finds out what's important in life. Simple but good-natured, engrossing coming-of-age tale. The score is especially elaborate.

**Paper Tiger** (1975, GBR) **C-99m**. SCOPE \*\* D: Ken Annakin. Starring David Niven, Toshirô Mifune, Hardy Krüger, Ando, Irene Tsu, Ivan Desny. Mild comedy drama about Brit Niven (was her ever slated to play someone else?), who takes up job of teaching ambassador Mifune's son some English, then becomes involved in a kidnapping. Not very funny or sweeping, despite having Annakin as a director. Fairly good score is best thing about it.

**Paper Towns** (2015, USA) **C-109m**. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D: Jake Schreier. Starring Nat Wolff, Cara Delevingne, Austin Abrams, Justice Smith, Halston Sage. Engrossing teen drama about the unusual relationship between conservative Wolff and free-spirited Delevingne. He has always been in love with her, although she has drifted away from him since their childhood. When she teams up with him in order to get her revenge on her ex-boyfriend and his friends, he thinks his chance has come to confess his love, but then she disappears. Can he find her again – with the help of clues she has left behind? Totally original, entertaining comedy drama has great performances and a fine score. Might become a cult film. Based on a novel by John Green (THE FAULT IN OUR STARS).

**Papillon** (1973, USA) **C-150m**. SCOPE \*\*½ D: Franklin J. Schaffner. Starring Steve McQueen, Dustin Hoffman, Victor Jory, Don Gordon, Anthony Zerbe, Robert Deman, Woodrow Parfrey, Bill Mumy, Richard Farnsworth. Prison drama based on the autobiography of Henri Charrière about McQueen, a 'pimp killer' who gets sent to infamous prison on an island off the coast of French Guyana, where no one can escape. Slowly paced, anti-climactic throughout, but McQueen's performance is impressive, as is Hoffman's as his friend. Good location work. Fine Jerry Goldsmith score was Oscar-nominated. DVD contains an interesting making-of documentary entitled THE MAGNIFICENT REBEL with Charrière on the set explaining things (only months before his death of throat cancer).

**Papillon, Le** (2002, FRA) **C-85m**. \*\*\* D: Philippe Muyl. Starring Michel Serrault, Claire Bouanich, Nade Dieu, Françoise Michaud, Hélène Hily. Lonely butterfly collector Serrault makes the acquaintance of a neglected little girl, 8-year-old Bouanich. When her mother fails to show up one evening, the old man takes her with him on a trip to the mountains, where he hopes to catch a rare butterfly. Soft-spoken drama is not perfect but doesn't need to be. With a story and actors like this you can't go wrong. English title: THE BUTTERFLY.

**Papurika** (2006, JAP) **C-90m**. \*\*½ D: Satoshi Kon. Starring (the voices of) Megumi Hayashibara, Torô Furuya, Kôichi Yamadera. Elaborate animated fantasy set in the future, where one invention enables people to enter somebody else's dreams. The title character

is the alter ego of a scientist, who must stop a villain putting everyone into a coma. A kind of variation of STRANGE DAYS (1995) and precursor to INCEPTION (2010) at the same time, this one is complicated and quite weird. Story never catches fire, but judge for yourself. Film has a fervent following. English title: PAPRIKA.

**Parallax View, The** (1974, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alan J. Pakula. Starring Warren Beatty, Paula Prentiss, Hume Cronyn, William Daniels, Earl Hindman, Anthony Zerbe. Conspiracy thriller about reporter Beatty who is made aware of the fact that years after a senator's assassination people who were present have been dying mysteriously. Is it a coincidence? Deliberately paced mystery has an unrelenting atmosphere, aided by Michael Small's excellent score. Photographed by Gordon Willis. Based on a novel by Loren Singer.

**Paranoia** (1970, ITA/SPA) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Carroll Baker, Jean Sorel, Luis Dávila, Alberto Dalbés, Marina Coffa, Anna Proclemer, Hugo Blanco, Calisto Tanzi. Racing car driver Baker must retire after an accident. Upon her release from rehabilitation, she is invited by her ex-husband Sorel to his exclusive villa. Soon it becomes clear that his new wife Proclemer would rather see him dead... but that's not the end of the story. Typically convoluted thriller, watchable, but poorly acted (especially by Sorel), rather poorly paced. Easy-listening score by Gregorio García Segura, (conducted by Piero Umiliani) provides period flavor. Reportedly, Joe D'Amato was camera operator. Don't mix this up with Lenzi's ORGASMO (1969), which was known as PARANOIA in some countries and also starred Baker. Also known as A QUIET PLACE TO KILL, and A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO KILL.

**Paranoiac** (1963, GBR) **B&W-80m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Freddie Francis. Starring Janette Scott, Oliver Reed, Sheila Burrell, Maurice Denham, Alexander Devion. Minor Hammer chiller about Reed's troubled family, who can't deal with sudden arrival of son Devion, who was thought to be dead for years. Is Devion telling the truth or is Reed trying to drive his sister to insanity? Rather bland thriller picks up toward the finale, with some solid acting and Francis' interesting visual style.

**Paranorman** (2012, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\*½** D: Sam Fell, Chris Butler. Norman isn't exactly your average boy from the neighbourhood... he can see dead people. That's why his loony uncle asks him to take over the job of soothing a 300-year-old witch that is about to unleash a horde of zombies on his town. Stop-motion animated horror comedy sounds like it cannot fail, but almost does. Average, almost boring plot is uplifted in exciting finale. Several horror movie references ranging from FRIDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> to HALLOWEEN don't really help. Film on the whole should have been much better.

**Parapsycho – Spektrum der Angst** (1975, GER/AUT) **C-103m. \*½** D: Peter Patzak. Starring Leon Askin, Debra Berger, William Berger, Mathieu Carrière, Marisa Mell, Jane Tilden. Deadening three-part horror drama examines the power of the mind telling three unconnected stories about parapsychological phenomena. Gained some notoriety for showing a real autopsy, but it's talk, talk, talk. The title is the only interesting thing about it.

**Par de Zapatos del '32, Un** (1974, SPA/ITA) **C-86m. \*\*\*½** D: Rafael Romero Marchent. Starring Ray Milland, Sylva Koscina, Remiro Oliveros, Franco Giacobini, Charly Bravo, María Silva, Eduardo Calvo. Interesting giallo-like thriller set in France: Milland plays doctor at a boarding school for boys, who has hired an assassin to kill someone. When the killer does this by blowing up an entire plane, killing 140 innocent people, Milland clubs him to death. However, one of the boys, we don't know who, witnessed this killing. How can Milland find out who was the witness? Remains interesting, if not too credible or compelling. Good score by Stelvio Cipriani. Italian title: QUALCUNA L'HA VISTO UCCIDERE (SOMEONE SAW HIM KILL). English titles: WITNESS TO MURDER, THE STUDENT CONNECTION.

**Parker** (1984, GBR) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Jim Goddard. Starring Bryan Brown, Cherie Lunghi, Kurt Raab, Elizabeth Spriggs, Bob Peck, Uwe Ochsenknecht, Dana Gillespie, Ingrid Pitt, Tom Wilkinson, Hannelore Elsner. Unusually structured thriller about businessman Brown, who has spent eleven days in the power of kidnappers and returns to his every-day life without a clue. Who abducted him and why? Brown's performance remains too cold to make this work, but worth a look. Bogs down in last third, though. Partly set (and shot) in Germany. Also known as BONES.

**Par Ou T'Es Rentré ? On T'A Pas Vu Sortir** (1984, FRA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Philippe Clair. Starring Jerry Lewis, Philippe Clair, Marthe Villalonga, Connie Nielsen, Jess Hahn, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Obnoxious comedy marks Jerry Lewis' very last slapstick starring vehicle after unsuccessfully attempting to revive his acting career in the early 1980s (not counting THE KING OF COMEDY, which had him in a serious role, however). He plays a private detective in France, who is hired to prove someone is having an affair. Only available in a French version with Jerry dubbed. The plot is weak, and most of the scenes are just not funny. Never released in the U.S. (as stipulated by Lewis in a contract!). Score by Alan Silvestri. English title: HOW DID YOU GET IN? WE DIDN'T SEE YOU LEAVE.

**Paroxismus** (1969, GBR/ITA/GER) **C-86m.** \*\*½ D: Jess Franco. Starring James Darren, Barbara McNair, Maria Rohm, Klaus Kinski, Dennis Price, Margaret Lee, Adolfo Lastretti, Paul Muller, Manfred Mann, Jess Franco. Jazz musician Darren finds dead Rohm washed ashore on a Turkish beach, then inexplicably meets her in a bar in Rio. It turns out that she fell victim to an orgy with Kinski, Price and Lee... or did she? Has she only come back for revenge? One of Franco's best loved films has several things going for it: the dreamlike story, convincing performances, and most of all, Manfred Mann's easy-listening score. It does grow tiresome after a while, but twist ending compensates. A time capsule, and a must for Franco followers. Also known as VENUS IN FURS, but not to be confused with another, same-titled 1969 release LE MALIZIE DI VENERE.

**Partie de Campagne, Une** (1936/46, FRA) **B&W-40m.** n/r D: Jean Renoir. Starring Sylvia Bataille, Georges D'Arnoux, Jeanne (Jane) Marken, André Gabriello, Jacques Borel (=Jacques B. Brunius), Jean Renoir. Renoir's famous ode to nature follows city people to the country, where they want to enjoy themselves and relax. The men go fishing, and the women let themselves be wooed by the locals. Interesting clash of lifestyles, superbly scored by Joseph Kosma, photographed by Claude Renoir. Edited in Renoir's absence, released ten years after it was originally shot. Among Renoir's assistants: Jacques Becker, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Yves Allégret, and Luchino Visconti! English title: A DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

**Partie de Plaisir, Une** (1974, FRA/ITA) **C-101m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Paul Gégauff, Danièle Gégauff, Clemence Gégauff, Paula Moore, Michel Valetta. Fine Chabrol drama about relationship between Paul and Marie Gégauff (both married in real life at that time), which is marred when he confesses that he has had several affairs and suggests she do the same. Realistic, unpretentious film was written by Gégauff himself. In real life he suffered a terrible fate; he was murdered by his second wife in 1983. English title: PIECE OF PLEASURE.

**Party, The** (1968, USA) **C-99m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, Claudine Longet, Buddy Lester, Gavin MacLeod. After two successful PINK PANTHER comedies, director Edwards reteamed with his star Peter Sellers and delivered this priceless comedy. A bumbling Indian extra is mistakenly invited to a bombastic party at a film producer's villa and wreaks unintentional havoc there. As much a time capsule as it is a Sellers one-man-show. None other than him could have made this work. Score by Henry Mancini, photographed by Lucien Ballard.

**Passager de la Pluie, Le** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-117m. \*\*\*½ D:** René Clément. Starring Charles Bronson, Marlène Jobert, Jill Ireland, Annie Cordy. On a rainy day a stranger arrives in a French seaside town. Jobert, whose husband is away, is raped by the man and subsequently kills him, disposing of his body in the sea without telling the police. The next day another stranger (Bronson) arrives and begins questioning her about what happened that night, but Jobert, suffering from a childhood trauma, refuses to tell the truth. Deliberately paced psycho drama, with excellent mise-en-scène and score (by Francis Lai). Fascinating, if not for all tastes. Script by Sébastien Japrisot, based on his novel. Won a Golden Globe for Best Foreign Film. English title: RIDER ON THE RAIN.

**Passage to India, A** (1984, GBR) **C-163m. \*\*\* D:** David Lean. Starring Judy Davis, Victor Banerjee, Peggy Ashcroft, James Fox, Alec Guinness, Nigel Havers, Richard Wilson, Antonia Pemberton, Michael Culver. Lengthy but worthwhile adaptation of E.M. Forster's masterful novel about young British woman (Davis) who travels to India to be engaged to a British magistrate, and meets geniality in a Muslim doctor (Banerjee). Fine performances carry film to an abrupt conclusion; Forster's original ending was dropped. Director Lean's final film (BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI, DOCTOR ZHIVAGO).

**Passengers** (2016, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Morten Tyldum. Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Chris Pratt, Michael Sheen, Laurence Fishburne, Andy Garcia. Stunningly designed science-fiction drama about a giant space vessel on its way to a distant planet, a second Earth. Thousands of people on board are in hypersleep, but when the spacecraft hits a meteor, Pratt's hibernation pod malfunctions and he is woken up – 90 years before the estimated time of arrival. How to get a companion apart from android bartender Sheen? Interesting, well-paced sci-fi whose real star is the design of the spaceship and its amenities. The stars are good.

**Passi di Morte Perduti nel Buio** (1977, ITA/GRE) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Maurizio Pradeaux. Starring Leonard Mann, Robert Webber, Vera Krouska, Nino Maimone, Barbara Seidel. On the Istanbul-Athens express a woman is murdered when the train passes through a tunnel. The people in her compartment are the suspects, including photographer Mann, who owns the murder weapon. Together with his silly girlfriend he tries to convince inspector Webber (based in Athens) that he didn't do it. Giallo mystery is well-plotted, stylishly made and even has a sense of humor. A late-bloomer for the genre, with a fine score by Riz Ortolani. English title: DEATH STEPS IN THE DARK.

**Passion** (2012, GER/FRA) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Brian De Palma. Starring Rachel McAdams, Noomi Rapace, Karoline Herfurth, Paul Anderson, Riner Bock, Benjamin Sadler, Dominic Raacke. Thriller about advertising exec McAdams, who manipulates, uses and abuses the people around her, especially her fragile assistant Rapace and secretary Herfurth, and will do anything to further her career. Revealing more of the plot would be spoiling it. That said, it takes too long for the twist, but when it finally becomes thrilling, we get our money's worth. Very elaborate Pino Donaggio score carries the film a long way. Has a very European feel to it. A remake of the Alain Corneau film CRIME D'AMOUR (2010).

**Password: Uccidete Agente Gordon** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Terence Hathaway (=Sergio Grieco). Starring Roger Browne, Helga Liné, Miguel de la Riva, Franco Ressel, Rosalba Neri, Andrea Scotti, Angel Menéndez, Umberto Raho. James Bond clone about agent Gordon (Browne) who is assigned to stop smuggling syndicate run by Ressel. Tame, with lots of poorly staged fist fights, nowhere near the Connery originals. Only passable things are Piero Umiliani's score and Neri's see-through underwear. Strictly for fans. English title: PASSWORD: KILL AGENT GORDON.

**Past Midnight** (1992, USA) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Jan Eliasberg. Starring Rutger Hauer, Natasha Richardson, Clancy Brown, Guy Boyd, Ernie Lively, Tom Wright. Mediocre thriller about social worker Richardson's romantic involvement with ex-con Hauer, who may or may not have killed his pregnant wife fifteen years ago. Manages to create some suspense, and charismatic Hauer lends credibility, but film is marred in unnecessarily stupid conclusion. First screen credit (associate producer) for Quentin Tarantino.

**Patch Adams** (1998, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tom Shadyac. Starring Robin Williams, Monica Potter, Daniel London, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Bob Gunton, Irma P. Hall, Josef Sommer, Peter Coyote, Michael Jeter, Harve Presnell, Richard Kiley, Harold Gould. Endearing, outright funny drama about the real-life Patch Adams (Williams), who turns himself into psychiatric care and finds he wants to become a doctor, making sick people not only healthy but also happy along the way. He meets resistance in the university's dean (Presnell), but doesn't refrain from trying out his unconventional (and very successful) methods. Williams is once more brilliant and makes you forget about some plot incongruencies and the false (Hollywood) endings. In fact, this spirited film, based on Hunter "Patch" Adams' book *Gesundheit: Good Health Is a Laughing Matter*, might also have been titled THE WORLD ACCORDING TO PATCH, or DEAD DOCTOR'S SOCIETY, bearing resemblance to Williams' best work of his career.

**Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid** (1973, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring James Coburn, Kris Kristofferson, Richard Jaeckel, Katy Jurado, Chill Wills, Barry Sullivan, Jason Robards, Bob Dylan, R.G. Armstrong, Luke Askew, John Beck, Richard Bright, Matt Clark, Rita Coolidge, Jack Elam, L.Q. Jones, Slim Pickens, Charles Martin Smith, Harry Dean Stanton, Rudy Wurlitzer, Elisha Cook, Jr. Perhaps the ultimate portrayal of the dying Wild West, presented by none other than Sam Peckinpah. Disenchanted Pat Garrett (Coburn), having corrupted his own code of ethics and working as a lawman now, goes after ruthless Billy the Kid (Kristofferson), whose wild world of shoot-outs and killings is crumbling. Film follows Garrett's increasingly reluctant chase of the gunslinger, whose violent days seem numbered. Mesmerizing, intermittently very violent western drama is top in all compartments. Lush photography by John Coquillon, melancholy score by Bob Dylan, who plays the role of Alias, a hanger-on who doesn't care which side he is on. Black-and-white frame narrative (which shows Garrett's death 28 years later) renders film all the more depressing (and fascinating). Exceptional cast, perhaps Coburn and Kristofferson's finest hours. Beware of 103m. version, which may still be in circulation.

**Paths of Glory** (1957, USA/GER) **86m. \*\*\*\*** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Kirk Douglas, Ralph Meeker, Adolphe Menjou, George Macready, Wayne Morris, Richard Anderson, Timothy Carey, Suzanne Christian, Bert Freed, Joseph Turkel. Harrowing, lightning-paced account of the fate of a bataillon during World War One as they fail to accomplish a mission given to them by fanatic general Macready. Excellent cast, ingenious direction in drama that shows how little human life is worth in a war, and that personal fates are disregarded completely. Kubrick adapted Humphrey Cobb's novel, which was based on a true incident.

**Patrick** (1978, AUS) **C-87m. \*½** D: Richard Franklin. Starring Susan Penhaligon, Robert Helpmann, Rod Mullinar, Bruce Barry, Julia Blake. Unspectacular horror thriller about a young man, who kills his mother and her lover (brutally) and subsequently falls into a coma. Nurse Penhaligon discovers that Patrick has psychic powers that he uses to kill. Poorly plotted and directed, a waste of time. Boring in shortened 85m. version, quite possibly unbearable in 96m., 105m. or even 115m. versions that reportedly exist out there. Goblin rescored film for European release, original music was by Brian May. Remade as PATRICK VIVE ANCORA in 1980.

**Patrick Vive Ancora** (1980, ITA) **C-93m**.  $\frac{7}{8}$  D: Mario Landi. Starring Sascha Pitoeff, Gianni Dei, Mairangela Giordano, Carmen Russo. Splatter remake of Richard Franklin's PATRICK (1978) is about a comatose patient at a private clinic, who kills the residents with telekinetic powers. Absolutely dreadful, even horror fans will be bored (although the ultra-gross iron stake scene has to be seen to be believed). Alternative titles: PATRICK STILL LIVES or PATRICK IS STILL ALIVE.

**Patriot, The** (2000, USA) **C-164m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Roland Emmerich. Starring Mel Gibson, Heath Ledger, Joely Richardson, Jason Isaacs, Chris Cooper, Tchéky Karyo, Rene Auberjonois, Donal Logue, Adam Baldwin. The American War of Independence, as seen through the eyes of peaceful but patriotic Gibson, who is disowned and swears revenge when one of his sons is killed. Lavishly filmed epic, whose point-of-view is a matter of discussion, but terrific (and violent) battle scenes make film worth watching. A smash-hit in the tradition of THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS (1992) or BRAVEHEART (1995). Score by John Williams.

**Paul** (2011, USA/GBR) **C-104m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Greg Mottola. Starring Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Seth Rogen, Jeffrey Tambor, David Koechner, Jason Bateman, Sigourney Weaver. Two British nerds attend the Comic Convention in San Diego and go on a tour of alleged Alien crash sites, when they stumble upon a real alien. His name is Paul and he shows pretty human characteristics and weaknesses. In fact, only his appearance makes him different from a typical slacker. They go on the run from the FBI and several other people. So-so plot generates a few laughs. Simon Pegg and his sidekick are funny.

**Paul Blart: Mall Cop** (2009, USA) **C-91m**. \*\*\* D: Steve Carr. Starring Kevin James, Keir O'Donnell, Jayma Mays, Raini Rodriguez, Shirley Knight, Bobby Cannavale. Funny comedy about overweight mall cop James, who thinks he will never strike a date, although he is in love with shop assistant Mays. Then criminals want to take over the mall and James gets a chance of showing his courage. Relies completely on James' comic talent and succeeds. A nice time-filler, with some laugh-out-loud gags. Cowritten and coproduced by James.

**Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2** (2015, USA) **C-94m**. \*\*½ D: Andy Fickman. Starring Kevin James, Raini Rodriguez, Neal McDonough, Daniella Alonso, Nicholas Turturro. At a mall cop convention(!) in Las Vegas, 'officer' Blart (James) must try to thwart the plans of an evil art thief. Sequel to the 2009 hit has some laughs, a few chuckles, but also some gags that don't work. Okay crime comedy. James cowrote and coproduced again.

**Paulie** (1998, USA) **C-91m**. \*\*\* D: John Roberts. Starring Gena Rowlands, Tony Shalhoub, Cheech Marin, Bruce Davison, Trini Alvarado, Jay Mohr, Buddy Hackett, Matt Craven. Inoffensive, enjoyable family film about speaking parrot Paulie and his odyssey, when is whisked away from his owner, a little girl. He is discovered by a Russian janitor (Shalhoub), who then listens to his life story. Amusing comedy from DreamWorks Pictures with good performances and colorful art direction.

**Paura in Città** (1976, ITA) **C-99m**. \*½ D: Giuseppe Rosati. Starring James Mason, Raymond Pellegrin, Maurizio Merli, Silvia Dionisio, Fausto Tozzi, Cyril Cusack. Trivial, tired actioner about tough cop Merli, who is reinstated to battle crime lord Pellegrin. Merli shows some charisma, but pace is a disaster. It's anyone's guess why Mason appeared in garbage like this. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. English titles: HOT STUFF, STREET WAR.

**Paura nella Città dei Morti Viventi** (1980, ITA) **C-89m**. \*\*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Christopher George, Catriona MacColl, Venantino Venantini, Michele Soavi, Janet Agren, Lucio Fulci. Medium MacColl has visions of a city of zombies and swoons in one of her sessions. She is presumed dead, and buried, but journalist George rescues her from the coffin. Together they investigate the mysterious going-ons in town of Dunwich, where a priest has hung himself and the dead walk the earth. Atmospheric, well-directed horror

shocker with many delirious ideas (bleeding glass shards, flying maggots, brain-squashing, guts-spewing zombies) wreaks terror in parts, plods in others. Understandably a cult favorite among horror buffs. Score by Fabio Frizzi is a good imitation of Goblin's theme for DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978). Also known as CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD, FEAR IN THE CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD, THE GATES OF HELL, and TWILIGHT OF THE DEAD.

**Payback** (1999, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Brian Koppelman. Starring Mel Gibson, Gregg Henry, Maria Bello, David Payner, Bill Duke, Deborah Kara Unger, John Glover, William Devane, Kris Kristofferson, James Coburn. Completely superfluous remake of POINT BLANK, like the 1967 classic based on Richard Stark's novel *The Hunter*. Film wavers uncomfortably between action and comedy (the latter obviously a commercial must due to Gibson's LETHAL WEAPON image), as crook Gibson is left for dead after a hold-up and tries to get revenge on his partner. The asset of the original was not the story but the stylish, surreal presentation, and Koppelman (screenwriter of L.A. CONFIDENTIAL) fails expectedly.

**Paycheck** (2003, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Woo. Starring Ben Affleck, Aaron Eckhart, Uma Thurman, Paul Giamatti, Colm Feore. Science-fiction thriller about special engineer Affleck, who steals corporate secrets from other companies and sells them, always getting a huge paycheck in return for having his memory erased. His latest job goes awry and he finds himself pursued – what happened in the last three years of his life? Some expected Wooish action set-pieces, interesting story (from a short story by Philip K. Dick), but plot never really catches fire (or creates credibility). And what's with those PSYCHO references? Thurman is wasted in a minor role. Woo also coproduced.

**Pay the Ghost** (2015, CDN) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Uli Edel. Starring Nicolas Cage, Sarah Wayne Callies, Veronica Ferres, Lyriq Bent, Stephen McHattie. Historian Cage and his wife are devastated when their little son disappears during a Halloween parade. Almost exactly one year later there are strange occurrences, signs that he is reaching out to them from another dimension? Mystery thriller becomes quite creepy in second half, but it's too fabricated and by-the-numbers, with Ferres' role especially pointless. Based on the novel by Tim Lebbon.

**Peace Hotel, The** (1995, HGK) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Wai Ka-Fai. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Cecilia Yip, Chin Ho, Lau Shun, Annabelle Liew. Strange eastern-western mix about ex-killer Chow, who runs title establishment, which houses exclusively former gangsters who want to go straight. When a lying, cheating and stealing woman arrives, Chow must decide if he wants to protect her from the hordes that want to lynch her. Well-produced (by John Woo) and quite well-made but action scenes are rare and Chow's story is hardly interesting or at least too slowly paced.

**Peacemaker, The** (1997, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Mimi Leder. Starring George Clooney, Nicole Kidman, Marcel Jures, Alexander Baluev, René Medvesek, Gary Wernitz, Armin Müller-Stahl. Action thriller about two U.S. special agents (Clooney and Kidman) who have to retrieve stolen atom bombs, which might be on their way to the Iran. Film is obviously a commercial enterprise (some eight or nine producers are credited!), its quick pace can hardly offset the illogical and completely incredible plot. Car chase sequence in Vienna is the only good sequence. Produced by Steven Spielberg's Dreamworks studios.

**Pearl Harbor** (2001, USA) **C-184m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Bay. Starring Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett, Kate Beckinsale, Cuba Gooding Jr., Jon Voight, Alec Baldwin, Tom Sizemore, William Lee Scott, Jennifer Garner, Dan Aykroyd, Mako, Tom Everett, John Diehl, Matt Damon. Big-budget blockbuster from the team that brought you ARMAGEDDON (1998). Film recounts cute love triangle, which is given a spin by ravaging WW2 and the surprising, devastating attack by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor in 1941. Typical war movie

script portrays the effects of war on a personal basis and offsets this by furious bomber attack sequences. Despite some glorification of war heroism, film scores on the emotional level, and is extremely well-photographed. Hartnett does not fit in 1940s context, but period flavor isn't film's main asset. Good score by Hans Zimmer.

**Peau d'Âne** (1970, FRA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Jacques Demy. Starring Catherine Deneuve, Jean Marais, Jacques Perrin, Micheline Presle, Delphine Seyrig, Fernand Ledoux, Henri Crémieux, Sacha Pitoeff, Coluche, Rufus, narrated by Jean Servais. A fairy tale, Jacques Demy style. When her mother dies and her father, the King, might just choose her as his second wife, princess Deneuve flees from his kingdom and becomes Donkey Skin, using a donkey costume to keep anyone from discovering her. Her life is lonely, however. Outstanding color cinematography (by Ghislain Cloquet) makes this very interesting, though story tends to be too low key. Extensive use of songs, fine score by Michel Legrand. English titles: DONKEY SKIN, MAGIC DONKEY, and ONCE UPON A TIME.

**Peau d'Espion** (1967, FRA/GER/ITA) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Eduard Molinaro. Starring Louis Jourdan, Senta Berger, Edmond O'Brien, Maurice Garrel, Bernard Blier, Anna Gael, Paul Muller. Berger's attraction to independent novelist Jourdan leads to his involvement with her husband, a newspaper editor, who wants to take the man to Heidelberg with a scientist. The characters' intentions remain a mystery for a long time in this drama about espionage, but that's also what keeps you watching in a way. After an hour film runs out of steam. Based on the novel by Jacques Robert. English title: TO COMMIT A MURDER.

**Pecker** (1998, USA) **C-86m.** \*\*½ D: John Waters. Starring Edward Furlong, Christina Ricci, Martha Plimpton, Lili Taylor, Bess Armstrong, Mark Joy, Mary Kay Place, Brendan Sexton III, Mink Stole. Amusing - if slight - satire by 'bad-taste' icon John Waters, with Furlong playing a young photographer who shoots photos of everyone living in the neighborhood of his suburban home in Baltimore. One day he is discovered by gallery owner Taylor and he becomes a star. However, this changes his and his friends' and family's life more for the worse than for the better. Wonderful assortment of characters can't camouflage aimless plot, which peters out without a satisfying resolution.

**Peeping Tom** (1960, GBR) **C-101m.** \*\*\* D: Michael Powell. Starring Carl Boehm (=Karlheinz Böhm), Moira Shearer, Anna Massey, Maxine Audley, Brenda Bruce, Martin Miller. Unsettling psycho drama about disturbed photographer Boehm, who murders young women and films them at the moment of death. Score, art direction are first-rate, and Boehm is almost too good as psychopath suffering from a childhood trauma. A scandal when originally released, film is less potent today but obviously still too gruesome for German TV stations, who show the film in a cut version(!).

**Peking Opera Blues** (1986, HGK) **C-105m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Tsui Hark. Starring Lin Ching-Hsia, Sally Yeh, Chrie Chung, Mark Cheng, Po-Chih Leong, Wu Ma. Well-produced action comedy from one of Hong Kong's most prolific filmmakers. A group of revolutionary guerillas attempt to steal a valuable document and become entangled in street fights, comic situations and romance. Well-made historical eastern is very entertaining, if not terribly plot-wise. Martial arts sequences directed by Ching Siu-Tung, director of the SWORDSMAN series.

**Películas Para No Dormir: Cuento de Navidad** (2005, SPA) **C-71m.** \*\*½ D: Paco Plaza. Starring Maru Valdivielso, Christian Casas, Roger Babiá, Pau Poch, Ivana Baquero. In 1985 Spain five kids find an injured woman in a Santa suit lying in a pit in the middle of the forest. When they realize she has just stolen 2 million Pesetas, they decide to blackmail her. Nice period flavour despite meagre budget, film is actually quite good although a bit uneven. The

first of SIX FILMS TO KEEP YOU AWAKE released in 2005/2006. The others were directed by the likes of Jaume Balaguero and Àlex de la Iglesia. English subtitle: THE CHRISTMAS TALE.

**Pelle Svanslös** (1981, SWE) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: Stig Lasseby, Jan Gissberg. Simple but cute animated feature about tailless cat Pelle, who goes to the big city where he is scorned and has to earn his respect. This true-to-life cartoon is so funny, adults will like it as much as kids.

**Pelts** (2006, USA) **C-58m. n/r** D: Dario Argento. Starring Meat Loaf Aday, Ellen Ewusie, Link Baker, Emilio Salituro, John Saxon. Second of Argento's episodes for TV's Masters of Horror (2005) series about a fur-maker (Meat Loaf), who learns of quite exceptional raccoon furs and plans to prepare and sell them. However, the creatures have a way of getting their revenge on everyone that comes in contact with the pelts. Meat Loaf brings conviction to his role but plot is only so-so. Ewusie's flawless physique and Attila Vaski's really gruesome effects attract attention, though look in vain for an Argento trademark other than the gore. Claudio Simonetti (Goblin) was inspired by older Argento movies for his rather odd score. Veteran actor Saxon had worked with Argento on the 1982 TENEBRE.

**Pembalasan Si Pitung** (1977, INES) **C-95m. \*½** D: Nawi Ismail. Starring Dicky Zulkarnaen, Sandi Suwardi Hasan, A. Hamid Arief, Rina Hasyim, Grace Simon, Billy Chong. Indonesian war movie, with their hatred for the Dutch more than evident. Plot vaguely centers around commando, who are battling the Dutch. Nothing worth your time. Third in a series of films made by the director. English translation of title is REVENGE OF PITUNG (an Indonesian hero/legend). International title: TIGER COMMANDO.

**Pen Choo Kab Pee** (2006, THA) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Wisit Sasanatieng. Starring Suporntip Chuangrangsri, Tassawan Seneewongse, Siraphan Wattanajinda. Quite typical Thai ghost story about a pregnant woman who seeks refuge at a widow's house. There are stories of ghosts which live in and around the lady's estate. Stylish settings, but almost no thrills or scares. And I guessed the ending much too early. English title: THE UNSEEABLE.

**Penitentiary** (1979, USA) **C-99m. \*\*** D: Jamaa Fanaka. Starring Gloria Delaney, Badja Djola, Leon Isaac Kennedy, Chuck Mitchell. Rough prison thriller (a classic for some) about Kennedy who unjustly goes to prison, where he acquires respect by winning boxing bouts. Some tense sequences may make it worthwhile for prison fanatics, but plot is trivial. Followed by two sequels.

**Penitentiary II** (1982, USA) **C-108m. \*½** D: Jamaa Fanaka. Starring Leon Isaac Kennedy, Ernie Hudson, Gerald Berns, Mr. T, Dennis Lipscomb. Sequel to PENITENTIARY has Kennedy return to the ring, when former nemesis Hudson brutally rapes and kills his girlfriend. Some intense scenes (especially the one after the murder), but film lacks the authenticity of the first and treads a much too familiar path. Followed by PENITENTIARY III in 1987.

**Pentito, Il** (1985, ITA) **C-119m. \*\*½** D: Pasquale Squitieri. Starring Franco Nero, Tony Musante, Erik Estrada, Max von Sydow, Rita Rusic (=Cecchi Gori), Ivo Garrani, Claudine Auger, Rik Battaglia, Venantino Venantini. Another one of director Squitieri's mafia dramas (one wonders why they never knocked him off). Quite unexceptional, earnest film that is based on the real-life judge Falcone, who battled the Cosa Nostra, with Nero playing the title character. Despite the performances and Ennio Morricone's unsettling score, the two hours can be difficult to sit through. English title: THE REPENTER.

**Penumbra** (2011, ARG) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Ramiro and Adrian Garcia Bogliano. Starring Cristina Brondo, Camila Bornodaba, Berta Muniz. Interesting horror thriller from Argentina about a real estate agent (Brondo), who shows a relatively derelict apartment to some people who claim their boss must have it - no matter what. She is then caught up in different strange events, all possibly related to the upcoming solar eclipse (penumbra). Brondo is engaging as the fast-talking, no-nonsense broker, film is only let down by the bizarre and

ultimately unsatisfying ending. An okay view, for fans of the unusual. Written by the directors.

**People Under the Stairs, The** (1991, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring Brandon Quintin Adams, Everett McGill, Wendy Robie, A.J. Langer, Ving Rhames, Sean Whalen, Bill Cobbs. Original, ambitious movie is a fairy-tale disguised as a horror film with a social conscience. On his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday, a little ghetto boy (Adams) is persuaded to break into the house of a rich couple (McGill and Robie). Once inside there seems to be no escape, as the two landlords turn out to be crazy maniacs who keep zombie-like 'people under the stairs'. Unusual horror movie is exhilarating, edge-of-your-seat entertainment for over an hour but then undermined by a stupid twist which makes it overly bizarre and incredible. Writer-director Craven delivers great shocks and adds a twisted sense of humor; this could have been his best film. McGill and Robie deliver performances of a lifetime. The booby-trapped house, brimming with gadgets and secret passages between the walls is the archetypal sinister (or haunted) house. Recommended to fans.

**People Vs. Larry Flynt, The** (1996, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Milos Forman. Starring Woody Harrelson, Courtney Love, Edward Norton, Brett Harrelson, Donny Hanover, James Cromwell, Crispin Glover, Vincent Schiavelli, Oliver Reed. Screen bio of a very American "hero", *Hustler* editor Larry Flynt. His fight for freedom of speech and his unconventional, rebellious behavior towards the authorities gives him enough public attention to sell more and more copies of his magazine. Dramatic treatment of his public and private life makes this a fine film, though it's much more compelling to U.S. Americans than other audiences. Good performances all around.

**Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters** (2013, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Thor Freudenthal. Starring Logan Lerman, Alexandra Daddario, Brandon T. Jackson, Leven Rambin, Anthony Head, Stanley Tucci. Sequel to *PERCY JACKSON: THE LIGHTNING THIEF* (2010) has a rather complicated set-up: The demi-god lives in a camp that is protected by an invisible barrier, which is shattered because the protecting tree-girl is dying. So, with others he sets out to find the Golden Fleece and must overcome all kinds of obstacles and monsters. Little cohesion in a dangerously anachronistic plot, film has some boo-ya! effects, but every time the main characters escape, they behave not like they escaped death but a boring amusement park attraction. For kids and teens.

**Perdita Durango** (1997, MEX/SPA/USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Alex de la Iglesia. Starring Rosie Perez, Javier Bardem, Harley Cross, Aimee Graham, James Gandolfini, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Harry Porter, Don Stroud, Alex Cox. Gratuitous road movie about two violent individuals touring through California and Mexico, kidnapping two teenagers on the way and torturing them to near madness. Poor characterization in an attempted epic that remains without a point and tortures its audience with unrelenting grimness. Some good scenes can't save this incoherent movie. Fine score by Simon Boswell seems to belong to a much better movie. Based on the novel *59 Degrees and Raining: The Story of Perdita Durango* by Barry Gifford. Original version runs 136m.

**Perfect Blue** (1997, JAP) **C-83m. \*\*½ D:** Satoshi Kon. Starring (the voices of) Junko Iwao, Rica Matsumoto, Shinpachi Tsuji. Japanese cult anime has a confusing plot but will definitely please horror and sleaze fans. A young pop singer wants to become an actress but is only cast in sex and crime scenes. Then she finds herself stalked by a maniac... and reality and fiction, even dreams become one big blur. Deliberately fools the viewer about what is real and what is not, has some potent gore scenes. For exploitation fans.

**Perfect Friday** (1970, GBR) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Hall. Starring Ursula Andress, Stanley Baker, David Warner, Patience Collier, T.P. McKenna. Diverting caper about conservative bank

manager Baker, who teams up with beautiful Andress and her husband, count Warner in plotting to steal money from the safe on a 'Perfect Friday'. Interesting narrative structure, direction in film that is a bit too talky but ultimately worthwhile. Central heist idea used later in Richard Brooks' \$ (1971).

**Perfect Man, The** (2005, USA) **C-100m.** \*\* D: Mark Rosman. Starring Hilary Duff, Heather Locklear, Chris Noth, Mike O'Malley, Ben Feldman, Vanessa Lengies. Teenager Duff, frustrated by her single mom's boyfriend choices, dreams up the perfect man and initiates a romance, using unknowing Noth's ideas about how to treat her. Guess how this is gonna end. Rather weak, predictable romantic comedy.

**Perfect Murder, A** (1998, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*½ D: Andrew Davis. Starring Michael Douglas, Gwyneth Paltrow, Viggo Mortensen, David Suchet, Sarita Choudhury, Michael P. Moran. Stockbroker Douglas learns that his wife Paltrow is cheating on him, so he hires her lover (!), a man with a shady past it turns out, to kill her. Needless to say, the perfectly planned crime goes awry. Variation on Hitchcock's DIAL M FOR MURDER is nice to look at, and Douglas' character has some great lines, but overall it's too predictable to really thrill its audience. An okay view, if nothing better is on TV.

**Perfect Storm, The** (2000, USA) **C-129m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Wolfgang Petersen. Starring George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg, Diane Lane, Karen Allen, William Fichtner, Bob Gunton, John C. Reilly, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Allen Payne, John Hawkes, Christopher McDonald, Michael Ironside, Cherry Jones, Rusty Schwimmer. Big but disappointing action drama takes fisherman Clooney and his crew out to sea for a last time before the end of the season. Just then, quite unexpectedly, a major storm is brewing. Will it take their lives? Longish, rather uninteresting introduction is redeemed by some exciting (albeit computer-animated) action footage. Overall, this movie has little dramatic impact. Based on a real-life incident documented in a book by Sebastian Junger. Score by James Horner.

**Perfect Stranger** (2007, USA) **C-109m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: James Foley. Starring Halle Berry, Bruce Willis, Giovanni Ribisi, Richard Portnow, Gary Dourdan, Florencia Lozano, Patti D'Arbanville, Heidi Klum. Cardboard thriller about ad exec Willis, who may have killed Berry's old childhood friend and got away. She sneaks into his firm, intending to find out the truth, and gets closer to the guy than she may have wished. Performances are okay, it's the characters that are clichéd. Three different endings were filmed.

**Performance** (1970, GBR) **C-105m.** \*\*\* D: Donald Cammell, Nicolas Roeg. Starring James Fox, Mick Jagger, Anita Pallenberg, Michele Breton, Ann Sidney, John Burdon. Cult film, an artful exploration of the drives of a generation, starring Fox as a cold-blooded criminal who is at odds with his boss and moves into the flat of Jagger, Pallenberg and Breton. Soon the man is drawn into their psychedelic world. Plot is not important in this often bizarre drama that is fascinating to watch. Fox outdoes his costar in coolness. Script by Cammell, cinematography by Roeg. The direction of both is appropriately impressionistic.

**Peril en la Demeure** (1985, FRA) **C-101m.** \*\*\* D: Michel Deville. Starring Christophe Malavoy, Nicole Garcia, Michel Piccoli, Richard Bohringer, Anémone, Anaïs Jeanneret, Jean-Claude Jay. Subtle, well-directed drama about guitar teacher Malavoy, who accepts to teach the daughter of Garcia and Piccoli. The woman soon entices him and they have an affair. Will Piccoli find out? And what does professional killer Bohringer have to do with him? Fine score by Brahms, Schubert and Enrique Granados carries this to a satisfying conclusion. Written by the director. English title: PERIL

**Perks of Being a Wallflower, The** (2012, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: Stephen Chbosky. Starring Logan Lerman, Emma Stone, Ezra Miller, Dylan McDermott, Kate Walsh, Paul Rudd, Tom Savini. Character study of a deeply troubled teenager (Lerman), who enters high school and

makes two new friends, Stone and Miller, who guide him through the school years. Can he communicate his infatuation with her? Slowly, the reason for his depression starts to come out. Difficult but heartfelt, depends on how much you can identify with the characters, but despite its story flaws (the early 90s setting is not so clear at the start) it gets to you, and the ending is very well-done. Stone is simply lovely. Based on director Chbosky's own 1999 novel.

**Perqué Quelle Strane Gocce di Sangue sul corpo di Jennifer?** (1972, ITA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\***

D: Giuliano Carnimeo. Starring Edwige Fenech, George Hilton, Annabella Incontrera, Paola Quattrini, Giampiero Albertini, George Rigaud. Typical giallo about young fashion model Fenech, who moves into a high-rise apartment building with her friend, even though two young prostitutes were killed there. Soon, she finds herself stalked by a cloaked maniac with rubber gloves... is it landlord Hilton, old violin professor Rigaud, or even the old lady next door, who has a penchant for horror stories? Whodunit with a beautiful score by Bruno Nicolai is a time capsule. Not completely convincing, but ending compensates. English title: CASE OF THE BLOODY IRIS, EROTIC BLUE and WHAT ARE THOSE STRANGE DROPS OF BLOOD DOING ON JENNIFER'S BODY?

**Perros Callejeros** (1976, SPA) **C-105m. \*\*½ D:** José Antonio de la Loma. Starring Victor Petit, Frank Brana, Xabier Elorriaga, Angel Fernández Franco. Tough drama about adolescent Franco, whose 'career' is crime is followed in semi-documentary fashion. He spends some time in a reform school but breaks out and resumes his criminal ways. Rather trivial but fast-paced, with a jarring finale. Reportedly, many of the actors were real-life delinquents. Followed by a sequel in 1983. English title: STREET WARRIORS.

**Perry Grant, Agente di Ferro** (1966, ITA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Lewis King (=Luigi Capuano). Starring Peter Holden, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Marilù Tolo, Seyna Seyn, Umberto D'Orsi, Franco Balducci, Geoffrey Coplestone. Typically talky Italian spy movie, a far cry from James Bond: Agent Holden investigates evildoers' plans to cause a blackout in New York City and the rest of the world. Too little action in this C-movie. Nice 60s score, though. English title: THE BIG BLACKOUT.

**Persecution** (1974, GBR) **C-91m. \*½ D:** Don Chaffey. Starring Lana Turner, Trevor Howard, Ralph Bates, Olga Georges-Picot, Suzan Farmer. Quite bizarre but off-putting horror about Bates' weird relationship to his mother Turner, whose pet cat he killed when he was a child. It seems Turner has bought pet cats again and again – all named Sheba – and the latest feline seems to be very hostile. Tired, boring attempt at suspense, only the aging stars maintain a feeble interest. From the director of ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. (1966). Alternatively known as SHEBA, THE TERROR OF SHEBA, THE GRAVEYARD.

**Persona** (1966, SWE) **85m. \*\*\*½ D:** Ingmar Bergman. Starring Bibi Andersson, Liv Ullmann, Margaretha Krook, Gunnar Björnstrand. Demanding psycho drama by one of cinema's most important auteurs. Actress Ullmann refuses to speak and is hospitalized. Film follows nurse Andersson's attempt to approach her, break her silence. Difficult to watch but masterfully directed and photographed (by Sven Nykvist). Excellent, bizarre score by Lars Johan Werle.

**Per Un Pugno di Dollari** (1964, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sergio Leone. Starring Clint Eastwood, Gian Maria Volonté, Marianne Koch, Wolfgang Lukschy, José Calvo, Sieghardt Rupp. Eastwood, in his star-making performance, plays a gunslinger, who comes to a small town, where two families are at odds with another. He manipulates them and plays tricks on them, hoping that he will leave the town a rich man. Rather weak plotwise, which shows most in first half of the picture but Leone's stylish approach and Ennio Morricone's exceptional score make this an exciting spaghetti western, the first of its kind.

Based on Akira Kurosawa's YOJIMBO. English title: A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS. Followed by PER QUALCHE DOLLARO IN PIU (FOR A FEW DOLLARS MORE).

**Per Qualche Dollaro in Piu** (1965, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Sergio Leone. Starring Clint Eastwood, Lee van Cleef, Gian Maria Volonté, Mario Brega, Klaus Kinski, Josef Egger, Mara Krup, Rosemarie Dexter, Luigi Pistilli. Sequel to the above is a triumph of style, pitting 'the man with no name' Eastwood and sinister van Cleef against outlaw Volonté, who is planning to steal money from the El Paso bank. Plot is overwhelmed by stylish, almost melancholy mise-en-scene. Ennio Morricone's score is brilliant, one of his best. Flashback sequences are especially stunning. Climactic duelling prefigures legendary ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST-showdown. Volonté is superb as the villain, who has more on his mind than just robbing banks. Second in director Leone's 'dollar trilogy', followed by IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO (THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY).

**Peter Pan** (1953, USA) **C-76m. \*\*\*½ D:** Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske. Starring the voices of Bobby Driscoll, Kathryn Beaumont, Hans Conried, Bill Thompson, Heather Angel, narrated by Tom Conway. Endearing Disney feature about the boy who never grows up and his involvement with girl Wendy, who learns a great deal about growing up and helps him fight the evil Captain Hook. Marvelous animation makes this a classic, although some of the slapstick action is a little too comic-bookish. The second film version of the J.M. Barrie classic, filmed many more times since.

**Peter Pan: Return to Never Land** (2002, USA/CDN/AUS) **C-72m. \*\*D:** Robin Budd, Donovan Cook. Starring (the voices of) Harriet Owen, Blayne Weaver, Corey Burton, Jeff Bennett. Sequel to the charming Disney classic can't hold a candle to the original. Wendy's daughter is whisked away to Peter Pan's island, where she must help him do battle with Captain Hook. All the (beloved) characters are there, drawn like in the original, but story lacks charm and is just so ordinary. Fans of the original PETER PAN (1953) should reject this.

**Peter Pan** (2003, USA/AUS) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\* D:** P.J. Hogan. Starring Jason Isaacs, Jeremy Sumpter, Rachel Hurd-Wood, Lynn Redgrave, Richard Briers, Olivia Williams, Ludivine Sagnier, Bruce Spence, narrated by Saffron Burrows. Needless updated version of the children's tale by J.M. Barrie, about the boy who never grows up and his "normal" girlfriend Wendy, who battle the evil Captain Hook in Never-Never Land. There is hardly any charm in this effects-ridden kids' movie, where the kids seem to have lost their innocence already. But maybe this is what the new generation of children is looking for. Older viewers should prefer the 1953 Disney version or the numerous adaptations for TV.

**Pete's Dragon** (1977, USA) **C-128m. \*\*½ D:** Don Chaffey. Starring Helen Reddy, Jim Dale, Mickey Rooney, Red Buttons, Shelley Winters, Sean Marshall, Jane Kean, Jim Backus, Jeff Conaway, Charlie Callas (voice of Elliott). Amusing Disney musical in the tradition of MARY POPPINS and CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, although not as plot-wise and not as magical. A little boy escapes from his foster family thanks to a temporarily invisible (animated) dragon called Elliott. In a nearby town he meets some new friends and enjoys himself, until the family comes there to look for him. Overlong, but filled with nice songs and funny vignettes with the amiable dragon, this cartoon should please kids, if no one else. Originally released at 134m., and later reissued in shorter versions.

**Petit Baigneur, Le** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Dhéry. Starring Louis de Funès, Andréa Parisy, Franco Fabrizi, Michèle Alexandre, Nicole Vervil, Michel Galabru, Robert Dhéry, Pierre Tchernia. Typically funny Louis de Funès comedy, where he plays a choleric businessman, who fires an employee in a fit of rage and then learns that he needs him back to produce award-winning sailing boat 'The Little Bather'. So he follows him to his rural home and causes all kinds of hilarious situations. Some unbelievable gags, this one

rivals Jacques Tati at times. Love the tractor scene. Written by Jean Carmet, Michel Modo, Pierre Tchernia, director Dhéry and two others. Photographed by Jean Tournier. Also known as THE LITTLE BATHER, and THE MAD ADVENTURES OF THE BOUNCING BEAUTY.

**Petit Monde de Don Camillo, Le** (1952, FRA/ITA) **108m.** \*\*½ D: Julien Duvivier. Starring Fernandel, Gino Cervi, Sylvie. Popular comedy about the feud between priest Don Camillo (Fernandel) and Communist mayor Peppone (Cervi). Film is pretty slim plotwise but palatable thanks to some likeable star performances. Its success led to four sequels. Based on a novel by Giovanni Guareschi. English title: THE LITTLE WORLD OF DON CAMILLO.

**Pet Sematary** (1989, USA) **C-103m.** ☒ D: Mary Lambert. Starring Dale Midkiff, Fred Gwynne, Denise Crosby, Brad Greenquist. Stephen King. Doctor Midkiff and his family move into their new home and learn of a strange graveyard for pets nearby. When their pet cat dies, neighbor Gwynne shows Midkiff how to resurrect the feline... will this work for humans too? Cruel horror film scripted by Stephen King (from his own novel) loses credibility early on and becomes stupid and offensive. Midkiff turns in a Razzie-award-caliber performance. Especially parents should stay away from this one. Still, it was followed by a sequel in 1992.

**Pettson och Findus 3: Tomtemaskinen** (2005, SWE/DAN/GER) **C-79m.** \*\*\* D: Jorgen Lerdam, Anders Sörensen. Starring (the voices of) Tord Peterson, Lukas Karlsson, Gunnar Uddén. Charming animated feature, the third in the Petterson (Pettson) and Findus series, which in turn was based on a book by Sven Nordqvist (which also inspired a TV series). This one has festive flavor as the old eremite and his talking cat prepare for Christmas. Findus wants to see Santa Claus, so Pett(er)son decides to invent a Santa machine. Sub-standard animation is completely outdone by movie's old-fashioned charm. German title: MORGEN, FINDUS, WIRD'S WAS GEBEN.

**Pettson och Findus 4: Glömligheter** (2009, SWE) **C-70m.** \*\*½ D: Jorgen Lerdam, Anders Sorensen. Starring (the voices of) Tord Peterson, Lukas Karlsson. Another compilation of television episodes that made it to the big screen (somehow) about the unmistakable Pettson (aka Petterson), who lives a lonely existence in rural Sweden with his speaking cat Findus. Here, there is no coherent story but several TV episodes back-to-back, among them Findus waking up to be as big as his master and vice versa, a rock band planning to make a circus, and Pettson being struck by lightning and suddenly forgetting who he is. For fans and little children. Also known as KUDDELMUDEL BEI PETERSSON UND FINDUS.

**Peur Sur la Ville** (1975, FRA/ITA) **C-120m.** \*\*\* D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Charles Denner, Adalberto-Maria Meril, Lea Massari, Rosy Varte. A serial-killer is roaming the streets of Paris and it's up to rough cop Belmondo to track him down. Fast-paced action-thriller plays like a cross between SE7EN and SPEED. Released in the U.S. as NIGHT CALLER (at 91m.).

**Phantasm** (1979, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Don Coscarelli. Starring A. Michael Baldwin, Bill Thornbury, Reggie Bannister, Angus Scrimm. Cult horror mystery about a 13-year-old boy, whose parents just died and who is brought up by his elder brother Baldwin. When they realize there are strange going-ons at the local morgue, they investigate and are soon stalked by 'tall man' Scrimm. Interesting plot keeps you watching, but it's also occasionally pretentious. Memorable theme adds to film's atmosphere. Followed by four sequels.

**Phantasm IV: Oblivion** (1998, USA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Don Coscarelli. Starring A. Michael Baldwin, Reggie Bannister, Bill Thornbury, Angus Scrimm, Heidi Leigh. Fourth installment in the series doesn't bother with a plot and uses scenes from the 1979 original to set up Baldwin and Bannister's continuing battle against the "Tall Man" and his army of midgets from hell. Quite well-made sci-fi/horror film mix proves that a self-perpetuating premise is

sometimes better than a ludicrous plot. Fans will embrace this sequel, others be warned: this vague, one-dimensional (!) flick may well be considered a waste of time.

**Phantoms** (1998, USA) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Joe Chappelle. Starring Peter O'Toole, Joanna Going, Rose McGowan, Liev Schreiber, Ben Affleck, Clifton Powell, Nicky Katt. When two sisters find a small town totally deserted - apart from a few terribly looking corpses - hell breaks loose, as an ancient, shape-shifting monster attacks them and a few local sheriffs, who have come for help. Scientist O'Toole may know the answer to the question of its existence. Fast-paced, thrilling and suspenseful horror thriller that bogs down in the second half due to unsatisfying plot development. Still worth a look, especially for horror aficionados. Based on the bestseller by Dean R. Koontz, who also wrote the screenplay.

**Phase IV** (1973, GBR) **C-86m.** \*\*\* D: Saul Bass. Starring Nigel Davenport, Lynne Frederick, Michael Murphy, Alan Gifford, Helen Horton, Robert Henderson. Two scientists set up a laboratory in an Arizona desert to study the strange behavior of local ants. It turns out these insects are unusually intelligent, but their intentions, as they besiege the camp, remain a mystery. Enigmatic science-fiction film, highlighted by fascinating photography. Title designer Bass's only film as a director.

**Phenomena** (1983, ITA) **C-110m.** \*\*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Jennifer Connelly, Daria Nicolodi, Donald Pleasence, Dalia di Lazzaro, Patrick Bauchau, Fiore Argento, Michele Soavi. Horror thriller about a 14 year-old American girl who comes to live in a school for girls in Switzerland. A mad killer is roaming the country at night, and as sleepwalking Connelly witnesses one of the murders, she soon becomes the prime target. The same night she befriends etymologist Pleasence, a wheelchair-bound professor who studies insects, to which the girl proves to have a telepathic tie! All classic Argento motifs are present: the protagonist witnessing a murder by an elusive, gloved assassin (L'UCCELLO DALLE PIUME DI CRISTALLO, PROFONDO ROSSO), a seemingly harmless and yet disquieting setting (SUSPIRIA), lavish, disturbing camera moves. Above-average plot makes this one of the best of Argento's films. Watch out for the climax! Cut down to 82m. for U.S. release (as CREEPERS).

**Philosophers, The** (2013, USA/INES) **C-107m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: John Huddles. Starring James D'Arcy, Sophie Lowe, Daryl Sabara, Bonnie Wright. In Jakarta, a group of philosophy students are given a challenge by their professor – on their last day together. He lets them draw different characters and makes them decide which ten of twenty in total would deserve to survive inside a bunker in the case of an atomic war. This scenario is shown with a lot of digital effects and impressive visuals. Intriguing, philosophical sci-fi is not completely successful but well-worth a look for genre adepts. Written by the director. Retitled AFTER THE END.

**Phone Booth** (2002, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Joel Schumacher. Starring Colin Farrell, Kiefer Sutherland, Forest Whitaker, Radha Mitchell, Katie Holmes. Snappy, fast-paced thriller based on a contrivance: Would-be P.R. manager Farrell picks up the phone in a booth on Manhattan and finds himself terrorized by a mysterious stranger, who seems to know a lot about his love affairs and dubious deals. The stranger threatens Farrell to kill him if he hangs up... a psycho-battle begins. Whose nerves will be the first to snap? If you buy into this premise, you will have a good time watching it. Written by Larry Cohen (an expert on B-material like this).

**Pi** (1998, USA) **84m.** \*\*½ D: Darren Aronofsky. Starring Sean Gulleter, Mark Margolis, Ben Shenkman, Pamela Hart, Stephen Pearlman, Samia Shoab, Ajay Naidu. Computer and mathematics genius Gulleter is homophobic, paranoid and slowly losing his mind. He works on a universal code that explains the entire universe. When he discovers a formula that can

predict the rates at the stock market, he is soon a wanted man. Is there God to be found in the formula? Disturbing, unconventional experimental drama shows style in direction, camerawork and score, but surreal plotline doesn't take you into the heart of the matter and treats you somewhat as an outsider. Well-worth a look, but not for all tastes.

**Pianeta Errante, Il** (1965, ITA) **C-82m. SCOPE** D: Anthony M. Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Jack Stuart (=Giacomo Rossi-Stuart), Ombretta Colli, Peter Martell. One of those films that gave science-fiction a bad name. Jack Stuart is out to save the Earth from a planet that is speeding towards it. Colorful and naive but cheap, phony effects don't even qualify it as corny fun. U.S. titles: WAR BETWEEN THE PLANETS and PLANET ON THE PROWL. Mario Bava's TERRORE NELLO SPAZIO, shot the same year, remains the best (Italian) genre film.

**Pianist, The** (2002, GBR/FRA/GER/POL) **C-148m. \*\*\*** D: Roman Polanski. Starring Adrien Brody, Thomas Kretschmann, Frank Finlay, Maureen Lipman, Emilia Fox, Ed Stoppard, Julia Ravner. Acclaimed depiction of the Nazi invasion of Poland and the creation of a Jewish ghetto in Warsaw, as seen through the eyes of the main character Brody, a pianist, whose survival throughout the terrors of war can be seen as a miracle. Impressive sets, good performances in war drama that marked Polanski's return to his own childhood. He won a Best Director Oscar for this work, so did Ronald Harwood for his screenplay (based on the real Wladyslaw Szpilman's memoirs).

**Piccole Labbre** (1978, ITA/SPA) **C-75m. \*\*½** D: Mimmo Cattarinich. Starring Pierre Clémenti, Katya Berger, Udo Bologna, Michele Soavi, Raf Baldassarre, Tom Felleggy, Paul Muller. Romantic drama set after World War One, from which shell-shocked Clémenti returns to his estate in Austria. He is on the verge of suicide, when he befriends a 12-year-old girl (Berger), who is on the verge of puberty, and a relationship develops. Soft-spoken drama lives off a sensitive score by Stelvio Cipriani. Has a negative reputation due to child nudity, but it fits in with the story and it's not offensive or overly voyeuristic. Some longer (but not more explicit) prints in existence. English title: LITTLE LIPS.

**Picnic at Hanging Rock** (1975, AUS) **C-107m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Weir. Starring Rachel Roberts, Vivean Gray, Helen Morse, Kirsty Child, Anne(-Louise) Lambert, Karen Robson, Jane Vallis. Australian cult director Peter Weir's second feature is an atmospheric mood-piece set in 1900, where a group of school girls make a day trip to Hanging Rock in the Australian wilderness. When all their watches stop at noon, they realize something eerie will happen... and indeed four of them disappear without a trace. Weir emphasizes the beauty and naiveté of innocence in this haunting film, making his actors pose like for paintings (recalling Ridley Scott's 1977 THE DUELLISTS). Excellent score by Bruce Smeaton includes pieces by Mozart, Bach and Beethoven, and an ethereal flute de pan by Gheorghe Zamfir Beautiful photography by Russell Boyd. Based on a novel by Joan Lindsay. The director followed this with the equally fascinating THE LAST WAVE (1978). Originally shown at 115m., re-edited by Weir to present length.

**Picture of Dorian Gray, The** (1945, USA) **C/B&W-110m. \*\*\*** D: Albert Lewin. Starring George Sanders, Hurd Hatfield, Donna Reed, Angela Lansbury, Peter Lawford, Lowell Gilmore, Richard Fraser. Classic adaptation of the Oscar Wilde novel about handsome young man, who – under the influence of cynical aristocrat Sanders – wishes for eternal youth and gets his wish granted. His portrait ages instead. Sanders is impressive, though only Lansbury was nominated for an Oscar. Four shots are in color, those of the portrait. Oscar-winning photography by Harry Stradling.

**Picture Perfect** (1997, USA) **C-105m. \*\*\*** D: Glenn Gordon Caron. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Jay Mohr, Kevin Bacon, Olympia Dukakis, Illeana Douglas, Kevin Dunn. Aniston is a happy

single, then gets forced by her firm to get engaged, but her friend has already presented a photograph with her fiancée – a man she has briefly met at a wedding. Just then, her heartthrob (Bacon) seems to fall in love with her. Basically all critics agree: Cute but forgettable romance, which gives the viewer just what he expects. Aniston looks pretty, the romantic entanglements are interesting. Score by Carter Burwell.

**Pieces** (1981, USA/SPA/PUE) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Juan Piquer Simón. Starring Christopher George, Lynda Day George, Frank Brana, Edmund Purdom, Ian Sera, Paul L. Smith, Jack Taylor, Gérard Tichy. Typical slasher horror movie, more violent than most examples of this subgenre. 40 years after hacking up his mother with an axe for being too strict, a psychopath resumes his murderous ways at a university – with a chainsaw. Rather stupid but watchable thriller with some gross-out gore effects. Co-written by – you guessed it – Joe D’Amato (as John Shadow). Also known as ONE THOUSAND CRIES HAS THE NIGHT.

**Pierrot le Fou** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-110m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Jean-Luc Godard. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Anna Karina, Graziella Galvani, Henri Attal, Samuel Fuller, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Dominique Zardi. Matter-of-taste art house classic about aimless Belmondo, who takes it on the lam with beautiful Karina after she kills a gangster. Predates many later lovers-on-the-lam pictures, but cannot really be compared to any because of Godard’s unique, artsy presentation. Ultimately, a fascinating experiment that was reportedly shot without a script. Strong, poetic images are more important than the plot here. Based on the novel *Obsession* by Lionel White. English titles: CRAZY PETE, PIERROT GOES WILD.

**Pieta** (2012, KOR) **C-103m.** \*\* D: Kim Ki-duk. Starring Jo Min-soo, Lee Jeong-jin, Woo Gi-hong. A loan shark with brutal methods is confronted with the sudden appearance of a middle-aged woman, who claims to be his mother. At first he doesn’t believe her, and he won’t allow any feelings, then he starts to rethink his methods. Harrowing, depressing character study with nothing to enjoy. Still, it won the Grand Prize at the 2012 Venice Film Festival.

**Pig Farm, The** (2000, USA) **C-80m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Lee Barlin. Starring Richard Alan Johnston, Jason Hildebrandt, Aaron Waiton, David Orange. Not-bad indie debut feature about two losers who run a pig farm but make hardly any money from it. When a hitman learns that their pigs devour *anything*, one of them strikes a deal, a deadly one at that. Quite good black comedy, hampered by low budget and odd scoring.

**Piglet’s Big Movie** (2003, USA) **C-75m.** \*\*½ D: Francis Glebas. Starring (the voices of) John Fiedler, Jim Cummings, Andre Stojka, Kath Souci, Nikita Hopkins, Peter Cullen, Ken Sansom, Tom Wheatley. Animated feature for small children based on the books of A.A. Milne. Piglet thinks he is of no use and decides to run away, which leads to a search party and flashbacks to some adventures with Piglet. Starts out mildly, improves later. Songs sung by Carly Simon. Followed by POOH’S HEFFALUMP MOVIE (2005).

**Pile Ou Face** (1980, FRA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Robert Enrico. Starring Philippe Noiret, Michel Serrault, Pierre Arditi, Dorothee, André Falcon, Bernard Lecoq, Jean Desailly. Police inspector Noiret, disillusioned with the influence of politics on his work, tries to find out if bourgeois Serrault kicked his wife out of the window. The psycho-battle that ensues eventually turns them into friends. Drama seems superficial, is too slow; a disappointment considering the involvement of two excellent French actors. English title: HEADS OR TAILS.

**Pin** (1988, CDN) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Sandor Stern. Starring David Hewlett, Cynthia Preston, Terry O’Quinn. Odd but intriguing variation of PSYCHO (1960). Two children grow up in a rich family, with their father, a doctor, using a life-size medical dummy to explain things to his kids. He pretends it’s alive and talking to them, when he is acting as a ventriloquist. Much later, when the children have grown up and their parents have died in a car crash, the boy

keeps treating Pin, the dummy, like a human, with terrible results. Interesting, but too slow. Based on the novel by Andrew Neiderman. Remake plans for 2014/2015.

**Pink Panther, The** (1963, USA/GBR) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Blake Edwards. Starring David Niven, Peter Sellers, Robert Wagner, Capucine, Claudia Cardinale. Sophisticated crime comedy has become a classic: Inspector Clouseau (Sellers) is trying to catch notorious jewel thief The Phantom (Niven) in Cortina. The criminal may be targeting exotic Princess Cardinale's precious Pink Panther diamond – the most valuable gem stone in the world. First-rate comedy, written by director Edwards and Maurice Richlin, has a great sense of humor and with Sellers also a brilliant performer. Classic hum-along title tune by Henry Mancini matches ironic tone of the film perfectly. Funny, ingenious animation sequence at the beginning was designed by Fritz Freleng. Stylish photography by Philip H. Lathrop. Followed by seven sequels, starting with **A SHOT IN THE DARK** (1964).

**Pink Panther Strikes Again, The** (1976, GBR) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, Herbert Lom, Lesley-Anne Down, Burt Kwouk, Colin Blakely, Leonard Rossiter, André Maranne, Omar Sharif, voice of Julie Andrews. Third sequel to **THE PINK PANTHER** (and fifth Clouseau film), has the bumbling inspector battle the former chief-of-police Lom, who has gone mad and is threatening the world with a super-weapon. Suffers from mild plot and unfunny stretches, but some hilarious moments make this worthwhile for fans. Lom provides a nice caricature of the usual Bond villain and almost steals the film. Followed by **REVENGE OF THE PINK PANTHER** (1978).

**Pinocchio** (1940, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\*\*½ D:** Hamilton Luske, Ben Sharpsteen. Starring (the voices of) Mel Blanc, Don Brodie, Walter Catlett, Marion Darlington, Cliff Edwards, Dickie Jones. One of Disney's best animated features (their second full-length feature), the classic story by Carlo Collodi is splendidly brought to the screen. A toymaker's wish to turn his latest creation, a wooden puppet, into a "real boy" magically comes true after a series of marvellous adventures. Excellent animation, design and (Oscar-winning) score, film loses itself in some playful details in the first half, but turns into a whale of an adventure in the second. A children's classic.

**Piranha** (1978, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Joe Dante. Starring Bradford Dillman, Heather Menzies, Kevin McCarthy, Keenan Wynn, Dick Miller, Barbara Steele, Belinda Balaski, Bruce Gordon, Paul Bartel. One of the best-loved 70s eco-horror flicks by cult director Joe Dante, about a new breed of killer fish Piranha that wreaks havoc on a holiday resort, whose manager just won't believe the warnings by Dillman and Menzies. Quite funny but rather mild satire, coproduced by Roger Corman and cowritten by John Sayles. Good cast of cult stars make this interesting for film buffs. 1981 sequel was directed by James Cameron!

**Pirate, The** (1973, HGK) **C-96m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Chang Cheh, Li Pao Hsueh, Wu Ma. Starring Ti Lung, David Chiang, Tien Ching, Yu Feng, Shih Tien (=Dean Shek). Relentlessly talky film that wants you to believe it's a swashbuckler, but the only pirate action in this one is its opening fight. Then the pirates led by Ti Lung must abandon ship because of a leak and find some poor fishermen need help. From then it's your average eastern setting. Not worth your time. Original title: **DA HAO DAO**.

**Pirates** (1986, FRA/TUN) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Roman Polanski. Starring Walter Matthau, Cris Campion, Damien Thomas, Olu Jacobs, Ferdy Mayne, David Kelly, Anthony Peck, Anthony Dawson, Charlotte Lewis, Roy Kinnear. Polanski's return to filmmaking after seven years is a lavish but generally unremarkable movie. Matthau single-handedly carries this mild pirate movie comedy about a pirate and his mate, who end up on a frigate carrying a treasure. Not bad, but plot ignites no sparks. Some kind of curio today. Edited from 124m. original release length. Score by Philippe Sarde.

**Pirates! Band of Misfits, The** (2012, GBR/USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** Directed by Peter Lord, Jeff Newitt. Starring (the voices of) Hugh Grant, Martin Freeman, Imelda Staunton, David Tennant, Jeremy Piven, Salma Hayek. From the creators of WALLACE & GROMIT and several other fine animation movies comes this rather disappointing comedy about a group of pirates who want to help their captain become Pirate of the Year. Queen Victoria ultimately becomes his nemesis. Not much plot, just a handful of laughs, no suspense or excitement... other people seemed to love it, though.

**Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl** (2003, USA) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gore Verbinski. Starring Johnny Depp, Geoffrey Rush, Orlando Bloom, Keira Knightley, Jack Davenport, Jonathan Pryce, Lee Arenberg. Enjoyable updating of swashbuckler films, with deft elements of fantasy and horror. Former pirate captain Depp gets involved in the kidnapping of beautiful Knightley by his former first mate Rush, now captain of the pirate vessel The Black Pearl. Blacksmith Bloom, Knightley's childhood friend (and love interest), mistrusts the cunning captain but ultimately must team up with him to find and rescue the beauty from the beast. Too simple and clichéd at the beginning, but film improves as it goes along, with some good action sequences and effects. Not the super-adventure advertised, but entertaining all the way. Depp gives a deliciously loony performance, Rush another Vincent-Price-ish one. Good score by Hans Zimmer. Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer.

**Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest** (2006, USA) **C-150m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gore Verbinski. Starring Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, Keira Knightley, Jack Davenport, Bill Nighy, Jonathan Pryce, Lee Arenberg, Mackenzie Crook, Kevin McNally, David Bailie, Stellan Skarsgard, Tom Hollander, Naomie Harris, Geoffrey Rush. Truly monstrous sequel to the 2003 blockbuster pits Jack Sparrow (Depp) against an undead octopus-faced captain and his crew of sea phantoms. Turner (Bloom) must find Sparrow to save him and Knightley from the gallows. Central gimmick: The Dead Man's Chest, which may contain the solution to Jack's problems. Often-muddled plot is outdone by first-rate production design and camerawork and excellent special effects. Darker, more exhilarating than the original, but certainly not better. Ends with a cliffhanger advertising Part 3 (2007). Rousing score by Hans Zimmer.

**Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End** (2007, USA) **C-168m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gore Verbinski. Starring Johnny Depp, Geoffrey Rush, Orlando Bloom, Keira Knightley, Jack Davenport, Bill Nighy, Jonathan Pryce, Mackenzie Crook, Lee Arenberg, Kevin McNally, Stellan Skarsgard, Chow Yun-Fat, Keith Richards. Grand finale of the PIRATES trilogy seems like a mere continuation of the second film, and plot is muddled to some degree, but performers give their best and will give you your money's worth. Knightley, Bloom and Rush rescue Depp from the underworld, get caught up with some other pirates, and squidman Nighy's fate is elaborated. So much to see, with large-scale special effects, that plot's deficiencies don't really matter. The sense of déjàvu is growing bigger, however, especially with Depp's bumbling routine. Rush comes off best. Score by Hans Zimmer.

**Pisaj** (2004, THA) **C-106m. \*½ D:** Chukiat Sakveerakul. Starring Pumwaree Yodkamol, Alexander Rendell, Amora Purananda, Dreradana Suwanhom. Slowly paced Thai horror chiller about a young orphan, 12 or 13 years old, who comes to live with her aunt, who is running a printing press in Bangkok. She is supposed to take care of her little nephew, who claims that there are ghosts in this house. Rather amateurishly directed film creates barely any chills, the child actors are also not very convincing. Also known as HOUSE OF GHOSTS, and EVIL.

**Piscine, La** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Jacques Deray. Starring Romy Schneider, Alain Delon, Maurice Ronet, Jane Birkin, Paul Crauchet. Subtle psycho drama about young couple

(Schneider and Delon) vacationing in France, who are visited one day by Schneider's former lover (Ronet). He brings his 18 year-old daughter (Birkin) with him, and erotic complications ensue. Longish but engrossing film, with prime performances by its stars. Screenplay cowritten by the director. Released in the U.S. as THE SWIMMING POOL at 85m. Music by Michel Legrand, Oscar winner for YENTL, THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR and SUMMER OF '42.

**Pistola per Cento Bare, Una** (1968, ITA/SPA) **C-87m.** \*\*\*½ D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Peter Lee Lawrence, John Ireland, Gloria Osuna, Eduardo Fajardo, Raf Baldassarre, Piero Lulli, Frank Brana. Quite good spaghetti western in which young soldier Lawrence returns to his family only to find his parents dead. He sets out to get his revenge on the four outlaws that killed them. Then he learns that one of the bandits is setting up a bank robbery. Above-average plot for the genre, this one also features good camerawork (by Alejandro Ulloa) and a nice score (by Angelo Francesco Lavagnino). English titles: A PISTOL FOR A HUNDRED COFFINS, A GUN FOR ONE HUNDRED GRAVES.

**Pistolero Segnato da Dio, Il** (1968, ITA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Calvin J. Pdgnet (=Giorgio Ferroni). Starring Anthony Steffen, Richard Wyler, Liz Barrat (=Luisa Baratto), Ken Wood (=Giovanni Cianfriglia), Andrea Bosis, Nello Pazzafini, Tom Felleghy, Sal Borgese, Romano Puppo. Another SHANE ripoff, this spaghetti western is about an orphan boy, who idolizes circus-performing gunman Steffen. When he loses a duel to a villain, he turns to alcohol, until the young boy needs help. Worth a look for spaghetti western completists, but creates very little interest. Mario Bava is rumored to have photographed the film. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. Edited version runs 80m. English titles: TWO PISTOLS AND A COWARD, TWO GUNS AND A COWARD, and GUNMAN SENT BY GOD.

**Pit, The** (1981, CDN) **C-96m.** \*\* D: Lew Lehman. Starring Sammy Snyders, Jeannie Elias, Sonja Smits, Laura Hollingsworth. Disturbed, disadvantaged 12-year-old Snyders has discovered a pit in the woods and befriended the creatures dwelling in it. The boy lures people to the hole intending to feed the monsters. A B-horror film about the pangs of puberty, not that bad, but it soon becomes repetitive. Also known as TEDDY.

**Pit and the Pendulum** (1961, USA) **C-80m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Roger Corman. Starring Vincent Price, John Kerr, Barbara Steele, Luana Anders, Antony Carbone, Patrick Westwood. Atmospheric, stylish horror tale, set after the Spanish inquisition, in an ancient, dystopian castle: A young man (Kerr) travels there to investigate the death of his sister, who was married to mysterious landlord Price. But is she really dead, or is Price insane? Appropriately bizarre horror, based on Edgar Allan Poe's story. Best enjoyed in a movie theater. Second of director Corman's eight Poe adaptations, script by Richard Matheson. Corman also produced the film. Remade in 1991 by Stuart Gordon.

**Pit and the Pendulum, The** (1991, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*\*½ D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Lance Henriksen, Rona de Ricci, Jonathan Fuller, Stephen Lee, William J. Norris, Mark Margolis, Carolyn Purdy-Gordon, Barbara Bocci, Jeffrey Combs, Oliver Reed. Well-produced but still pretentious Gothic horror tale about the Grand Inquisitor of Spain (Henriksen) and his infatuation with baker's wife de Ricci. Expected scenes of torture and horror are quite tame, though film picks up a little in the final third. Henriksen is convincing as the merciless monk. Owes more to British Gothic fiction (William Gregory Lewis' *The Monk*, perhaps) than to Edgar Allan Poe, whose short story the screenplay is based on. Set in Spain but shot in Italy.

**Pitch Black** (2000, USA/AUS) **C-112m. SCOPE** \*½ D: David N. Twohy. Starring Vin Diesel, Radha Mitchell, Cole Hauser, Keith David, Lewis Fitz-Gerald, Claudia Black. Science-fiction horror film about a group of space travellers, who crash-land on a barren planet. Convict Diesel poses one threat, vicious night creatures another – and there's a solar eclipse

approaching, which will last for days. Stylish and flashy, but becomes tedious, as the plot is pure nonsense. Steals from countless superior films. Filmed in Australia. Also released in edited 108m. version.

**Più Bella Serata della Mia Vita, La** (1972, ITA/FRA) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Ettore Scola. Starring Alberto Sordi, Charles Vanel, Michael Simon, Janet Agren, Pierre Brasseur, Claude Dauphin, Giuseppe Maffioli. Highly interesting adaptation of a play by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, a parable on the seemingly perfect bourgeois existence. In Switzerland fast-talking businessman Sordi follows a sexy biker into the mountains, where his car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. He finds help in a nearby castle, which is inhabited by a (former) lawyer, an attorney (Simon) and a judge (Vanel). They tell him they like playing out historical court room situations, and although he considers all this a game, he is suddenly subject of a trial which examines his life and wants to prove his guilt. The content of this parable alone makes this film worth watching. Sordi's comic touches are a drawback, but Scola's directorial touches make up for it. Good cast, fine use of the setting. Experimental score by Armando Trovaioli. Cowritten by the director.

**Pixels** (2015, USA/CHI/CDN) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Chris Columbus. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan, Peter Dinklage, Josh Gad, Matt Lintz, Brian Cox, Sean Bean, Jane Krakowski, Dan Aykroyd. Fairly entertaining science-fiction fantasy of the juvenile kind. More than 30 years after their arcade game heyday as kids, James is President, but Sandler only a hi-fi technician. When aliens attack the Earth and threaten to destroy it, only the video game nerds can help to avert disaster, as the invaders attack arcade game style. Pretty absurd, even in characterizations and relationships, but quite diverting, has a few laughs and, obviously a lot of special effects.

**Place Beyond the Pines, The** (2012, USA) **C-140m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Derek Cianfrance. Starring Ryan Gosling, Bradley Cooper, Eva Mendes, Ray Liotta, Craig Van Hook, Ben Mendelsohn. Motorcycle stunt driver Gosling returns to his show's venue from last year and realizes that his one-night-stand lover Mendes has a baby boy. In order to provide for the infant he turns to robbing banks. In the second half of the plot, ambitious policeman Cooper's fate mirrors that of Gosling. Overlong drama aspires to be an epic but falls flat, missing a lot of opportunities to make it more engrossing. Cowritten by the director.

**Plagio** (1969, ITA/FRA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** Sergio Capogna. Starring Ray Lovelock, Mita Medici, Alain Noury. Sensitively handled romantic drama about the triangular relationship between student couple Medici and Noury and troubled newcomer Lovelock, who's rich but unhappy. Quite touching film unfolds nicely. Good period soundtrack paired with Gustav Mahler's 5th symphony. Filmed in Bologna and Rimini. Written by the director.

**Plague, The** (2006, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Hal Masonberg. Starring Jason Van Der Beek, Ivana Milicevic, Brad Hunt, Joshua Close, Brittany Scobie, Dee Wallace-Stone. Horror film with a bizarre premise: One day all children aged 10 and below fall into a catatonic state and remain that way for years (excepting daily convulsions at 10 a.m. and p.m.). Ten years later, they wake up again – as blood-thirsty zombies who kill everyone in the way. Van Der Beek and his ex-wife, nurse Milicevic, hook up with some survivors of the epidemic. Apart from recalling classics such as VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED (1960) or INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956), film also copies ideas from George Romero's LIVING DEAD movies. Too bad the title CHILDREN OF THE LIVING DEAD was already taken! Not ineffective, well-scored, but way too derivative and peopled with underdeveloped characters you don't care about. Co-produced by Clive Barker. Also known as CLIVE BARKER'S THE PLAGUE.

**Plague of the Zombies, The** (1966, GBR) **C-90m. \*\*\* D:** John Gilling. Starring André Morell, Diane Clare, Brook Williams, Jacqueline Pearce, John Carson, Michael Ripper. After receiving

a call for help from colleague Williams, doctor Morell and his daughter travel to Cornish community, where several people have fallen prey to mysterious illness. Is evil squire Carson behind it all? Nicely paced, well acted Hammer horror with nice use of color was made only two years before NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. Not as uncompromising, but a good one by Hammer standards. Also known as THE ZOMBIES.

**Planetfall** (2005, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Gianni Mezzanotte (=Michael J. Heagle). Starring Heidi Fellner, Leitha Matz, Charles Hubbell, John Levene, Ted V. Mikels. Independent science-fiction movie about two female bounty hunters, who are both after an important cargo that is has crashed somewhere in the desert. Pays homage to spaghetti westerns and space classics alike, but cannot rise above budgetary limitations. The acting and direction are respectable by amateur movie standards.

**Planet 51** (2009, USA/GBR/SPA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jorge Blanco, Javier Abad, Marcos Martínez. Starring (the voices of) Dwayne Johnson, Jessica Biel, Justin Long, Gary Oldman, Seann William Scott, John Cleese. Planet 51 is inhabited by green noseless aliens who lead a life like Americans in the 1950s. Then a spaceship from Earth lands and alien-hysteria engulfs the planet. The astronaut on board befriends a teen, who helps him find his way back to his spaceship. Some funny characterizations in this animated feature, but plot is much too weak to hold your interest. Filled with gratuitous movie references from 2001 to WALL-E.

**Planet of the Apes** (1968, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Franklin J. Schaffner. Starring Charlton Heston, Roddy McDowall, Kim Hunter, Maurice Evans, James Whitmore, James Daly, Linda Harrison. Completely fascinating, brilliant science-fiction adventure, based on the novel by Pierre Boulle. Heston and his crew, astronauts on a time warp mission, wake up from hypersleep to find themselves in the year 3978. They have landed on a barren planet some 320 light years away from the Earth. What they find beyond the desert, is just the beginning of an adventure – and nightmare. Excellent score by Jerry Goldsmith, stunning make-up effects by John Chambers (winner of a special Oscar), one of the classic science-fiction adventures (and probably the best). Followed by four sequels (starting with BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES) and two television series (one live-action, one animated). Remade by Tim Burton in 2001.

**Planet of the Apes** (TV series, 1974, USA) **C-50m. (14 episodes) n/rD:** Jack Starrett, Bernard McEveety, Arnold Laven et al. Starring Roddy McDowall, Ron Harper, James Naughton, Mark Lenard, Ron Stein, Booth Colman. Interesting continuation of the science-fiction franchise as a television series, using the same sets and special effects. Lalo Schifrin's bizarre score is also retained. **(1) Escape from Tomorrow** – McDowall plays intelligent chimp Galen (not the Cornelius/Caesar he played in the movies), who is sent to investigate by Zaius (from the originals) when two astronauts crashland on the planet. At the beginning they are helped by a friendly human but later must fend for themselves. **(2) The Gladiators** The two astronauts flee with Galen to a nearby community of apes, are captured and turned into gladiators. Mild intermezzo. **(3) The Trap** The astronauts flee from the Gorillas into an abandoned town, where an earthquake opens up the earth, and Naughton and a gorilla are trapped in an old subway station. They have to help each other to survive. Fairly good. **(4) The Good Seed** On their continued flight from the gorillas the astronauts and Galen find shelter on a farm of Chimps. They help them with the farmwork and a pregnant cow. As uninteresting as it sounds. **(5) The Legacy** Back in a crumbling urban landscape the astronauts find a machine that produces a holographic message. One of the astronauts gets captured. **(6) Tomorrow's Tide (7) The Surgeon (8) The Deception (9) The Horse Race (10) The Interrogation (11) The Tyrant (12) The Cure (13) The Liberators (14) Up Above the**

**World So High:** From episode 6 onwards, the adventures more or less resemble each other. The astronauts (more like rural missionaries by now) help communities of apes, keep running from gorillas and bond with other humans. None of the episodes live up to the first few episodes. Nothing new. Biggest flaw may be the unconvincing lead actors, especially Naughton looks as if he just didn't care. It's easy to see why this was cancelled after only 14 episodes. Followed by an animated TV series.

**Planet of the Apes** (2001, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tim Burton. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Tim Roth, Helena Bonham Carter, Michael Clarke Duncan, Paul Giamatti, Estella Warren, Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa, David Warner, Kris Kristofferson, Lisa Marie, Rick Baker, Linda Harrison, Charlton Heston. Burton's re-imagining of the classic sci-fi adventure finds Wahlberg in a similar position to Heston's, as he crashlands on an uncharted planet, which is ruled by apes. Some interesting variations of the original story, some effective battle scenes, but also some dull spots in-between. Typically well-designed and dark Burton movie is interesting enough to make it worthwhile. Evil ape Roth comes off best. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Planet Terror** (2007, USA) **C-106m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Rose McGowan, Freddy Rodriguez, Josh Brolin, Marley Shelton, Jeff Fahey, Michael Biehn, Rebel Rodriguez, Bruce Willis, Naveen Andrews, Tom Savini, Quentin Tarantino, Jason Douglas, Michael Parks, Danny Trejo, Cheech Marin, Zoe Bell, Robert Rodriguez. Director Rodriguez' part of the GRINDHOUSE double-feature (complemented by Quentin Tarantino's DEATH PROOF) pays homage to horror and splatter films of the late 1970s and early 1980s, as zombie-like epidemic springs from lab experimenting with chemical warfare. Go-go dancer McGowan and boyfriend Rodriguez are among those running, shooting and killing for their lives. Large parts of the movie are also set in doctor Brolin's hospital and Texas BBQ chef Fahey's restaurant. Done with more regard for pace and action than Tarantino's half, but film also lives for the moment and cannot live up to the promise of the early scenes to provide a compelling plot throughout. Still, great fun, with enough gore thrown at you to fill several horror films. Film mainly references MOTEL HELL (1980) and especially DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978), whose Tom Savini effects are recreated. Rodriguez also photographed, edited, produced the movie and, as usual, also did some other minor jobs on it.

**Play Dead** (1985, USA) **C-86m. ☹ D:** Peter Wittman. Starring Yvonne De Carlo, Stephanie Dunnam, David Cullinane, Glenn Kezer, Ron Jackson. De Carlo is totally wasted as evil, voodoo-practicing aunt, who kills Dunnam's family one by one with the help of a 'cute' Rottweiler. Ludicrous thriller has the dog commit murders (like pouring poison into the detective's drink!). As bad as it gets. Also known as KILLER DOG, SATAN'S DOG.

**Play Motel** (1979, ITA) **C-91m. \*\* D:** Mario Gariazzo. Starring Ray Lovelock, Anna Maria Rizzoli, Mario Cutini, Antonella Antinori, Anthony Steffen. Variation of giallo elements about a sleazy motel, where there's sexual activity as well as blackmail and murder. Actor Lovelock is asked to help inspector Steffen find out who's the blackmailer. An okay view for adepts, this includes hard-core scenes and has a catchy title tune. It's not as interesting as it sounds, though.

**Playtime** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-124m. \*\*\* D:** Jacques Tati. Starring Jacques Tati, Barbara Dennek, Rita Maiden. Extravagant satire on modern life by master Tati was three years in the making. The director's alter ego Monsieur Hulot arrives in Paris and gets lost in a maze of modern buildings among people who are constantly struggling through everyday life. No narrative per se but a stream of (collective) consciousness with typical Tati humor, although the laughs are limited. Great cinematography emphasizes depth, and due to the countless characters doing different things at the same time, this may be a different experience every

time you watch it. An interesting curio, as there is barely another 'science-fiction' film like this, especially not at the time. Sadly, it was a box-office failure. Tati's first film since *MON ONCLE* (1958), he would direct only one other, *TRAFIC* (1971).

**Pleasantville** (1998, USA) **C/B&W-123m**. \*\*½ D: Gary Ross. Starring Tobey Maguire, Jeff Daniels, Joan Allen, William H. Macy, J. T. Walsh, Reese Witherspoon, Don Knotts. Two teenagers (Maguire and Witherspoon) are miraculously drawn into a 1950s sitcom called *Pleasantville* and soon start to upset the characters' picture perfect world, turning their black-and-white existence into a colorful life. Fine performances almost overcome plot deficiencies (overlength, inconsequentiality). "Pleasant" is right.

**Pleasure Girls, The** (1964, GBR) **86m**. \*\*\* D: Gerry O'Hara. Starring Ian McShane, Francesca Annis, Klaus Kinski, Mark Eden, Tony Tanner, Suzanna Leigh, Rosemary Nicols, Colleen Fitzpatrick. Refreshing drama about country lass Annis, who comes to London to start a modelling career. She meets many interesting people, including charismatic McShane, who falls in love with her, but she thinks she is not ready for a serious relationship. Fast-paced, well-acted coming-of-age drama, written by the director.

**Plein Soleil** (1959, FRA/ITA) **C-115m**. \*\*\* D: René Clément. Starring Alain Delon, Marie Laforet, Maurice Ronet, Frank Latimore, Ave Ninchi. Outstanding direction and photography (by Henri Decaë) in an adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Delon is astonishingly good as High-smith's anti-hero Ripley, who roams Italy and France with his friend Ronet. Ripley is after his money, and a sailing trip promises to be a good chance to get rid of him... Crime drama is deliberately paced, but talents behind the camera compensate. Fine score by Nino Rota. Script by René Clément and Paul Gégauff. Romy Schneider appears briefly in the opening scene. English title: *PURPLE NOON*.

**Plenilunio delle Vergine, Il** (1973, ITA) **C-83m**. \*\*½ D: Luigi Batzella. Starring Mark Damon, Sergio Pissar, Sara Bay (=Rosalba Neri), Esmeralda Barros. Above-average, atmospheric gothic horror film about two brothers, one of whom travels to Transsylvania in order to find the famed Ring of the Nibelungs, which is said to be in the possession of a vampire. The leader of the coven is waiting to sacrifice some virgins in order to celebrate her wedding with Count Dracula. Somewhat different, less obvious vampire movie should interest buffs. Direction and score are quite good. English credits try to make us believe that Mark Damon played both(!) brothers. Photographed by Joe D'Amato. English titles: *THE DEVIL'S WEDDING NIGHT*, *FULL MOON OF THE VIRGINS*.

**Plumber, The** (1979, AUS) **C-77m**. \*\*\* D: Peter Weir. Starring Judy Morris, Ivar Kants, Robert Coleby. Psycho drama made for TV by the acclaimed director of *PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK* (1975). Here, he examines the class struggle by having a plumber, real or not, invade Morris and Kants' home in order to work on the bathroom. Obviously, there is no plumbing problem at all, and the woman starts suspecting there is something wrong with him. Interesting little exercise, nothing more, well-acted.

**Plunkett & Macleane** (1999, GBR/CZE) **C-97m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Jake Scott. Starring Robert Carlyle, Jonny Lee Miller, Iain Robertson, Alan Cumming, Liv Tyler, Michael Gambon. Two street robbers keep baffling the local authorities in 18<sup>th</sup> century England. They take from the rich... and keep the loot (and all this is set to techno music). When will they be caught? Film wants to be action comedy, serious drama, thriller, buddy movie and pop drama at the same time, but script is uneven and incoherent. Flashy direction and photography somewhat compensate. First theatrical film by Jake Scott, who is Ridley Scott's son. Gary Oldman was among the producers.

**Plus Longue Nuit du Diable, La** (1971, BEL/ITA) **C-93m**. \*\*½ D: Jean Brismée. Starring Erika Blanc, Jean Servais, Jacques Monseau, Ivana Novak, Lorenzo Terzon, Shirley Corrigan, Daniel

Emilfork. A bunch of tourists are forced to spend the night at Servais' spooky castle, not knowing that an ancient curse rests on his family and a succubus (sexy demon) is among their company. Unusual, indulgent chiller has good score and great sets (love that wallpaper), but is too slow and obvious. Still, warmly recommended to fans of Euro sleaze. André Hunebelle (FANTOMAS) supervised this obscure Belgian-Italian coproduction. Also known as DEVIL'S NIGHTMARE, LA TERRIFICANTE NOTTE DEL DEMONIO, CASTLE OF DEATH, DEVIL WALKS AT MIDNIGHT, DEVIL'S LONGEST NIGHT, NIGHTMARE OF TERROR, SUCCUBUS and VAMPIRE PLAYGIRLS (there is actually a quite sexy lesbian love-making scene).

**Pod** (2015, USA) **C-78m. \*\*\* D:** Mickey Keating. Starring Larry Fessenden, Lauren Ashley Carter, Brian Morvant, Dean Cates. Low-budget horror mystery about siblings Cates and Carter, who try to talk some sense into their manic brother, who's holed up in a cabin by a lake and fantasizes about something he has locked into the basement that is trying to take control of him. Appropriately vague script builds to a genuinely terrifying climax. Not fully convincing in the first half, but stay with it!

**Point Blank** (1967, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Boorman. Starring Lee Marvin, Angie Dickinson, Keenan Wynn, Carroll O'Connor, Lloyd Bochner, Michael Strong, John Vernon, James B. Sikking. Stylish, poetic revenge thriller about a criminal (Marvin) who seeks vengeance on his wife and her lover, who double-crossed him after a heist on Alcatraz Island. Confusing plot is outshined by artistic brilliance, which creates a most unusual, sometimes surreal atmosphere. A film that is more to be admired than enjoyed, as it is years ahead of its time. Fine photography by Philip Lathrop. Adapted from the novel *The Hunter* by Richard Stark, alias Donald E. Westlake. Same story filmed again in 1999 as PAYBACK. This was director Boorman's second feature film.

**Poison** (1991, USA) **C/B&W-85m. \*\*½ D:** Todd Haynes. Starring Edith Meeks, Larry Maxwell, Susan Norman. Director Haynes' feature debut consists of three interwoven stories that are unconnected plot-wise but share the theme of being an outsider. The first story is a TV documentary style account of a boy who murdered by father, the second one deals with homosexuality, and the third one (in black-and-white) is a mad scientist tale. Some style, but difficult to access and sometimes also to watch. Inspired by the novels by Jean Genet.

**Polar** (1983, FRA) **C-101m. \*\* D:** Jacques Bral. Starring Jean-Francois Balmer, Sandra Montaigne, Pierre Santini, Roland Dubillard, Claude Chabrol. Tired murder mystery about a private detective (Balmer) who one night is visited by a young woman who asks him solve the murder of her girlfriend, which has just been committed. Needless to say, he attempts to do so but remains highly ineffective (like the film itself). Plot, which is based on the novel *Morgue Pleine* by Jean-Patrick Manchette, a very successful mystery writer in France, turns out to be highly derivative of Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*. Film is brought down by a routine, unimaginative direction and a colorless protagonist, who is clearly miscast. Music composed by Karl-Heinz Schäfer is exceptional and reminiscent of Matthieu Chabrol's work for his brother Claude.

**Polar Express, The** (2004, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Zemeckis. Starring Tom Hanks, Daryl Sabara, Leslie Harter Zemeckis, Eddie Deezen, Michael Jeter, Steven Tyler. Director Zemeckis works digital wonders again in this beautiful Christmas tale, based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg. A little boy who is slowly starting to doubt the existence of Santa Claus boards a magical train one night, which will lead him and fellow passengers to the North Pole. The journey is filled with riveting adventures and thrill rides and teaches the boy a thing or two about life. Charming Christmas movie will delight kids. The interesting animation (3D motion capture) required the actors to act first, then their appearances and

movements were computerized. Hanks has five roles. Good score by Alan Silvestri and Glen Ballard.

**Police Story** (1985, HGK) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Bridget Lin, Maggie Cheung, Chor Yuen, Bill Tung, Kenneth Tong. Chan (once again playing himself) is assigned to pin down a druglord and after that look after a key witness (Cheung). Unexceptional plot highlighted by some incredible stunts (including the destruction of a whole village!) and a dramatic and exciting ending that takes a welcome leave from the awkward comedy that pervades nearly all of the star's films. Recommended to Jackie's fans, others may not be so tolerant. Followed by three sequels. Aka POLICE FORCE.

**Police Story 2** (1988, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Maggie Cheung, Wu Ma, Chor Yuen. Chan's follow-up to one of his biggest hits has his feud with the druglord from the first film prolonged. Cheung plays his love interest, who gets involved in mad-cap action set-pieces. Not-bad sequel, more serious than most of Jackie's other films. For his fans. Followed by POLICE STORY 3.

**Police Story 3** (1992, HGK) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Stanley Tong. Starring Jackie Chan, Michelle Yeoh, Maggie Cheung, Kenneth Tsang, Yuen Wah, Lo Lieh, Philip Chan. Third entry into Chan's most popular film series is another step down, as inspector Chan goes against drug lords again. Plot is not worth mentioning, apart from the introduction of Yeoh's character. Rather violent and serious, redeemed somewhat by the explosive showdown. Followed by POLICE STORY 4, which was released in the States as JACKIE CHAN'S FIRST STRIKE.

**Police Woman** (1973, HGK) **C-71m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Tsu Hdeng. Starring Lee Man Tai, Jackie Chan, Gam Woo, Charlie Chin. Early Jackie Chan performance may be the reason to watch this low-budget actioner about a cab driver, who is chased by a drug syndicate after he becomes witness to one of their killings. And Jackie is a baddie here! Reasonably fast-paced, but plot is uninteresting. Uncut version runs some 10 minutes longer. Also known as RUMBLE IN HONG KONG, YOUNG TIGER, and POLICE WOMAN AGAINST JACKIE CHAN.

**Polizia Accusa: Il Servizio Segreto Uccide, La** (1975, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sergio Martino. Starring Luc Merenda, Mel Ferrer, Tomas Milian, Delia Boccardo, Tom Felleghy, Goffredo Unger. Slightly above-average police actioner, which takes up familiar Italian theme of corruption, pitting inspector Merenda against sinister chief of secret service Milian, who may have something to do with suicides of several persons of high rank. Fast-paced, quite well-directed, but plot is far from exciting. English titles: CHOPPER SQUAD, SILENT ACTION.

**Polizia Brancola nel Buio, La** (1975, ITA/TUR) **C-79m. \*\*½** D: Helia Colombo. Starring Joseph Arkim (=Cüneyt Arkin), Francisco Cortez, Richard Fielding, Gabriella Giorgelli, Margaret Rose Keil. Late giallo about murders around wheelchair-bound photographer Arkim's estate. The boyfriend of one of the victims goes to investigate and finds there are complicated relationships between the people at the villa. Typically contracted plot, although it doesn't make much sense. This one even has a slight sci-fi touch! Giallo lovers will find this Italian-Turkish coproduction appealing. Title translates as THE POLICE ARE BLUNDERING IN THE DARK.

**Polizia Chiede Aiuto, La** (1974, ITA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Massimo Dallamano. Starring Giovanna Ralli, Claudio Cassinelli, Mario Adorf, Franco Fabrizi, Farley Granger. When a 15-year-old school girl is found hanged, the police investigations reveal that she was pregnant and may have been murdered. Then a killer clad in black leather starts hacking up the cast with a hatchet. Quite good, fairly exciting, fast-paced giallo with unfortunately unspectacular plot and stylistics. Direction is competent and Stelvio Cipriani's score is fine and well-timed. Photographed by Franco delli Colli. English titles: THE COED MURDERS, THE

POLICE WANT HELP and WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOUR DAUGHTERS? (suggesting a link to Dallamano's earlier giallo COSE AVETE FATTO A SOLANGE?).

**Polizia è Sconfitta, La** (1977, ITA) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Domenico Paolella. Starring Marcel Bozzuffi, Vittorio Mezzogiorno, Riccardo Salvino, Nello Pazzafini, Claudia Gianotti, Goffredo Unger. A cop thriller like dozens others produced in Italy in the mid-70s. Police inspector Bozzuffi is frustrated with the rise in crime and creates a special police squad to battle the terrorists. Among them is an especially heinous bomber (Mezzogiorno). Violent but standard. For fans there is a cool score by Stelvio Cipriani and an attempt at copying Sam Peckinpah's slow-motion action set-pieces. Also known as STUNT SQUAD.

**Polizia Interviene: Ordine di Uccidere!, La** (1975, ITA) **C-101m. \*\*\*½** D: Giuseppe Rosati. Starring James Mason, Leonard Mann, Stephen Boyd, Janet Agren, Enrico Maria Salerno, Fausto Tozzi, Tom Felleghy, Franco Ressel, Goffredo Unger. Inspector Mann investigates the kidnapping of a rich industrialist and seems to uncover a web of conspiracies and blackmail. His relationship with Agren suffers and soon he becomes a target himself. Quite good, character-driven crime drama with a nice score by Paolo Vasile, one of the better poliziottescos. Mann is good in title role. Alternative Italian title: LA MANA SINISTRA DELLA LEGGE. English title: LEFT HAND OF THE LAW.

**Polizia Sta a Guardare, La** (1973, ITA/FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Roberto Infascelli. Starring Enrico Maria Salerno, Lee J. Cobb, Jean Sorel, Luciana Paluzzi, Claudio Gora, Laura Belli. Typical Italian police drama about commissioner Salerno, who takes over from Cobb in order to stop recent crime and kidnapping wave. Salerno is convincing, but movie is talky and has a sloppy plot. The main reason to watch it is one of Stelvio Cipriani's most memorable themes, which increases the \*\*\*-rating by half a star. English titles: THE GREAT KIDNAPPING, and RANSOM: POLICE IS WATCHING.

**Poliziotto, Solitudine e Rabbia** (1979, ITA/GER) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*D**: Stelvio Massi. Starring Maurizio Merli, Jutta Speidel, Arthur Brauss, Francisco Rabal, Jochen Schröder, Ottaviano Dell'Acqua. Barely watchable police actioner about cop Merli, whose friend is shot, upon which Merli swears for revenge and goes undercover to bust the criminals. Boring, familiar plot somewhat redeemed by Speidel's role as his tragic lover, but apart from Stelvio Cipriani's score, this is rather forgettable. International title: THE REBEL.

**Poltergeist** (1982, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Tobe Hooper. Starring JoBeth Williams, Craig T. Nelson, Beatrice Straight, Dominique Dunne, Oliver Robins, Heather O'Rourke, Zelda Rubinstein. A suburban family are faced with inexplicable phenomena in their house, then a demonic presence kidnaps their daughter into another dimension (the television set?). In panic, they ask a team of parapsychics for help. Well-made, effective funhouse ride is a bit uneven but carried by Jerry Goldsmith's incredibly elaborate scare score, which pulls all the orchestral stops. Finale (after the faux one) is best part. Excellent special effects by Richard Edlund. One of (producer) Steven Spielberg's rare forays into horror retains his entertainment philosophy, which doesn't quite gel with the seriousness of the genre. It's not a horror comedy after all. Originally rated PG (even though there are one or two gross-out scenes). Followed by two sequels and a remake in 2015.

**Poltergeist** (2015, USA/CDN) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Gil Kenan. Starring Sam Rockwell, Rosemarie DeWitt, Saxon Sharbino, Kennedi Clements, Jared Harris, Jane Adams. Remake of the now-classic POLTERGEIST (1982) is not as effective, despite the evolution of special effects. Rockwell is miscast as family father, whose daughter disappears into her closet. Together with a team of paranormal investigators they try to bring her back. Not bad, but there was really no point in remaking the 1982 film. It's just one of many (3D) scare films.

**Polyester** (1981, USA) **C-86m**. \*\*\*½ D: John Waters. Starring Divine, Tab Hunter, Edith Massey, Mary Garlington, Ken King, David Samson, Mink Stole, Stiv Bators. Trash satire set in a typically Waters-ish suburb and featuring his star Divine as a housewife with a nightmarish family. Her husband, a porn cinema owner, cheats on her and the children are more into sex and drugs (oh yes, and footstomping) than school. Typically engaging, with some hilarious bits for Divine, but it sometimes gets to be too much – and thus pretentious. Originally released in ‘Odorama’ (scratch-and-sniff cards for the audience). After this feature, Waters would take a break of seven years before making another film (HAIRSPRAY).

**Pontypool** (2008, CDN) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Bruce McDonald. Starring Stephen McHattie, Lisa Houle, Georgina Reilly, Hrant Alianak. *Very* unusual horror film about radio morning show host McHattie, who’s a tad too cynical for his producer Houle. One morning they hear of a strange occurrence in their town of Pontypool and report on it with call-in eye-witness accounts. What seems like a prank at first, turns into a dead-serious situation, with people obviously dying by the dozen outside. Soon, they are locked in and escape seems impossible. Is it a zombie invasion? The setting is confined to the radio station, film at times seems like a stunt, but it’s effective and the explanation for it all is unusual as it is original. There’s even some humor in this. McHattie gives an impressive performance, the score is good. Stay tuned until the very end (after the credits). Screenplay by Tony Burgess, based on his novel.

**Pooh’s Heffalump Movie** (2005, USA) **C-68m**. \*\*\* D: Frank Nissen. Starring (the voices of) Jim Cummings, John Fiedler, Nikita Hopkins, Brenda Blethyn. Disney’s fifth feature length Winnie the Pooh cartoon (based on the A.A. Milne stories) should really be called ROO’S HEFFALUMP MOVIE, as little Roo – disappointed at being deemed too young to catch ‘evil’ Heffalumps – goes out on his own to chase some. Funny, exciting and well-made, this movie teaches a lesson on friendship, parental worries and prejudice.

**Poppies Are Also Flowers** (1966, USA/AUT) **C-95m**. \*½ D: Terence Young. Starring Senta Berger, Stephen Boyd, Yul Brynner, Angie Dickinson, Georges Géret, Hugh Griffith, Jack Hawkins, Rita Hayworth, Trevor Howard, Trini López, E.G. Marshall, Marcello Mastroianni, Anthony Quayle, Harold Sakata, Omar Sharif, Barry Sullivan, Nadja Tiller, Eli Wallach, Howard Vernon, Marilú Tolo. Gargantuan cast in gargantuan misfire about some inspectors’ attempts to stem international drug trafficking, especially the opium production in the Middle East. Incredibly poor plot is based on a story by Ian Fleming (with Terence Young of James Bond fame as a director – to no avail). You just go from one cameo to the next. Also known as DANGER GROWS WILD, THE OPIUM CONNECTION, and THE POPPY IS ALSO A FLOWER.

**Popsy Pop** (1971, FRA/ITA/VNZ) **C-96m**. \*\* D: Jean Herman. Starring Claudia Cardinale, Stanley Baker, Henri Charrière, Georges Aminel, Joachim Hansen, Marc Mazza. Weak heist movie set in South America with beautiful Cardinale, a dancer, arriving at a small village to entertain the miners, when as a matter of fact she is part of a plan to rob some diamonds. Interesting location work, but plot is a yawn. Charrière’s only acting credit, he also cowrote the screenplay with director Herman. Alternative titles: THE BUTTERFLY AFFAIR, THE 21 CARAT SNATCH, QUEEN OF DIAMONDS, and THE GREAT DIAMOND CHASE.

**Porno Holocaust** (1979, ITA) **C-114m**. ☒ D: Joe D’Amato (Aristide Massaccesi), Bruno Mattei. Starring George Eastman, Dirce Funari, Annj Goren, Lucia Ramirez, Mark Shannon. Infamous film from an infamous director is nothing more than a boring hard-core sex film about a group of researchers who are confronted with a mutated negro running amok on a lovely Caribbean island. Amateurishly directed, preposterously long. Written by actor Eastman.

**Porta del Cannone, La** (1969, ITA/FRA/YUG) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½D: Leopoldo Savona. Starring John (Gianni) Garko, Irina Demick, Gianna Serra, Horst Frank, Tom Felleghy. In the

early days of WW2, Italian spy Garko is assigned to kill a Czechoslovakian rebel leader to pave the way for the Nazis. On his mission he falls in love and slowly learns that he is on the wrong side. Thoughtful, quite well-made war drama lacks the extra-punch or speed to make it sizzle. Still, worth a look. Spaghetti western regular Garko proves he can act. Features impressive real WW2 action footage. Director Savona coscripted from the novel by Giuliano Friz. Score by Carlo Rustichelli.

**Porta sul Buio: Il Tram, La** (1973, ITA) **C-52m. n/r** D: Sirio Bernadotte (=Dario Argento). Starring Enzo Cerasico, Paolo Tedesco, Pierluigi Aprà, Gildo Di Marco, Tom Felleghy, Corrado Olmi. One of four episodes made for the television series LA PORTA SUL BUIO (DOOR INTO DARKNESS), this was directed by horror maestro Argento right after his animal trilogy of giallos. Story about inspector Cerasico, who wants to find out who killed pretty young woman on a tram is more realistic and lacks the violence and style that made his other movies so irresistible. Not without interest, but not the find you might have expected as an Argento devotee. Comic relief and playful score (Giorgio Gaslini) are rather inappropriate. The other episodes in this Argento-produced series were called IL VICINO DI CASA (directed by Luigi Cozzi), TESTIMONE OCULARE (co-directed by Dario sans credit) and LA BAMBOLA. English title: THE TRAM.

**Porte del Silenzio, Le** (1991, ITA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring John Savage, Sandi Schultz, Richard Castleman, Jennifer Loeb. Italian horror maestro Fulci's last film before his death in 1996 is unremarkable but watchable horror chiller filmed in Louisiana. Businessman Savage drives home from his father's funeral and has some strange visions of a hearse and a mysterious woman. What's wrong with him? Now and then the pace comes to a screeching halt, but setting and subject matter are interesting. Fulci also scripted under pseudonym. English title: DOOR TO SILENCE.

**Portiere di Notte, Il** (1974, ITA/USA) **C-117m. \*\*** D: Liliana Cavani. Starring Dirk Bogarde, Charlotte Rampling, Philippe Leroy, Gabriele Ferzetti, Isa Miranda. Bogarde plays a night porter at an Austrian hotel, who is shocked when beautiful Rampling moves in, the very same woman he used to abuse when he was a Gestapo officer for the Nazis fifteen years before. A difficult portrait of an obsessive love, well-cast, but unfortunately wallowing in sleaze and degradation. Notable as one of the first Nazi exploitation films, although this is certainly more serious and honorable in its attempt to depict the aftermath of Nazi horror (the others focused on violence and sex). English title: THE NIGHT PORTER.

**Poseidon** (2006, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Wolfgang Petersen. Starring Kurt Russell, Josh Lucas, Richard Dreyfuss, Jacinda Barrett, Emmy Rossum, Mike Vogel, Kevin Dillon. Remake of the disaster movie classic THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE (1972), with revamped special effects but pretty much the same story. After a tidal wave hits his luxurious ship and it capsizes, Russell must find his daughter among the survivors and venture to the ship's bottom to escape. Some excitement derives from cliffhanger stunts, and the cast is quite good, though cardboard characters fail to engross you. Photographed by John Seale.

**Poseidon Adventure, The** (1972, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ronald Neame. Starring Gene Hackman, Ernest Borgnine, Red Buttons, Carol Lynley, Roddy McDowall, Stella Stevens, Shelley Winters, Jack Albertson, Pamela Sue Martin, Arthur O'Connell, Leslie Nielsen. During a silvester celebration, the luxury liner 'Poseidon' is hit by a tidal wave and turned upside down, creating chaos and destruction on board. A handful of survivors, led by reverend Hackman, decide to venture to the ship's bottom (now the only part above the water's surface). Who will survive? Trivial 30-minute introduction is followed by dramatic excitement and good performances (especially feisty Hackman, nervous Winters). One of the first (and finest) disaster thrillers of the 1970s. Oscar-winner for Best Song and Best

Visual Effects. In fact, film was nominated for nine Academy Awards. Based on the novel by Paul Gallico. Irwin Allen coproduced (and reportedly codirected, sans credit). Followed by BEYOND THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE in 1979. Remade in 2005 (for TV) and 2006.

**Possession** (1981, FRA/GER) **C-124m. \*\*\* D:** Andrzej Zulawski. Starring Isabelle Adjani, Sam Neill, Margit Carstensen, Heinz Bennent, Johanna Hofer. Expressionistic, powerful art horror about the disintegration of the marriage between Neill and Adjani. He suspects her of cheating on him, she goes raving mad. Obviously, her love affair is of a supernatural kind. Graphic, difficult to watch, definitely not to everyone's taste, but undeniably powerful, with daring acting by Adjani. In the film's depiction of insanity and use of an apartment house setting, this owes a bit, perhaps, to Polanski's THE TENANT (1976), also starring Adjani. Filmed in English.

**Possession, The** (2012, USA/CDN) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ole Bornedal. Starring Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Natasha Calis, Kyra Sedgwick, Jay Brazeau, Madison Davenport. Solid horror movie about the demonic possession of a ten-year-old girl. She finds a peculiar box at a yard sale and takes it home. It turns out that there's a demon inside the box, waiting to feed on the souls of innocent children. Not very much new in terms of plot, but well-made, with good scares and chills. Calis's performance is really good. From the director of the original NIGHTWATCH (NATTEVAGTEN).

**Postino, Il** (1994, ITA/FRA) **C-108m. \*\*\*\*½ D:** Michael Radford. Starring Massimo Troisi, Philippe Noiret, Maria Gracia Cucinotta, Linda Moretti, Renato Scarpa. Touching, beautifully realized film about the friendship between a simple-minded postman and famed poet Pablo Neruda from Chile, who helps the reluctant man win his love Cucinotta. Troisi (in his final film) is perfect and so is Noiret in a grand performance as the writer. Filmed on the island Isla Negra, this moving comedy drama is almost stunningly beautiful and unfolds slowly and quietly, like the lives of the people living there. Oscar-winning score by Luis Enrique Bakalov helps to build an atmosphere that is warm and real, a rarity these days. An intelligent film, which shows how poetry can affect (and change) one's life. Based on the novel *Burning Patience* by Antonio Skàrmeta. English title: THE POSTMAN.

**Postman** (1997, USA) **C-177m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Kevin Costner. Starring Kevin Costner, Will Patton, Larenz Tate, Olivia Williams, James Russo, Daniel von Bargen, Tom Petty, Scott Bairstow, Giovanni Ribisi, Roberta Maxwell. I always knew it: Postmen make the world a better place... at least in this dreary science-fiction drama set in 2013 after a war has wiped out civilization (and left nature intact). Costner plays a slow-witted loner who one day is forced to enlist in barbaric army of the Hornists led by vicious Patton. After his escape our hero finds the uniform of a postman (and his remains) and decides to become a mailman himself (but *why?*). By delivering letters and telling false stories of a reinstated government, he gives people hope for a better future and soon becomes a living legend. Patton, however, is out to kill every new postman assigned by Costner. Some magnificent, epic-scale photography promises more at the beginning, and Patton is good as the villain, but the story (as you might agree after reading the plot review) is laughable and oozing with pointless patriotism. Scripted by Eric Roth and Brian Koppelman (of L.A. CONFIDENTIAL 'fame'), based on the novel by David Brin. This is a drama set in the future, not a science-fiction film. For a beautiful, touching, poetic film about a postman, watch IL POSTINO.

**Posto Ideale per Uccidere, Un** (1971, ITA/FRA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Irene Papas, Ray Lovelock, Ornella Muti, Michel Bardinet, Jacques Stany, Umberto D'Orsi, Calisto Tanzi, Sal Borgese, Umberto Raho. Time capsule from the early 70s about free-wheeling couple Lovelock and Muti (who was 16 when this was released), who drift from place to place selling pornography. When they are caught and forced to leave the

country within 24 hours they want to make one more stop and end up in a secluded villa, whose owner Papas harbors a secret. Interesting giallo is stylishly directed and nicely conveys the spirit of the time, it's also ideally cast. Title song *How can you live your life* is a catchy tune. Produced by Carlo Ponti. English titles: DEADLY TRAP, DIRTY PICTURES, and OASIS OF FEAR.

**Posutoman Burusu** (1997, JAP) **C-110m.** \*\*½ D: Sabu (=Hiroyuki Tanaka). Starring Shin'ichi Tsutsumi, Keisuke Horibe, Ren Osugi, Kyôko Toyama, Sabu. Quirky, typically eccentric – although not vintage – Sabu comedy about a lonely postman, who becomes hunted by the police, who believe him to be a hitman working for the mob. Bizarre situations abound, but pace isn't up to Sabu's other efforts. In fact, it resembles that found in the work of Jim Jarmusch, who may be Sabu's main inspiration. English title: POSTMAN BLUES.

**Poughkeepsie Tapes, The** (2007, USA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: John Erick Dowdle. Starring Stacy Chbosky, Ben Messmer, Samantha Robson. Uneven, oppressive – and thus barely enjoyable mockumentary from the director of DEVIL (2010) and AS ABOVE, SO BELOW (2014). The police discover hundreds of video tapes in the home of a serial killer, which depict his work. Film consists of interviews with detectives and psychologists involved, as well as some overlong, sadistic torture/abduction sequences in VHS quality. Ambitious addition to the found-footage genre is mostly unpleasant, perhaps deliberately so. Judge for yourself. Sat on the shelf for almost seven years following a brief festival run.

**Pouic-Pouic** (1963, FRA) **B&W-86m.** \*\*½ D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Mireille Darc, Roger Dumas, Jacqueline Maillan, Christian Marin, Guy Tréjan. Pre-superstar de Funès stars in this farce, a filmed stageplay, about a stockbroker who is trying to sell his wife's latest present, a worthless land claim in South America to the lovesick millionaire who woos his rebel daughter (Darc). She comes up with a plan to say she just married in secret. Several other characters complicate the proceedings during one weekend at the family's villa. Some laughs, an erratic performance by de Funès make it worthwhile for fans, this is surprisingly similar to OSCAR (1967) or JO (1971) though not as hilarious. One of de Funès' more obscure starring roles.

**Poulet au Vinaigre** (1985, FRA) **C-108m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Poiret, Stéphane Audran, Michel Bouquet, Jean Topart, Lucas Belvaux, Pauline Lafont, Caroline Cellier, Dominique Zardi, Henri Attal, Josephine Chaplin. Stimulating crime drama about a conflict which leads to murder in a rural village. A handicapped widow (Audran) and her son are threatened with eviction from their house by three business partners. Jean Poiret, in his first appearance as Inspecteur Lavardin, solves the case in his own inimitable style. Fine script by Chabrol and Dominique Roulet, whose novel *Une Mort en Trop* this drama is based on. The director has a cameo in the bistro. English language title: COP AU VIN. Followed by INSPECTEUR LAVARDIN in 1986 and several made-for-TV sequels, all titled LES DOSSIERS DE L'INSPECTEUR LAVARDIN.

**Poultrygeist: Night of the Chicken Dead** (2006, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Lloyd Kaufman. Starring Jason Yachanin, Kate Graham, Allyson Sereboff, Robin L. Watkins, Lloyd Kaufman, Ron Jeremy. Gross-out splatter comedy from Troma films (THE TOXIC AVENGER) is actually quite entertaining. Yachanin starts working for a fast-food chain, but his girlfriend has joined some activists protesting against it. It turns out the chicken are about to return from the dead. Gulp! Gory, disgusting, filled with engaging, catchy musical numbers, a must for Troma fans. It's also remarkably well-edited.

**Poussière d'Ange** (1987, FRA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Edouard Niemens. Starring Bernard Giraudeau, Fanny Bastien. Down-to-earth, boozy policeman (Giraudeau) who has been left by his wife investigates a murder series, with which young Bastien may have something to

do. Typically depressing, aloof French 80s film, quite interesting but none too entertaining. Strange noir-like narration. Title means 'Angel Dust'.

**Power, The** (1968, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Byron Haskin. Starring George Hamilton, Suzanne Pleshette, Richard Carlson, Yvonne De Carlo, Earl Holliman, Arthur O'Connell, Aldo Ray, Michael Rennie, Forrest J Ackerman. Well-plotted mystery thriller with science-fiction elements. Film is set at a space travel research facility of the near future, where one of the scientists is revealed to have telekinetic powers. Hamilton sets out to identify the person and becomes a target himself. Slightly uneven and a bit too talky but endowed with a good mystery plot. A time-capsule of the late 60s, produced by George Pal. Good zither score by Miklós Rózsa. Based on the novel by Frank M. Robinson (THE TOWERING INFERNO). Last film of director Haskin (WAR OF THE WORLDS).

**Practical Magic** (1998, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Griffin Dunne. Starring Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman, Dianne Wiest, Stockard Channing, Goran Visnjic, Chloe Webb, Aidan Quinn. Two sisters (Bullock and Kidman) are born into a family of witches and learn that there's a curse on them, sooner or later killing every man they fall in love with. As grown-ups their ways part, with Bullock leading a happy family life with two children and Kidman partying through life. When Bullock's husband dies in an accident (the curse!) and Kidman's lover (Visnjic) turns out to be a brute, they are forced to reunite and make use of their special gift. Inept adaptation of Alice Hoffman's novel starts out as a family film (with beautiful photography) but turns into an odd horror drama in the second half. Unconvincing (perhaps due to the overly realistic town setting) and obviously pointless. Not for small children.

**Prancer** (1989, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** John D. Hancock. Starring Sam Elliott, Cloris Leachman, Rutanya Alda, Michael Constantine, Rebecca Harrell. Heart-warming tale of an 8-year-old girl (Harrell), who grows up without a mother and refuses to believe that Santa doesn't exist. It's a harsh winter, as her father (Elliott) is fearing for their financial existence. Then the little girl discovers a wounded reindeer, names it Prancer and hides it in their barn. Is Santa going to pick it up this Christmas if she nurtures it back to health? Simple story, well-told. Score by Maurice Jarre.

**Predator** (1987, USA) **C-107m. \*\*\* D:** John McTiernan. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Carl Weathers, Elpidia Carrillo, Bill Duke, Jesse Ventura. Good horror/action yarn set in the jungle, where Schwarzenegger's SWAT team is assigned to retrieve missing politician. When the first team members die, guerilla fighters are suspected. In fact, it's a hideous monster that just dropped onto the Earth. Unexceptional first half outweighed by crackerjack second one, as director McTiernan (DIE HARD) adds suspense to the action. Fine score by Alan Silvestri. Followed by a sequel in 1990.

**Predatori di Atlantide, I** (1983, ITA/FIL) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Ruggero Deodato. Starring Christopher Connelly, Gioia Scola, Tony King, Stefano Mingardo, Ivan Rassimov, George Hilton. Often laughable, amateurish sci-fi actioner about the resurfacing of Atlantis. A team of scientists and adventurers explore it and are attacked by a group of MAD MAX / ROAD WARRIOR-type weirdos. Quite trashy, but not without appeal. From the director CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (1979). Also known as RAIDERS OF ATLANTIS, ATLANTIS INTERCEPTORS and ATLANTIS INFERNO.

**Predators** (2010, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Nimród Antal. Starring Adrien Brody, Laurence Fishburne, Topher Grace, Alice Braga. Several soldiers / mercenaries are dropped into the jungle against their will and soon find out that there are lots of aliens out to hunt them. Sci-fi horror action, the second sequel to the Schwarzenegger hit PREDATOR (1987) unfortunately does almost everything wrong. The 'suspense' scenes are drawn out, the characters are annoying, all the situations seem pretentious. Even the monsters come across

as silly men in armor suits. Good production values and effects, but still seems endless and the script is stupid.

**Prefetto di Ferro, Il** (1977, ITA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Pasquale Squitieri. Starring Giuliano Gemma, Claudia Cardinale, Stefano Satta Flores, Massimo Mollica, Rik Battaglia, Paul Muller, Fernando Rabal. Difficult, at times powerful saga of the “iron prefect” Cesare Mori, whose aim was to rid Sicily of the powerful grasp of the Mafia in the 1920s. Gemma is excellent in the title role and carries the whole film, which remains sometimes too uninvolved. Cardinale plays a struggling housewife, who has her own complaints with Mori’s methods. Based on the novel by Arrigo Petacci. Score by Ennio Morricone. English title: THE IRON PREFECT.

**Premature Burial, The** (1962, USA) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Roger Corman. Starring Ray Milland, Hazel Court, Richard Ney, Heather Angel, Alan Napier. Another Corman film based on an Edgar Allan Poe novel: Milland is afraid of being buried alive because his father died of Catalepsia, a disease that induces all symptoms of death. Atmospheric, eerie entry into the series has plot that becomes more complicated towards the end but camerawork and direction pull it off.

**Preparati la Bara!** (1968, ITA) **C-92m. \*\* D:** Ferdinando Baldi. Starring Terence Hill, Horst Frank, George Eastman, José Torres, Franco Balducci. Low-grade spaghetti western, a follow-up to Corbucci’s DJANGO movies, with Hill in the title role. He assembles several criminals to avenge the murder of his wife by the hands of evil Frank. No proper score, just an inappropriate replay of the tune, plot is even less motivated. Ending is best part. Beware of shorter comedy print. Also known as DJANGO – PREPARE A COFFIN, VIVA DJANGO, and DJANGO SEES RED.

**Préparez Vos Mouchoirs** (1978, FRA/BEL) **C-105m. \*\*\* D:** Bertrand Blier. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Patrick Dewaere, Carole Laure, Riton, Michel Serrault, Eleonore Hirt. Unconventional comedy about man (Depardieu) who asks a total stranger (Dewaere) to make his wife happy. This leads to funny, if not always believable complications. Well-acted (especially by Serrault in a supporting role) but overall a slight choice for the Oscar as Best Foreign Film. English title: GET OUT YOUR HANDKERCHIEFS.

**Prestige, The** (2006, USA/GBR) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Christopher Nolan. Starring Hugh Jackman, Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Piper Perabo, Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Samantha Mahurin, David Bowie, Andy Serkis, Chao Li Chi. Good-looking, original thriller about two magicians in turn-of-the-century London, whose friendship evolves into rivalry when Jackman’s wife dies because Bale fouled up a magic trick. From then on, each one is obsessed with outdoing the other, especially by finding out how the trick of The Transported Man works. Complex narrative, fine performances, film builds suspense well until climax, which seems exaggerated, unbelievable but still packs a punch. Scripted by director Nolan, based on a novel by Christopher Priest.

**Prey, The** (1980, USA) **C-80m. \*½ D:** Edwin Brown. Starring Debbie Thuresen, Steve Bond, John Leslie, Lori Lethin, Robert Wald, Jackie Coogan. Some teenagers go camping in the woods and are stalked by a mutated giant that seeks revenge for a wildfire that killed his family some thirty years before. Not bad in some parts, and quite gory, but very slowly paced and ultimately dull. Only if you are a die-hard fan of early 80s horror. Effects by John Carl Buechler. Remained unreleased for four years.

**Pride and Prejudice** (1940, USA) **117m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Z. Leonard. Starring Greer Garson, Laurence Olivier, Edward Ashley, Maureen O’Sullivan, Mary Boland, Edmund Gwenn. First adaptation of Jane Austen’s classic novel set in 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘Old’ England, where intelligent girl Garson and her four sisters are looking for husbands in order not to lose their

inheritance. Posh upper-class gentleman Olivier might be the ideal match... Generally considered to be a classic, but to us this film version lacked spirit and it's obvious that the book has much more wit to spare. Photographed by Karl Freund, cowritten by none other than Aldous Huxley.

**Pride & Prejudice** (2005, GBR/FRA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Joe Wright. Starring Keira Knightley, Simon Woods, Talulah Riley, Rosmund Pike, Jena Malone, Carey Mulligan, Donald Sutherland, Brenda Blethyn, Judi Dench, Alan Cumming. Well-made Jane Austen adaptation about headstrong lass Knightley, one of Sutherland's four daughters, who falls in love with seemingly proud, condescending Woods. Beautifully shot, overall handsome romance is also remarkably well-paced. An alternative (happier) ending was shot for U.S. release.

**Prima Notte, La** (1959, ITA/FRA) **C-80m. \*\*** D: Alberto Cavalcanti. Starring Vittorio de Sica, Martine Carol, André Versini, Don Ziegler, Claudia Cardinale. Mild comedy about a rich Frenchwoman Carol, who travels to Venice and becomes romantically involved with Versini, who is posing as an Arabian prince. Colorful and harmless, but not at all funny or imaginative. A pity, with those talents involved. Based on Abel Hermant's novel *Les Noces Venitiennes*. Originally released in black-and-white.

**Primary Colors** (1998, USA) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mike Nichols. Starring John Travolta, Emma Thompson, Kathy Bates, Adrian Lester, Billy Bob Thornton, Maura Tierney, Larry Hagman, Diane Ladd, Rob Reiner. Young Lester 'boards' the Presidential election campaign of Bill Clintonesque Governor Travolta and finds himself in a swamp of false accusations and counter attacks. The aspiring President has a few skeletons in the closet, which make him viable to attacks by his opponents. His affairs with countless women may even break his neck in the campaign. Not very compelling portrait of an election campaign (with interesting links to Bill Clinton's own life), but well-acted and overall worthwhile. Bates is brilliant as one of Travolta's advisors and his conscience. Based on the novel by Anonymous (Joe Klein).

**Prime** (2005, USA) **C-105m. \*\*** D: Ben Younger. Starring Meryl Streep, Uma Thurman, Bryan Greenberg, Jon Abrahams. Slightly sub-standard romantic comedy about recently divorced 37-year-old Thurman and her infatuation with 23-year-old Greenberg. The hitch: He's her therapist's son! One-joke comedy tries to be authentic but fails because there are only occasional smiles instead of the laughs in this contrived story. Thurman and Streep are appealing, though. Written by the director.

**Prince of Darkness** (1987, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Carpenter. Starring Donald Pleasance, Jameson Parker, Victor Wong, Lisa Blount, Dennis Dun, Susan Blanchard, Alice Cooper. Typical Carpenter horror movie about a team of scientists, who research mysterious "living" cylinder in a church and must fear that Satan is about to emerge. Creepy, effective, well-scored (by Carpenter himself), good for horror fans, although this one takes itself much too seriously. Written by Carpenter (as Martin Quatermass). 102m. version inserts new footage and should be avoided.

**Prince of Egypt, The** (1998, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½** D: Brenda Chapman, Steve Hickner, Simon Wells. Voices of Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes, Michelle Pfeiffer, Sandra Bullock, Jeff Goldblum, Danny Glover, Patrick Stewart, Helen Mirren, Steve Martin, Martin Short, Mel Brooks. Bombastically animated, supposedly crackerjack drama recreates the events described in the Exodus chapter of the Holy Bible. Moses, an abandoned baby, becomes brother to an Egyptian prince and leads the Hebrews into the Promised Land. Not really for children due to the lack of comic relief, and even adults will be confounded by the flawed story-telling. Too bad, a hit-and-miss production from Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks Pictures.

**Princess and the Frog, The** (2009, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\*** D: Ron Clements, John Musker. Starring (the voices of) Anika Noni Rose, Bruno Campos, Keith David, Michael-Leon Wooley, Jennifer

Cody, Jim Cummings, Oprah Winfrey, Terrence Howard, John Goodman, Randy Newman. Good Disney movie takes its inspiration from the Frog Prince fairy tale and blends it into 1920s New Orleans, where underprivileged girl has a dream of opening her own restaurant. Meanwhile, a poor prince falls prey to a voodoo doctor and is turned into a frog. When he mistakes the chamber maid (our heroine) for a princess, she is turned into one as well, and together they have to stop the voodoo guy's evil plans. Fairly well-made and told fantasy, with the colorful, bizarre villain sequences standing out. This was the first hand-drawn Disney movie since 2004. Score by Randy Newman.

**Princess Bride, The** (1987, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\*½ D: Rob Reiner. Starring Cary Elwes, Mandy Patinkin, Chris Sarandon, Christopher Guest, Wallace Shawn, Andre the Giant, Fred Savage, Robin Wright Penn, Peter Falk, Peter Cook, Mel Smith, Carol Kane, Billy Crystal. Quite popular fairy tale with a complicated story setup: Falk visits his grandson Savage and reads a story to him about princess Penn, who is in love with a servant. When he dies, she must become the wife of a prince, but kidnappers whisk her away to foreign lands. Nicely done fantasy, with some comic touches that unfortunately gain an overweight. Slightly fragmented script by William Goldman, based on his novel.

**Princess Caraboo** (1994, USA/GBR) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Michael Austin. Starring Phoebe Cates, Jim Broadbent, Wendy Hughes, Kevin Kline, John Lithgow, Stephen Rea, Peter Eyre, Jacqueline Pearce. Good family film about a young woman, who is accepted into a 18th century British household, after she appears out of nowhere. She speaks a strange language, and soon the landlord and landlady begin to suspect she is a foreign princess. Fine cast handles material well. Photographed by Freddie Francis.

**Princess Mononoke** (1997, JAP) **C-134m**. \*\*\*½ D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring the voices of Yôji Matsuda, Yuriko Ishida, Yûko Tanaka, Tetsu Watanabe. Top-notch animated fantasy about a warrior, who is fatally wounded by a giant boar and goes on a journey to find out the reason for its attack. It turns out the spirits of the forests are in upheaval, as a ruthless ruler is about to destroy the woods for the sake of her iron production. The warrior teams up with mysterious Princess Mononoke, who lives with the wolves and is half-girl, half-spirit. Mythical, engrossing fantasy creates a similar kind of awe and wonder as Ridley Scott's **LEGEND** (1985). Intelligent story, excellent score, a winner from start to finish. Original title: **MONONOKE-HIME**. English version features the voices of Gillian Anderson, Billy Crudup, Claire Danes, Minnie Driver, Jada Pinkett Smith, Billy Bob Thornton, Lewis Arquette.

**Prisoners** (2013, USA) **C-153m**. \*\*\* D: Denis Villeneuve. Starring Hugh Jackman, Jake Gyllenhaal, Viola Davis, Maria Bello, Terrence Howard, Melissa Leo, Paul Dano. Powerful crime drama about workman Jackman and his family, whose little daughter is kidnapped one Thanksgiving afternoon along with a friend. Police detective Gyllenhaal takes too long to make any progress, so Jackman abducts the prime suspect, a mentally retarded man who refuses to disclose any information, and tortures him in an abandoned building. Long but engrossing film, very intense, with an impressive performance by Jackman. Well-photographed by Roger Deakins.

**Prityazhenie** (2016, RUS) **C-133m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Fedor Bondarchuk. Starring Irina Starshenbaum, Alexander Petrov, Rinal Mukhametov, Oleg Menshikov. An alien spaceship crashlands in Moscow. The site is immediately cordoned off, with colonel Menshikov in charge. His daughter Starshenbaum, who barely survived the impact, lost her friend in it and decides to enter the quarantine zone to send a personal message to the aliens. They, however, turn out to look quite human below their robot-like suits. Sci-fi drama has some good effects and a professional score, but plot is aimless and turns into a romance(!) in the second half. The director is Sergei's son. English title: **ATTRACTION**.

**Private Life of Sherlock Holmes, The** (1970, USA/GBR) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Billy Wilder. Starring Robert Stephens, Colin Blakely, Geneviève Page, Irene Handl, Stanley Holloway, Christopher Lee, Clive Revill. Exquisite film, superbly designed and photographed, about famous private detective Sherlock Holmes (Stephens) and his companion Dr. Watson (Blakely), who in his memoirs discloses some very personal cases, which the sleuth tackled. In the main episode Holmes traces the husband of an amnesiac to the Scottish Loch Ness. Grand entertainment, perfectly realized by cowriter-producer-director Wilder. Originally devised as a three-and-a-half-hour film, a 12m. sequence was restored later. Filmed in England and Scotland.

**Prix du Danger, Le** (1982, FRA/YUG) **C-97m. \*\*** D: Yves Boisset. Starring Michel Piccoli, Gérard Lavin, Bruno Cremer, Andréa Ferréol, Jean-Claude Dreyfus. In a futuristic game show humans are hunted by armed assassins. If they survive for five hours they win a lot of money. Lavin is the victim that puts up more resistance than all those that preceded him. Film comes to life in the second half when Lavin is actually hunted, but overall Boisset has created a mild satire on the media, who will do anything to attract audiences. Muddled, underproduced and unconvincing. Piccoli is over-the-top as flamboyant host of the show. Adapted from a novel by Robert Sheckley, which was filmed before as LA DECIMA VITTIMA (THE TENTH VICTIM). This version at least had some style. English title: THE PRIZE OF PERIL.

**Probabilità Zero** (1968, ITA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Maurizio Lucidi. Starring Henry Silva, Vittorio André, Luigi Casellato, Katia Christine, Renato De Carmine. Italian war adventure detailing the dangerous mission led by Silva to infiltrate a fortress, where the Nazis have brought stolen radar device. Story by Dario Argento has some interesting elements (most notably the Norwegian setting), but script is too pedestrian and fails to create any suspense. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. English title: PROBABILITY ZERO.

**Professor Columbus** (1968, GER/NED) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Rainer Erlen. Starring Rudolf Platte, Ankie van Amstel, Jeroen Krabbé, Louise Martini. Charming piece of 60s nostalgia about university librarian Platte, who discovers his passion for ships. He all of a sudden quits his job and buys a run-down steamer, intending to live for his dream rather than keep pushing book carts. On board he meets a group of Hippies, who think the ship is theirs. Irresistible story, great performance by Platte. From the director of DIE DELEGATION (1970) and FLEISCH (1979).

**Profondo Rosso** (1975, ITA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Dario Argento. Starring David Hemmings, Daria Nicolodi, Gabriele Lavia, Macha Méril, Eros Pagni, Clara Calamai, Nicoletta Elmi. Superbly stylish direction and brilliant photography in one of the best psycho horror thrillers ever made. American pianist Hemmings witnesses a murder during a stay in Rome and becomes obsessed with finding out the identity of the black-gloved killer. Gory murders backed by an insane, creepy rock-music score (by Goblin, no less) make for a frightening experience. Several scenes are bound to drive you up the wall! One of the few Argento films where the plot is actually good, this is arguably his best achievement. An artistic triumph, with one of the most astounding camerawork ever (by Luigi Kuveiller, assisted by Ubaldo Terzano). Written by Dario Argento and Bernardino Zapponi (a Fellini regular). Produced by Salvatore and Claudio Argento. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Most prints run around 100m., you would do well to avoid them. English titles: DEEP RED, and THE HATCHET MURDERS.

**Profondo Carmesì** (1996, MEX/SPA/FRA) **C-115m. \*\*\*½** D: Arturo Ripstein. Starring Regina Orozco, Daniel Gimenez-Cacho, Marisa Paredes, Veronica Merchant, Julietta Egurolla, Patricia Reyes Spindola. True crime drama about a murderous couple is actually a remake of Leonard Kastle's THE HONEYMOON KILLERS, which is based on the same case from 1940s Mexico. Orozco and Gimenez-Cacho fall in love and take it on the lam, killing rich widows on

their way. Well-acted, nicely photographed thriller drama offers good production design and score, but might have been a little more compact and dramatic. Highly regarded by some. English title: DEEP CRIMSON.

**Project A** (1983, H GK) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Yuen Biao, Samo Hung, Dick Wei, Isabella Wong, Mars. Jackie Chan plays a sergeant for the coast guard who is assigned to stop pirates from raiding the seas around Hong Kong. After he is dismissed for improper conduct, he teams up with his friends Samo Hung and Yuen Biao to complete the mission called Project A. Funny action adventure takes some time to get going (primarily because of the standard plot) but is filled with great fights and stunts. Well-produced by Leonard Ho and Raymond Chow. Followed by a sequel.

**Projected Man, The** (1967, GBR) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ian Curteis. Starring Bryant Haliday, Mary Peach, Ronald Allen, Norman Wooland. Sci-fi horror film about a scientist who has developed a beaming device (à la Star Trek) and becomes its first victim, when he tries it on himself. The disfigured scientist goes on to take revenge on those who sabotaged the experiment. Poorly plotted contrivance has some stylish lighting and camerawork but remains dramatically pat. A curio, for B-movie fans. Some versions run 77m.

**Prometheus** (2012, USA/GBR) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½** D: Ridley Scott. Starring Noomi Rapace, Michael Fassbender, Charlize Theron, Idris Elba, Guy Pearce, Logan Marshall-Green. Visually sumptuous, impressive science-fiction horror film takes Scott back to his ALIEN (1979) and BLADE RUNNER (1982) days. Similar cave paintings found in different parts of the world point toward a solar system with an exoplanet that might support life. A scientific crew are put in hypersleep to travel there. The funder of the mission expects to find mankind's makers there. Soon, however, the android on board seems to sabotage the mission and death awaits them on the planet. Plot is sometimes mundane, but brilliant design by H.R. Giger, suspenseful storyline, fine score and photography make this a must for sci-fi fans. Predates the ALIEN mission by some 30 years, making this a kind of prequel.

**Prom Night** (1980, CDN) **C-92m. \*½** D: Paul Lynch. Starring Leslie Nielsen, Jamie Lee Curtis, Casey Stevens, Anne-Marie Martin, Antoinette Bower, Michael Tough, Robert A. Silverman, Jeff Wincott. Six years after the murder of a little girl, the kids involved have now grown up and are waiting for their Prom Night. Just then somebody starts hacking them up with an axe and glass shards. Who is the masked maniac? Poorly written thriller, obviously inspired by HALLOWEEN (1978), which also starred Curtis. It lacks a memorable main theme and a tighter and more dramatic plot. Even horror fans will be bored. Nevertheless spawned three sequels, starting with HELLO MARY LOU: PROM NIGHT II (1987).

**Prom Night III: The Last Kiss** (1989, CDN) **C-97m. \*½** D: Ron Oliver, Peter R. Simpson. Starring Tim Conlon, Cynthia Preston, David Stratton, Courtney Taylor, Dylan Neal. Second sequel to PROM NIGHT (1980) is stupid horror comedy, with the emphasis on comedy. Conlon plays an "average" teenager, whose life gets a dose of adrenaline, when demonic Mary Lou becomes his lover and kills all his enemies. Starts incredibly stupid, then improves, but still just a worthless horror film. Followed by PROM NIGHT IV: DELIVER US FROM EVIL (1992).

**Pronto ad Uccidere** (1976, ITA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Franco Prosperi. Starring Ray Lovelock, Martin Balsam, Elke Sommer, Heinz Domez, Peter Berling, Riccardo Cucciolla. Cop Lovelock goes undercover to infiltrate crime syndicate, flees a prison with gangster Balsam. Violent action thriller is fluidly filmed, contains lots of action (obviously modeled after Sam Peckinpah's films), but plot is not very spectacular and some sequences go on too long. Also known as MEET HIM AND DIE and RISKING. Director Prosperi collaborated with Mario Bava in the early 1960s.

**Proof of Life** (2000, USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Taylor Hackford. Starring Meg Ryan, Russell Crowe, David Morse, Pamela Reed, David Caruso, Anthony Heald, Gottfried John. Flawed thriller about the kidnapping of American engineer Morse at work in South America. His wife Ryan eventually agrees to cooperate with top-notch hostage negotiator Crowe. Solid performances and nice cinematography are only assets of this film that is made much too long. Inspired by a book by Thomas Hargrove and an article by William Prochnau. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Prophecy** (1979, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Frankenheimer. Starring Robert Foxworth, Talia Shire, Armand Assante, Richard A. Dysart, Victoria Rasimo, George Clutesi. Made back at the time when they thought horror films could be A-movies, this eco-horror thriller is interesting for buffs. Foxworth (stern as ever) plays a doctor with noble intentions, who is called to calm down native folks believing monsters to be roaming their woods. Is nature preparing to strike back at humans? Some vicious (though rather unconvincing) effects, but plot is silly. Photographed by Harry Stradling Jr. in Canada (the first U.S. production to use B.C. locales).

**Prophecy, The** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*\*** D: Gregory Widen. Starring Christopher Walken, Elias Koteas, Virginia Madsen, Eric Stoltz, Viggo Mortensen, Amanda Plummer. The Angels are battling it out for a human soul in this ambitious horror film. A cop (Koteas) with a clerical past investigates several murders that may have something to do with the (non-existent) 23rd Bible chapter of the Revelations, which prophecizes a war of gargantuan proportions. Not exactly credible (and not for all tastes), but brilliantly cast (Walken is brilliant) and creatively directed by first-time director Widen, who also wrote the screenplay. Also known as GOD'S ARMY. Followed by two sequels.

**Prophétie des Grenouilles, La** (2003, FRA) **C-91m. \*\*½** D: Jacques-Remy Girerd. Starring (the voices of) Michel Piccoli, Anouk Grinberg, Annie Girardot, Michel Galabru, Kevin Hervé, Coline Girerd. Orphan Tom lives in the country with his foster parents, the old sailor Ferdinand (whom he calls grandfather) and his African wife. One day the owners of a nearby zoo go on a holiday to Africa (to catch some crocodiles), and just then a flood hits the country. The zoo animals find refuge in the sailor's lighthouse, which is floating on a giant tractor wheel. Cute animation retains a refreshing picture book look, but the story (a Noah's Ark variation) is uneven and has a jarring twist, which gives the bad guys the upper hand. English title: RAINING CATS AND FROGS.

**Proposition, The** (2005, AUS/GBR) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John Hillcoat. Starring Guy Pearce, Ray Winstone, Danny Huston, John Hurt, David Wenham, Emily Watson, Noah Taylor, John Hurt. Stylish outback western set in 1880s Australia about tough law enforcer Winston, who has recently moved to the continent with his fragile wife Watson. He investigates a family massacre and forces suspect Pearce to catch his own brother Huston – the real mastermind behind the crime – or else his other brother will die in prison. Excellent photography, striking direction in stylized, tense mood piece from a screenplay by Nick Cave (who also contributed to the fine score). Often unrelenting, but recommended to cult film buffs.

**Protector, The** (1985, USA/HKG) **C-94m. \*½** D: James Glickenhaus. Starring Jackie Chan, Danny Aiello, Sandy Alexander, Roy Chiao, Bill Wallace. Very poorly plotted action film about two New York Cops (Chan and Aiello) who travel to Hong Kong and battle crime syndicate there. A few well-filmed action scenes, but nothing to brag about. Chan seems uneasy, Aiello is completely miscast.

**Providence** (1977, FRA/GBR) **C-107m. \*\*** D: Alain Resnais. Starring Dirk Bogarde, John Gielgud, Ellen Burstyn, David Warner, Elaine Stritch. On his 78th birthday writer Gielgud

drowns his sorrows in alcohol and imagines a story which stars his own children. Pseudo-intellectual drama, written by David Mercer, hardly makes sense, the surreal scenes don't work, and result is a shapeless mess. Very profane, film's cast provides only real interest. Score by Miklos Rosza.

**Provincia Violenta** (1978, ITA) **C-79m.** \*½ D: Robert Moore (=Mario Bianchi). Starring Calogero (Lino) Caruana, Alicia Leoni, Al Cliver, Richard Harrison, Antonella Dogan. Deservedly obscure action thriller about brutal, DIRTY HARRY-style police inspector Caruana, who quits his job, but returns with full force when his girlfriend is killed. Extremely poor acting, and direction that relies solely on staccato editing. Stelvio Cipriani's score is much too good for this trash.

**Prowler, The** (1981, USA) **C-88m.** D: Joseph Zito. Starring Vicky Dawson, Christopher Goutman, Lawrence Tierney, Farley Granger, Cindy Weintraub. Bottom-of-the-barrel horror film about a WW2 veteran running amok at a prom dance. Illogical, dumb, goes on forever. Only reason to watch it may be Tom Savini's special effects. Aka ROSEMARY'S KILLER and THE GRADUATION.

**Proxy** (2013, USA) **C-122m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Zack Parker. Starring Joe Swanberg, Kristina Klebe, Alexa Havins, Alexia Rasmussen. An isolated, pregnant woman is attacked in the street, which kills her unborn. In a therapy group she meets another woman, who has also lost her son, or so she claims. Crime thriller has an adequate score to aspire to being Hitchcockian, but there is no cleverness, suspense or momentum, and after a ludicrous twist, plot goes completely overboard. None of the characters and situations are believable.

**Psychic Killer** (1975, USA) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Ray Danton. Starring Paul Burke, Jim Hutton, Julie Adams, Aldo Ray, Nehemia Persoff, Neville Brand, Rod Cameron, Greydon Clark. Hutton, unjustly accused of murder, is finally rehabilitated and sets out to punish anyone that he hates with his newly found psychic powers (enabling him to kill without leaving his sofa). Admittedly stupid premise is aided by elaborate score and a good performance by Hutton, but interest wanes dangerously in the second half. Also known as THE KIRLIAN EFFECT or THE KIRLIAN FORCE.

**Psycho** (1960, USA) **109m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles, John Gavin, Martin Balsam. Hitchcock's masterpiece of terror has lost most of its edge over the years but still qualifies as one of the most intelligent and tensest horror thrillers of all-time. Classic plot about young woman who runs away with money that doesn't belong to her and ends up in the Bates motel may have surprised cinema-goers in the 1960s, but the fact that the film has become a classic (and therefore served as a model for so many imitations) makes you experience it from a certain distance. Bernard Hermann's score is nothing but excellent. Based on Robert Bloch's novel. A similar kind of terror was achieved only by Dario Argento's horror films of the 1970s (which admittedly operated on a different level). Remade in 1998.

**Psycho** (1998, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Gus Van Sant. Starring Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Julianne Moore, Viggo Mortensen, William H. Macy, Chad Everett, Philip Baker Hall, Anne Haney, Rance Howard, James LeGros, James Remar, Rita Wilson, Robert Forster, Flea. Any remake of an Alfred Hitchcock film is blasphemy, and refilming his 1960 classic PSYCHO scene by scene(!) seems like an especially idiotic idea. Director Van Sant tightens the pace a bit, which amounts to a difference of 6 minutes, but adds nothing new. The original plot, however, is as good as ever: Heche impersonates Marion Crane, the woman whose bad conscience about stealing money from her boss (\$400,000 instead of the original's \$40,000) *almost* makes her turn back, if it wasn't for motel owner Norman Bates (Vaughn). The color takes away some of the oppressive atmosphere and Vaughn is no match for the

brilliant Anthony Perkins. Bernard Hermann's score is reused, with some modernizations by Danny Elfman. What's next? A remake of CASABLANCA, or GONE WITH THE WIND?

**Psycho II** (1983, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\* D:** Richard Franklin. Starring Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, Meg Tilly, Robert Loggia, Dennis Franz, Tom Holland, Richard Franklin. Unexpectedly good sequel to the horror classic with Norman Bates deemed sane by psychiatrist Loggia and released from prison. He returns to his motel and befriends drifter Tilly. Soon he starts hearing voices and strange messages begin to appear. Is his mother "back"? Good score (by Jerry Goldsmith), well-directed... how much you'll like it may depend on your reception of the ending (it is a knock-out). Written by Tom Holland. Followed by PSYCHO III (1986) and PSYCHO IV: THE BEGINNING (1990).

**Psycho Cop** (1988, USA) **C-87m. \*½ D:** Wallace Potts. Starring Robert R. Shafer, Jeff Qualle, Palmer Lee Todd, Dan Campbell. Rival to slightly better MANIAC COP (1988), has only a different setting, as some teens are hassled (and killed) by the title character. Direction is somewhat okay, plot a bore. Followed by PSYCHO COP RETURNS (1993). Also known as PSYCHOCOP.

**Psychomania** (1971, GBR) **C-89m. \*\* D:** Don Sharp. Starring Beryl Reid, George Sanders, Nicky Henson, Mary Larkin, Ann Michelle. Robert Hardy, Patrick Holt. Reid has made a pact with a devilish sect (who worship a bullfrog) and her son Henson is about to find out. He demands to be told the secret to life after death (how to return from the grave) and does so, along with his ruthless motorcycle gang(!). Odd combination of horror and biker action has a far too conventional direction and becomes boring after a while. Curiosity may keep you watching. Also shown at 95m. Alternative titles: THE DEATH WHEELERS, THE LIVING DEAD, THE FROG.

**Pulp** (1972, GBR) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** Mike Hodges. Starring Michael Caine, Mickey Rooney, Lionel Stander, Elizabeth Scott, Nadia Cassini, Dennis Price, Al Lettieri, Leopoldo Trieste, Janet Agren. Time-capsule from the early 70s has lost most of its charm. Pulp writer Caine travels to Malta, where he should pen a former Hollywood star's memoirs. However, real murders complicate his mission. Not much in terms of plot, this satire is still witty and funny, especially Caine's voice-overs. Written by director Hodges, who followed this with the interesting sci-fi thriller THE TERMINAL MAN. Edited by John Glen.

**Pulp Fiction** (1994, USA) **C-154m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring John Travolta, Samuel L. Jackson, Uma Thurman, Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Amanda Plummer, Maria de Medeiros, Ving Rhames, Eric Stoltz, Rosanna Arquette, Christopher Walken, Bruce Willis, Quentin Tarantino, Frank Whaley, Steve Buscemi, Alexis Arquette, Lawrence Bender. Tarantino's follow-up to the surprise hit RESERVOIR DOGS is *the* cult film of the 1990s. His look at various dubious characters in the underworld of L.A. has become a modern classic. Basically this is divided into three interlinked stories: In the first, hitman Travolta must entertain his boss's wife Thurman, which leads to some outrageous situations. In the second, boxer Willis cheats on Travolta's boss and must run for his life (if it wasn't for that gold watch...). In the third, concerning a messed-up car, everything is ingeniously linked. Endlessly quotable dialogue, really outrageous, no-holds-barred plot complications make this one of the most influential films of the 1990s. Oscar-winner for Best Screenplay (Tarantino and Roger Avary). Really cool 1970s soundtrack adds to the fun. Listing all the trivia would be nearly impossible. Go to the PULP FICTION page on the IMDb for interesting information.

**Pulse** (1988, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Golding. Starring Cliff De Young, Roxanne Hart, Joey Lawrence, Matthew Lawrence, Charles Tyner. Underrated horror thriller about boy Lawrence, who comes to visit his divorced Dad in his new suburban home (with new flame

Hart) and goes to realize that the neighbor across the street may have been killed by an energy pulse, something that made his appliances evil. Will their house be next? Not very logical or gory (it's rated PG-13), but special effects are terrific and direction showcases them appropriately. Hard to believe this was writer-director Golding's only feature as he includes some intelligent references to key films.

**Punch-Drunk Love** (2002, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Paul Thomas Anderson. Starring Adam Sandler, Emily Watson, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Luís Guzmán. Terminally weird drama about the life of (terminally weird) Sandler, who runs a sort-of garage shop but cannot deal with certain normal situations in life. Sometimes he flies into a rage, sometimes he just breaks out in tears. Is there love waiting for him somewhere? Not easily accessible drama has a fine performance by Sandler but script is basically empty. We never really find out what's wrong with the main character. A slight disappointment from the director of BOOGIE NIGHTS.

**Puppet on a Chain** (1970, GBR) **C-103m. \*\* D:** Geoffrey Reeve, Don Sharp. Starring Sven-Bertil Taube, Barbara Parkins, Alexander Knox, Patrick Allen, Vladek Sheybal, Ania Marson. Trivial but not uninteresting thriller about American agent Taube, who arrives in Amsterdam to investigate several killings and bust drug syndicate. Some period flavor, interesting title gimmick in this low-grade James Bond clone (Sheybal had been the villain in FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE). The speedboat race through Amsterdam, the action 'highlight', was directed by Don Sharp, who also cowrote the script, based on the novel by Alistair MacLean. Interestingly, Bond would also pay a visit to Amsterdam in DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER (1971).

**Puppy** (2007, USA) **C-79m. \*½ D:** Sony Green, Jennifer Emsley. Starring Calico Cooper, Kay Vasilyeva, Greg Land, Sarah Rodebaugh, Brittany Accosta. Amateur splatter movie about a thousand-year-old killer puppy from the Vikings(!), who is washed ashore in modern-day America and after being taken in by some coeds starts killing and cannibalising everybody. Splatter horror comedy made on a shoe-string budget is pretty gross, but with a plot that tries to stay 'straight' and doesn't completely succumb to its effects, it stays less offensive than others of its kind, although the acting and the direction are often inept.

**Pura Formalità, Una** (1994, ITA/FRA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Giuseppe Tornatore. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Roman Polanski, Sergio Rubini, Nicola DiPinto, Paolo Lombardi. On a rainy night a soaked man (Depardieu) is picked up by the authorities and brought to an isolated police station. He claims to be a famous novelist, and commissario Polanski just happens to be a great admirer of his work. However, a murder has been committed and Depardieu may have something to do with it. Is he really the man he claims to be? Psycho drama is interesting to say the least and well-directed but not really satisfying due to an overbearing atmosphere and a conclusion which not everyone may accept. Well-worth a look, if only to see Polanski and Depardieu sharing screen time. Written and edited by the director. Score by Ennio Morricone. English title: A PURE FORMALITY.

**Purge, The** (2013, USA/FRA) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** James DeMonaco. Starring Ethan Hawke, Lena Headey, Max Burkholder, Adelaide Kane, Edwin Hodge, Rhys Wakefield. Some ten years into the future America has become a crimeless society with barely any unemployment. The new leaders have introduced a purge day, 12 hours once every year, when every single crime is legal and emergency service is suspended. Hawke, an alarm system salesman, and his family are about to experience a night of chaos in their suburban home. Interesting concept, loosely related, perhaps, to A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (1971), unfortunately mutes its criticism of society in favour of action and gore. Still, worth a look for cult movie aficionados.

**Purple Rose of Cairo, The** (1985, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** Woody Allen. Starring Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels, Danny Aiello, Dianne Wiest, Van Johnson, Michael Tucker. Well-paced fantasy

comedy about waitress Farrow, who is unhappily married and frequently escapes reality by going to the local movie theatre. And then suddenly one day her favorite character (Daniels) steps off the screen and confesses his love for her! Intelligent script by director Allen goes to show how wonderful the world of the movies can be, despite being full of illusions.

**Pusher** (1996, DEN) **C-110m.** \*\* D: Nicolas Winding Refn. Starring Kim Bodnia, Zlatko Buric, Mads Mikkelsen, Peter Andersson, Nicolas Winding Refn. Director Refn's debut feature is on the low end of his artistic spectrum. A realist picture set in Kopenhagen, where drug pusher Bodnia strikes a deal in order to eliminate his debt. When that deal goes awry, he is faced with an even bigger debt... how can he escape this situation? Often endless Dogma-style crime drama lacks verve and style. Followed by two sequels in 2004 and 2006 after it was re-discovered by the art-house market.

**Pushing Tin** (1999, USA/GER) **C-124m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Mike Newell. Starring John Cusack, Billy Bob Thornton, Cate Blanchett, Angelina Jolie, Jake Weber. Cusack plays a hot-shot air-traffic controller, whose life is at a crossroads. New colleague Thornton may not only steal the show but also his wife Blanchett. Drama is off-beat at first glance but reveals itself to be very ordinary. You know you're in trouble when the opening sequence, designed to convey the excitement of air-traffic control, isn't interesting at all. Good actors make this watchable.

**Pyx, The** (1973, CDN) **C-111m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Harvey Hart. Starring Karen Black, Christopher Plummer, Donald Pilon, Lee Broker, Yvette Brind'Amour. Highly unusual detective thriller about Plummer, who investigates the murder of Black and is drawn into a devil cult. Film shows some weaknesses in terms of plot but is highly intriguing in its use of different time levels. A small gem, not to be missed by cult movie fans. Some of the dialogue is in French. Aka THE HOOKER CULT MURDERS.

**Q** (1982, USA) **C-93m.** \*\*\* D: Larry Cohen. Starring Michael Moriarty, Candy Clark, David Carradine, Richard Roundtree, James Dixon, Mary Louise Weller, Bruce Carradine. One of B-movie icon Cohen's best films, this AIP-produced horror film is about a South American cult, which commits ritualistic murders and has resurrected a winged serpent – in the middle of Manhattan! Moriarty plays a small-time crook, who incidentally stumbles into the creature's lair and intends to cash in on it. Uneven performances (excluding Moriarty's great turn), but script is interesting and pace agreeable. For B-movie fans. Written and produced by Cohen, whose story served as an inspiration for another 'Q', Quentin Tarantino, who borrowed the diamond-heist premise for RESERVOIR DOGS (1992) from this film. Also known as SERPENT, and THE WINGED SERPENT.

**Quai des Orfèvres** (1947, FRA) **106m.** \*\*\* D: Henri-Georges Clouzot. Starring Louis Juvet, Bernard Blier, Suzy Delair, Claudine Dupuis, Simone Renant, Jean Durand, René Blancard, Robert Dalban. Pianist Blier is jealous of his wife Delair, a variety performer, and plots to kill a film producer, who he thinks has an affair with her. When he arrives at his house he finds the man already murdered. Was it his wife? Well-scripted, credible crime drama based on the novel *Légitime Défense* by Stanislas-André Steeman. Film builds suspense slowly, but good cast makes film worthwhile, especially Juvet as the cynical, world-weary inspecteur on the case. Clouzot won the Best Director-award in Cannes. English title: JENNY LAMOUR.

**Qualcosa Striscia nel Buio** (1971, ITA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Mario Colucci. Starring Farley Granger, Lucia Bosé, Stan Cooper (=Stelvio Rosi), Mia Genberg, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Dino Fazio. Italian mystery chiller about a group of people who are surrounded by high water and must seek refuge in a secluded villa one night. Among this group are an inspector keeping a criminal in custody, an estranged couple, and a professor with a faith in seances. Suspenseful, atmospheric giallo with a good score by Angelo Francesco Lavagnino, who also appears as the professor. Bogs down in the second half but still worthwhile. Its premise was

ripped off for the Hollywood thriller *IDENTITY* (2003). English titles: *SOMETHING CREEPING IN THE DARK*, *SOMETHING IS CRAWLING IN THE DARK*, *SHADOWS IN THE DARK*, and *PHANTOM ASSASSIN*.

**Qualcuno Ha Tradito** (1967, ITA/FRA) **C-88m**. BOMB D: Frank Shannon (=Franco Prosperi). Starring Robert Webber, Elsa Martinelli, Jean Servais, Marina Berti, Umberto Raho. Totally forgettable actioner that obviously considers itself a mix between *TOPKAPI* and James Bond. Webber joins a group of safecrackers to steal diamonds. Too bad that someone is planning to betray them. Cheap and pretentious trash. Probably a sequel to Prosperi's *TECNICA DI UN OMICIDIO* (1966), which also starred Webber. Cowritten by Dario Argento! English title: *EVERY MAN IS MY ENEMY*.

**Quando Alice Ruppe lo Specchio** (1988, ITA) **C-84m**. D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Brett Halsey, Sacha Darwin, Al Cliver, Ulla Kerowa, Ria De Simone. Disgusting splatter film about (literal) lady killer Halsey and the ugly women he dates and dismembers with his chainsaw. Gross, pointless, sick. Nihilistic gore from a once-stylish director. Much of this was re-edited into *UN GATTO NEL CERVELLO*. Aka *WHEN ALICE BROKE THE MIRROR* and *TOUCH OF DEATH*.

**Quando le Donne Avevano la Coda** (1970, ITA) **C-91m**. \*½ D: Pasquale Festa Campanile. Starring Senta Berger, Giuliano Gemma, Frank Wolff. Sex comedy about bunch of primitive cavemen who find a pretty woman in one of their traps and discover their libido. Hardly funny script wears very thin after about an hour. Nice sets, though. Score by Ennio Morricone. Also runs (allegedly) 95m., 99m. and even 110m.! English title: *WHEN WOMEN HAD TAILS*. Followed by *WHEN WOMEN LOST THEIR TAILS*.

**Quante Volte ... Quella Notte** (1969, ITA/GER) **C-83m**. \*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Daniele Giordano, Brett Halsey, Dick Randall, Valeria Sabel, Michael Hinz, Rainer Basedow, Brigitte Sky. Light-hearted but mild sex farce from fantasy/horror icon Mario Bava. Halsey picks up beautiful Giordano and subsequently spends the night with her. But what really happened? Did he rape her (and she claims) or did she seduce him (as he claims)? Four versions of the events that night are related, all differ significantly from each other (à la *RASHOMON*). Despite narrative complexity, too tame and talky, not as intriguing as intended. Fans will savor Bava's trademark use of a zoom lens (the 'girl on a swing' would later return in *CINQUE BAMBOLE PER LA LUNA D'AGOSTO*), others will find this terribly dated. Alternative Italian title: *UNA NOTTE FATTA DI BUGIE*. English title: *FOUR TIMES THAT NIGHT*.

**Quantum of Solace** (2008, USA/GBR) **C-106m**. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Marc Forster. Starring Daniel Craig, Olga Kurylenko, Mathieu Amalric, Judi Dench, Giancarlo Giannini, Gemma Arterton, Jeffrey Wright, David Harbour, Jesper Christensen, Anatole Taubman, Rory Kinnear, Tim Pigott-Smith, voices of Guillermo del Toro, Alfonso Cuarón. The Bond franchise revs it up in this sequel to *CASINO ROYALE* (2006), in which 007 goes after pseudo-environmentalist Amalric and his organisation, which is buying land in Bolivia. Bond's driving force is revenge, however, as he still mourns the death of his lover Vesper Lynd. Craig is good (again), and director Forster tries to keep things at a lightning pace with staccato editing, though even at this speed, the plot holes and coincidences don't all disappear. Some spectacular stunt work and globe-spanning settings put this above-average. At 106m., this is the shortest Bond movie of all time. Followed by *SKYFALL* (2012).

**Quarantine** (2008, USA) **C-89m**. \*\*½ D: John Erick Dowdle. Starring Jennifer Carpenter, Steve Harris, Jay Hernandez, Johnathon Schaech, Columbus Short, Andrew Fiscella, Rade Serbedzija. Scene-by-scene remake of the Spanish 2007 hit [*REC*] about a house in L.A. which is quarantined as a virus is transforming the residents into zombies. Can they escape? Pretty much on a par with the original, the ending makes the movie again.

**Quatermass Xperiment, The** (1955, GBR) **B&W-82m.** \*\* D: Val Guest. Starring Brian Donlevy, Jack Warner, Margia Dean, Gordon Jackson, Lionel Jeffries. The first British sci-fi shocker kickstarted the Hammer phenomenon, but has not held up well over the decades. When three astronauts return to Earth either dead or mysteriously infected, it's up to Professor Quatermass to stop an obvious virus that is multiplying by the hour. Talky, overly serious, but incredibly successful at the time, spawning an immediate sequel two years later and a real cult movie in 1967 (QUATERMASS AND THE PIT). Also known as THE CREEPING UNKNOWN.

**Quatermass II: Enemy from Space** (1957, GBR) **B&W-85m.** \*\* D: Val Guest. Starring Brian Donlevy, Jack Longden, Sidney James, Bryan Forbes, William Franklyn. Follow-up to THE QUATERMASS XPERIMENT offers more of the same sci-fi hysteria. Professor Quatermass is dazzled to find there is a real-life version of his moonbase model standing in the British countryside. Obviously, an alien organism is breeding there, attempting to take over the world. Talky and pretentious, like the original. Watch the 1967 QUATERMASS AND THE PIT instead.

**Quatermass and the Pit** (1967, GBR) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring James Donald, Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley, Julian Glover, Duncan Lamont, Bryan Marshall. Five million year-old skulls are unearthed by subway workers and soon a bigger object is found – a sealed-tight spaceship that emanates strange powers. It's Professor Quatermass to the rescue! Suspenseful, eerie, fascinating. Excellent cast headed by Keir as the resourceful professor. Top 60s sci-fi horror, one of the best of the decade. Same story previously filmed in 1958 as a British mini-series, several other Quatermass movies are in existence.

**Quattro dell'Apocalisse, I** (1975, ITA) **C-104m.** \*\*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Fabio Testi, Lynne Frederick, Michael J. Pollard, Harry Baird, Tomas Milian. A very unusual film for the Godfather of Gore: Sentimental western drama about four strangers, who survive a town massacre in their prison cell and embark on a grueling cross-country trek to a town 200 miles distant. On their way they meet the sadistic character of Chaco (Milian). Uneven late (last?) entry in the spaghetti western canon finally opts for human drama (but does not completely do without director Fulci's trademark gore scenes). Some nicely melancholy songs add to the unique mood of the film (unique for a Fulci western at least). Based on stories by 19<sup>th</sup> century novelist Bret Harte. English titles: FOUR OF THE APOCALYPSE, FOUR GUNMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE or FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE.

**4 Mosche di Velluto Grigio** (1972, ITA/FRA) **C-101m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Dario Argento. Starring Michael Brandon, Mimsy Farmer, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Bud Spencer, Aldo Bufi Landi, Calisto Tanzi, Francine Racette. Argento's third feature film, the final part in his Animal Trilogy of giallos. Brandon plays a drummer for a successful rock group, who accidentally kills a stranger and finds himself stalked by the only witness of the crime, a mystery man who might have staged the murder. So-so plot and performances are almost overcome by typical Argento stylistics and haunting theme song by Ennio Morricone. An interesting addition to the director's canon and certainly not his worst film. There is also a surprising amount of (welcome) comic relief in the picture (a homosexual detective, a paranoid postman). Not very violent and quite low-key, despite the director's reputation. A striking point in Argento's career, who turned away from the murder mystery (giallo) genre and went on to make the comedy LE CINQUE GIORNATE next. A must for his followers. Written by Argento, Luigi Cozzi (also ass dir) and Mario Foglietti. English title: FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET.

**...4 ...3 ...2 ...1 ...Morte** (1967, ITA/GER/SPA/MON) **C-95m.** **SCOPE** \*\* D: Primo Zeglio. Starring Lang Jeffries, Essy Persson, Pinkas Braun, Luis Dávila, Gianni Rizzo. A curio: This first (and last) adaptation of Clark Darlton's internationally successful *Perry Rhodan* sci-fi novels

is about the hero's encounter with extra-terrestrials and his attempt to cure one of their crew members suffering from leukemia(!). Cheap special effects, unintentionally funny dialogues, and most of this is set on Earth! Psychedelic flavor, nice soundtrack will interest B-movie freaks. In fact, most of them will probably end up liking the picture (although many *Perry Rhodan* fans were disappointed by this adaptation). Score by Antón García Abril and Erwin Halletz, songs by Marcello Giombini. Also known as MISSION STARDUST and PERRY RHODAN – SOS AUS DEM WELTALL.

**Queen, The** (2006, GBR/FRA/ITA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Stephen Frears. Starring Helen Mirren, James Cromwell, Alex Jennings, Roger Allam, Sylvia Syms, Michael Sheen, Helen McCrory. Sensitive drama about Queen Elizabeth II. (Mirren), who in 1997 is faced with the biggest crisis of her long-time reign. The death of Lady Diana leaves her cold as she is no longer part of the Royal Family, but Premier Blair (Sheen) knows she cannot hide herself from the mourning public. Interesting characterizations of a very private, yet much-observed family, highlighted by Mirren's Oscar-winning performance as the title character.

**Queen's Ransom, A** (1976, HGK) **C-96m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Tan Shin-Si. Starring George Lazenby, Judith Brown, Angela Mao, Wang Yu. A group of terrorists headed by Lazenby want to assassinate the Queen, who is visiting Hong Kong in this trashy thriller. Aptly directed and produced (by Raymond Chow), film suffers most from silly plot twists in the second half. Trash fans may like the movie anyway. One of three Hong Kong movies starring Lazenby. The others are THE DRAGON FLIES (1975) and STONER (1975). Alternative title: INTERNATIONAL ASSASSIN.

**Que la Bete Meure** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-112m. \*\*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Michel Duchaussoy, Jean Yanne, Caroline Cellier, Lorraine Rainer, Marc DiNapoli. After his son is killed in a hit-and-run accident, Duchaussoy sets out to find and kill the responsible driver. After a long search a coincidence helps him to find out the identity of the man. Quiet, subtle psycho drama, flawlessly acted, coldly, perfectly directed by Chabrol. One of his best films. Based on the novel *The Beast Must Die* by Nicholas Blake. Chabrol reworked the subject matter in the similarly themed, yet formally completely different Bronson actioner DEATH WISH, which he coscripted. English title: THIS MAN MUST DIE.

**Quella Villa Accanto al Cimitero** (1980, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Katherine MacColl, Dagmar Lassander, Lucio Fulci. Gruesome, eerie horror film about a young family who move into a New England house where a terrible tragedy has taken place. Strange voices seem to be coming from the cellar and the couple's son keeps having conversations with the ghost of a little girl. Buckets of blood characterize this splatter movie but it also builds some neat suspense, putting heavy strain on your nerves. Stylish but not too intelligent, one of Fulci's best films. Basically just a rip-off of THE AMITYVILLE HORROR, but with more style and gore. English title: HOUSE BY THE CEMETERY.

**Quella Villa in Fondo al Parco** (1987, ITA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring Janet Agren, David Warbeck, Eva Grimaldi, Werner Pochath. On a Caribbean island, fashion models fall prey to attacks by a pint-sized creature spawned in laboratory experiments. Agren teams up with journalist Warbeck to find her sister, a model, in the jungle. A B-movie from the word 'go', but well-directed and with a genuinely scary monster. Good, atmospheric score by Stefano Mainetti. Horror buffs should seek out this eerie little chiller. Also known as L'UOMO TOPO and THE RAT MAN.

**Quelli della Calibro 3** (1976, ITA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Massimo Dallamano. Starring Marcel Bozzuffi, Ivan Rassimov, Carole André, Franco Garofalo. Typical Italian potboiler about hardened cop Bozzuffi, who leads a special squad against the criminals who killed his wife and are threatening the city with stolen dynamite. Ordinary story is somewhat offset by

Dallamano's fairly good direction and pace, as well as a good score by Stelvio Cipriani. Otherwise, this is standard action fare. Dallamano's last film.

**Quel Maledetto Treno Blindato** (1978, ITA) **C-99m.** \*\* D : Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Bo Svenson, Peter Hooten, Fred Williamson, Michael Pergolani, Jackie Basehart, Michel Constantin, Debra Berger, Raimund Harmstorf, Ian Bannen, Bill Vanders, Enzo G. Castellari. Italian war cult movie about a band of American deserters in 1944 France, who try to escape to Switzerland and sabotage a train along the way. Poorly scripted movie is tedious for over an hour, gets a bit better in the finale, though this is still a drag. Quentin Tarantino liked it and referenced it in *INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS* (2009). Score by Francesco De Masi. Shown in various cut versions, although it is not very violent. Also known as *THE INGLOURIOUS BASTARDS*, *COUNTERFEIT COMMANDOS*, *DEADLY MISSION*, *G.I. BRO*, *HELL'S HEROES*, *THE DIRTY BASTARD*.

**Quelqu'un Derrière la Porte** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: Nicolas Gessner. Starring Charles Bronson, Anthony Perkins, Jill Ireland, Henri Garcin, Adriano Magistretti. Thriller about doctor Perkins, who takes in amnesiac Bronson and tries to reconstruct his identity. Little does Bronson know that he is falling prey to an evil scheme involving Perkins' wife Ireland. Interesting, well-acted (especially by Perkins), but quite unlikely, which weighs it down a bit. Cowritten by novelist Marc Behm and director Gessner, who followed this with *THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE* (1976). Also known as *SOMEONE BEHIND THE DOOR*, and *TWO MINDS FOR MURDER*.

**Quest for Camelot** (1998, USA) **C-86m.** \*\*½ D: Frederick Du Chau. Starring the voices of Jessalyn Gilsig, Cary Elwes, Gary Oldman, Don Rickles, Eric Idle, Jane Seymour, Pierce Brosnan, John Gielgud, Bronson Pinchot, Gabriel Byrne. Well-animated and directed fantasy about the daughter of a knight, who aims for greatness and tries to prove her vigilance when Excalibur is stolen from King Arthur's court. The animation is beautiful, but basically all the characters seem familiar (see Disney's *THE BLACK CAULDRON*), and the songs distract. Based on the novel *The King's Damosel* by Vera Chapman. Also known as *THE MAGIC SWORD*.

**Qui?** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-76m.** \*\*½ D: Léonard Keigel. Starring Romy Schneider, Maurice Ronet, Gabriele Tinti, Simone Bach, Jean-Jacques Bourgeois. Minor psycho drama about mysterious Schneider, who is taken in by Ronet, the brother of her husband, who just died in a car accident. Ronet soon has doubts about the seductive woman... did she kill her husband? Oddly paced, interesting curio written by the director and Paul Gégauff. Also known as *IL CADAVERE DAGLI ARTIGLI D'ACCIAIO* and *THE SENSUOUS ASSASSIN*.

**Quick and the Dead, The** (1995, USA) **C-108m.** \*\*½ D: Sam Raimi. Starring Sharon Stone, Gene Hackman, Russell Crowe, Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobin Bell, Roberts Blossom, Kevin Conway, Keith David, Lance Henriksen, Pat Hingle, Gary Sinise, Olivia Burnette, Fay Masterson, Woody Strode, Bruce Campbell. Acceptable attempt at rekindling the spirit of the spaghetti western casts Stone as the 'Woman With No Name', who comes to a Western town to get her revenge on local kingpin Hackman. She enters the annual quickdraw tournament, where Hackman is also taking part. Stylish, especially the photography (by Dante Spinotti), but plot is paper-thin, which you'll realize soon. Director Raimi doesn't seem *towant* to get away from B-material, even though his style has meanwhile reached 'A'-level. Strode's last film.

**Quicksilver Highway** (1997, USA) **C-90m.** ☞ D: Mick Garris. Starring Christopher Lloyd, Matt Frewer, Raphael Sbarge, Bill Nunn, Veronica Cartwright, Clive Barker, John Landis. Absolutely atrocious made-for-TV horror film based on two stories by Stephen King and Clive Barker. King's *The Chattering Teeth* is about a traveling salesman, who buys a birthday present with a life of its own. Barker's *The Body Politic* is about a plastic surgeon, whose hands have

decided to start a rebellion. Both tales are framed by pointless narration by mystery man Lloyd. Well-produced (by John McTiernan, among others) and well-directed by Garris (THE STAND), but stories are ludicrous and pointless, as Lloyd keeps admitting. Stay away!

**Quien Puede Matar a un Niño?** (1976, SPA) **C-104m.** \*\*\* D: Narciso Ibáñez Serrador. Starring Lewis Fiander, Prunella Ransome, Antonio Iranzo, Miguel Narros. An English couple on holiday in Spain travel to a remote Spanish island and find it almost completely deserted. Only a few children seem to have been left behind ... Above average horror with good score does without shock scenes and builds suspense neatly, as the man and his pregnant wife slowly unravel the secret of the island. Photographed by José Luis Alcaine (BELLE EPOQUE). Based on a novel by Juan José Plans. Titled ISLAND OF THE DAMNED for the U.S. release, which hints at analogies with VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED.

**Quiet Days in Clichy** (1989, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-120m.** \*\*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Andrew McCarthy, Nigel Havers, Barbara de Rossi, Stephanie Cotta, Isolde Barth, Eva Grimaldi, Anna Galiena, Guiditta Delvecchio, Stéphane Audran, Mario Adorf, Elide Melli. Flavorful, erotic adaptation of Henry Miller's novel, the memoirs of a writer who lived in Paris of the 1930s, the city of love and inspiration. Art direction, costume design superbly capture the time period. The protagonist's adventures are not terribly interesting, however. Matthieu Chabrol composed a typically fine score. Filmed before in 1969.

**Quiet Earth, The** (1985, NZL) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Geoffrey Murphy. Starring Bruno Lawrence, Alison Routledge, Peter Smith. Scientist Lawrence wakes up one day and finds that everyone in the world has vanished. He believes it's the fault of the recently launched globe-spanning energy grid that he has been working on. On his odyssey through the cities he encounters two more survivors. Interesting, to say the least, but rather one-note, because the implications of the situation are not fleshed out well enough.

**Quiet Ones, The** (2014, GBR) **C-98m.** \*½ D: John Pogue. Starring Jared Harris, Sam Claflin, Erin Richards, Rory Fleck-Byrne, Olivia Cooke. Plodding Hammer production tries to cash in on the popularity of films like PARANORMAL ACTIVITY or SINISTER, but fails miserably. Harris plays a university professor with an interest in the paranormal. In 1974, he gathers several students at a rural villa to do research on a possessed test subject. Talky script goes nowhere, and to make matters worse, the sound effects become truly annoying, resulting in jumps but no scares. Avoid. Don't mix this up with the horror thriller THE QUIET ONES (2010).

**Quills** (2000, USA) **C-124m.** \*\*½ D: Philip Kaufman. Starring Geoffrey Rush, Kate Winslet, Joaquin Phoenix, Michael Caine, Billie Whitelaw, Amelia Warner. Director Kaufman's history of the infamous Marquis de Sade (Rush) and his obsession with obscene writings, which nobleman Caine would rather see burned. It seems that locking up the Marquis in an insane asylum won't keep him from being published. Well-performed, well-produced drama, unfortunately lacks a clear, dramatic plotline. Kaufman fared better with his similarly lavish (and profane) HENRY & JUNE (1990).

**Quintet** (1979, USA) **C-115m.** ½ D: Robert Altman. Starring Paul Newman, Vittorio Gassman, Bibi Andersson, Fernando Rey, Brigitte Fossey, Nina Van Pallandt, David Langton. Low point in the careers of renowned film director Altman (IMAGES, MCCABE AND MRS. MILLER) and lead actor Newman. Set in a frozen city in the future, this science-fiction film deals with a mysterious game of death that Newman is investigating. Slow, completely unappealing and very hard to follow. Written and produced by Altman.

**Quinto: Non Ammazzare** (1968, ITA/SPA) **C-93m.** SCOPE ½ D: Léon Klimovsky. Starring Steven Tedd, Sarah Ross, Alfonso Royas, Diana Sorel, Alfonso de la Vega. Worthless spaghetti western about a group of bank robbers who kill each other when their loot

disappears. Interesting premise done in by terrible writing, poor acting and sloppy direction. Piero Umiliani's score cannot save it.

**Rabid** (1977, CDN) **C-91m**. \*\* D: David Cronenberg. Starring Marilyn Chambers, Frank Moore, Joe Silver, Howard Ryshpan. Canadian shock specialist Cronenberg's third feature is uneven, slow horror thriller about Chambers, who is treated in a special clinic after a near-fatal motorcycle crash and develops a penis-like sting under her arm pit. Too bad her 'bite' is contagious... Interesting premise, typical Cronenberg theme, as well as some nice directorial touches cannot overcome poor pacing. Also, in Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and THE CRAZIES (direct inspirations?) the epidemic was more exciting. Written by Cronenberg, coproduced by Ivan Reitman.

**Race to Witch Mountain** (2009, USA) **C-98m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** D: Andy Fickman. Starring Dwayne Johnson, AnnaSophia Robb, Alexander Ludwig, Carla Gugino, Ciarán Hinds, Tom Everett Scott, Cheech Marin. Remake of Disney's ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN (1975) about two extra-terrestrial children, who need to find a device and bring it to their spaceship and enlist the help of Las Vegas taxi driver Johnson. Soon they are hunted by the secret service. Second-rate script cannot fully be camouflaged by special effects and fast pace. Good fun for kids (although the TERMINATOR-like cyborg belongs into a horror movie).

**Ráfaga de Plomo** (1985, MEX) **C-90m**. \*½ D: Pedro Galindo III. Starring Mário Almada, Jorge Reynoso, Hilda Aguirre, Arlette Pacheco. Low-grade action thriller about a man fighting a drug syndicate after he is falsely accused of a massacre they committed. Probably aimed at the video market, nothing of interest here.

**Ragazza Che Sapeva Troppo, La** (1963, ITA) **86m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava. Starring Leticia Román, John Saxon, Valentina Cortese, Dante DiPaolo, Robert Buchanan, Jorge Rivero. Mario Bava's first foray into crime stars Román as an innocent American tourist, who comes to visit her aunt in Rome. However, her trip soon turns into a nightmare when her relative dies and she witnesses a murder that same night. Will the murderer begin to stalk her now? Complicated script gets in the way of suspense, and pace is slow, but Bava's fine direction and camerawork pull it off, especially in the denouement. Most remarkable as the first giallo ever made; fans will find all the classic ingredients here (and detect analogies to Dario Argento's brilliant 'American-abroad' horror thriller PROFONDO ROSSO). Bava's last black-and-white film (his second as a director after LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO). Title song by Adriano Celentano. Also known as THE EVIL EYE and THE GIRL WHO KNEW TOO MUCH (an allusion to Hitchcock's THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH).

**Ragazza dal Pigiamia Giallo, La** (1977, ITA/SPA) **C-100m**. \*\*\* D: Flavio Mogherini. Starring Ray Milland, Dalila Di Lazzaro, Michele Placido, Mel Ferrer, Howard Ross, Ramiro Oliveros. Retired inspector Milland starts researching the brutal murder of a girl on the beach. She wore yellow pyjamas – not the only unusual aspect of the case. A second, seemingly unrelated plot strand is about Di Lazzaro, who is caught between three men (Placido, Ross, Ferrer). Set (and filmed) in sunny Sydney, Australia, this unusual, late giallo gets going rather slowly but comes up with nice twists. Good soundtrack, with a synthesizer score by Riz Ortolani. Mogherini, an art director who worked with Bava and Fellini, pays tribute to earlier gialli; ironically, Dario Argento would copy Milland's character into his 2001 thriller NONHOSONNO. English titles: THE PYJAMA GIRL CASE, and THE CASE OF THE GIRL IN THE YELLOW PAJAMAS.

**Ragazza del Lago, La** (2007, ITA) **C-95m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Andrea Molaioli. Starring Toni Servillo, Denis Fasolo, Nello Mascia, Giulia Michelini, Alessia Piovani, Valeria Golino. Quiet, engrossing crime drama about commissioner Servillo, who is called to a small North Italian town, where a girl has been found dead near a lake. He investigates and comes up with

several suspects. Interesting, well-scripted whodunit eschews pulse-pounding excitement and concentrates on the characters instead. As with other good crime dramas, this is as much about the detective as about the murder. Recommended. Based on the novel by Norwegian author Karin Fossum. English title: THE GIRL BY THE LAKE.

**Ragazza di Latta, La** (1970, ITA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Marcello Aliprandi. Starring Roberto Antonelli, Sydne Rome, Elena Persiani, Umberto D'Orsi. Curio centering around henpecked bank clerk Antonelli, who falls in love with blonde girl Rome. The beauty keeps eluding him... is she real? Experimental, surreal science-fiction satire on corporate power, but without narrative appeal it soon becomes tiresome. Of main interest as beautiful Rome's third feature (she was 18 or 19 when this was filmed). English title: THE TIN GIRL.

**Ragazza Tutta Nuda Assassinata nel Parco** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Alfonso Brescia. Starring Robert Hoffmann, Irina Demick, Pilar Velásquez, Teresa Gimpera, Howard Ross, Patrizia Adiutori, Adolfo Celi, Philippe Leroy. When a rich man is found murdered after taking a ride in an amusement park's Tunnel of Horrors, an insurance company assigns its best agent (Hoffmann) to investigate, since the man signed an insurancy policy worth one million an hour before he died. The agent falls in love with the daughter, beautiful Velásquez, and is introduced to her eccentric family. Just who is threatening them on the phone with details about the murder? Barely logical but unpredictable giallo, stylishly directed by Brescia and endowed with an excellent Carlo Savina score, which is at times touching, at times eerie. An obscure cult movie gem, worth (re-)discovering. English title: NAKED GIRL KILLED IN THE PARK, and THAT CURSED HOUSE CLOSE TO THE MUSHROOM BELT.

**Ragazzi del Massacro, I** (1969, ITA) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: Fernando Di Leo. Starring Pier Paolo Capponi, Susan Scott (=Nieves Navarro), Marzio Margine, Renato Lupi, Enzo Liberti. During the title credits we see the rape and murder of a young school teacher by the hands of her delinquent students. Police inspector Capponi questions them one by one, but everyone pretends to be innocent or a bystander. Can he clear up their motivations? Mixture of crime and police movie, with social commentary, is uneven and talky, but not without interest. Unsettling climax best part. English titles: NAKED VIOLENCE, THE BOYS WHO SLAUGHTER, and SEX IN THE CLASSROOM.

**Rage of the Master** (1971, HGK) **C-90m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Wang Hung Chang. Starring Jimmy Wang Yu, Chiao Chiao, Lee Yi Min, Lung Fei, Shan Mao. After their father, the leader of a kung fu school, is killed, his son and daughter set out to get help from fighter Wang Yu. Unexceptional eastern has sub-par action scenes most of the way and a violent finale. Wang Yu is less charismatic here (although he really kicks ass in the final fights). Also known as THE HERO, RAGE OF THE TIGER, and THE DESTROYER.

**Raggio Infernale, II** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: Frank G. Carroll (=Gianfranco Baldanello). Starring Gordon Scott, Delphy Maureen, Nello Pazzafini, Alberto Dalbés, Silvia Solar. James Bond clone/spoof about spy Scott, who must rescue scientist from villains who intend to use his powerful ray gun. Some funny allusions at the beginning, but plot is trivial, unexciting. Nice 60s score makes this slightly more engaging than other imitations. English titles: DANGER!! DEATH RAY, and NEST OF SPIES.

**Raging Bull** (1980, USA) **C-129m.** \*\*\*½ D: Martin Scorsese. Starring Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, Joe Pesci, Frank Vincent, Nicholas Colasanto, Michael Badalucco, Martin Scorsese, John Turturro. Elegant bio-pic of prominent boxer Jake La Motta (played by De Niro), whose life is traced from the early 1940s (as an up-and-coming boxer) to the early 1960s, where he's become a down-and-out loser. First-rate filmmaking, fine black-and-white cinematography (by Michael Chapman), superlative editing during the fight scenes (by

Thelma Schoonmaker), and a stunning performance by De Niro make you forget about film's minor flaws (pace, timing). Another compelling 'loser study' by scriptwriter Paul Schrader (TAXI DRIVER), based on the memoirs of the real Jake La Motta. Winner of two Oscars (De Niro, Schoonmaker).

**Ragione per Vivere e Una per Morire, Una** (1972, ITA/SPA/FRA/GER) **C-82m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Tonino Valerii. Starring Bud Spencer, James Coburn, Telly Savalas, Joe Pollini, Ralph Goodwin. Tedious spaghetti western about a band of outlaws, who attempt to infiltrate Savalas' fort and steal buried loot. Rips off countless better westerns, most notably THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN. Main interest springs from the cast but Coburn and Savalas are given nothing to do. Riz Ortolani's score is good, though. Some sources say Terence Hill appears, but he doesn't (at least not in the German version). English titles: MASSACRE AT FORT HOLMAN and A REASON TO LIVE, A REASON TO DIE.

**Raiders of the Lost Ark** (1981, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Steven Spielberg. Starring Harrison Ford, Karen Allen, Paul Freeman, Ronald Lacey, John Rhys-Davies, Denholm Elliott, Alfred Molina, Frank Marshall. Classic action adventure set in 1936 about archaeology professor Indiana Jones (Ford), who is called to Egypt where the Nazis have begun searching for legendary ark, which may hold key to unlimited power. He teams up with former lover Allen to defeat French mastermind Freeman and his German allies. A whale of an adventure, filled with action and humor, a rollercoaster ride. Brilliant score and memorable theme by John Williams. Screenplay by Lawrence Kasdan, from a story by George Lucas and Philip Kaufman. Photographed by Douglas Slocombe. Joe Johnston was art director of the visual effects, which won an Oscar, as did the general art direction, the editing (Michael Kahn) and the sound. Beware of edited prints. Followed by a TV series and three sequels, starting with INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM (1984).

**Raigyo** (1997, JAP) **C-77m. \*½ D:** Takahisa Zeze. Starring Takeshi Ito, Yukiko Izumi, Tomohiro Okada, Moe Sakura. Supposedly arty psycho drama about a woman who comes undone in modern Japan. She begins to have sex with chance acquaintances and ends up murdering her sex partners. Sounds like it cannot fail but it does. Scenes go on and on without direction, the color tint may or may not be meaningful. Also known as SACRAMENT.

**Rainbow Thief, The** (1990, GBR/FRA/POL) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Peter O'Toole, Omar Sharif, Christopher Lee, Francesco Romano, Berta Domínguez D. Touching fantasy drama about depressed prince O'Toole, heir to dying Lee's fortune, and his affiliation with small-time crook and thief Sharif, who hopes to make a fortune himself by helping the prince. They both dwell in sewers of a large city, waiting for the news of Lee's death. Story and screenplay by Berta Domínguez D. is a little aimless but the delightful Sharif, great sets, fine score (by Jean Musy) and photography (by Ronnie Taylor, an Argento regular) more than compensate. An enchanting fantasy, set in a netherworld reminiscent of the director's SANTA SANGRE. In fact, many characteristic Jodorowsky elements can be found here, although this is not as violent and uncompromising as his earlier efforts. Received little attention when originally released, allegedly even disowned by Jodorowsky. Filmed in Gdansk.

**Rainmaker, The** (1997, USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Matt Damon, Danny DeVito, Jon Voight, Virginia Madsen, Claire Danes, Mary Kay Place, Dean Stockwell, Teresa Wright, Mickey Rourke, Andrew Shue, Randy Travis, Roy Scheider, Danny Glover. Excellent cast is true attraction of this rather contrived law drama about young lawyer Damon, who battles a ruthless insurance firm, who refused to pay for a treatment of a young man dying of leukemia. Coppola handles subject matter well, though story (adapted from John Grisham's bestseller) seems a little contrived, with needless plot add-ons.

**Rain People, The** (1969, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Francis Ford Coppola. Starring James Caan, Shirley Knight, Robert Duvall, Marya Zimet, Tom Aldredge, Laurie Crewes. Well-made psycho drama about troubled wife Knight, who runs away from her husband for fear of having to take responsibilities now that she's expecting a baby. She picks up retarded former football player Caan, from whom she learns what taking responsibilities is all about. Strong performances carry minimally plotted film a long way.

**Raintree County** (1957, USA) **C-168m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Edward Dymtryk. Starring Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, Eva Marie Saint, Nigel Patrick, Lee Marvin, Rod Taylor, Agnes Moorehead, DeForest Kelley. MGM's Civil War epic about simple-minded but righteous Clift, who leaves Saint to marry belle Taylor. His new wife, however, has problems of her own, ever since she had a traumatic encounter in her childhood. GONE WITH THE WIND it ain't, but still compelling, well-acted. Based on Ross Lockridge Jr.'s novel. Photographed by Robert Surtees in a 2.55:1 process called MGM Camera 65 (the same one used for BEN-HUR).

**Raising Arizona** (1987, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*\*** D: Joel Coen. Starring Nicolas Cage, Holly Hunter, John Goodman, Frances McDormand, Randall (Tex) Cobb, M. Emmet Walsh. Brilliant, inventive comedy about a most unlikely couple (small-time criminal Cage and law-enforcement officer Hunter), whose life is shattered when they learn that they can't have a baby. So they decide to steal one from a furniture magnate whose wife has just born quint. Soon everyone seems to be after the baby. Creatively directed and photographed (by Barry Sonnenfeld), this comedy is not only hilariously funny but also philosophical, which makes it one of the best genre films of the 1980s.

**Raising Helen** (2004, USA) **C-119m. \*\*\*** D: Garry Marshall. Starring Kate Hudson, John Corbett, Joan Cusack, Hayden Panettiere, Spencer Breslin, Abigail Breslin, Helen Mirren, Felicity Huffman, Amber Valetta, Paris Hilton, Hector Elizondo. Bittersweet comedy drama about career girl Hudson, who is suddenly confronted with her late sister's wish that she be the guardian for her three children. Saddled with a family (and no boyfriend), she finds life has become extremely hard. Some conventional plot twists, but Hudson is so appealing, she carries the entire film.

**Raisins de la Mort, Les** (1977, FRA) **C-81m. \*½** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Marie-Georges Pascal, Serge Marquand, Patricia Cartier, Mirelle Rancelot, Félix Marten, Brigitte Lahaye. A pesticide turns local peasants into zombies. A young woman who has come to visit her lover tries to escape their attacks. Some effective scenes among general lethargy. Recommended only to horror fans and those of director Rollin. English title is, perhaps, THE GRAPES OF WREATH.

**Rambo** (2008, USA/GER) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sylvester Stallone. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Julie Benz, Matthew Marsden, Graham McTavish. Stallone returns in pumped-up shape and doesn't look his 60+ years. His RAMBO character makes a living catching and selling poisonous snakes close to the Burmese border. Then some American missionaries hire him to enter Burmese territory to help the Civil War victims against his advice... and live to regret it. Paper-thin plot outdone by stylish photography and editing. It's also extremely violent. Good score by Brian Tyler. Fourth in the series, which was started in 1982 with FIRST BLOOD. Also known as JOHN RAMBO.

**Rancho de los Implacables, El** (1964, SPA/GER/ITA) **C-79m. SCOPE 2** D: Alfonso Balcazar. Starring Robert Woods, Maria Sebalt, Jack Steward, Helmut Schmid, Richard Häussler, Hans Nielsen. Cheap, phony Euro western about gunslinger who protects the owners of a ranch. Tame and self-conscious, the opposite of what a spaghetti western should be like. Made, of course, before the heyday of the genre. Karl May clichés abound.

**Random Hearts** (1999, USA) **C-133m**. \*\* D: Sydney Pollack. Starring Harrison Ford, Kristin Scott Thomas, Charles Dutton, Bonnie Hunt Dennis Haysbert, Sydney Pollack, Richard Jenkins, Peter Coyote, M. Emmet Walsh. Policeman Ford and politician Scott are teamed up by fate, when they learn that their spouses were having an affair – and died together in an airplane crash. Together they try to come to grips with their loss while experiencing a budding romance. Despite star appeal, this drama is an overlong soap opera, with some truly corny dialogue. Based on the novel by Warren Adler.

**Rap Nawng Sayawng Khwan** (2005, THA) **C-85m**. \*\*½ D: Pakphum Wojinda. Starring Sumonrat Wattanaselarat, Wonghtep Khunarattanrat, Amornpan Kongtrakarn, Atchara Sawangwai, Kenta Sikjiya. Interesting slasher movie from Thailand, quite well-produced. A group of high school freshmen go on a camping trip, which goes wrong early, when their bus falls from a collapsing bridge in the middle of nowhere. Then a killer starts bumping off the survivors. Gory but not tasteless, above-average, atmospheric horror with competent editing, score, direction, cinematography, even acting. Reference range from *EVIL DEAD* (1982), *INTRUDER* (1988) to Italian horror. Buffs should give this one a look. Also known as *SCARED*.

**Rapture, The** (1991, USA) **C-100m**. \*\*\* D: Michael Tolkin. Starring Mimi Rogers, Patrick Bauchau, David Duchovny, James Le Gros, Dick Anthony Williams, Will Patton. Fascinating psycho drama about promiscuous telephone operator Rogers, who feels her life is spiritually empty and turns to religion as a purpose in life. Film follows her descent into fanaticism, desperately waiting for the end of the world (the 'rapture'). Fine storytelling, excellent performance by Rogers. Shares some of its existentialist themes with two other great films of 1991, *THE FISHER KING* and *BARTON FINK*.

**Rare Exports** (2010, FIN/NOR/FRA/SWE) **C-84m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Jalmari Helander. Starring Onni Tommila, Jorma Tommila, Tommi Korpela, Per Christian Ellefsen. Pretty unique horror film about an eccentric Truman Capote like businessman, who is digging up something in the far north of Finland. It turns out to be an archaic form of Santa Claus - evil, dark, ... alive and breathing! A little boy, who lives with his father, investigates and becomes the unlikely hero of the story. Absolutely unpredictable, uneven, off-center film set in Northern Finland near the Russian border. Has a kind of an early Lars von Trier air to it. Score is almost too bombastic for this type of film. Camerwork is also noteworthy. Love the snowflakes that seem to float in the picture for most of the movie.

**Rasen** (1998, JAP) **C-97m**. \*\* D: Jôji Iida. Starring Koichi Sato, Miki Nakatani, Hinako Saeki, Shingo Tsurumi, Nanako Matsushima, Hiroyuki Sanada, Kôji Suzuki. First, immediate sequel to the hit *RINGU* (1998) is a disappointment. Pathologist Sato has to perform an autopsy on a good friend and learns that he viewed a cursed video seven days before he died. Can he find an eliminate this deadly virus that seems to be spreading to everyone that watches it? Very similar in plot, but even more sluggishly paced, this will only be embraced by die-hard fans. To add to the confusion this was also released as *RING 2: THE SPIRAL*, *RING 4: THE SPIRAL*, and simply *RING: SPIRAL*. Made into a TV series in 1999. Followed by *RINGU 2* (1999) and *RINGU 0* (2000).

**Rashomon** (1950, JAP) **87m**. \*\*\*½ D: Akira Kurosawa. Starring Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, Takashi Shimura. Extraordinary drama about the egotistical nature of man and his proneness to telling lies for his own advantage. Three men discuss what happened at a court session, where the parties involved came up with three different versions of the same story. First-rate acting, score and photography, an outstanding achievement for cowriter-director Kurosawa, whose first big success this film was.

**Rasputin: The Mad Monk** (1966, GBR) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Don Sharp. Starring Christopher Lee, Barbara Shelley, Richard Pasco, Francis Matthews, Suzan Farmer. Quite vivid period drama from Hammer Films about the infamous Russian monk, vigorously played by Lee, who has strange healing powers and exerts an influence on the nobility. Filmed back-to-back with DRACULA: PRINCE OF DARKNESS (1966).

**Ratas del Asfalto** (1978, MEX) **C-83m. \*½** D: Rafael Villasenor Kuri. Starring Ana Martín, Emmanuel Oléa, Armando Silvestre, Oscar Traven, Eduardo Noriega. Trivial actioner about a group of loafers who spend their time at illegal car races when not chasing after all kinds of women. Muddled script sinks this early on, although the fast editing keeps this bore at an agreeable pace.

**Ratas no Duermen de Noche, Las** (1973, SPA/FRA) **C-85m. \*½** D: Juan Fortuny. Starring Paul Naschy, Sylvia Solar, Evelyn Scott. Low-grade horror film with trash appeal about bankrobbers on the run, one of them fatally wounded with a bullet in his head. The gangsters bring him to a doctor, who recommends a colleague that is experimenting with brain surgery – on animals! Extremely weak direction, poor acting, a laughable film, but sometimes so bad it's funny. This one is not gruesome at all. English title: CRIMSON, THE COLOR OF BLOOD, and simply CRIMSON.

**Ratatouille** (2007, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brad Bird. Starring (the voices of) Patton Oswalt, Ian Holm, Lou Romano, Brian Dennehy, Peter Sohn, Peter O'Toole, Brad Garrett, Janeane Garofalo, Will Arnett, John Ratzenberger, Brad Bird. Amusing Pixar comedy about a simple rat with a special cooking talent, who ends up in Paris, France, where he directs a kitchen helper to make the most delicious meals. Superbly animated and designed, but plot has some silly contrivances and twists and remains quite predictable. And: Why make children's movies so long?

**Ratchet** (1996, USA) **C-112m. \*½** D: John Johnson. Starring Tom Gilroy, Margaret Welsh, Mitchell Lichtenstein, Nurit Koppel, Matthew Dixon. Screenwriter Gilroy moves to an island near Cape Cod to write a new script and meets some shady characters who are involved in blackmail. Solidly filmed but illogical thriller moves at a snail's pace. Not worth your time.

**Ratón Pérez, El** (2006, ARG/SPA) **C-94m. \*\*** D: Juan Pablo Buscarini. Starring Delfina Varni, Fabián Mazzei, Ana María Orozco, Joe Rígoli, the voice of Alejandro Awada. Mild, partly animated family comedy about a rat (mouse?), who is part of a giant underground organisation, which acts as a tooth fairy and turns the teeth of kids into little pearls. A villain kidnaps our hero, intending to take over the production. Poorly plotted, hardly entertaining stuff. They forgot to make this funny. An okay view only for kids. English title: TH HAIRY TOOTH FAIRY.

**Rat Race** (2001, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jerry Zucker. Starring Rowan Atkinson, John Cleese, Whoopi Goldberg, Cuba Gooding Jr., Jon Lovitz, Kathy Najimy, Breckin Meyer, Amy Smart, Lanei Chapman, Dave Thomas, Dean Cain, Kathy Bates. Comedy in the vein of the classic IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD (1963), about casino owner Cleese, who at random picks eight contestants who should compete in a race across America. Whoever gets to Silver City, New Mexico, first will win \$2 million. Needless to say, most characters are rather crazy, like Atkinson's narcoleptic Italian guyo or Lovitz' greedy family father. Some funny bits make this worthwhile, although script is uneven and several gags misfire. For those who like the premise. Best scene is at the World War Two Veteran convention.

**Ratti: Notte di Terrore** (1983, ITA/FRA) **C-97m. \*½** D: Vincent Dawn (=Bruno Mattei). Starring Alex McBride (=Massimo Vanni), Richard Raymond (=Ottaviano Dell'Acqua), Janna Ryann, Richard Cross. In the post-apocalyptic future, a group of primitive survivors find temporary shelter in a deserted laboratory. Little do they know that mutated(?) rats want

to devour them. Slowly paced, overlong (like Mattei's VIRUS), only occasionally atmospheric. The rats are actually quite cute. Photographed by Franco delli Colli. English titles: RATS, and RATS: NIGHT OF TERROR.

**Räuber Hotzenplotz, Der** (2006, GER) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Gernot Roll. Starring Armin Rohde, Martin Stührk, Manuel Steitz, Rufus Beck, Katharina Thalbach, Piet Klocke, Barbara Schöneberger, Christiane Hörbiger. Quite nice children's movie based on Otfried Preußler's novel about a ruffian but bumbling burglar, who is constantly chased by equally incompetent policeman Klocke (the funniest in the picture) and outsmarted by the real main characters Kasperl and Seppel, two mischievous kids. Has a nice, old-fashioned charm and adequate performances. For kids. Filmed before in 1967 (for TV) and 1974 (with Gert Fröbe).

**Ravagers** (1979, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Richard Compton. Starring Richard Harris, Ernest Borgnine, Ann Turkel, Art Carney, Anthony James, Woody Strode, Seymour Cassel. Uneventful sci-fi drama set decades after nuclear destruction. After losing his wife in an attack by ravagers, Harris goes on the run and meets major Carney and other characters. Some interesting locations, a (truly) stellar cast, but otherwise bland. Competent score by Fred Karlin. Based on the novel by Robert Edmond Alter.

**Raven, The** (2012, USA/SPA/HUN) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James McTeigue. Starring John Cusack, Alice Eve, Luke Evans, Brendan Gleeson, Kevin McNally. Well-produced but hollow mystery thriller about Edgar Allan Poe (Cusack), who is confronted with a series of murders that are modelled after his novels. Cusack isn't exactly bad, but it's his comedic demeanor that hurts the movie considerably. What's more, this type of film has been done before; FROM HELL (2001) or even Argento's TENEBRAE (1982) had similar premises. It also seems endless.

**Ravenous** (1999, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Antonia Bird. Starring Guy Pearce, Robert Carlyle, Jeffrey Jones, David Arquette, Jeremy Davies, John Spencer, Stephen Spinella. Truly offbeat horror set in the 1840s about a cavalry officer Pearce who is sent to a remote outpost in California and is drawn into a grisly case of cannibalism. Film lacks both humor and punch, obviously director Bird (PRIEST, MAD LOVE) is no horror film director. Still, strange enough to please fans of the macabre. Coproduced by Damon Albarn, the lead singer of *Blur*.

**Raw Deal** (1986, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*½ D:** John Irvin. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Kathryn Harrold, Sam Wanamaker, Paul Shenar, Robert Davi. Rather dumb action movie about FBI-agent-turned-cop Schwarzenegger, who goes undercover to bust crime syndicate. Among Arnie's worst films: his wooden, TERMINATOR-style acting really hams this up. Good for a few chuckles.

**Raw Force** (1982, USA/FIL) **C-86m. \*\*½ D:** Edward D. Murphy. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Geoff Binney, Hope Holiday, John Dresden, Camille Keaton. Corny cult movie about a group of cruise ship passengers, who may fall prey to a Hitler-like villain, who lures hookers to an island where martial arts monks trade them in for jade. Whoa! Plot is indefensible, but contains so much gratuitous nudity that men will be more than pleased. It's quite well-paced, too. For the final third, it replaces the boobs with action. Written by director Murphy, who only directed one other film in his career (HEATED VENGEANCE). Also known as KUNG FU CANNIBALS.

**Rawhead Rex** (1986, GBR/EIR) **C-89m. \*\* D:** George Pavlou. Starring David Dukes, Kelly Piper, Cora Lunny, Ronan Wilmot, Hugh O'Connor. Barely watchable, unconvincing monster horror written by none other than Clive Barker. An ancient monster is resurrected and wreaks havoc on the population of a little Irish town. The police refuse to believe historian Dukes, who has seen it. Has some violent bits, but plot seems lifted off one of Barker's short

stories, padded out to feature length by adding scenes about the police investigation (a completely needless touch of realism). After UNDERWORLD, this was Barker's second collaboration with director Pavlou. He went on to direct the smash-hit HELLRAISER (1987).

**Razzia sur la Chnouf** (1955, FRA) **B&W-105m.** \*\* D: Henri Decoin. Starring Jean Gabin, Lino Ventura, Albert Rémy, Marcel Dalio, Lila Kedrova, Marcel Bozzuffi. Gangster drama, less masterful others. Gabin arrives in Paris and starts working as a drug peddler. His customer, especially ruthless Rémy, soon start wondering why there are more and more arrests. Moralizing, semi-documentarian attitude weighs film down, the stars cannot be blamed. Chnouf is the code word for heroin. Based on a novel by Auguste Le Breton (RIFIFI). Also known as CHNOUF.

**Reader, The** (2008, USA/GER) **C-124m.** \*\*\* D: Stephen Daldry. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Kate Winslet, David Kross, Jeanette Hain. Winslet won the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role as mysterious worker, who helps a 15-year-old boy in 1950s Germany and starts a passionate affair with him. It becomes a habit for him to read out classic stories for her, until they lose sight of each other. Years later, the boy, now being a law student, sees her again in a most uncomfortable position in court. Well-acted, well-directed by the maker of THE HOURS (2002), film is fascinating to some degree, good but not great. Based on the book by Bernhard Schlink. Photography started by Roger Deakins and finished by Chris Menges. Dedicated to producers Anthony Minghella and Sydney Pollack, who both died before film was released.

**Real Blonde, The** (1997, USA) **C-105m.** \*\*\*½ D: Tom DiCillo. Starring Matthew Modine, Catherine Keener, Daryl Hannah, Maxwell Caulfield, Elizabeth Berkley, Buck Henry, Christopher Lloyd, Kathleen Turner, Dennis Leary, Steve Buscemi. Light-weight comedy drama about the relationships of various New Yorkers, focusing on luckless actor Modine and his frustrated lover Keener. Writer-director DiCillo makes some telling comments on modern-day life and love, but overall film lacks a solid core. Good cast helps.

**Reality Bites** (1994, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\*½ D: Ben Stiller. Starring Ethan Hawke, Winona Ryder, Ben Stiller, Janeane Garofalo. Telling portrait of the Generation X is really an old-fashioned love story about two twens who have a deep affection for each other but are afraid of admitting it. If you go along with that schmaltz you might like this often funny examination of the problems the 'new' generation has to face. It's also fun to watch cool Hawke and no-nonsense Ryder together.

**Realive** (2017, SPA/BEL/FRA) **C-112m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Mateo Gil. Starring Tom Hughes, Charlotte Le Bon, Oona Chaplin, Barry Ward. Intriguing science-fiction drama about advertising exec Hughes, who is diagnosed with a terminal illness. He decides to freeze his body, and indeed, 60 years later, he becomes the first human to be revived. But has it been worth it? Uneven, often not convincingly acted, but contains some bitter truths about our lives and is ultimately fascinating to watch. Written by director Gil, a regular collaborator of Alejandro Amenábar. Also known as PROJECT LAZARUS.

**Real Steel** (2011, USA/IND) **C-127m. SCOPE** \*\*\*D: Shawn Levy. Starring Hugh Jackman, Dakota Goyo, Evangeline Lilly, Hope Davis, James Rebhorn. Formulaic movie recalls Sly Stallone's ROCKY or OVER THE TOP days, as down-on-his-luck loner Jackman takes over his role as an underdog in the futuristic sport of robot boxing, where 8-foot iron giants are remote controlled in wrestling-like fights. Jackman must spend the summer with his 11-year-old son, who he never met before. The boy turns out to be a talented bot master, who helps his father get back on the winning track. Predictable fare, made convincing by child actor Goyo, who steals the film with his winning smile. From the director of the NIGHT AT THE

MUSEUM films. Produced by Steven Spielberg and Robert Zemeckis. Score by Danny Elfman, photographed by Mauro Fiore.

**Re-Animator** (1985, USA) **C-86m**. \*\*\* D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Jeffrey Combs, Bruce Abbott, Barbara Crampton, Robert Sampson, David Gale. Director Gordon's first film is a delightful horror film, tongue-in-cheek but still gruesome enough to have you cover your eyes in terror. Medical student Herbert West has discovered a serum that re-animates dead people, however with terrible results. Keeps a fine balance between humor and horror, which excuses some pacing flaws. Based on H.P. Lovecraft's story *Herbert West, Re-Animator*, though the author's original work is a more subtle tale of terror. Followed by BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR in 1990; director Gordon adapted another H.P. Lovecraft story for his next film, FROM BEYOND. Beware longer version, which is without most of the gore scenes.

**Rear Window** (1954, USA) **C-112m**. \*\*\*\* D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Wendell Corey, Thelma Ritter, Raymond Burr, Judith Evelyn, Ross Bagdasarian, Georgine Darcy. Brilliant Hitchcock thriller about reporter Stewart who is temporarily confined to a wheelchair and "must" watch his neighbors' apartments through his rear window. This harmless diversion turns into an intriguing chore as Stewart believes that one of them has murdered his wife. His fiancée Kelly and housekeeper Ritter must help to solve the mystery. Relatively long story set-up is completely compensated for by plot development and riveting finale. Highly suspenseful, ingenious direction by Hitchcock, who actually confines the viewer in a wheelchair. Stunning perspectives, point-of-view, one of the director's best. Remade for television in 1998.

**Rebelión de las Muertas, La** (1972, SPA) **C-89m**. \*½ D: Leon Klimovsky. Starring Paul Naschy, Victor Alcázar, Emma Cohen, Claudia Romy. Hilariously bad zombie pic with Spanish horror movie star Paul Naschy (né Jacinto Molina) in at least two roles. That of a Hindu guru named Krishna and his evil (twin?) brother, who is hiding in a mansion somewhere in London(!), commanding a few grinning zombies. Ultra-cheesy horror film for trash fans. Photography, make-up and effects are not bad, though. Also known as REBELLION OF THE DEAD WOMEN, REVOLT OF THE DEAD ONES, WALK OF THE DEAD, and most commonly VENGEANCE OF THE ZOMBIES.

**[Rec]** (2007, SPA) **C-78m**. \*\*\* D: Jaume Balagueró, Paco Plaza. Starring Manuela Velasco, Ferran Terraza, Jorge Serrano, Pablo Rosso, David Vert, Vicente Gil, Carlos Vicente. Spanish horror thriller about a TV host and cameraman, who visit a fire station for a midnight TV report, when an emergency brings them to an apartment house, where an old lady has run amuck. It turns out a virus is transforming people into zombies. Filmed with a hand-held camera, from the perspective of the cameraman, film has effective moments, but somehow remains rather pretentious – until the final fifteen minutes, which provide a stunning twist finale. For fans, who will enjoy this Spanish BLAIR WITCH PROJECT variation. Remade as QUARANTINE (2008). Followed by a sequel in 2009.

**[Rec]<sup>2</sup>** (2009, SPA) **C-81m**. \*\*\* D: Jaume Balagueró, Paco Plaza. Starring Jonathan D. Mellor, Oscar Zafra, Ariel Casas. Frenzied sequel to the horror hit [REC] (2007) starts its plot right after the end of the original. A priest is on a mission to retrieve the zombie girl's blood in order to develop an antidote. The apartment building is still sealed off and zombies might be lurking around every corner... a bit video-game-like, but splatter effects are superb, giving horror fans their money's worth. Very-well directed, too.

**[Rec]<sup>3</sup> Genesis** (2011, SPA) **C-77m**. \*\*½ D: Paco Plaza. Starring Leticia Dolera, Javier Botet. Third movie in the horror series takes place miles from the original apartment house setting during a wedding, where a guest is obviously infected. Soon, the virus breaks loose among

the others. Bride and bridegroom first lose sight of each other in the mayhem, then join forces. After some 20 minutes the hand-held video camera is smashed and we watch the proceedings like in a normal movie, which makes this quite pretentious. Film comes alive in final reel, when the blood-spattered bride discovers a chainsaw. For splatter movie fans, the effects are quite potent, although this is clearly inferior, much less panicky than the other installments.

**[Rec]<sup>4</sup> Apocalipsis** (2014, SPA) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Jaume Balagueró. Starring Manuela Velasco, Paco Manzanedo, Héctor Colomé, Ismael Fritschi. Longest and weakest of the sequels is set on a navy ship. The journalist from the first film is brought to the vessel, where doctors and scientists are trying to isolate and destroy the zombie virus. Needless to say, all hell breaks loose on the ship. Shaky camerawork hampers film this time, the effects are potent again, but the plot is rather weak. This one does completely without found footage.

**Re-cycle** (2006, HGK/THA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*\* D:** The Pang Brothers (Danny and Oxide Pang). Starring Lee Sinje (=Angelica Lee), Lawrence Chou, Lau Siu-Ming, Rain Li. Astounding fantasy horror drama from the makers of *THE EYE* (2002). Novelist Lee, whose latest novel has been made into a movie, is working on a new book, a ghost story as she says. Soon, there are ghostly manifestations all around her. Is her book coming alive? Then she stumbles into a fantasy world of abandoned, forgotten things, ideas – and people. How can she escape from this hell? Begins like a (by-now) conventional Asian horror film and expands into a beautiful fantasy drama recalling the worlds of great imaginative directors Burton, Gilliam, Jeunet et Caro, or Miyazaki (in fact, this would have made a perfect script for Miyazaki). Visually dazzling, superbly scored, with a script that has not one but *two* brilliant twists at the end – a masterpiece! Not to be missed. Original title: *GWAI WIK*.

**Red 2** (2013, USA/CDN/FRA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Dean Parisot. Starring Bruce Willis, Helen Mirren, John Malkovich, Mary-Louise Parker, Anthony Hopkins, Lee Byung-Hun, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Neal McDonough, David Thewlis, Tim Pigott-Smith, Brian Cox. Sequel to *RED* (2010) is another tired action comedy with Willis (not even *trying* to act) as a retired CIA agent, who is called back to action when an atomic warhead, devised by Hopkins and stolen during the Cold War, is sought after by several interest groups. Cast is the only attraction here.

**Red Baron, The** (1971, USA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Roger Corman. Starring John Phillip Law, Don Stroud, Barry Primus, Corin Redgrave, Stephen McHattie, George Armitage. Misfired action drama (by Roger Corman, of all people) about famous WW1 fighter pilot Manfred von Richthofen, his rise and fall among the German airforce. Some exciting aerial stunts to make up for lulls in the script. Reportedly, it's also not historically concise. Aka *VON RICHTHOFEN AND BROWN*.

**Red Christmas** (2016, AUS) **C-82m. BOMB D:** Craig Anderson. Starring Dee Wallace, Sarah Bishop, Geoff Morrell. Terrible Christmas horror movie about a family reunion which goes awry when a hooded, disfigured(?) figure rings on their door, intending to take revenge(?). And it all has an anti-abortion subtext. Cast is atrocious, as is direction.

**Red Corner** (1997, USA) **C-119m. \*\* D:** Jon Avnet. Starring Richard Gere, Bai Ling, Bradley Whitford, Byron Mann, Peter Donat, James Hong. Predictable court thriller, one of those films that can be truly annoying, especially as they are technically well-made. Gere plays a businessman, who trying to fix a deal in China is framed for the murder of a politician's daughter. His inhumane treatment and sabotaged defense is at the core of the film. Despite some attempted cultural criticism, not at all credible. For fans of Richard Gere.

**Red Dragon** (2002, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Brett Ratner. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Edward Norton, Ralph Fiennes, Harvey Keitel, Emily Watson, Mary-Louise Parker, Philip

Seymour Hoffman, Anthony Heald, Ken Leung, Lalo Schiffrin, voice of Ellen Burstyn. Remake of Michael Mann's MANHUNTER (1986) is actually a prequel to THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (1991) and HANNIBAL (2001), both also starring Hopkins as 'Hannibal the Cannibal'. Here, the brilliant but murderous psychiatrist is put behind bars by detective Norton, who asks for his help when a serial killer (called the 'tooth-fairy') starts slaughtering entire families. Less of a psycho-battle than SILENCE, but much better plotted than HANNIBAL, this is at times a riveting psycho thriller that (almost) avoids common trappings of such films. Intelligent, engrossing script by Ted Tally (from Thomas Harris' novel) and some excellent performances. Tacked-on climax is completely unnecessary, however. Elaborate score by Danny Elfman, photography by Dante Spinotti.

**Redeemer: Son of Satan, The** (1978, USA) **C-84m. BOMB D:** Constantine S. Gochis. Starring Damien Knight, Jeannetta Arnette, Nick Carter. Abysmal, amateurish wanna-be slasher movie about a high-school reunion that goes fatally wrong, when someone locks the friends into a house and starts killing them. Amateur hour in every respect.

**Red Eye** (2005, USA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring Rachel McAdams, Cillian Murphy, Brian Cox, Jayma Mays, Laura Johnson, Jack Scalia. Well-paced thriller gives you the genre's assets in a nutshell: McAdams meets nice guy Murphy on an overnight flight to Miami, but soon he shows his real self when he blackmails her into helping him to assassinate a politician. Takes place almost entirely at the airport and on board the plane, movie delivers the goods kudos to veteran director Craven. It's also well-acted.

**Red Heat** (1985, GER/USA) **C-94m. D:** Robert Collector. Starring Linda Blair, Sylvia Kristel. Prison drama set in bleak East Germany with Blair mistaken for an American CIA agent. Very little action, no tongue-in-cheek, and Blair looks old and ugly; film lacks everything that made w.i.p. films interesting in the first place.

**Red Heat** (1988, USA) **C-106m. \*\*½ D:** Walter Hill. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, James Belushi, Peter Boyle, Ed O'Ross, Laurence Fishburne, Gina Gershon, Brent Jennings, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Brion James, Sven-Ole Thorsen. Arnie blockbuster where he plays a Russian policeman, who must cooperate with Americans in order to bring back a Russian drug dealer. His assigned partner Belushi is not very happy about the Russian's sledgehammer methods. Artificial story is offset by some explosive set-pieces and Belushi's funny lines, which make it entertaining to some degree. Director Hill coproduced and cowrote the screenplay. Score by James Horner.

**Redneck Zombies** (1987, USA) **C-90m. D:** Pericles Lewnes. Starring P. Floyd Piranha, Zoofeet, Alex Lewnes. Terrible assault of your senses, absolutely amateurish and all the more grisly for that. A bunch of rednecks get hold of radioactive waste, distill it, drink it and turn into - yes, you guessed it - flesh-munching zombies. Sickening, fascist garbage. Distributed by Troma Films, who have obviously found a niche for films dealing with radioactive material. Handle with care. Shot on video (it looks terrible).

**Red Planet** (2000, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Antony Hoffman. Starring Val Kilmer, Carrie-Anne Moss, Benjamin Bratt, Tom Sizemore, Simon Baker, Terence Stamp. A mission to Mars goes fatally wrong, as Kilmer and his crew crashland on the planet, while commander Moss is monitoring everything on their ship. Will they survive on the planet (where humans are conducting experiments with genetically manipulated algae) or will Moss be able to help them get back to their vessel? Well-designed, extremely good-looking science-fiction adventure covers hum-drum turf. Too bad. Still, quite exciting, if not engrossing.

**Red State** (2011, USA) **C-88m. \*½ D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Michael Parks, Melissa Leo, John Goodman. Strange horror thriller by cult director Kevin Smith (CLERKS, DOGMA, COP OUT) about three teen friends who are lured to an isolated community, where religious fanatic

preacher Parks has his anti-gay, ultra-radical headquarters, and will not shy away from murder. Enter FBI agent John Goodman, who is faced with a terrible dilemma. Sounds more interesting than it plays. Some scenes go on far too long, Smith's point is unclear. Goodman almost saves this, but the anti-climactic ending puts another nail in the movie's coffin.

**Reflecting Skin, The** (1990, GBR/CDN) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Philip Ridley. Starring Viggo Mortensen, Lindsay Duncan, Jeremy Cooper, Sheila Moore, Duncan Fraser. Unrelentingly bizarre and unpleasant psycho drama about a boy growing up in a rural village and his problems with neighbor Duncan, who might just be a vampire. Difficult to watch and understand, but cult film fans should give it a try. Similar to Bernard Rose's PAPERHOUSE. Score (by Nick Bicât) and photography (by Dick Pope) are good.

**Reflections of Evil** (2002, USA) **C-137m.** \*½ D: Damon Packard. Starring Damon Packard. Disjointed, offensive mix of film clips, all of them dealing with obese character of Robert (Packard), who lives on the street and is seen irritating people, gobbling down junk food, trying to sell broken watches and generally behaving like a madman. In a flashback, we see him visiting the set of Steven Spielberg's SOMETHING EVIL (1971) with his mother. Most dialogues are re-dubbed, shrill sound effects added. Although Packard does have some wild ideas, his concept wears thin after 20 minutes, as he gives away the chance of commenting on his surroundings and the film becomes the simple depiction of a series of grotesque scenes. Let this stand as an example of the trash age (where vomiting can be art).

**Refugio del Miedo, El** (1974, SPA) **C-91m.** \*½ D: José Ulloa. Starring Craig Hill, Patty Shepard, Teresa Gimpera, Fernando Hilbeck, Pedro Mari Sanchez. Low-budget sci-fi drama set almost entirely inside an underground shelter, where five people are holed up after the nuclear holocaust. Tensions grow between them, their only connection to the contaminated world is a broken CB radio. Cheap, barely worth your time. English title: REFUGE OF FEAR.

**Regine, Le** (1970, ITA/FRA) **C-86m.** \*\*\*½ D: Tonino Cervi. Starring Ray Lovelock, Evelyn Stuart (=Ida Galli), Silvia Monti, Guido Alberti. Drifter Lovelock chances to meet a mysterious man on the road in the middle of the night, who shortly thereafter dies in a car crash. Lovelock then spends the night in a hut and makes the acquaintance of a trio of beautiful women, who seem to live in a nearby country house – all by themselves. Where's the catch? Intriguing but rather slow fantasy/horror film with inimitable period flavor. Recommended to buffs. Also known as IL DELITTO DEL DIAVOLO, and QUEENS OF EVIL.

**Regression** (2015, CDN/SPA) **C-106m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Alejandro Amenábar. Starring Ethan Hawke, Emma Watson, David Thewlis, Lothaire Bluteau, Dale Dickey, David Dencik. Polished crime drama based on true events from 1990 about detective Hawke, who tackles the case of abuse victim Watson and uncovers hints that satanism might have been involved. Strong performances (especially Hawke's) and an excellent score by Roque Banos keep this afloat, but story is strangely uninvolved and makes you experience events at a certain distance. Written by the director.

**Reindeer Games** (2000, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE** \*\* D: John Frankenheimer. Starring Ben Affleck, Gary Sinise, Charlize Theron, Dennis Farina, James Frain, Donal Logue, Danny Trejo, Isaac Hayes, Ashton Kutcher. Interesting cast saddled with ludicrous script: Affleck, just released from prison, takes on his cell mate's identity to make out with his gorgeous penfriend Theron. However, the lady's freaked-out brother Sinise intends to use him in a robbery of a casino. Twists galore and some violent shoot-outs, but movie doesn't work. Affleck (showing us his array of dumb faces) and Sinise (chewing up the scenery) are not appealing. Score by Alan Silvestri. Also released in a 124m. director's cut.

**Reivers, The** (1969, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Mark Rydell. Starring Steve McQueen, Sharon Farrell, Rith White, Michael Constantine, Clifton James, Will Geer, Mitch Vogel, Diane

Ladd, narrated by Burgess Meredith. Rousing piece of Americana based on a William Faulkner novel, set in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Mississippi, where an 11-year-old boy (Vogel) joins two 'reivers' in going to Memphis with an automobile. There he meets prostitute Farrell and ends up in an existential horse race. Enjoyable comedy drama with a fun performance by McQueen and a fine score by John Williams. Deserves to be better known. Aka THE YELLOW WINTON FLYER.

**Relic, The** (1997, USA/GBR/GER) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Peter Hyams. Starring Penelope Ann Miller, Tom Sizemore, Linda Hunt, James Whitmore, Clayton Rohner. A Brazilian monster roams the dark halls of a Chicago museum in this thrilling, exciting, explosive horror spectacle. Plot is so lame, however, that anyone who likes to have his films intelligent and well-scripted will be annoyed. Frenzied editing will rather irritate your eyes than push you to the edge of your seat. This horror film is another example of a Hollywood production which is technically brilliant but incredibly hollow plotwise. Photographed by the director. Probably played better in movie theatres.

**Remember My Name** (1978, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Alan Rudolph. Starring Anthony Perkins, Geraldine Chaplin, Moses Gunn, Berry Berenson, Jeff Goldblum, Timothy Thomerson, Alfre Woodard, Dennis Franz. Psychopathic woman (Chaplin), just released from prison, starts terrorizing Perkins and his wife for reasons specified later in the film. Subtle psycho drama with thriller elements has an intriguing narrative and good cast. Written by the director. Produced by Robert Altman.

**Renard et l'Enfant, Le** (2007, FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Luc Jacquet. Starring Bertile Noel-Bruneau, Isabelle Carré, Thomas Laliberté. Beautiful-to-look-at drama about a ten-year-old girl who grows up in the countryside and befriends a fox, who lets her come closer and closer until touching seems possible. The film charts their relationship over a period of several months. Plot may seem simple and contracted, but what counts here is the beauty of nature and the sense of adventure that can be had from it. From the director of the Oscar-winning penguin documentary LA MARCHE DE L'IMPERIEUR (2005). English title: THE FOX AND THE CHILD.

**Rendez-Vous** (1985, FRA) **C-84m. \*\*** D: André Téchiné. Starring Juliette Binoche, Lambert Wilson, Wadek Stanczak, Jean-Louis Trintignant. Well-acted but unappealing and pointless drama about young actress Binoche who comes to the city and gets involved with all kinds of demented characters. Trintignant plays the only normal person and saves the film with his effortless charisma. The surreal scenes don't work.

**Rendez-Vous, Le** (1961, FRA/ITA) **128m. \*\*\*** D: Jean Delannoy. Starring Annie Girardot, Odile Versois, Jean-Claude Pascal, Andréa Parisy, Jean-François Poron, Michel Piccoli, Philippe Noiret, George Sanders. Fine, engrossing crime drama about millionaire Pascal, who meets ex-wife Girardot one day, who left him and his son six years ago. Pascal is married to the daughter of a respected musician (Sanders), and Girardot is enjoying a fling with hot-shot photographer Poron, who in turn has the hots for Pascal's sister-in-law Parisy. Eventually a murder happens and police inspector Noiret has the task of finding out who and has done it and why. Complicated, very well-acted drama is short of emotions (the black-and-white photo-graphy doesn't help) but suspenseful and exciting. Adapted from Patrick Quentin's novel *The Man With the Two Wives*. Italian title: L'APPUNTAMENTO. Beware of shorter versions.

**Replacement Killers, The** (1998, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Antoine Fuqua. Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Mira Sorvino, Michael Rooker, Jürgen Prochnow, Kenneth Tsang, Til Schweiger. Hollywood debut of Hong Kong superstar Chow Yun-Fat is a one-dimensional action film about a professional hit man who is targeted by his own boss after refusing to complete his

last assignment. Sorvino plays a passport forger who unwillingly teams up with the charismatic killer. Flashy but overindulgent direction is sometimes visually confusing. It's also odd to see Rooker (HENRY - PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER) play a loving family father. John Woo was among the executive producers. Chow fared much better under his direction (see A BETTER TOMORROW, THE KILLER, HARD BOILED).

**Reptile, The** (1966, GBR) **C-91m.** **\*\*½ D:** John Gilling. Starring Noel Willman, Jennifer Daniels, Ray Barrett, Jacqueline Pearce, Michael Ripper. Upon the death of his brother, Willman intends to move into his cottage in Cornwall. However, there seems to be a curse over the village since several men have already died mysteriously. Solid direction, earnest acting keep this slow, vague horror chiller from going under.

**Repulsion** (1965, GBR) **104m.** **\*\*\*\* D:** Roman Polanski. Starring Cathérine Deneuve, Ian Hendy, John Fraser, Patrick Wymark, Yvonne Furneaux, James Villiers. Artistically brilliant film, the second big success for writer-director Roman Polanski. A shy, introvert young woman (Deneuve) who feels repulsed by men has to stay alone in her flat when her sister leaves for a few days. Polanski lets us share her tragic mental deterioration in this harrowing, psycho drama about sexual repression. Completely unconventional, both form- and content-wise years ahead of its time. Polanski cowrote the screenplay with his regular collaborator Gérard Brach. This was his first English-language film.

**Requiem for a Dream** (2000, USA) **C-102m.** **\*\*\* D:** Darren Aronofsky. Starring Ellen Burstyn, Jared Leto, Jennifer Connelly, Marlon Wayans, Christopher McDonald, Louise Lasser, Mark Margolis. Aronofsky's second feature after PI (1998) has become a cult film. Leto plays a small-time drug dealer who develops a serious habit himself along with his girlfriend Connelly and buddy Wayans. His mother, Burstyn, lives a lonely life in Brooklyn, but when she is invited to a television show she starts taking diet pills and becomes addicted, too. Creatively directed drama, with a brilliant, Oscar-nominated performance by Burstyn. Quite harrowing in the depiction of the downward spiral of drug addiction.

**Requiescant** (1966, ITA) **C-93m.** **\*\* D:** Carlo Lizzani. Starring Lou Castel, Mark Damon, Pier Paolo Pasolini. A young Mexican boy, the only survivor of a massacre that wiped out his entire family, is brought up by a priest (Pasolini). When he has grown to adulthood he sets out to find the priest's daughter - and stumbles upon the man who was responsible for the death of his parents. Not bad but slow and rather predictable spaghetti western with an unconvincing hero who reads bible verses to those he has just killed.

**Resa dei Conti, La** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-110m.** **SCOPE \*\* D:** Sergio Sollima. Starring Lee Van Cleef, Tomas Milian, Luisa Rivelli, Fernando Sancho, Nieves Navarro, Tom Felleghy, Romano Puppo, Calisto Tanzi. Serious spaghetti western about determined bounty hunter Van Cleef, who is assigned to track down Mexican Milian, who is said to have killed a twelve-year-old girl. Van Cleef is good, but film is much too sluggish. Could have used a dose of Sergio Leone. Quite good score by Ennio Morricone. Followed by CORRI, UOMO, CORRI (1968) and remade by the same director as REVOLVER (1973). English titles: ACCOUNT RENDERED, THE BIG GUNDOWN.

**Resan till Melonia** (1989, SWE/NOR) **C-99m.** **\*\*\* D:** Per Ahlin. Starring (the voices of) Hans Alfredson, Jan Blomberg, Robyn Carlsson, Allan Edwall, Olle Sarri. Fine animated feature, a loose adaptation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, but aimed at children: Prospero the magician, lives with his daughter Miranda on paradise-like island Melonia, the only natural place left on Earth. However, evil industrialists are making plans to take it over. Together with a stowaway, little Miranda schemes to free the children forced to labor on their island, which is one big factory. Excellent storytelling in adequately animated fantasy tale will keep kids spellbound for most of the time. For adults, it's no less captivating; its

ecological message is a further plus. Recommended viewing. May even have partly inspired Jeunet et Caro's LA CITE DES ENFANTS PERDUS (1995). English title: THE JOURNEY TO MELONIA: FANTASIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S 'THE TEMPEST'.

**Rescuers, The** (1977, USA) **C-78m. \*\*\* D:** Wolfgang Reitherman, John Lounsbery, Art Stevens. Starring (the voices of) Bob Newhart, Eva Gabor, Geraldine Page, Joe Flynn, Jeanette Nolan, James McDonald. Fine animated feature from Disney about a rescue aid society run by mice, who embark on a rescue mission when they find a message in a bottle from a little orphan who is in trouble. Colorful adventure, stylishly filmed with atmospheric sets in the Florida swamps. Based on the novels by Margery Sharps. Followed by THE RESCUERS DOWN UNDER in 1990, the first Disney sequel ever.

**Rescuers Down Under, The** (1990, USA) **C-77m. \*\*½ D:** Hendel Butoy, Mike Gabriel. Starring (the voices of) Bob Newhart, Eva Gabor, John Candy, Tristan Rogers, Adam Ryen, George C. Scott, Bernard Fox, Peter Firth. Sequel to THE RESCUERS (1977) whisks the mice Bernhard and Bianca away to Australia, where a boy has been kidnapped by a ruthless poacher. More of the same mouse adventure fun by Disney, although it's louder, more hectic... for no reason at all. The first Disney movie with CG effects.

**Reservoir Dogs** (1992, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Quentin Tarantino. Starring Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Michael Madsen, Chris Penn, Steve Buscemi, Lawrence Tierney, Randy Brooks, Kirk Baltz, Edward Bunker, Quentin Tarantino, Lawrence Bender. Fresh, original take on gangster movies, written and directed by Quentin Tarantino. A group of gentleman gangsters team up to perform a diamond robbery. When the heist goes fatally wrong, the remaining members meet at an abandoned warehouse and must come to terms with the situation. Was an undercover cop involved? Violent, funny, well-acted, a key film of the early 1990s. Abundant film references to classic films such as THE KILLING (1956), POINT BLANK (1967) and THE WILD BUNCH (1969) make it all the more fun for movie buffs. Many of the characters (or at least their names) show up again in Tarantino's next film (and quasi-sequel) PULP FICTION (1994).

**Residencia, La** (1969, SPA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ibanez Narciso Serrador. Starring Lilli Palmer, Cristina Galbó, John Moulder-Brown, Mary Maude, Frank Brana. Low-key but chilling mystery set at a school for wayward girls somewhere in France. Palmer is excellent as the cold-hearted principal, who turns a blind eye to the mysterious disappearances of some of her students. Is her isolated 17-year-old son involved? The title edifice makes for a wonderful set in this atmospheric puzzler. Too bad this was director Serrador's first of only two theatrical films (the other one being the equally fascinating QUIEN PUEDE MATAR A UN NINO?). Fine score by Waldo de los Ríos. May have influenced Dario Argento's SUSPIRIA (1977). English titles: THE BOARDING SCHOOL, THE FINISHING SCHOOL, and THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED.

**Resident Evil: The Final Chapter** (2016, CDN/GER/FRA/AUS) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Paul W.S. Anderson. Starring Milla Jovovich, Iain Glen, Ali Larter, Shawn Roberts, Ruby Rose. Sixth and final(?) instalment in the series of video game adaptations. With only about 4,000 survivors on the Earth, Jovovich receives a message from the Red Queen telling her to go to Raccoon City, where she can retrieve an antidote to wipe out the virus for good, although she only has 48 hours to do so. Paper-thin plot merely serves as an excuse for high octane action sequences. Not bad, despite overly shaky direction and staccato editing. Also released in 4DX.

**Resurrected, The** (1991, USA/CDN) **C-106m. \*\*½ D:** Dan O'Bannon. Starring John Terry, Jane Sibbett, Chris Sarandon, Robert Romanus, Laurie Briscoe. Rather poorly paced but quite interesting monster horror concoction based on the story by H.P. Lovecraft, filmed before

as *THE HAUNTED PALACE* (1963). Terry plays a private investigator, who is hired by Sarandon's wife to find out what secret things (involving blood and corpses!) the man is doing in the basement. Some nice effects, but slow film is really only kept afloat by Richard Band's engaging score. Went straight to video. Sci-fi writer O'Bannon's only other feature directing credit was for *RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD* (1985). Also known as *SHATTERBRAIN*. **Resurrection Man** (1997, GBR) **C-102m**. \*\*½ D: Marc Evans. Starring Stuart Townsend, Geraldine O'Rawe, James Nesbitt, John Hannah, Brenda Fricker, James Ellis, Sean McGinley, Derek Thompson, Zara Turner. Initially intriguing thriller drama about young rebel Townsend, who leads a group of thugs in war-torn Belfast in 1975. Their daily routine consists of cutting up Catholics. Townsend is impressive, but his character is almost mysticised; you will expect him to unleash some supernatural powers any minute. What's sorely missing is some background information about his motives, or simply his feelings. The main figure remains so ultra-cool (and nobody questions his authority!), it is hard to identify with him. Good direction, stark photography will hold your attention, however. Based on the novel by Eoin McNamee, who also wrote the screenplay. Michael Winterbottom (*BUTTERFLY KISS*) executive produced.

**Resurrection of Zachary Wheeler, The** (1971, USA) **C-100m**. \*\*\* D: Bob Wynn. Starring Leslie Nielsen, Bradford Dillman, James Daly, Angie Dickinson, Don Haggerty. Thought-provoking science-fiction drama about reporter Nielsen, who investigates unofficial kidnapping of U.S. senator Dillman after a near-fatal car crash. He finally tracks him down in a clinic specializing on organ transplantations. Dramatically flawed but interesting throughout, with some startling horror elements towards the end.

**Retez** (1981, CZE) **C-90m**. \*\* D: Jirí Svoboda. Starring Zora Kerova, Pavel Nový, Jirí Klepl, Miroslav Zounar. After a bank robbery, the leading gangster dies and the money disappears. The rest of the gang goes after Kerova to find out what happened to it. Not-bad thriller is worth a look for the curious, but it looks and feels just as bleak as you remember the Eastern Bloc. English title: *THE CHAIN*.

**Retorno del Hombre Lobo, El** (1981, SPA) **C-92m**. \*½ D: Paul Naschy. Starring Paul Naschy, Julia Saly, Silvia Aguilar, Azucena Alvarez. Cheap, poorly made and acted horror film, the ninth of twelve or thirteen appearances of Naschy as the werewolf man Waldemar Daninsky, his signature role. Two young women willingly resurrect the infamous countess Bathory, who then battles the Wolfman in her castle. Unconvincing trash, written by Naschy himself. Also known as *NIGHT OF THE WEREWOLF*, *RETURN OF THE WOLFMAN*, and *THE CRAVING*.

**Return from Witch Mountain** (1978, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*½ D: John Hough. Starring Bette Davis, Christopher Lee, Kim Richards, Ike Eisenmann, Jack Soo, Anthony James, William Bassett. Sequel to *ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN* (1978) is less original but otherwise on a par with the first film. The kids return to Earth for a vacation, but get mixed up with evil Davis and scientist Lee, who have built a mind-control machine and kidnap the boy. It's up to the girl to save him with a group of street urchins. Fairly exciting, for kids. Typically good score by Lalo Schifrin. The real killer, however, is Bette Davis' green teeth.

**Returning, The** (1983, USA) **C-81m**. \*½ D: Joel Bender. Starring Gabriel Walsh, Susan Strasberg, Victor Arnold, Ruth Warrick. Almost incomprehensible story of two men who are possessed by evil Indian spirits, which force them continue their grudge in the modern day. Pretty stupid, poorly filmed horror entry, not even for fans. Aka *WITCH DOCTOR*.

**Return of Count Yorga, The** (1971, USA) **C-97m**. \*\* D: Bob Kelljan. Starring Robert Quarry, Mariette Hartley, Roger Perry, Yvonne Wilder, Tom Toner, George Macready, Craig T. Nelson. Sequel to *COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE* (1970) follows the Count's exploits at a rural

village. Tries to be imaginative and stylish, but doesn't come off better than an ordinary horror flick. The vampire attack scenes don't all work. Watch it for Quarry's charismatic performance.

**Return of the Aliens: The Deadly Spawn** (1983, USA) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Douglas McKeown. Starring Charles George Hildebrandt, Tom DeFranco, Richard Lee Porter, Jean Tafler, Karen Tighe. Sci-fi horror splatter movie about a meteorite which crashes down near a village and brings some extra-terrestrial monsters with it. The villagers try to fight it, but its millions of teeth are hard to escape. Pretty ghastly, with gory effects, film is low-budget but ambitious, evident in direction and score. It's even reminiscent of David Cronenberg's early movies. The effects are good. Unofficial sequel: METAMORPHOSIS: THE ALIEN FACTOR (1990). Also known as DEADLY SPAWN, and (RETURN OF) THE ALIEN'S DEADLY SPAWN.

**Return of the Chinese Boxer** (1975, HGK) **C-95m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Jimmy Wang Yu. Starring Jimmy Wang Yu, Lung Fei, Cheung Yin Chen, Chin Kang, Ching Chih Min. Martial arts movie produced and directed by star Wang Yu, who plays a superfighter, who singlehandedly manages to fight off Japanese intruders in China. Interesting set-pieces, but plot is incoherent and built around (mediocre) fight scenes. Wang Yu looks tired, though he knows how to appear 'cool'. Probably released after 1979, because film makes brief use of John Barry's score for THE BLACK HOLE (1979)! This is probably a sequel to Wang Yu's THE CHINESE BOXER (1970), for which he used one of Barry's James Bond themes! Alternative titles: SWIFT SHAOLIN BOXER, INVINCIBLE.

**Return of the 5 Deadly Venoms** (1978, HGK) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*½D:** Chang Cheh. Starring Chen Kuan Tai, Philip Kwok, Lo Meng, Sun Chien, Chiang Sheng, Lu Feng. Interesting martial arts movie about a tyrant, who cripples three men, turns another one into an idiot. The four form a team and go into training for 3 years. Then they try to battle the tyrant and his son, who has hands of iron. Quite-well choreographed and directed eastern whose plot never really catches fire. Showdown includes mind-boggling acrobatics. The title is obviously wrong and the film is not a sequel to director Chang's classic FIVE DEADLY VENOMS, which he made the same year. Also known as CRIPPLED AVENGERS, CRIPPLED HEROS, and MORTAL COMBAT.

**Return of the Living Dead, The** (1985, USA) **C-91m. \*\*½ D:** Dan O'Bannon. Starring Clu Gulager, James Karen, Don Calfa, Thom Mathews, Linnea Quigley. Quite amusing horror comedy spoofs the classic NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968). One night at a medical supply warehouse, two employees release a gas from a zombie container in the basement, resurrecting the dead in a nearby cemetery. A group of teens (including 'scream queen' Quigley) is trying to fend them off. Has become a cult film, spawning several sequels.

**Return of the Living Dead Part II, The** (1988, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Ken Wiederhorn. Starring Michael Kenworthy, Thor Van Lingen, Jason Hogan, James Karen, Thom Mathews. Sequel to RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD (1985) sets up plot nicely, with some kids unwittingly opening a rusty drum containing a gas that raises the dead from their graves. Some amusing bits, good splatter effects, though film plays for humor too often and most of its characters are downright stupid. For zombie-movie fans. Written by the director. Followed by three more sequels.

**Return of the Living Dead 3** (1993, USA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Brian Yuzna. Starring J. Trevor Edmond, Mindy Clarke, Kent McCord, James T. Callahan, Sarah Douglas, Anthony Hickox. Zombie spectacle with a twist: Teenager Edmond, whose father is a government official, breaks into a secret lab to revive his dead girlfriend with a zombie gas used by the army. Gruesome splatter movie manages to work love and friendship into its plot, but it's more sluggish and less entertaining than its predecessors. Director Yuzna also coproduced.

**Return of the Pink Panther, The** (1975, GBR) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, Christopher Plummer, Catherine Schell, Herbert Lom, Burt Kwouk, Graham Stark. After two PINK PANTHER movies in the 1960s, the series returned for three entries in the 70s. This, the first, relies heavily on Sellers comic genius and he does provide it with hilarious sequences. Plummer takes over the Phantom role from Niven, but despite his stately demeanor, the plot doesn't catch fire. Episodic, to be sure, but funny scenes prevail, one of the funniest being about a revolving door. Lom as Inspector Dreyfuss is also great. Followed by THE PINK PANTHER STRIKES AGAIN (1976).

**Return of the Street Fighter** (1976, JAP) **C-76m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Shigehiro Ozawa. Starring Sonny Chiba. Chiba returns in this sequel, battling the mafia and his arch-enemy, who he thought he had killed last time around. Plot doesn't mean much, which may be due to extensive cuts in the U.S. R-rated version. This video version contains hardly any violence and also (surprisingly) little action. It's recorded in EP mode and fullscreen, which destroys most of the picture. Thus, it's only possible to hint at film's assets. Followed by THE STREET FIGHTER'S LAST REVENGE and SISTER STREETFIGHTER.

**Return of the Texas Chainsaw Massacre** (1997, USA) **C-87m. \*½ D:** Kim Henkel. Starring Renee Zellweger, Matthew McConaughey, Robert Janks, Tonie Perenski, Joe Stevens, Lisa Newmyer. As horror sequels go, this is more a remake of the first film. Wild, bizarre - and totally absurd - horror film about weird backwoods family who slaughter unsuspecting prom night teenies. Not much violence per se but many unsettling chase sequences (with Leatherface close behind his victims). Nowhere as frightening or brilliantly filmed as the 1974 horror classic, which director Henkel cowrote. Probably sat on the shelf for some years. Alternative title: T.C.M. - A NEW GENERATION. Also shown at 84m. and 94m.

**Return to Me** (2000, USA) **C-115m. \*\*\* D:** Bonnie Hunt. Starring David Duchovny, Minnie Driver, Carroll O'Connor, Robert Loggia, Bonnie Hunt, David Alan Grier, Joely Richardson, Eddie Jones, James Belushi. Formulaic, rather contrived but immensely likable romantic comedy about Duchovny, who loses his wife in an accident and learns later that it was Driver, who received her heart in a transplantation. Warm and atmospheric drama, with a priceless supporting cast and beautiful scenes at that cosy Irish-Italian (!) restaurant. Lush photography by Laszlo Kovacs. Stay away only if you are a (Hollywood) diabetic.

**Return to Paradise** (1998, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Joseph Ruben. Starring Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Joaquin Phoenix, David Conrad, Vera Farmiga, Nick Sandow, Jada Pinkett, Ming Lee. After two years separation three friends hear from each other in most unusual circumstances. In Malaysia, one of them (Phoenix) is threatened with the death penalty, if his friends (Vaughn and Conrad) don't return and confess to be co-owners of the 104 grams Marijuana the police found in his hut. The two, now living in New York, have to decide whether the life of their friend is worth the three (if both go) or six years (if one of them goes) that they would have to spend in prison with him. His lawyer Heche has seven days to persuade them to "return to paradise". Interesting but uneven, with a shattering conclusion which will leave you wondering what the film's point is. Based on the French film FORCE MAJEURE.

**Return to Salem's Lot, A** (1987, USA) **C-97m. \*½ D:** Larry Cohen. Starring Michael Moriarty, Ricky Addison Reed, Samuel Fuller, Andrew Duggan, Evelyn Keyes. Anthropologist Moriarty returns to Salem's Lot, a small rural village where he spent his childhood, and finds out that the town has been taken over by vampires... who want him to write their history! Low-key horror, not at all interesting. Not a sequel to Tobe Hooper's SALEM'S LOT despite similar setting and vampire theme. When movie cuts loose in the finale, most viewers are likely to have switched off already.

**Revenants, Les** (2004, FRA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Robin Campillo. Starring Géraldine Pailhas, Jonathan Zaccai, Frédéric Pierrot, Victor Garrivier. Strange drama with a horror or sci-fi premise. One day the dead people of an entire cemetery come back to life (not rotted or dirty), and it's up to the society to reintegrate them. The 'zombies' sometimes behave strangely, but most of them take up jobs again. Film focuses on three people or families, a dead child, a dead lover and the dead wife of the mayor. Works intermittently, but don't expect any horror touches. It's more a character study. English title: THEY CAME BACK.

**Revenant, The** (2015, USA) **C-156m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Alejandro González Inárritu. Starring Leonard DiCaprio, Tom Hardy, Will Poulter, Domhnall Gleeson, Forrest Goodluck, Paul Anderson. Grueling survival drama set in the wintry American wilderness of the 19th century, where a group of trappers are brutally attacked by an Indian tribe. Only a handful survive and after DiCaprio is also maimed in a bear attack, he is left for dead by his people. Can he survive against all odds? Acclaimed but unrelenting saga has some great elements, but they don't add up to a great movie. Direction, camerawork are top-notch, but script is uninvolved, not to say unrealistic. DiCaprio's ordeal becomes a chore to watch at this length. A multi-award winner nonetheless. From the director of BIRDMAN and BABEL.

**Revenge of Frankenstein** (1958, GBR) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Terence Fisher. Starring Peter Cushing, Francis Matthews, Eunice Gayson, Michael Gwynn, Lionel Jeffries, John Welsh. Dramatic horror film about the evil doctor Frankenstein's continuous attempts to create human life. This time he ordines in Germany under a false name. Intelligent script by Jimmy Sangster, good performance by Cushing elevates this sequel to THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1957). This was the second (and also the best) of seven FRANKENSTEIN films produced by Hammer Films.

**Revenge of the Living Zombies** (1988, USA) **C-93m. Ⓜ** D: Bill Hinzman. Starring Bill Hinzman, amateur cast. Romero's zombies go on yet another rampage, this time it's college kids who are stupid enough to drive out into the woods on Halloween. Film mixes the college-kids-get-dispatched formula with plot elements of the Romero classic, but that's about the only novelty of this amateurishly filmed and acted gorefest. The splatter FX might attract less discriminating horror fans. Referred to as FLESHEATERS in the main credits, film's British video release title is, tellingly, ZOMBIE NOSH. Hinzman was Romero's cinematographer for THE CRAZIES.

**Revenge of the Pink Panther** (1978, GBR/USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, Herbert Lom, Burt Kwouk, Dyan Cannon, Robert Webber, Tony Beckley, Robert Loggia, Paul Stewart, André Maranne, Alfie Bass, Ferdy Mayne, Adrienne Corri. Sequel to THE PINK PANTHER STRIKES BACK (1976) provides more of the same humor, as chief inspector Clouseau is thought dead but goes after the killers and a crime syndicate in various funny disguises. Meanwhile, inspector Lom is trying to figure out whether his nemesis has really died. Script is muddled but good slapstick scenes, funny set-pieces make this memorable. Seller's last film as Clouseau, he was posthumously edited into the follow-up films TRAIL OF THE PINK PANTHER (1982) and CURSE OF THE PINK PANTHER (1983).

**Reversal of Fortune** (1990, USA/JAP) **C-111m. \*\*\*** D: Barbet Schroeder. Starring Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, Ron Silver, Annabella Sciorra, Uta Hagen, Fisher Stevens, Julie Hagerty. Based-on-fact drama about stoic aristocrat Irons' attempts to reverse verdict that declared him guilty of the attempted murder of his wife Close, who is now in a coma. Irons hires law professor Silver for the appeal. Very interesting narrative (with Close narrating!), film loses its momentum and suspense early on, but remains interesting throughout. Performances

are all strong, Irons won an Oscar. Based on the book by Alan Dershowitz, written by Nicholas Kazan. Oliver Stone coproduced the film. Photographed by Luciano Tovoli.

**Revolt** (1985, USA/IRN) **C-73m.** D: Jim Sheybany. Starring Rand Martin, Ross McTosh, Fattaneh, Tom Weigand. Obscure film produced in the U.S. obviously by Iranian people. Starts by moralizing against drugs, then goes on to tell incomprehensible story of a drug syndicate. Inept, cheap, released on German video in 1985, though film looks as if it was made in the 1970s. German video title: DIE RÄCHER HETZEN DIE MEUTE.

**Richter und Sein Henker, Der** (1976, GER/ITA) **C-91m.** \*\*\* D: Maximilian Schell. Starring Jon Voight, Jacqueline Bisset, Martin Ritt, Robert Shaw, Helmut Qualtinger, Gabriele Ferzetti, Rita Calderoni, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Lil Dagover, Donald Sutherland. In Switzerland police commissioner Ritt's 30-year grudge against all-powerful industrialist Shaw may just come to an end. One of his inspectors (Sutherland, who plays a corpse here) has been murdered and Shaw may have had his hands in it. Can new colleague Voight clear up the case? Gripping thriller drama based on the novel by Friedrich Dürrenmatt is well-acted by a most interesting cast. Bisset, as Sutherland's troubled fiancée, may be the most fascinating character. Fine Ennio Morricone score outdoes Schell's direction, which is not always on top of the material. English titles: END OF THE GAME, DECEPTION, GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER, and MURDER ON THE BRIDGE.

**Riding in Cars with Boys** (2001, USA) **C-132m.** \*\* D: Penny Marshall. Starring Drew Barrymore, Steve Zahn, Adam Garcia, Brittany Murphy, James Woods, Lorraine Bracco, Rosie Perez, Sara Gilbert, Maggie Gyllenhaal. Biography of a woman (Barrymore) who grew up in the 1960s, whose writing talent was hindered by an early pregnancy (at 15) and subsequent marriage to the wrong guy (Zahn). Story is told in retrospect by her son. Earnest drama with equally earnest performances offers lots of period flavor, but its pace flags in mid-section and film becomes too serious for its own good. It's overlong, too.

**Rien Ne Va Plus** (1997, FRA/SUI) **C-110m.** \*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Michel Serrault, Isabelle Huppert, François Cluzet, Jean-François Balmer. Partners-in-crime Serrault and Huppert cheat rich people out of their money until they target Cluzet, who himself intends to keep the 5,000,000 Swiss Francs entrusted to him by a company. Unexceptional crime comedy that is neither funny nor thrilling. The stars, who are both very good, are the only reason to watch this film. Written by the director, whose 50th film this was (and definitely not his best).

**Rififi ad Amsterdam** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-90m. BOMB** D: Terence Hathaway (=Sergio Grieco). Starring Roger Browne, Aida Power, Umberto Raho, Franco Ressel, Evelyne Stewart (=Ida Galli). Talky, ultra-boring spy movie about agent Browne going after some diamond thieves. Poorly done, even the occasional fight scenes look lame and unconvincing. Score by Piero Umiliani. English title: RIFIFI IN AMSTERDAM.

**Riget (The Kingdom)** (1994/97, DAN/SWE/GER) **C-487m.** \*\*\*\* D: Lars von Trier. Starring Ernst-Hugo Järegård, Kirsten Rolffes, Ghita Norby, Soren Pilmark, Holger Juul Hansen, Annevig Schelde Ebbe, Jens Okking, Otto Brandenburg, Baard Ove, Solbjorg Hojfeldt, Udo Kier, Stellan Skarsgård. Absolutely stunning made-for-TV mini-series, set in a Copenhagen hospital called „The Kingdom“, where the spiritual and the scientific world collide with each other, unearthing strange secrets and unspeakable mysteries. The first five episodes, made in 1994, introduce the hospital staff, uniquely bizarre, yet appealing characters. Story centers around hypochondriac woman (Rolffes), who one day hears a girl crying in the elevator well. It turns out the girl is a ghost, whose soul yearns to be released from the hospital. A stylish, strange, eerie, hilarious horror satire. Highly intelligent and philosophical. Not to be missed. Followed by five more episodes in 1997, which took the story further,

emphasizing the theme of the battle between Good and Evil: Rolffes is run over by an ambulance upon leaving the hospital, and discovers during her stay that there are more ghosts waiting to be released. It seems Evil is omnipresent. Episodes 6-11 are equally fascinating, if not as original. Ends with a set-up for new episodes.

**Rigor Mortis** (2013, HGK) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Juno Mak. Starring Anthony Chan, Chin Siu-Ho, Fat Chung, Kara Hui, Giselle Lam, Richard Ng, Nina Paw. Visually astounding Hong Kong horror based on a series of vampire movies of the 1980s. The plot is quite difficult to follow. A new tenant moves into apartment 2442, which is obviously haunted by two dead twin sisters. After the accidental death of Ng, his wife Paw hires a witch doctor to bring him back to life. Needless to say, there's scares, special effects and action. The brilliant visuals outshine the plot (which does make sense later), Paw's performance of a worried, elderly wife is impressive. Produced by Takashi Shimizu. Original title: GEUNG SI.

**Ring, The** (2002, USA/JAP) **C-115m. \*\*\*** D: Gore Verbinski. Starring Naomi Watts, Martin Henderson, David Dorfman, Brian Cox, Jane Alexander, Lindsay Frost, Amber Tamblyn, Adam Brody, Daveigh Chase, Chris Cooper. Remake of the Japanese horror hit RINGU (1998) is surprisingly good. Watts plays a journalist, who investigates the mysterious death of her niece. It turns out she died exactly seven days after viewing a video. When Watts finds the tape and pops it into the VCR herself, she must solve the mystery before she falls prey to the video's curse. Not without flaws (some improbable coincidences, overlength, weak tacked-on ending), but the story is expertly told, well-directed and well-shot. Horror movie buffs will savor the references to genre classics like PSYCHO (1960), JACOB'S LADDER (1990) and even PROFONDO ROSSO (1975). Good score by Hans Zimmer. Followed by THE RING TWO (2005).

**Ring Two, The** (2005, USA) **C-109m. \*\*** D: Hideo Nakata. Starring Naomi Watts, Simon Baker, David Dorfman, Elizabeth Perkins, Gary Cole, Sissy Spacek. Sequel to the American horror remake THE RING (2002) features the original RINGU (1998) director, but is unimaginative and unrelenting. Watts and her son have moved to a new community, but they cannot escape the curse of the little girl. Watts' son is especially haunted by the spirit, develops hypothermia and threatens to die. Can his mother finally put an end to the curse? Plot provides no better excuse for a return of its villain than it would for Freddy Kruger or Jason Vorhees. What's more, it puts a child in constant torment. Unrated version runs longer.

**Ringo del Nebraska** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Ken Clark, Yvonne Bastien, Frank Brana, Charles Lawrence, Piero Lulli, Alfonso Rojas. Stranger Clark helps a rancher and his beautiful wife (Bastien) against a ruthless bunch of cowboys. Cardboard western with little action and suspense and a leisurely paced plot. Still not that bad. Legendary Mario Bava's direction is utterly conventional (he replaced film's original director Antonio Román), he obviously made this without much ambition. Score by Nino Oliviero dominates this tame spaghetti western. Román was credited with the direction for more than twenty years until Bava's involvement was made known. Alternative titles: NEBRASKA JIM, NEBRASKA IL PISTOLERO, SAVAGE GRINGO.

**Ringo, il Volto della Vendetta** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*½**D: Mario Caiano. Starring Anthony Steffen, Frank Wolff, Eduardo Fajardo, Armando Calvo, Alejandra Nilo, Antonio Orengo. Standard European western about five characters who embark on a treasure hunt, with the novelty of the map being tattooed on the back of two of the men. Technically OK but generates no interest whatsoever.

**Rings** (2017, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*½** D: F. Javier Gutierrez. Starring Matilda Lutz, Alex Roe, Johnny Galecki, Vincent D'Onofrio. Almost twenty years after the original RINGU (1998) - its sequels

and US remakes - this film slightly updates the viral video theme. Biology professor Galecki is investigating the curse and sees it as a kind of afterlife. When his student Roe is stricken by the curse, his girlfriend tries to find out the truth about Samara. Harmless, hardly scary but watchable PG-13 mystery.

**Ringu** (1998, JAP) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: Hideo Nakata. Starring Nanako Matsushima, Miki Nakatani, Hiroyuki Sanada, Yuko Takeuchi, Hitomi Sato. Journalist Matsushima mourns the death of her niece, who died mysteriously, allegedly after viewing a cursed video. She starts to investigate and views the video herself. According to the rumors she has now exactly one week before she will die. What is the mystery behind the video? Deliberately paced, almost tentative horror chiller creates an uneasy atmosphere and builds suspense well. The vanguard of the new Japanese horror wave; it was based on the novel by Kôji Suzuki. At the very least it stands as a monument of the (then-dying) video tape. Previously filmed as a TV movie in 1995. Followed by two sequels (RASEN, RINGU 2), a prequel (RINGU 0), a Korean remake (RING), and several Hollywood remakes. Also known as simply RING.

**Ringu 2** (1999, JAP) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Hideo Nakata. Starring Miki Nakatani, Hitomi Sato, Kyôko Fukada, Fumiyo Kohinata, Kenjiro Ishimaru. Second sequel (despite its title) to the influential RINGU (1998), but the first by that film's original director. Set right after the events of the first film, a young student investigates and becomes entranced by the search for the mysterious video tape. The creepy sound effects are still there, but everything else just doesn't work any more. Film was made after audiences were dissatisfied with the first sequel, RASEN, but this is not much better. Followed by RINGU 0: BASUDEI (2000). English title: RING 2.

**Ringu 0: Bâsudei** (2000, JAP) **C-99m.** \*\*½ D: Norio Tsuruta. Starring Yukie Nakama, Seiichi Tanabe, Kumiko Aso, Yoshiko Tanaka, Takeshi Wakamatsu. After two sequels, the Japanese horror hit gets a prequel, which tells the story of young Sadako, who is the restless spirit in the original RINGU (1998). In 1968, the deeply troubled girl joins an acting troupe, who are rehearsing a play. Soon, people start to die and everything is blamed on her. Rumors of the traumatized girl's spiritualist mother start to surface. Relatively low-key, but moody, not uneffective chiller, for fans of the series. English title: RING 0: BIRTHDAY.

**Ring Virus, The** (1999, KOR) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Kim Dong-bin. Starring Shin Eun-Kyung, Lee Seung-hyeon, Jeong Jin-yeong, Kim Chang-wan. Korean remake of the Japanese horror hit is almost on a par with the original. A journalist investigates the strange deaths of teenagers and finds this all to be linked to a videotape. When she watches it herself, she becomes convinced that she has only seven days to solve the mystery or she will die. Slow, redundant at times, but fairly effective.

**Rinne** (2005, JAP) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Takashi Shimizu. Starring Yûka, Karina, Kippe Shiina, Tetta Sugimoto. From the director of the JU-ON films (and their American remakes) comes this ambitious horror film about a young actress who gets cast in a movie about a serial killer that slayed 11 people many years ago in a big hotel. Soon it seems the murder victims are trying to come back to life... by reincarnation? Faint echoes of SHINING, but the story and its chilling shocks are never convincing. Either the camera stays on too long, or we have seen these scares too many times by now. Still worth a look for horror fans. English titles: REINCARNATION, and J-HORROR THEATER VOL. 3.

**Riot** (1969, USA) **C-100m.** \*½ D: Buzz Kulik. Starring Jim Brown, Gene Hackman, Ben Carruthers, Mike Kellin, Gerald O'Loughlin. Uninteresting prison drama about inmates of an Arizona jailhouse, who rebel and talk about their demands and plans to escape. Very little action until the finale. Unimaginative script, routine direction; not at all like the prison and blaxploitation films of the early 1970s. James Poe (cowriter of CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF!!!)

adapted *The Riot* by Frank Elli. Produced by the legendary William Castle. Alan Rudolph (REMEMBER MY NAME) receives his first credit as assistant director.

**Ripley's Game** (2002, GBR/USA/ITA) **C-110m.** \*\* D: Liliانا Cavani. Starring John Malkovich, Ray Winstone, Dougray Scott, Lena Headley, Chiara Caselli, Hanns Zischler. Patricia Highsmith adaptation makes use of her main gimmick from STRANGERS ON A TRAIN (1951). Terminally ill Scott is persuaded by crook Winstone to become a killer, with Ripley (Malkovich) pulling the strings. Of course, things go awry, and Scott soon wishes he had never accepted the deal. Well-acted crime drama fails because its main character is so cold and off-putting, and the story becomes less interesting as it goes along. Previously filmed by Wim Wenders as DER AMERIKANISCHE FREUND (1977). Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Ripper, The** (1997, GBR/AUS) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: Janet Meyers. Starring Patrick Bergin, Gabrielle Anwar, Samuel West, Michael York, Adam Couper, Essie Davis, Olivia Hamnett, Karen Davitt. Handsomely filmed and decorated version of the horror classic with Bergin on the trail of serial killer Jack the Ripper, who terrorizes the London streets killing and mutilating prostitutes. Production values, credible acting overcome predictable plotting. Filmed in Australia. Made for television.

**Risate di Gioia** (1960, ITA) **105m.** \*\*\*½ D: Mario Monicelli. Starring Ben Gazzara, Anna Magnani, Totò, Fred Clark. Three disparate characters unwillingly spend a turbulent silvester night in Rome together. Totò, an unemployed actor, has to contend with pickpocket Gazzara and would-be actress Magnani. Funny comedy with three wonderful stars. English title: THE PASSIONATE THIEF.

**Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond, The** (1960, USA) **101m.** \*\*½ D: Budd Boetticher. Starring Ray Danton, Karen Steele, Elaine Stewart, Jesse White, Simon Oakland, Robert Lowery, Warren Oates, Dianne (Dyan) Cannon. A very American gangster movie, set during Depression, about small-time crook Jack 'Legs' Diamond, who rises to become a much-feared crime boss. Film is fast-paced and generally well-made, but emotionally aloof and uninvolved. This predictable film is helped by some good performances, especially by Danton, Oates and a young Cannon (in her film debut). Photographed by Lucien Ballard.

**Rise of the Planet of the Apes** (2011, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Rupert Wyatt. Starring James Franco, Andy Serkis, Freida Pinto, John Lithgow, Brian Cox, Tom Felton, Jamie Harris. Research scientist Franco is working on a formula that can cure Alzheimer's disease, and has already proved its effectiveness by making chimps super-intelligent. After an incident with a monkey-gone-wild, he is forced to abandon his research and all but manages to take one chimp home with him. Ultimately, this chimp - named Caesar - will form a monkey army and wreak havoc on San Francisco. More drama than thriller, this remake of the sci-fi *adventure* PLANET OF THE APES (1968) is quite well-made but lacks a distinct sci-fi feel and doesn't have much action or suspense. The finale compensates somewhat. The sequel DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES (2014) is an improvement.

**Ritana** (2002, JAP) **C-116m.** \*\*½ D: Takeshi Yamazaki. Starring Takeshi Kaneshiro, Anne Suzuki, Kirin Kiki, Goro Kishitani, Yukiko Okamoto. Quite good science-fiction actioner about a time-traveller on a mission to avert future war. She is aided by an assassin. Explosive set-pieces, but storyline fails to compel. English title: RETURNER.

**Rite, Magie Nere e Segrete Orge nel Trecento** (1973, ITA) **C-98m.** \*½ D: Ralph Brown (=Renato Polsell). Starring Mickey Hargitay, Rita Calderoni, Raoul Traucher, Christa Barrymore, Consolata Moschera, Max Dorian, Tano Cimarosa. Director Polsell's follow-up to his interesting giallo DELIRIO CALDO (1972) is barely comprehensible indulgence about witchcraft and a religious cult. A group of American visitors to a castle are faced with inexplicable going-ons that may be caused by the burning of a witch 500 years ago. Plot is

barely there, odd intercutting a meager replacement for photographic style. For only the most fervent followers of the eccentric PolSELLI, who also wrote and edited the picture. Also known as THE REINCARNATION OF ISABEL, BLACK MAGIC RITES: REINCARNATIONS, THE GHASTLY / HORRIBLE ORGIES OF COUNT DRACULA.

**Ri-Teun** (2007, KOR) **C-88m.** \*½ D: Kim Byeong-woo. Starring Kim Bo-yeong, Lee Jin-seok. Experimental, surreal horror drama about a businessman who wakes up in a bathtub and realizes that one of his kidneys is missing. There's an odd female employee that follows him around the derelict building setting and keeps telling him metaphysical things. Obviously he is part of a story that is being revised all the time. Difficult to make sense of, there's barely a reason to watch this at all. English title WRITTEN, not to be confused with A-I-DEUL... (2011) director Lee Ky-maan's first feature RI-TEON / WRITTEN (2007), which is also about surgery.

**Ritorno dalla Morte** (1991, ITA) **C-96m.** D: David Hills (=Joe D'Amato). Starring Donald O'Brien, Cinzia Monreale, Richard Harsh. Awful horror movie about a woman with telekinetic powers, who falls into a coma after being raped by thugs. She proceeds to "use" her dead friend to take revenge. Poorly directed, sloppily acted, a waste of time. Costume design by Laura M. Gemser. International title: FRANKENSTEIN 2000.

**Ritorno di Zanna Bianca, Il** (1974, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-98m. SCOPE\*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Franco Nero, Virna Lisi, John Steiner, Raimund Harmstorf, Renato Cestiè, Harry Carey Jr., Werner Pochath, Rik Battaglia, Hannelore Elsner, Fernando Rey. Second of six ZANNA BIANCA (WHITE FANG) movies produced in the 1970s. Film recounts episodes in the Canadian (?) wilderness, with recurring characters and, of course, the title creature (as known from the Jack London novel). Typical (wintry) wilderness adventure might thrill smaller kids, adults might want to watch it for the cast and director. Fulci also directed the first film of the series, ZANNA BIANCA (1972), the same year he made NON SI SEVIZIA UN PAPERINO! Score by Carlo Rustichelli. Also known as CHALLENGE OF WHITE FANG.

**Rivelazioni di un Maniaco Sessuale al Capo della Squadra Mobile**(1972, ITA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Roberto (Bianchi) Montero. Starring Farley Granger, Sylva Koscina, Cristea Avram, Femi Benussi, Silvano Tranquilli, Jessica Dublin. Moderately successful whodunit: Inspector Granger must find the maniac who kills the unfaithful wives of prominent members of society. The killer leaves photographs of the adulterers at the crime scene. Giallo doesn't integrate its characters well, but remains interesting. Lots of nudity, some violence. Good, weird score by Giorgio Gaslini is at times moody, at times jazzy. English titles: BAD GIRLS, CONFESSIONS OF A SEX MANIAC, THE SLASHER IS THE SEX MANIAC, SLASHER, SO NAKED, SO DEAD, and SO SWEET, SO DEAD. Film was re-edited for the American market (some hardcore scenes were inserted) and re-titled PENETRATION.

**Rivières Pourpres, Les** (2000, FRA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*** D : Mathieu Kassovitz. Starring Jean Reno, Vincent Cassel, Nadia Farès, Dominique Sanda, Karim Belkhadra, Jean-Pierre Cassel. Typically atmospheric thriller about the hunt for a serial killer, who likes cutting off his victim's hands. Police inspector Reno suspects the murderer to be at a university in the French Alps. Despite being suspenseful, this film shows the typical faults of a novel adaptation by the writer himself (Jean-Christophe Grangé). Plot holes, illogical twists may be explained in the novel, but not in the film. Watchable but awfully contrived. English title: THE CRIMSON RIVERS.

**Rivolta dei Sette, La** (1964, ITA/SPA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Tony Russel, Massimo Serato, Nando Gazzolo, Howard Ross, Helga Liné, Piero Lulli. Obviously modeled after THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (1962), this sword-and-sandal costumer features Russel as a rebel who leads several friends into battle against the Spartans. Adequately

scored and directed, but plot creates no interest, let alone excitement. Not to be confused with GLI INVINCIBILI SETTE (1964) by the same director. English titles: THE REVOLT OF THE SEVEN, THE SPARTAN GLADIATOR(S).

**Road Games** (1981, AUS) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Richard Franklin. Starring Stacy Keach, Jamie Lee Curtis, Marion Edward, Grant Page. Interesting thriller about truck driver Keach, who becomes obsessed with following a car driver that he thinks is the serial killer that has been terrorizing Australian roads recently. Quite well-made, never boring, toys with conventions and your expectations, even satirical, but not fully successful. Director Franklin followed this with PSYCHO II (1983).

**Road to Perdition** (2002, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sam Mendes. Starring Tom Hanks, Paul Newman, Jude Law, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Daniel Craig, Tyler Hoechlin, Stanley Tucci, Sam Mendes. In the 1930s Hanks falls out of grace with his foster father Newman, a patriarch/mobster who rules an entire town, and ultimately has to take it on the lam with his little son. Engrossing drama, impressively directed by Mendes (AMERICAN BEAUTY), but broken down, story carries little weight and there are also problems of perspective (first person vs. omniscient narrator). A good film, though, whose stylistic flourishes and storytelling savvy make it worthwhile. Superb score by Thomas Newman, fine cinematography by Conrad Hall (his last).

**Road Trip** (2000, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Todd Phillips. Starring Breckin Meyer, Seann William Scott, Amy Smart, Paulo Costanzo, Dj Qualls, Rachel Blanchard, Anthony Rapp, Tom Green, Todd Phillips. Slight but funny teen comedy, along the lines of AMERICAN PIE, about Meyer, who mistakenly sends a video tape to his girlfriend in Texas, which depicts him having sex with Blanchard. He spontaneously decides to travel 1800 miles to stop the package and save their relationship. Not all of the gags work but enough to give you entertaining 90 minutes.

**Roar** (1981, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Noel Marshall. Starring Tippi Hedren, Melanie Griffith, John Marshall, Jerry Marshall, Frank Tom, Zakes Mokae. Pretty unique adventure thriller set in Africa, where wildlife expert Marshall lives among dozens of lions, tigers, leopards, panthers and cougars. Story revolves around his (real-life) family, who come to visit for the first time in years but find his house deserted except for the wildcats. The basically benign but uncontrollable, unpredictable animals soon make them fear for their lives. Film was plagued by production problems and ended up losing its producers \$15 million, but it's extremely well-filmed and edited (kudos to DP and co-editor Jan De Bont, a Verhoeven regular), which makes this truly exciting. Score adds to the unrelenting pace of the movie. The wildcats are fascinating. Uncut version runs longer.

**Robin Hood** (1973, USA) **C-83m. \*\*½** D: Wolfgang Reitherman. Voices of Brian Bedford, Phil Harris, Monica Evans, Peter Ustinov, Terry-Thomas, Andy Devine, Roger Miller. Disney version of the legend of the rebellious Robin Hood in medieval England is unexceptional and not very entertaining, but should be a sure pick for kids, who want to kill time on a rainy afternoon.

**RoboCop** (1987, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*** D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Peter Weller, Nancy Allen, Dan O'Herlihy, Ronny Cox, Kurtwood Smith, Miguel Ferrer, Michael Gregory, Paul Verhoeven. Effective action film, near the genre's pinnacle of the 1980s. Weller plays a cop who is almost killed then returns as RoboCop, half man, half robot, programmed to rid the near-future city of Detroit (soon to be renamed Delta City) of crime. Some tackiness (especially in some of the minor villains, the really bad guys are convincing) is forgotten in extremely violent, well-filmed bullet-riddling shoot-outs. Verhoeven cuts loose often enough. Fine score by Basil Poledouris provides emotional, dramatic angle. Monty Hellman

reportedly directed parts of the second unit. R-rated version runs 102m. Followed by two sequels, a TV series and a mini series. Remade in 2014.

**RoboCop** (2014, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** José Padilha. Starring Joel Kinnaman, Gary Oldman, Michael Keaton, Abbie Cornish, Jackie Earle Haley, Jay Baruchel, Samuel L. Jackson. Remake of the 1987 sci-fi action classic is fairly good. Kinnaman plays an ambitious cop who is double-crossed and barely survives a car bomb. A corporation specializing in robots uses him as a prototype to persuade American lawmakers to allow robot cops to roam the streets. Screenplay maintains interest, as does good acting, but it's not as audacious as the original. Oldman comes off best and almost makes the movie his own.

**Robot & Frank** (2012, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jake Schreier. Starring Frank Langella, James Marsden, Liv Tyler, Susan Sarandon, Jeremy Sisto, voice of Peter Sarsgaard. In the near future, robots have become household helpers and companions. When aging cat burglar Langella receives one to better master everyday life, he notices that it can be manipulated and used as an accomplice in crime. Low-key, uneventful drama becomes really good towards the end. Langella gives an impressive performance. From the director of PAPER TOWNS (2015).

**Robot Jox** (1989, USA) **C-84m. BOMB D:** Stuart Gordon. Starring Gary Graham, Anne-Marie Johnson, Paul Koslo, Robert Sampson, Jeffrey Combs. Title refers to so-called jockeys who operate giant war robots in one-on-one duels which are actually territorial battles. Utterly predictable, clichéd storyline makes this sci-fi war action movie a chore to watch, unless you are a ten year-old boy who is easily impressed. Produced by Charles and Albert Band. Director Gordon receives story credit.

**Robots** (2005, USA) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Chris Wedge, Carlos Saldanha. Starring (the voice of) Ewan McGregor, Halle Berry, Robin Williams, Greg Kinnear, Mel Brooks, Drew Carey, Jim Broadbent, Amanda Bynes, Stanley Tucci, Dianne Wiest, Paul Giamatti, Jennifer Coolidge, Dan Hedaya, James Earl Jones, Natasha Lyonne, Lowell Ganz, Paula Abdul, Jay Leno, Stephen Tobolowsky. Superbly designed computer animated movie that transports the viewer to a world of robots and metal parts and creates the world as it would look like if everything was made of metal. In the plot, a young robot (voiced by McGregor) travels to the big city to achieve fame as an inventor, but finds that the good-natured industrialist Bigweld (voiced by Mel Brooks) has been overthrown by a greedy, capitalist executive. While the plot is only standard, the production design is impressive and the voice cast flawless. Good fun. From the creators of ICE AGE (2002).

**Rock, The** (1996, USA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Michael Bay. Starring Sean Connery, Nicholas Cage, Ed Harris, John Spencer, David Morse, Wililam Forsythe, Michael Biehn, Vanessa Marcil, Tony Todd. Danny Nucci, Yander Berkeley, Philip Baker Hall. Slam-bang action thriller about a group of elite mercenaries led by Harris, who capture Alcatraz and threaten to fire some missiles armed with a deadly gas, if they are not given a large sum of money. Former inmate Connery and chemical weapons expert Cage try to avert disaster. Lots of action, few thrills plotwise. Mindless entertainment from the team that brought you ARMAGEDDON (1998).

**Rock-a-Bye Baby** (1958, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\* D:** Frank Tashlin. Starring Jerry Lewis, Marilyn Maxwell, Connie Stevens, Salvatore Baccaloni. One of Jerry Lewis' most endearing films is about a movie star (Maxwell) whose career is threatened by a sudden pregnancy. Then she remembers her old boyfriend Lewis, who's back in their home town, and asks him to take care of the baby after birth. What a surprise when he learns it's triplets he has to look after! Charming, funny, an ideal showcase for Lewis' talents. Also love that picture-perfect late 1950s setting. A remake of Preston Sturges' THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK (1944).

**Rocket to the Moon** (1967, GBR) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Don Sharp. Starring Burl Ives, Troy Donahue, Gert Fröbe, Terry-Thomas, Hermione Gingold, Daliah Lavi, Lionel Jeffries, Dennis Price. Old-fashioned comedy with many delightful characters, about P.T. Barnum (Ives), who travels to Britain to sell his latest business idea – a flight to the moon. Story wanders a little, but kids should find this lovely. Nice turn by Fröbe. Based on the novel by Jules Verne. Also known as BLAST-OFF, JOURNEY THAT SHOOK THE WORLD, and THOSE FANTASTIC FLYING FOOLS.

**Rock Star** (2001, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Stephen Herek. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Jennifer Aniston, Jason Flemyng, Dominic West, Jason Bonham, Timothy Spall, Timothy Olyphant, Rachel Hunter, Colleen Fitzpatrick. Engaging drama set in the mid-1980s of youngster Wahlberg, who idolizes the lead singer of his favorite heavy metal group and plays in a tribute band. When the band approach him to replace his idol, he becomes a rock star overnight. Interesting recreation of a rock-era has a few silly sequences too many, but Wahlberg is so appealing in the lead that this compensates any flaws. The songs are actually sung by Mike Matijevic, though Wahlberg was in a band himself in the early 1990s. George Clooney co-executive produced.

**Rocky** (1976, USA) **C-119m. \*\*\*½ D:** John G. Avildsen. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, Carl Weathers, Bruggess Meredith, Thayer David, Joe Spinell, Frank Stallone, Lloyd Kaufman. Irresistible rhinestone drama about 30-year-old boxer Rocky (Stallone), whose life is at a crossroads. He is contemplating the end of his pathetic career, when the heavy-weight champion (Weathers), looking for an easy-to-beat contender, chooses him, the 'Italian Stallion', for the championship bout. Screenplay, written by Stallone himself, strikes all the right tones, especially towards the end, excusing some pacing flaws in the first half of the film. Understandably an extremely popular film, which won Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Editing (the final bout was filmed *backwards* and re-edited). Memorable score by Bill Conti. Lloyd Kaufman, co-founder of Troma Films, appears briefly as a drunk and also supervised the pre-production. Followed by four sequels.

**Rocky Horror Picture Show, The** (1975, GBR) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Jim Sharman. Starring Tim Curry, Susan Sarandon, Barry Bostwick, Richard O'Brien, Meatloaf. Outrageous rock musical about a conser-vative couple who find refuge in a castle after their car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. There they meet Transsylvanian transvestites, whose leader Frank 'N' Furter (Curry) is about to create a human being! Kinky horror satire has acquired a cult following, although (or because) it bombed when originally released. Legendary soundtrack features many familiar songs.

**Rokugatsu no Hebi** (2002, JAP) **B&W-77m. \*\*\* D:** Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Asuka Kurosawa, Yuji Kohtari, Shinya Tsukamoto. Stark, stylized psycho drama about a couple, Kurosawa and her considerably older spouse Kohtari, whose marriage seems happy on the outside. One day, the woman, who works as a telephone counsellor, is contacted by a man who seems to know a lot about her life. He blackmails her with compromising photos and unmasks her secret desires, but that's not the end of the story as her husband – and even the stalker – have something to hide. Cult director Tsukamoto as the voyeur projects himself into the movie here, with stunning results that are often reminiscent of a Bergman or perhaps Lynch. His blue-and-white color scheme and striking direction make this an artistic triumph, even if the movie is not easily accessible. Filmed in an aspect ratio of 1,37:1 (on 16mm film). Deservedly won awards on several filmfestivals, including Venice. Tsukamoto also wrote, produced, photographed, edited and designed the film. English title: A SNAKE OF JUNE.

**Rollerball** (1975, USA) **C-122m. \*\*\* D:** Norman Jewison. Starring James Caan, John Houseman, Maud Adams, John Beck, Moses Gunn, Pamela Hensley, Burt Kwouk, Ralph Richardson. 'Social' science-fiction in the vein of ZARDOZ (1974) and LOGAN'S RUN (1976). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a controlled society enjoys their leisure time at so-called Rollerball games. Caan is the star of the violent sport, but someone is trying to make him retire. Uneven, vague sci-fi drama with some effective action scenes juxtaposed to quiet, pensive drama. A matter of taste, but has become a cult film. Well-photographed by Douglas Slocombe, well-produced, written by William Harrison, based on his story 'The Roller Ball Murders'. Excellent use of classical music by Bach, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky. Some prints run 129m. Remade in 2002.

**Rollercoaster** (1977, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** James Goldstone. Starring George Segal, Richard Widmark, Timothy Bottoms, Henry Fonda, Harry Guardino, Susan Strasberg, Helen Hunt, Craig Wasson, Robert Quarry, Steve Guttenberg. Standard disaster film, about madman Bottoms and his plans to blow up a bomb in an amusement park if his demands are not met. Segal is good as the weary inspector chasing him, but he is surrounded by cardboard characters. Redeeming feature: Lalo Schifrin's fine suspense score and somewhat tight editing. Originally released in Sensurround, which rocked the cinema audiences in their seats. Helen Hunt's first theatrical film. Director Goldstone went on to make the last gasp of the disaster movie decade with WHEN TIME RAN OUT... (1980).

**Röllin Sydän** (2007, FIN/GBR/RUS/GER) **C-78m. \*\*\*½ D:** Pekka Lehtosaari. Starring (the voices of) Allan Tuppurainen, Saija Lentonen, Aarre Karén. Harmless but colorful kids adventure about a tribe of dirty, heartless rollies (a hobbit-like race), who join an elf in finding magical heart that will stop the petrification of the forest. LORD OF THE RINGS for pre-schoolers, none too cleverly scripted, but, to reiterate, harmless entertainment for small children. English title: QUEST FOR A HEART.

**Rolling Thunder** (1977, USA) **C-90m. \*\* D:** John Flynn. Starring William Devane, Tommy Lee Jones, Linda Haynes, James Best, Dabney Coleman, Lisa Blake Richards, Luke Askew. Shell-shocked Devane returns home from the Vietnam War after seven years, but is unable to connect emotionally to his family. When his wife and son are brutally shot dead by thugs, who leave his hand disfigured, he swears for revenge and performs it with icy precision. Icy cold, like its main character, drama is an interesting predecessor to Martin Scorsese's TAXI DRIVER (1978) but has nothing of that classic's texture. Cowritten by Paul Schrader, who also scripted TAXI DRIVER. Incredibly, this is in Quentin Tarantino's top ten best films of all time. Originally 99m.

**Roma a Mano Armato** (1976, ITA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Maurizio Merli, Tomas Milian, Arthur Kennedy, Giampiero Albertini, Ivan Rassimov, Luciano Pigozzi, Tom Felleghy. Gritty cop thriller, much like Lenzi's earlier MILANO ODIA (1974). Merli plays a frustrated policeman who employs his own (violent) methods, when the criminals keep getting away. It all comes down to a duel with hunchback Milian. Merli is a poor man's DIRTY HARRY, his facial expression doesn't change the entire movie, but Lenzi keeps things moving fast and some of the action is good. Fine, rhythmical score by Franco Micalizzi. Milian also played the hunchback in Lenzi's LA BANDA DEL GOBBO (1977). English titles: ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON, BRUTAL JUSTICE, ROME ARMED TO THE TEETH, and THE TOUGH ONES.

**Roma Come Chicago** (1968, ITA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alberto de Martino. Starring John Cassavetes, Anita Sanders. Criminal Mario Corda (Cassavetes), who is also a loving family father, wants to do one more 'job' before retiring, but his ruthless partner fouls things up and Corda gets caught. In prison he swears for revenge. Stylish, cool, yet almost cold and

depressing action thriller slows down in the mid-section but Ennio Morricone's superb score keeps it afloat.

**Roman Polanski: A Film Memoir** (2011, GBR/ITA/GER) **C-90m. \*\*\* D:** Laurent Bouzereau. Featuring Roman Polanski, Andrew Braunsberg. Interesting documentary about master filmmaker Polanski, who is visited by his friend and business partner of nearly 50 years, Andrew Braunsberg in his Swiss chalet in Gstaad, while under house arrest for the rape charges dating back to 1977. Polanski gives a very personal insight in his early life, from childhood during World War Two, to his early acting career and later personal tragedy with Sharon Tate. Highly interesting, even touching, this is recommended to any film fan. Some of his films are neglected, some not even mentioned, but what you get to hear is fascinating. Good piano score by Alexandre Desplat.

**Romeo and Juliet** (1968, GBR/ITA) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Franco Zeffirelli. Starring Leonard Whiting, Olivia Hussey, John McEnery, Milo O'Shea, Pat Heywood, Robert Stephens, Michael York, Bruce Robinson, narrated by Laurence Olivier. Beautiful, impressive adaptation of Shakespeare's famous play about two young lovers whose families are bitter enemies. Excellent production values, expressive acting, fine score by Nino Rota. Among the best *Romeo and Juliet* versions (of at least 30!). Oscar winner for Best Cinematography and Best Costume Design.

**Romeo + Juliet** (1996, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Baz Luhrmann. Starring Claire Danes, Leonardo DiCaprio, Brian Dennehy, John Leguizamo, Pete Postlethwaite, Paul Sorvino, Vondie Curtis-Hall, M. Emmet Walsh. Pointless modernization of the classic Shakespeare tragedy about the love of two young people whose parents are bitter enemies. Thoroughly off-putting, overly *cool* adaptation is aggressively directed and well-filmed but subject matter does not at all translate into the 90s, especially not the original dialogue, which is used here. It makes the love scenes seem phony, though the stars are appealing. Trashes the brilliance of the plot with MTV-aesthetics. Watch Franco Zeffirelli's version instead.

**Romeo Is Bleeding** (1993, USA) **C-109m. \*\*\*\*½ D:** Peter Medak. Starring Gary Oldman, Lena Olin, Juliette Lewis, Annabella Sciorra, Roy Scheider, Michael Wincott, James Cromwell, Will Patton, Dennis Farina, Ron Perlman. Fascinating, bizarre psycho thriller drama about corrupt cop Oldman, who is married to Sciorra but entertains a whore (Lewis) and finally breaks apart when his latest job brings him together with crime goddess Olin, who dominates and humiliates him. Difficult, not easy to swallow character study, very well-acted, with flashes of style – and a very pessimistic, dark, defeatist mood. An unheralded gem, in the realm of films like *ANGEL HEART*, *JACOB'S LADDER*, perhaps even *BLADE RUNNER*. Written by Hilary Henkin.

**Romeo Must Die** (2000, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Andrzej Bartkowiak. Starring Jet Li, Aaliyah, Isaiah Washington, Russell Wong, DMX, Delroy Lindo, Francoise Yip. Misfired action thriller comedy about warring gangs (black and Chinese) and Li's determination to avenge the murder of his brother. Aaliyah, as the daughter of the rival gang's boss, just wants to be left alone but the script forces her to become Li's love interest. Trivial, profane, unfunny, redeemed only by some okay action scenes.

**Romper Stomper** (1992, AUS) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Geoffrey Wright. Starring Russell Crowe, Daniel Pollock, Jacqueline McKenzie, Alex Scott, Leigh Russell, Daniel Wyllie, James McKenna. Gritty, realistic depiction of the lives of a group of Australian skinheads, whose credo is violence and destruction. Crowe (who was awarded the Best Actor-Prize at the Australian film festival) plays their leader, a senseless brute with swastikas tattooed on his back, who encounters a runaway girl (McKenzie) and draws her into his circle. Not terribly

scriptwise, but dynamically filmed and exciting. The characters are rather shallow, though not as much as usual. Only for people with a strong stomach. Wright's directorial debut.

**Ronin** (1998, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Frankenheimer. Starring Robert De Niro, Jean Reno, Natascha McElhone, Stellan Skarsgård, Sean Bean, Skipp Sudduth, Michel Lonsdale, Jan Triska, Jonathan Pryce, Katharina Witt. De Niro plays an American in France who teams up with a group of "specialists" to steal a suitcase which everyone seems to be interested in. Frankenheimer's expert direction and the fine cast make film worthwhile, but the few good car stunts and suspenseful situations can't overcome the simplicity of the plot. At the end you are not only left to wonder just what *was* in the suitcase, but also what the fuss was all about. Set and filmed entirely in France.

**Room** (2015, USA) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lenny Abrahamson. Starring Brie Larson, Jacob Tremblay, Sean Bridgers, Joan Allen, William H. Macy. Immensely touching drama about young mother Larson, who raises her 5-year-old son Tremblay in a small room without ever going outside, being held captive for seven years by psychopath Bridgers. All the boy ever sees and deals with are the things in their confinement, which comprise his world. Film focuses on the characters, not the crime, and is utterly real, utterly moving. Fine performances, excellent score by Stephen Rennicks. One of the best films of the year. Based on the novel by Emma Donoghue, who also scripted.

**Room 237** (2013, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Rodney Ascher. Documentary focusing on one of the most enduring cult movies, Stanley Kubrick's *THE SHINING* (1980). Several film scholars and fans of the film offer interpretations, coming up with subtexts like Nazi/war atrocities, Indian massacres, the allegedly fake Apollo mission, even sexual symbolism. Some have watched the movie backwards and analysed the geometrical structure of the setting, with awkward results. Most comments are off-screen, with scenes from the original film and other Kubrick works. At the very least, this documentary shows what a massive influence this movie has had, and generally how you can interpret many things into any movie. If you are fan of Kubrick or *THE SHINING*, you will be thoroughly engrossed.

**Room with a View, A** (1985, GBR) **C-116m. \*\*\* D:** James Ivory. Starring Maggie Smith, Helena Bonham-Carter, Denholm Elliott, Julian Sands, Daniel Day-Lewis, Simon Callow, Judi Dench, Rupert Graves, Nigel Hawthorne. Bonham-Carter plays a young woman from England who travels to Florence, Italy, with her chaperon Smith. The naive girl falls in love with melancholy but audacious Sands. She swears to forget her romance and decides to marry stiff, conservative Day-Lewis instead. Naturally, her past will come back to haunt her. Top British cast in popular period piece, based on E.M. Forster's novel. Entertaining and pleasant but no classic, as some dubbed it upon release. Oscar winner for Best Screenplay and Art Direction, and Costume Design.

**Roseaux Sauvages, Les** (1994, FRA) **C-114m. \*\*\* D:** André Téchiné. Starring Elodie Bouchez, Gael Morel, Stéphane Rideau, Frédéric Gorny, Michèle Moretti. Perceptive, well-written coming-of-age drama set in the 1960s about four adolescents who, on the verge of adulthood, are affected by matters such as love, sex and politics in a similar way. Well-directed, well-acted, with handsome location photography. Téchiné also wrote the screenplay. English title: *WILD REEDS*.

**Rosebud** (1975, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Otto Preminger. Starring Peter O'Toole, Richard Attenborough, Cliff Gorman, Claude Dauphin, John V. Lindsay, Peter Lawford, Raf Vallone, Adrienne Corri, Isabelle Huppert, Kim Catrall, Klaus Löwitsch. Five young American girls vacationing in Europe are taken hostage by Arab terrorists and it's O'Toole's job to find and free them. Any message is drowned out in talk, a political bore, one of the big mistakes of big directors. O'Toole ridicules his role, others look properly embarrassed. Of note only for

interesting cast and synthesizer score (by Laurent Petitgirard). Based on a novel by Paul Bonnell and Joan Hemingway.

**Rose de Fer, La** (1973, FRA) **C-80m**. \*\*\* D: Jean Rollin. Starring Mireille Dargent, Françoise Pascal, Nathalie Perrey, Hugues Quester. Subtle chiller about a pair of lovers, who spend the night at a seemingly abandoned, derelict graveyard and are strangely affected by its brooding atmosphere. Deliberately paced (like all of Rollin's movies) but fascinating and irresistible once you are accustomed to the film's mood. Seems like a brilliant stage play put on celluloid. A must for devotees of Graveyard Poetry and followers of director Rollin (he once again returns to his sea-side setting, although no vampires appear here). Closer to being an 'art' film than most projects of the director. English title: ROSE OF IRON.

**Rosemary's Baby** (1968, USA) **C-136m**. \*\*\*\* D: Roman Polanski. Starring Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon, Sidney Blackmer, Maurice Evans, Ralph Bellamy, Angela Dorian (=Victoria Vetri), Patsy Kelly, Elisha Cook Jr., Charles Grodin, D'Urville Martin, William Castle, Patricia O'Neal, Sharon Tate, voice of Tony Curtis. Subtle, chilling masterpiece of horror about happily married couple Farrow and Cassavetes, who move into a New York apartment house that has a gruesome history. Their new neighbors Gordon and Blackmer force themselves into their lives, especially when Rosemary (Farrow) gets pregnant. Where do those eerie chants come from, and does Rosemary's husband's estrangement have something to do with their neighbors? More and more, Rosemary feels the horrors close in on her... Polanski's brilliant direction involves you right from the beginning and never eases its icy clutch. The perfect example of a horror film that does without any graphic scenes. Mia Farrow delivers her *second* knock-out performance in one year (the other one being in SECRET CEREMONY); she also sang the title theme. William Castle produced, Polanski scripted, from Ira Levin's novel. Gordon won Best Supporting Actress at the Academy Awards, but Farrow and Blackmer should have been considered as well. One of the best horror films of all time and a definite influence on Dario Argento's classic SUSPIRIA (1977). This was the second part of Polanski's (inofficial) trilogy about the horrors of apartment buildings, following REPULSION (1965). This trilogy was ended by THE TENANT / LE LOCATAIRE (1976). An inferior TV-sequel, titled LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ROSEMARY'S BABY, premiered in 1976.

**Rossetto, Il** (1959, ITA/FRA) **90m**. \*\*\* D: Damiano Damiani. Starring Pierre Brice, Giorgia Mull, Laura Vivaldi, Bella Darvi, Pietro Germi. Good crime drama about a 14-year-old girl, who develops a crush on neighbor Brice, who might be a murderer. How will he manage this odd situation? Well-acted, rather sober but still a compelling, thought-provoking view. English titles: LIPSTICK and RED LIPS.

**Rouge aux Lèvres, Le** (1971, BEL/FRA/ITA/GER) **C-87m**. \*\*\* D: Harry Kümel. Starring Delphine Seyrig, John Karlen, Danielle Ouimet, Andrea Rau, Paul Esser, Georges Jamin, Joris Collet, Fons Rademakers. A young and free couple, honeymooning in a deserted holiday resort in Belgium, meet the seductive baroness Bathory, who likes to bathe in the blood of virgins, as legend has it. Moody cult horror film, slowly paced but fascinating all the way. Good direction and score, beautiful Seyrig ennobles the picture with a brilliantly charismatic performance. Original uncut version runs 100m. English title: DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS.

**Route de Corinthe, La** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-100m**. \*\* D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean Seberg, Claude Chabrol. Plodding, slowly paced espionage yarn with Seberg an attractive woman who takes over the investigation started by her late husband, a secret agent. Works at first on a tongue-in-cheek level but bogs down later when film runs out of ideas. In fact, it seems as if it was made during a vacation trip with an improvised screenplay. At least the cast has

fun, including the director himself in a small, hilarious role as a traitor. Also known as CRIMINAL STORY and, in the U.S., as WHO'S GOT THE BLACK BOX?

**Royal Flash** (1975, GBR/USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Richard Lester. Starring Malcolm McDowell, Alan Bates, Florinda Bolkan, Oliver Reed, Tom Bell, Joss Ackland, Christopher Cazenove, Alastair Sim, Lionel Jeffries, Britt Ekland, Bob Hoskins, Roy Kinnear. Typically irreverent Richard Lester fare, which the director made right after his MUSKETEERS movies. McDowell plays a coward, who somehow wins a medal for bravery during a 19<sup>th</sup> century war and goes on to become a hero. Otto von Bismarck (Reed) also uses him as a pawn to impersonate a prince. Not exactly memorable or a classic, but engagingly done, with a good score (by Ken Thorne) and nice photography (by Geoffrey Unsworth). Based on a novel by George MacDonald Fraser, who wrote the screenplay himself.

**Royal Hunt of the Sun** (1969, GBR) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Irving Lerner. Starring Robert Shaw, Christopher Plummer, Nigel Davenport, Michael Craig, Leonard Whiting, James Donald. In 1530 Spanish adventurer Pizarro (Shaw) travels to South America in search of legendary 'land of gold'. He discovers an Inca tribe led by proud king (Plummer). Pizarro holds him prisoner in order to get his gold. Compelling drama about the clash of civilizations, powered by superb performances. Plummer is especially impressive. Film shows its stage origins, though; Peter Shaffer's play was adapted by Philip Yordan. Originally 118m.

**Roy Colt & Winchester Jack** (1970, ITA) **C-85m. \*\*** D: Mario Bava. Starring Brett Halsey, Charles Southwood, Marilu Tolo, Teodoro Corrà, Lee Burton, Bruno Corazzari, Mauro Bosco, Federico Boido, Piero Morgia, Franco Pesce, Isa Miranda. Typical Italian western, made at the time when producers wanted to cash in on the success of Sergio Leone's IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO. Plot about three gunslingers (Halsey, Southwood and Corrà) is clearly a rip-off and nowhere as funny or clever as the Eastwood western; too often it resorts to low-brow comedy. Some typical directorial touches, nice photography (by Antonio Rinaldi) makes film worth watching for Bava completists. Score by Piero Umiliani.

**Rugrats Movie, The** (1998, USA) **C-79m. \*\*½** D: Igor Kovalyov, Norton Virgien. Starring (the voices of) David Spade, Whoopi Goldberg, Elizabeth Daily, Christine Cavanaugh, Tim Curry. Big-screen debut for Nickelodeon's hit series puts Tommy, Chucky, Angelica et al in danger as they end up in a forest right after the arrival of Baby Dylan. Larger than life episodes take away some of the cuteness of the TV version, but fans shouldn't be disappointed. Many musicians like Lenny Kravitz, Iggy Pop, Lisa Loeb or Patti Smith have small cameos. Followed by two sequels.

**Rules of Engagement** (2000, USA/GBR/CDN/GER) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: William Friedkin. Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Samuel L. Jackson, Guy Pearce, Ben Kingsley, Bruce Greenwood, Ann Archer, Blair Underwood, Philip Baker Hall. Gripping, well-made thriller drama about U.S. marine Jackson, who is accused of having killed innocent civilians during a hairy situation in the American embassy in Yemen. Vietnam vet and former colleague Jones wants to help his friend and prevent his becoming a scapegoat for a shady government official. Superbly filmed opening scenes, engrossing court-room scenes, a winner. Only the ending disappoints a little.

**Rumble in the Bronx** (1996, HKG/CDN) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Stanley Tong. Starring Jackie Chan, Anita Mui, Françoise Yip, Bill Tung, Marc Akerstream. Chan comes to New York City to visit his uncle and soon gets mixed up with criminals. Story is as simple as that but Jackie compensates for any clichés with some astounding stunt work (directed by himself and director Tong). Hong Kong version runs some 105m. Also known as RED BRONX.

**Rumor Has It...** (2005, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Rob Reiner. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Kevin Costner, Shirley MaLaine, Mark Ruffalo, Richard Jenkins, Christopher McDonald, Steve

Sandvoss, Mena Suvari. Aniston is a thirty-ish woman, whose life is at a crossroads. She is about to attend her sister's wedding with her fiancé Ruffalo, when she realizes that her own family might just be the inspiration for THE GRADUATE! She begins to investigate and seeks out her dead mother's lover Costner (played by Dustin Hoffman in the movie). Starts rather mediocre, but develops a fine sense of humor, with funny complications and MacLaine a stand-out as Aniston's grandmother. Written by Ted Griffin (BEST LAID PLANS, MATCHSTICK MEN). George Clooney and Steven Soderbergh were among the producers.

**Runaway** (1984, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael Crichton. Starring Tom Selleck, Cynthia Rhodes, Gene Simmons, Kirstie Alley, Stan Shaw. So-so science-fiction thriller penned and directed by successful writer Crichton (WESTWORLD, JURASSIC PARK). Selleck plays a cop in the near future, whose job is to terminate robots that have gone crazy (every household has one). Soon it becomes clear that an evil scientist (Simmons, of the rock group Kiss) has implanted chips that turn them into murderous machines. Story has potential, but it never really gets going and is much too serious and pretentious. Score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**Runaway Train** (1985, USA) **C-111m. \*\*\*** D: Andrei Konchalovsky. Starring Jon Voight, Eric Robert, Rebecca De Mornay, Kyle Heffner, John P. Ryan, T.K. Carter, Kenneth McMillan, Stacey Pickren. Action film about two inmates (Voight and Roberts) who escape from a maximum security prison in Alaska and hop on a train, whose engineer soon after dies of a heart attack. It seems the runaway train cannot be stopped. OK story serves as a springboard for good action scenes and nerve-wrecking suspense. Film hits bull-eye in the last third. Fine score, Voight is excellent. Based on a screenplay by Akira Kurosawa.

**Rundown, The** (2003, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*½** D: Peter Berg. Starring The Rock, Seann William Scott, Rosario Dawson, Christopher Walken, Ewen Bremner, Jon Gries, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Embarrassingly bad action comedy with wrestler The Rock (né Dwayne Johnson) is like a thousand other buddy movies. Here, The Rock must find and bring back rich brat Scott, who's after a treasure in the Amazon jungle. Lots of unmotivated action scenes with annoying staccato editing. The dialogue is plain ridiculous. Also known as WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE.

**Run for the Sun** (1956, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roy Boulting. Starring Richard Widmark, Jane Greer, Trevor Howard, Peter Van Eyck, Carlos Henning. Exciting, well-made suspense thriller about reporter Greer, who tracks down writer Widmark in a Mexican provincial town. Ultimately, they find themselves on the run from criminals. Film takes unusually long to establish its premise, but performances are credible. The second remake of THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME, and one of the best. Officially based on the story by N.N. but film doesn't closely resemble the plotline of the cult classic.

**Running Man, The** (1987, USA) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Paul Michael Glaser. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Maria Conchita Alonso, Yaphet Kotto, Jim Brown, Jesse Ventura, Mick Fleetwood, Richard Dawson. Futuristic actioner about an extremely popular television series, which features real fights to the death. Schwarzenegger plays an ex-cop, wrongly accused of having killed hundreds, who is forced to compete and run for his life – kill or be killed. A step up from Arnies action pics after TERMINATOR, but still not the real thing. Quite entertaining 80s time capsule, based on a novella by Stephen King (writing as Richard Bachman).

**Running Scared** (2006, USA/GER) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Wayne Kramer. Starring Paul Walker, Cameron Bright, Vera Farmiga, Karel Roden, Johnny Messner, Ivana Milicevic, Chazz Palmnitieri, Bruce Altman. Criminal Walker returns home to his family after a shoot-out with some corrupt cops and becomes a witness to the shooting of his Russian neighbor by his son, who is friends with his own son. The boy has used his weapon and Walker must try to

retrieve it before the police do. Super-charged action thriller, with super-stylish (though rather meaningless) visuals. The story is totally implausible and unpleasant; it provides violence for the sake of violence. Quentin Tarantino is among the film's defenders. Nice theme by Mark Isham.

**Rupan Sansei: Nenrikichan Sakusen** (1974, JAP) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Takashi Tsuboshima. Starring Yuki Meguro, Kunie Tanaka, Shirô Itô, Arihiro Fujimura. First full-length feature following the 1971 animated TV series about Monkey Punch's Lupin character is unfortunately live-action and has little in common with mangas, retains the silliness but not the stylized action or the sense of adventure. Interesting for buffs nevertheless, as story centers around the beginning of Lupin's exploits, where he meets Jigen and Fujiko for the first time. A bit reminiscent of the Inspector Clouseau movies of the time, but not funny enough. Silly slapstick prevails. English title: LUPIN III: STRANGE PSYCHOKINETIC STRATEGY.

**Rupan Sansei: Mamo Karano Chousen** (1978, JAP) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Yasuo Otsuka, Soji Yoshikawa. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Makio Inoue, Gorô Naya. First animated feature film (following the early 1970s TV series and a live-action movie of 1974) about gentleman thief Lupin the Third, who along with his sidekick Jigen and samurai Goemon find out the mystery behind a madman, who has cloned himself and others, intending to rule the world. Plot is vague and uneven at first, later it becomes an entertaining, exciting action adventure with science-fiction touches. Highly recommended to fans. Followed by the famous CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO (1979). English title: LUPIN III: THE MYSTERY OF MAMO or THE SECRET OF MAMO.

**Rupan Sansei: Kariosutoro no Shiro** (1979, JAP) **C-102m. \*\*\*½** D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Eiko Masuyama, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Gorô Naya, Sumi Shimamoto, Tarô Ishida. Debut feature by Japanese animation god Miyazaki continues the stories around Lupin III, begun in a 1971-1972 animated TV series (for which Miyazaki directed some episodes), a live-action feature in 1974 and an animated feature in 1978, all based on a comic strip by Monkey Punch (though the main character has its foundation in Maurice LeBlanc's early 20<sup>th</sup> century *Arsène Lupin* stories). The protagonist is thief and trickster Lupin the Third, who in this story follows some counterfeit money to the state of Cagliostro, where he tries to prevent an evil count from marrying a princess, which would enable him to have access to the family treasure. Fabulous, tongue-in-cheek action adventure with animation that's not up to Miyazaki's later efforts and owes a lot to TV animation, but characters are a hoot and story and set-pieces are spectacular. Closer in spirit to some old Belmondo movies than James Bond, which some people have compared this to. Lupin's sidekick is so cool you never (except once) see his eyes behind the deeply drawn hat! A disappointment at the box-office in Japan, so it took Miyazaki 5 more years to release his next (and breakthrough) film KAZE NO TANI NO NAUSHIKA (NAUSICÄÄ). Followed by several more RUPAN SANSEI movies (in total there are dozens of short films and features bearing that title). English titles: THE CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO, and LUPIN THE THIRD: THE CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO.

**Rupan Sansei: Babiron no Ogon Densetsu** (1985, JAP) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Kiyoshi Suzuki (=Seijun Suzuki), Shigetsugu Yoshida. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Eiko Masuyama, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Gorô Naya. The first LUPIN feature since Hayao Miyazaki's CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO (1979) puts the title character and his sidekicks in search of the legendary gold of Babylon. A mafia boss has found some ancient inscribed plates, which, when combined, reveal the whereabouts of the treasure. Too bad that Lupin has some in his possession, too. Resorts to slapstick and whimsy too often, but finale is explosive,

including fantasy and science-fiction. For fans of the series. English titles: LUPIN III: THE LEGEND OF THE GOLD OF BABYLON.

**Rupan Sansei: Fûma Ichizoku no Inbô** (1987, JAP) **C-73m.** \*\*\* D: Masayuki Ozeku. Starring (the voices of) Toshio Furukawa, Banjô Ginga, Mami Koyama, Kaneto Shiozawa, Seizô Katô. Typically fast-paced, action-laden Lupin III series entry pits our hero against some villains who have kidnapped samurai Goemon's bride. They want to find a family treasure hidden somewhere in the mountains. Wild car chases, fierce sword fights and wisecracks, along with some intricate gimmicks and traps. Great fun. English title: LUPIN III: THE FUMA CONSPIRACY / PLOT OF THE FUMA CLAN.

**Rupan Sansei: Bai Bai Ribatii - Kiki Ippatsu!** (1989, JAP) **C-96m.** \*\*½ D: Osamu Dezaki. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya, Makio Inoue. Lesser LUPIN III movie, this was the first of the TV movies, of which there was a new one every year from then on. Lupin seems to have retired in Paris, when he is called to New York to help Jigen find a super (diamond) egg hidden somewhere in the Statue of Liberty. To be able to find it better, they carry off the statue into the Grand Canyon! A 123-year-old villain is also after the treasure, he wants an implanted computer virus in order to rule the world. Interesting relic from the pre-PC world, but plot is less rousing than in other entries. Also known as LUPIN III: GOODBYE LADY LIBERTY, and BYE BYE LIBERTY CRISIS.

**Rupan Sansei: Hemingway Paper no Nazo** (1990, JAP) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Osamu Dezaki. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya, Makio Inoue, Osamu Kobayashi, Fumihiko Tachiki. Fast-paced LUPIN III adventure, in which Goemon and Jigen find themselves on opposing sides in a civil war on a Mediterranean island, which also harbors a treasure described in a lost Hemingway manuscript. Less funny but well-directed, a stylish film despite its TV origin. English title: LUPIN III: THE HEMINGWAY PAPERS.

**Rupan Sansei: Moeyo Zantetsuken** (1994, JAP) **C-90m.** \*\*½ D: Masahara Okuwaki. Starring (the voices of) Yasuo Yamada, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya, Makio Inoue. Lupin is challenged by a villain to dive down to the wreck of the Titanic to retrieve an ancient dragon statue that is made of a metal stronger than Goemon's sword! With this alloy the madman wants to control the world. Some good action set-pieces and a flair for adventure, but plot is not as compelling as one would have it. Yamada's last vocal performance as Lupin. English title: LUPIN III: DRAGON OF DOOM.

**Rupan Sansei: Kutabare! Nastradamus** (1995, JAP) **C-98m.** \*\*\*½ D: Shunya Ito. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya, Makio Inoue. Entry in the Japanese cult series (begun in the early 70s) about Arsène Lupin's grandson, who is a master-thief and globetrotter. Here, he becomes involved in the kidnapping of a prominent politician's daughter by the evil Nostradamus sect. In an intricately hidden treasure chamber on top of the politician's hyper-skyscraper they suspect the whereabouts of Book Seven of Nostradamus. Astounding, tongue-in-cheek action adventure with sci-fi touches, lightning-paced and with incredible action set-pieces, this one cuts loose like good anime should. This is the way the old Bond movies were made! The sixth theatrical Lupin III movie (excluding the TV movies). From the director of the infamous SASORI movies. English title: LUPIN III: DIE, NOSTRADAMUS, or GO TO HELL NASTRADAMUS.

**Rupan Sansei: Dead or Alive** (1996, JAP) **C-95m.** \*\*\* D: Monkey Punch. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Makio Inoue. The only LUPIN THE THIRD movie directed by the manga character's creator himself, this was also the first theatrical animated feature. Lupin travels to a kingdom ruled by a despotic general who has killed the king and the prince, inventors of a nano-machine that protects a giant treasure.

The master thief and his sidekicks have to make a dozen narrow escapes in this one, there's even a bounty on Lupin's head this time! Fairly interesting story with sci-fi touches is made worthwhile by fine settings, explosive action set pieces, but it's nothing outstanding.

**Rupan Sansei: Towairaito Jemini no Himitsu** (1996, JAP) **C-92m**. \*\*\* D: Gisaburo Sugii. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Makio Inoue, Gorô Naya. One of the LUPIN movies made for television, this one tracks the hero and daredevil to Morocco in search of the second half of a diamond which may unlock the secret to a legendary treasure. Tongue-in-cheek adventure suffers a little from static TV-style animation, but movie is a lot of fun. There's even some nudity in this one! English title: LUPIN III: THE LEGEND OF TWILIGHT GEMINI.

**Rupan Sansei: Ikiteita Majutsushi** (2002, JAP) **C-53m**. n/r D: Mamoru Hamatsu. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Eiko Masuyama, Makio Inoue, Gorô Naya. Made-for-video entry in the long-running LUPIN series is a sequel to a 1972 TV episode featuring the magician Pycal, who is looking for some crystals in Eastern Greece. Lupin and his companions are fighting him. Confusing, rushed plot setup hampers things considerably, it still contains a few stylish bits, but slightly less action than usual. Maybe works better if you have seen the original TV episode. Be sure to stay tuned until after the closing credits. English title: LUPIN III: RETURN OF PYCAL.

**Rupan Sansei: Otakara Henkyaku Dai-Sakusen!!** (2003, JAP) **C-92m**. \*\*\* D: Jun Kawagoe. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya. Master thief Lupin is baffled when a friend asks him posthumously to return all the (art) treasures that he stole during his lifetime. After doing so Lupin will get the Trick Diamond, which is said to unveil a great treasure in Barcelona, Spain. Slightly uneven series entry, made for TV, tries to copy James Bond and has some cool action and nice European settings. Not up to some of the earlier entries, but still fun. The fifteenth LUPIN III TV movie. English title: LUPIN III: RETURN THE TREASURES.

**Rupan Sansei: Tenshi no Sakuryaku Takutikusu Yume no Kakeru Wa Koroshi no Kaori** (2005, JAP) **C-92m**. \*\*\*½ D: Shigeyuki Miya. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya. Spectacular, stylish LUPIN III adventure about a group of Amazon-like terrorists, who want a sphere of extra-terrestrial origin that Lupin has just stolen from the Area 51 site. Apart from their voluptuous looks, each of the four has a deadly speciality – can they match the wits of Lupin, Jigen, Goemon and Zenigata? Made for television, but extremely well-directed, gets better and better as it goes along. Quite violent, too. English title: LUPIN III: ANGEL TACTICS.

**Rupan Sansei: Kiri no Eryuushivu** (2007, JAP) **C-92m**. \*\* D: Toshihiko Masuda. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya. Lupin travels back in time some 500 years, where the time-travelling villain Mamo (from the 1978 feature) is putting them between the fronts of two warring factions. Sorely lacks the pace that made most other entries such a treat to watch. There's not even enough action. English title: LUPIN III: THE ELUSIVENESS OF THE FOG.

**Rupan Sansei: Sweet Lost Night – Maho no Lamp wa Akumu no Yokan** (2008, JAP) **C-91m**. \*\*\*½ D: Tetsurô Animo. Starring (the voices of) Kanichi Kurita, Kiyoshi Kobayashi, Makio Inoue, Eiko Masuyama, Gorô Naya. Disappointing entry in the LUPIN series about a magical lamp, which is sought after by a Nazi-like warmonger, because it can erase people's memories. Lupin becomes a victim, too, and cannot remember anything that happens between 7pm and 7am. Zenigata has complete amnesia. Complicated plot stands in the way of film's success. The action and the explosions are there, but it becomes a tiresome affair until the end.

**Rupture, La** (1970, FRA/ITA/BEL) **C-116m.** \*\*\*½ D: Claude Chabrol. Starring Stéphane Audran, Jean-Pierre Cassel, Michel Bouquet, Annie Cordy, Jean-Claude Drouot, Jean Carmet, Harry Kümel, Dominique Zardi, Michel Duchaussoy. After a violent attack by her psychotic husband, which puts their son into a hospital, Audran intends to get a divorce. She meets fierce resistance by her father-in-law, rich, influential Bouquet, who won't stop at making her appear a bad mother. However, the intrigue spun by him will bring tragic results. First-rate, fascinating drama about the amorality of the bourgeois society is in the league of Ingmar Bergman's films about failed (or failing) marriages. Writer-director Chabrol based his psychogram of a woman who comes undone on a novel by Charlotte Armstrong; thirty years later he filmed another one of her novels as *MERCI POUR LE CHOCOLAT* (2000). Bizarre, excellent score by Pierre Jansen, photographed by Jean Rabier. English title: *THE BREAK UP*.

**Rush** (2013, USA/GER/GBR) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Ron Howard. Starring Chris Hemsworth, Daniel Brühl, Olivia Wilde, Alexandra Maria Lara, Pierfrancesco Favino, David Calder. Outstanding drama based on the real-life rivalry between Formula One superstars Niki Lauda and James Hunt. In the mid-1970s the technically brilliant Austrian is set to defend his world championship title against the British party animal Hunt, when a terrible accident changes his priorities. Compelling, perfectly realised character study, excellent photography (by Anthony Dod Mantle) and production design, this is fascinating to watch even if you are not a racing fan. Brühl's performance is chilling, he even gets Lauda's accent right. A great film about two opposing philosophies and the triumph of the human mind over the body.

**Rush Hour** (1998, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brett Ratner. Starring Jackie Chan, Chris Tucker, Elizabeth Pena, Tom Wilkinson, Philip Baker Hall, Chris Penn. One of Jackie's typical latter-day action comedies: Here, he teams up with black cop Tucker to investigate the kidnapping of a little Chinese girl in Los Angeles. Some really funny scenes courtesy Tucker, but the film is not very logical and rather hollow. Passable entertainment, followed by two sequels.

**Rushmore** (1998, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\*** D: Wes Anderson. Starring Jason Schwartzman, Bill Murray, Olivia Williams, Seymour Cassel, Brian Cox, Mason Gamble, Luke Wilson, Owen Wilson. Off-beat, unusual comedy, really a satire on the American way of life in general and teen comedies in particular. Schwartzman plays a 15-year-old nerd, a notorious liar who likes to make decisions for other people, but is also one of the worst students at Rushmore High School. His life changes considerably when he makes the acquaintance of millionaire Murray and falls in love with teacher Williams. Lots of absurdist bits and pieces, meticulously played out. Deliberately short on realism, which lets the film down at points. Fine soundtrack rounds off this sleeper. Recommended to lovers of off-beat cinema.

**Rutles, The** (1978, GBR/USA) **C-74m. \*\*\*½** D: Gary Weis, Eric Idle. Starring Eric Idle, John Halsey, Ricky Fataar, Neil Innes, Michael Palin, George Harrison, Bianca Jagger, John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, Mick Jagger, Gilda Radner, Bill Murray, Gwen Taylor, Ron Wood, Lorne Michaels, Paul Simon, Gary Weis. Unique mockumentary pokes fun at the Beatles phenomenon by creating fictional band The Rutles and telling of their making and world-wide success. In the vein of most Monty Python comedies, this was conceived and written by regular Python Idle, who also appears as the host and the Paul McCartney lookalike Rutle. A must, also for fans of Saturday Night Live comedians, who all appear in minor roles. The songs – imitations of real Beatles songs – are superb and compensate for less funny parts of the film. Made for television. Also known as *ALL YOU NEED IS CASH*. Followed by *RUTLES 2: CAN'T BUY ME LUNCH* (2002).

**RV** (2006, USA/GBR/GER) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Barry Sonnenfeld. Starring Robin Williams, Cheryl Hines, Joanna Levesque, Josh Hutcherson, Jeff Daniels, Kristin Chenoweth, Hunter

Parrish, Chloe Sonnenfeld, Barry Sonnenfeld. Quite funny road movie comedy in the vein of Chevy Chase's NATIONAL LAMPOON movies. Williams is good as usual in a role he can play in his sleep, as a family father who takes his (problem) family on a trip to Colorado in the title vehicle. He wants to do some business along the way, which causes all kinds of problems. Simple script generates some laughs, and Daniels is fun as an RV veteran. Score by James Newton Howard.

**Sabata** (1969, ITA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Frank Kramer. Starring Lee van Cleef, William Berger, Franco Ressel. Acceptable spaghetti western, whose title character (expertly played by van Cleef) is after a stolen \$100,000. Occasional cleverness can't overcome poor plot that has few novelties to offer. Berger is pretty ridiculous as banjo-wielding gunslinger, the score is good, though. Film's full title is EHI AMICO ... C'E SABATA, HAI CHIUSO! Followed by a sequel.

**Sabor de la Venganza, El** (1963, SPA/ITA) **C-75m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent. Starring Richard Harrison, Robert Hundar, Fernando Sancho, Claudio Ungari, Luis Induni, Gloria Milland, Raf Baldassarre, Aldo Sambrell. Pre-Leone western leans towards the classic American western (of which Riz Ortolani provides a great score imitation). Three brothers, all grown up to be different, have not forgotten the murder of their father 20 years ago. Who will finally avenge it? Quite appealing despite being weakly plotted. Original version reportedly runs much longer. English titles: GUNFIGHT AT HIGH NOON, SONS OF VENGEANCE, and THREE RUTHLESS ONES.

**Säge des Todes, Die** (1981, GER/SPA) **C-85m. \*\*½** D: Jess Franco. Starring Olivia Pascal, Christoph Moosbrugger, Nadja Gerganoff, Alexander Waechter, Corinna Gillwald (=Drews), Otto Retzer, Jess Franco. Slasher movie set in a Spanish language school, where a killer is hacking up the students. Could it be the disfigured son of the comtessa? Or one of the lecherous teachers? One of trash director Franco's better films, this is solidly made, scored and acted. Also has some gory set-pieces, some obviously inspired by Mario Bava's BAY OF BLOOD and FIVE DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON. International title: BLOODY MOON.

**Sahara** (2005, USA/GBR/SPA/GER) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*½** D Breck Eisner. Starring Penélope Cruz, Matthew McConaughey, Steve Zahn, William H. Macy, Delroy Lindo. Adaptation of one of Clive Cussler's Dirk Pitt adventure novels is a near-miss: McConaughey plays the adventurer/hero Pitt, who ends up in Mali, Africa, chasing after a famed Civil War battleship. He teams up with WHO doctor Cruz, who's researching a mysterious virus up the river Niger. Never believable, but action-filled enough to make this fairly entertaining. Good production values. Only other Cussler novel filmed before was RAISE THE TITANIC (1980).

**Saibogujiman Kwenchana** (2006, KOR) **C-105m. 7** D: Park Chan-Wook. Starring Lim Su-jeong, Rain, Choi Hie-jin, Kim Byeong-ok. Terminally weird film about a young woman working in a factory (pop singer Rain), who is interred with psychological problems into an insane asylum, and this is indeed where she belongs. She believed herself to be a cyborg. She meets and falls in love with equally crazy Lim. Park, director of OLDBOY (2003), adds one demented idea after the other, but the result is totally pointless. Even the doctors are behaving abnormally here. English title: I'M A CYBORG BUT THAT'S OKAY.

**Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea, The** (1976, GBR) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lewis John Carlino. Starring Sarah Miles, Kris Kristofferson, Jonathan Kahn, Margo Cunningham, Earl Rhodes. In a British seaside town, widowed mother (Miles) of a teenage boy (Kahn) is about to fall in love again... with a sailor (Kristofferson). Film deals with the boy's complicated coming-to-terms with his mother's new feelings and his relationship with his friends, one of whom (Rhodes, remarkably cold) is influencing him in negative way. Deliberately paced

character study with fine performances and a moody score. Well-photographed by Douglas Slocombe. The director scripted from a novel by Yukio Mishima.

**Saimin** (1999, JAP) **C-109m**. **\*\*½** D: Masayuki Ochiai. Starring Goro Inagaki, Miho Kanno, Takeshi Masu, Ken Utsui, Yuki Watanabe. Derivative but quite effective horror thriller about mysterious suicides in contemporary Tokyo, which, as it turns out, have been caused by an elusive hypnotist, who planted a sound inside the victim's minds that causes them to go crazy. An inspector and a psychologist try to track down the person responsible. Interesting film steals too much from movies like SE7EN (1995) and the Japanese hit CURE/KYUA (1997), but has an exciting finale. Based on a novel by Keisuke Matsuoka. English titles: HYPNOSIS, and THE HYPNOTIST.

**Saint Ange** (2004, FRA/ROM) **C-99m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Pascal Laugier. Starring Virginie Ledoyen, Lou Doillon, Catriona MacColl, Dorina Lazar. Film debut of writer-director Laugier (MARTYRS, THE TALL MAN) is a moody, atmospheric chiller set in 1958 about a secretly pregnant servant girl (Ledoyen), who starts work in a dilapidated institution for orphans. Only an elderly maid and a disturbed girl are on the premises, which seem alive with the chatter and sighs of children who used to stay there. Slow, heavy-going at times, but Laugier's direction is excellent, as is the score (by Joseph LoDuca, who did the score for the EVIL DEAD trilogy). Watch it if you can cherish stylish directorial work. Coproduced by Christophe Gans. English title: HOUSE OF VOICES.

**Saisons du Plaisir, Les** (1987, FRA) **C-86m**. **\*\*½** D: Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Stéphane Audran, Jean-Pierre Bacri, Jean-Luc Bideau, Roland Blanche, Richard Bohringer, Fanny Cottençon, Darry Cowl, Eva Darlan, Denise Grey, Sylvie Joly, Bernadette Lafont, Jacqueline Maillon, Bernard Maniez, Jean Poiret, Charles Vanel. Typically eccentric Mocky comedy about family gathering at 100 year-old perfume magnate Vanel's château in the countryside. When he announces that he will finally retire, everybody speculates about inheriting the business. Fast-moving, frivolous farce has some truly bizarre characters but won't make anyone laugh unless they are fans of the director. Mocky (L'IBIS ROUGE, LA GRANDE FROUSSE) wrote the screenplay and coedited the picture.

**Salem's Lot** (1979, USA) **C-184m**. **\*\*\*** D: Tobe Hooper. Starring David Soul, James Mason, Lance Kerwin, Bonnie Bedelia, Lew Ayres, Julie Cobb, Elisha Cook Jr., George Dzundza, Ed Flanders, Geoffrey Lewis, Barney McFadden, Kenneth McMillan, Reggie Nalder. Novelist Soul returns to his hometown of Salem's Lot and finds out that antiques dealer Mason may be the reason for the disappearance of some children. What's more, Mason's house is reported to be haunted. Is he harboring a vampire? Adaptation of Stephen King's horror novel builds suspense and atmosphere neatly until hair-raising climax. Nalder's make-up is terrifying! Originally made for television, film was released to theaters in Europe in a 110m. version. This one suffers from a rushed story setup and rates **\*\*½**. Script was originally offered to George A. Romero; Hooper's choice of directing this TV-movie seems odd, especially after his uncompromising earlier efforts. Also known as BLOOD THIRST. In-name-only sequel: A RETURN TO SALEM'S LOT (1987), which was directed by Larry Cohen.

**Salinui Chueok** (2003, KOR) **C-132m**. **\*\*\*** D: Bong Joon-ho. Starring Song Kang-ho, Kim Sang-kyung, Kim Roe-ha. Remarkable Korean crime drama set in 1986 where the police in a rural community must investigate serial murders of young women. The detectives involved can't make much of the case and try to torture suspects into a confession. There's a bit more progress, however, when a colleague from Seoul arrives to help. Even if the plot seems like one long documentation of a botched criminal investigation, film is thoroughly engrossing, despite 2-hour+ length, and has acquired a cult following. A good, some would say great

example of modern Korean cinema. Director Bong followed this with the fantasy hit GWOEMUL (THE HOST). English title: MEMORIES OF MURDER.

**Salome** (1973, GBR) **18m. n/r** D: Clive Barker. Starring Anne Taylor, Graham Bickley, Clive Barker, Doug Bradley. First film work of horror novelist and filmmaker Barker is a highly aesthetic, even hypnotic short film, loosely based on the play by Oscar Wilde. Eerie score, great atmosphere, an outstanding achievement, made when Barker was only 21. A must for followers of the director and basically all horror buffs.

**Salon Kitty** (1976, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-133m. \*½** D: Tinto Brass. Starring Helmut Berger, Ingrid Thulin, Teresa Ann Savoy, John Steiner, John Ireland, Tina Aumont, John Bartha, Tom Felleghy. Easily the most polished of all 70s Nazi exploitation pictures, this drama falls short in terms of dramatics. During WW2, Nazi general Berger is ordered to install a brothel in order to spy on the clients there. Story is worthless, production values (design by Bond regular Ken Adam!) are the only thing worth seeing, but at 133m. running time, this is deadening. Lots of nudity (male and female alike), this was originally rated X. Not as perverted as Pasolini's SALO movie, though. Many shorter versions in existence.

**Samaria** (2004, KOR) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: Ki-duk Kim. Starring Min-jeong Seo (=Yeo-reum Han), Ji-min Kwak, Eol Lee, Kwon Hyun-Min. Another fascinating drama from the new Korean cinema and one of its wunderkinds about two school girls, who decide to prostitute themselves to finance a trip to Europe. One girl sells her body unflinchingly, her friend is her "manager". Then tragedy strikes... Deeply felt, subtle drama, a telling observation of modern youth, and later modern parenting. Not for everyone's taste but well-acted and hypnotic towards the end. Fine score makes use of a famous classical theme. Winner of the Silver Bear at the Berlin film festival. English title: SAMARITAN GIRL.

**Samâ Uôzu** (2009, JAP) **C-114m. \*\*\*** D: Mamoru Hosoda. Starring (the voices of) Ryûnosuke Kamiki, Nanami Sakuraba, Mitsuki Tanimura. From the director of THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME comes this beautifully scored and animated story of a math genius, who is asked by his crush to pose as her boyfriend and spend some days with her at her family's countryside home, where grandma will celebrate her 90th birthday. When he accidentally compromises the security of an online social network, he must use all his wits to set things right. Quite difficult to access, more fascinating than enjoyable, with excellent animation. International title: SUMMER WARS.

**Samourai, Le** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-96m. \*\*\*½** D: Jean-Pierre Melville. Starring Alain Delon, François Périer, Nathalie Delon, Cathy Rosier, Catherine Jourdan. Somber, pessimistic drama about professional killer Delon, whom the police are trying to get hold of. Delon's situation gets more and more hopeless, and he realizes that the lonely, isolated life he has led is like that of a bird in a cage. Masterful film initiated Delon's international career and has become a cult item. Deliberately paced but fascinating if tuned in to immaculate atmosphere. An exceptional achievement by one of the great French directors. Scripted by Melville, who adapted Goan McLeod's *The Ronin*. Photographed by Henri Decaë. Originally 103m.

**San Andreas** (2015, USA/CDN/AUS) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brad Peyton. Starring Dwayne Johnson, Carla Gugino, Alexandra Daddario, Ioan Gruffud, Archie Panjabi, Paul Giamatti, Kylie Minogue. Large-scale disaster thriller about rescue pilot Johnson, who returns to L.A. just in time for a destructive series of earthquakes that will might destroy the entire westcoast. Fine effects and bland plot hold a balance. It's never boring, but also never really exciting. Some over-the-top cliffhanger stunts will make you chuckle and say 'Yeah, right'. Stunning Daddario, at 28, believably plays a teen here.

**Sanguisuga Conduce la Danza, La** (1975, ITA) **C-89m. \*½** D: Alfred Rizzo. Starring Femi Benussi, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Krista Nell, Patrozia De Rossi (=Webley), Luciano Pigozzi.

Sex/horror trash about count Rossi-Stuart, who invited the actresses of a closed-down theater to his castle. There they fall prey to a killer, who decapitates them with an ancient dagger. Is it the family curse? Leaden pace, gratuitous nudity, amateurish direction. This attempt at a gothic chiller is laughably bad. Even the title (THE BLOODSUCKER LEADS THE DANCE in English) is misleading, there is no vampire in the movie. Also known as THE MARK OF SATAN, THE PASSION OF EVELYN.

**Sans Mobile Apparent** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Philippe Labro. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Dominique Sanda, Sacha Distel, Carla Gravina, Paul Crauchet, Laura Antonelli, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Stéphane Audran. Okay thriller about police detective Trintignant, who is baffled when seemingly unrelated people are killed by a sniper in Nice, on the French riviera. Time is running out because there is a new murder every day. Can he catch the killer? Plot is rather second-rate, but Trintignant is convincing and the Ennio Morricone score (albeit not among his best) keeps it afloat. Based on the Ed McBain novel *Ten Plus One*. English title: WITHOUT APPARENT MOTIVE.

**Sansone Contro i Pirati** (1963, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE** \*½ D: Amerigo Anton (=Tanio Boccia). Starring Kirk Morris, Margaret Lee, Daniele Vargas, Aldo Bufi Lando, Calisto Tanzi. Adequately produced but empty-headed, poorly plotted costumer about strongman Samson (Morris), who goes against evil pirate who has abducted Lee's friends and intends to auction them off as slaves. Hard to believe people once found this entertaining. English titles: SAMSON AGAINST THE PIRATES, SAMSON AND THE SEA BEAST.

**Santa Sangre** (1989, MEX/ITA) **C-123m.** \*\*\*½ D: Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Axel Jodorowsky, Blanca Guerra, Sabrina Dennison, Guy Stockwell, Thelma Tixou, Adan Jodorowsky, Faviola Elenka Tapia. Exceptional film produced by Claudio Argento marked Jodorowsky's return to the screen after a break of ten years. Young Fenix, the son of a brutal, ugly circus owner (Stockwell) and a religious fanatic (Guerra) lives through a traumatizing childhood, which climaxes in his mother pouring acid on his father's genitals in a rage of jealousy and his father cutting off her arms. The boy lives in an institution, refusing to speak, and when he coincidentally meets the woman responsible for his father's death, he escapes and becomes a murderer, intent on killing every woman he meets. When his mother reappears, he performs with her, lending her his arms. Absolutely fascinating, irresistible depiction of circus life and the Mexican netherworld, grotesque and graphic, but also incredibly poetic and heart-rending. One stabbing scene (obviously influenced by Dario Argento) is so shockingly realistic that it is missing from most prints. Brilliant score by Simon Boswell. Original story by Alejandro Jodorowsky, whose collaboration with Marcel Marceau in the 1950s clearly influenced his style. The pantomime 'The Creation of the World', appearing in this film, is based on one of Marceau's acts.

**Sa Som I Himmelen** (2004, SWE) **C-132m.** \*\*½ D: Kay Pollak. Starring Michael Nyqvist, Frida Hallgren, Lennart Jähkel, Ingela Olsson, Niklas Falk, Helen Sjöholm. Oscar-nominated drama about famous conductor, who is forced to interrupt his career for health reasons and returns to his old hometown in the Swedish countryside, where nobody remembers him. He tries to integrate in the small community and meets all kinds of problems. Not very cinematic, almost Dogma-like drama about a man finding himself. Direction, acting contribute to feeling of authenticity but there's no reason for this to be so long or undramatic. English title: AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, AS IN HEAVEN.

**Satan Bug, The** (1965, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: John Sturges. Starring George Maharis, Richard Basehart, Anne Francis, Dana Andrews, John Larkin, Richard Bull, Edward Asner, James Doohan. Thriller detailing nervous quest to retrieve title germ that has been stolen from government lab. The virus can wipe out whole cities – and there is no antidote! Never

hits bull's-eye due to muddled, uneven plot, but manages to create some suspense, and cinematography (by Robert Surtees) is something to see. Fine, first-rate score by Jerry Goldsmith. Based on an Alistair MacLean novel.

**Satanic Rites of Dracula, The** (1974, GBR) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Alan Gibson. Starring Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Michael Coles, William Franklyn, Freddie Jones, Joanna Lumley. Final installment in Hammer Films' DRACULA series is one of the weakest. In modern-day England, Professor Van Helsing (Cushing) must do battle yet again with unkillable count Dracula (Lee), who intends to wipe out civilization with a deadly virus. The stars do their best to keep this from sinking too fast. Film shows the typical 70s tendency of being explicitly violent. Also shown at 84m.

**Satan's Bed** (1965, USA) **B&W-72m. BOMB** D: Michael Findlay. Starring Yoko Ono, Val Avery, Roberta Findlay. Unwatchable mess of a movie about several drug-addicted youngsters and their lifestyle in contemporary New York. Mid-60s exploitation done with gritty black-and-white realism and no professionalism whatsoever. Of sole interest for the appearance of John Lennon's wife Yoko Ono, but there's so little dialogue, anyone could have played her role. Avoid. Reissued as SATAN'S HOT BED.

**Satan's School for Girls** (1973, USA) **C-74m. \*\*\*** D: David Lowell Rich. Starring Pamela Franklin, Kate Jackson, Lloyd Bochner, Jamie Smith-Jackson, Roy Thinnes, Jo Van Fleet, Cheryl Stoppelmoor (Ladd). Above-average, interesting chiller made for TV about Franklin, whose sister inexplicably committed suicide. She goes to her sister's school to investigate, enrolling as a student. She finds out there's something weird going on and more suicides are to follow. What mystery is the basement harboring? Quite well-directed mystery horror makes the most of its capacities. Might even have been an influence for SUSPIRIA (1977). Written by Arthur A. Ross (CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, THE GREAT RACE), coproduced by Aaron Spelling. Remade in 2000.

**Satan's Slave** (1976, GBR) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Norman J. Warren. Starring Michael Gough, Candace Glendenning, Martin Potter, Barbara Kellerman, Michael Grace, James Bree, Celia Hewitt. During a visit to the country house of her uncle, young Glendenning gets caught in a sect of devil worshippers, who want to resurrect a demon. Solidly filmed horror trash, with some nudity, sadistic violence and gore. Of interest to horror fans only. Others may find it repellent.

**Saturn 3** (1980, USA) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Stanley Donen. Starring Kirk Douglas, Farrah Fawcett, Harvey Keitel. Okay sci-fi thriller set in the orbit of the planet Saturn, where couple Douglas and Fawcett and joined by cold new worker Keitel, who builds a robot and soon tries to replace the 'inefficient' Douglas. Not completely convincing, although performances are good and robotics might even have influenced THE TERMINATOR (1984). Sci-fi fans should give this a look. Douglas is surprisingly virile at 63, Fawcett looks ravishing.

**Saut de l'Ange, Le** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Yves Boisset. Starring Jean Yanne, Senta Berger, Sterling Hayden, Gordon Mitchell, Raymond Pellegrin. Trivial but watchable actioner about the bloody war between two rivalling gangster families. Extremely violent, only for rabid fans of European B-movies. Based on a novel by Bernard-Paul Lallier. English title: COBRA.

**Savage Bees, The** (1976, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Bruce Geller. Starring Ben Johnson, Michael Parks, Paul Hecht, Gretchen Corbett, Horst Buchholz, James Best. THE BIRDS (1963) meets JAWS (1975) in this made-for-TV horror. African killer bees are invading New Orleans at Mardi Gras, but nobody wants to listen to sheriff Johnson's warnings. Maybe expert Buchholz can help? Standard, earnest thriller offers no novelties, but is much better than

similarly themed disaster thriller THE SWARM (1978). Followed by TV-movie TERROR OUT OF THE SKY (1978).

**Savage Harvest** (1981, USA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Robert E. Collins. Starring Tom Skerritt, Michelle Phillips, Shawn Stevens, Anne-Marie Martin, Derek Partridge. In Kenya, Africa, local tribesmen are fearing attacks by vicious lions, and indeed the wildcats besiege an entire family at their villa. Okay, inauspicious thriller is never as rousing as it would like to be. Skerritt's earnest performance helps. Photographed by Ronnie Taylor (OPERA).

**Savage Weekend** (1979, USA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: David Paulsen. Starring Christopher Allport, James (Jim) Doerr, Marilyn Hamlin, Caitlin O'Heaney. In this horror thriller a group of weekenders find themselves under attack by a masked maniac. Not-bad slasher movie moves at a slow pace but is well-directed and shot. Score is more elaborate than you'd expect. Slasher movie fans should give this one a look, it's not bad despite familiar trappings and sluggish plotting. Also known as THE KILLER BEHIND THE MASK (film's working title) and THE UPSTATE MURDERS.

**Saving Private Ryan** (1998, USA) **C-170m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Tom Hanks, Tom Sizemore, Edward Burns, Barry Pepper, Adam Goldberg, Vin Diesel, Giovanni Ribisi, Jeremy Davies, Matt Damon, Ted Danson, Paul Giamatti, Dennis Farina. WW2, Steven Spielberg-style: A group of soldiers led by Hanks is ordered to find and bring back a private whose three brothers have died on the battlefields. Their journey and desperate search turns into a nightmare as some of the soldiers lose their life themselves. Bravura action scenes, top direction and effects (especially in the final battle) do much to camouflage pathetic Americana. Only occasionally manages to criticise the lack of humanity in war (although the film *does* show it up constantly). In structure not dissimilar to George Romero's legendary DAWN OF THE DEAD (the effects do put most horror films to shame). Allegedly based on a true story. Oscar-winner for Best Direction, Cinematography, Editing, Sound and Effects. Score by John Williams.

**Savior** (1998, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Predrag Antonijevic. Starring Dennis Quaid, Nastassja Kinski, Catlin Foster, Stellan Skarsgård, John MacLaren, Jean-Marc Barr. After having lost his wife and only child in an attack by terrorist bombers and killed some religious fundamentalists in an act of revenge, Quaid enlists in the Foreign Legion, fighting in the Yugoslav war in 1993. He encounters a pregnant young woman, whom he saves from certain death. He feels responsible for her and the child, so he protects them, trying to get them through to Zagreb. Nicely photographed war film, hampered by listless direction and a lack of character development. Maybe producer Oliver Stone should have directed as well.

**Saviour of the Soul** (1992, HGK) **C-93m.** \*\*½ D: Corey Yuen, Jeffrey Lau, David Lai. Starring Andy Lau, Anita Mui, Gloria Yip. Immortal warrior Silver Fox is after beautiful Paradisa, who has caused his master to die, but she's protected by Mercury, who's looking after Paradisa's little sister. Quite violent, often incoherent fantasy action comedy has some eye-popping fight scenes to recommend it but little more.

**Saw** (2004, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*\*½ D: James Wan. Starring Leigh Whannell, Cary Elwes, Danny Glover, Ken Leung, Dina Meyer, Mike Butters, Paul Gutrecht, Michael Emerson, Shawnee Scott, Monica Potter. Riveting horror thriller that maintains a fever pitch from start to finish. Whannell and Elwes, two strangers, wake up in a shabby warehouse bathroom, obviously as prisoners of some deranged psychopath. Cops Glover and Leung are hot on his trail... can they or indeed anyone figure out which sick game the killer is playing? Intense, twist-laden story operates on several time levels and is stylishly directed. Leaves you hardly any time to breathe and keeps adding more and more (also gore) to its cocktail of suspense and violence. Plot is not completely airtight, but at this pace, who cares? A surefire cult hit,

written by star Whannell (whose acting is decidedly inferior to his writing), from a story by himself and the director. References ranging from Argento (PROFONDO ROSSO, OPERA – love the stethoscope scene) to Fincher (SE7EN) make it all the more fun for buffs. Followed by SAW II (2005).

**Saw II** (2005, USA) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Donnie Wahlberg, Tobin Bell, Shawnee Smith, Franky G, Erik Knudsen, Glenn Plummer, Dina Meyer. Fast-paced, gimmicky sequel to the 2004 horror hit puts cop Wahlberg face to face with the jigsaw killer, who has locked several people into a booby trapped house, including Wahlberg's son. A gas will kill them in two hours, unless they find an antidote, hidden somewhere in the derelict building. A bit too sadistic and unpleasant at times, but generally enjoyable, if you like this kind of stuff. Written by the director and Leigh Whannell, who also executive produced, along with the original SAW director James Wan. Followed by SAW III (2006).

**Saw III** (2006, USA) **C-107m**. \*\*½ D: Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Tobin Bell, Shawnee Smith, Angus Macfadyen, Bahar Soomekh, Donnie Wahlberg, Dina Meyer, Leigh Whannell. Third SAW movie has the dying Jigsaw killer and his assistant kidnap a doctor, who must keep him alive unless she will die with him because the collar around her neck is tied to his life functions. Meanwhile, a man who's been mourning the death of his son by a hit-and-run driver is trying to escape a labyrinth devised by the madman. Story is still gripping and includes some gross-out gore and death scenes, but script is slightly uneven and most of this is déjà vu. Fans won't mind.

**Saw IV** (2007, USA) **C-96m**. \*\*½ D: Darren Lynn Bousman. Starring Tobin Bell, Costas Mandylor, Scott Patterson, Betsy Russell, Lyriq Bent, Donnie Wahlberg, Angus Macfadyen, Shawnee Smith, Dina Meyer. Horror franchise is still going strong, with this entry partly a prequel to the other films, which explains – in flashback – how Jigsaw (Bell) became the killer he was. Somebody is playing another game of torture, and this time, detective Mathews' (Wahlberg's) life is at stake. Twisted story, explicitly gory effects sure to make you cringe, film relies heavily on the previous parts, so watch this right after SAW III if possible.

**Saw V** (2008, USA/CDN) **C-95m**. \*\*½ D: David Hackl. Starring Tobin Bell, Costas Mandylor, Scott Patterson, Betsy Russell, Julie Benz, Meagan Good, Mark Rolston. No end in sight to horror franchise, and to be honest, there's no need. Fifth SAW movie explains how agent Hoffman (Mandylor) was corrupted by Jigsaw Bell and how agent Strahm (Patterson) manages to narrowly escape one of his torture devices. Of course, there's a group of related people, who have to escape booby-trapped rooms. Still fascinating, with a few gross-out scenes, and a WTF-ending. Followed by SAW VI (2009).

**Saw VI** (2009, USA/CDN/GBR/AUS) **C-91m**. \*\* D: Kevin Greutert. Starring Tobin Bell, Costas Mandylor, Mark Rolston, Betsy Russell, Shawnee Smith, Peter Outerbridge, Athena Karkanis, Samantha Lemole, Tanedra Howard. Weakest of the SAW films, this one follows agent Hoffman, who intends to complete the late Jigsaw's last plan involving an insurance broker. Jigsaw's wife is an accomplice, although the other policemen are hot on Hoffman's trail. Best part is by-now trademark twist finale, but rest of the film is rather weakly plotted, if by no means bad. For SAW fans.

**Saw 3D** (2010, USA/CDN) **C-90m**. \*\*\* D: Kevin Greutert. Starring Tobin Bell, Costas Mandylor, Betsy Russell, Cary Elwes, Sean Patrick Flanery. The series makes an unexpected critical comeback with this exciting, fast-paced entry. Detective Hoffman (as the Jigsaw successor) is now targeting Jigsaw's widow, all the while devising a series of traps for someone who pretends to be a Jigsaw survivor. Yucky as ever, but you just have to keep watching. There's no reasons why this series - the best horror series of the decade - should

stop any time soon. Still, this was officially the last entry. James Wan and Leigh Whannell executive produced this one as well.

**Sawney: Flesh of Man** (2012, GBR) **C-90m**. \*\* D: Rick Wood. Starring Elizabeth Brown, Samuel Feeney, David Hayman, William Houston. Somewhere in the Scottish highlands, a mad butcher is holding high the family tradition. Sawney Bean used to be an infamous cannibal in the 15th century, now his successors are still active, picking up young women at random with their fake black taxi and delivering them to their hideout in the mountains. A journalist is investigating. Story more belongs to 70s B-movies (Wes Craven's HILLS HAVE EYES was reportedly influenced by the real Sawney), it's gruesome but not convincing and too talky. Written by the director's father. Aka LORD OF DARKNESS.

**Sbirro, la Tua Legge è Lenta... la Mia... No!** (1979, ITA) **C-103m**. \*½ D: Stelvio Massi. Starring Maurizio Merli, Mario Merola, Carmen Scarpitta, Francisco Rabal, Nando Marineo. Italian police actioner (poliziottesco), made at the end of this subgenre's popularity. Merli plays a cop who returns to Naples and must fight the local mafia. Some violent shoot-outs, but plot is lame. At least the score is by Stelvio Cipriani. Title translates as YOUR LAW IS SLOW, BUT MINE ISN'T!

**Scandal** (1989, GBR) **C-114m**. \*\*\* D: Michael Caton-Jones. Starring John Hurt, Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, Bridget Fonda, Ian McKellen, Leslie Phillips, Britt Ekland, Daniel Massey, Roland Gift, Jeroën Krabbé. The Profumo Scandal of the early 1960s that eventually led to the downfall of the government is vividly brought to the screen. Whalley-Kilmer portrays an 18 year-old showgirl, who becomes the mistress of the British Defense Minister John Profumo. Hurt, as the man who introduces her to the political elite of the country, is excellent as usual. A well-acted, interesting drama with a good score by Carl Davis. Director Caton-Jones' (THIS BOY'S LIFE, THE JACKAL) first film. R-rated U.S. version runs 106m.

**Scanner Darkly, A** (2006, USA) **C-100m**. \*½ D: Richard Linklater. Starring Keanu Reeves, Winona Ryder, Robert Downey Jr., Woody Harrelson, Rory Cochrane, David Cronenberg. Adaptation of a 1977 Philip K. Dick novel set in the near future, where main character Reeves is a cop of sorts, a spy, whose looks change every nano-second. He goes undercover to nail drug dealer Downey, but soon finds himself 'trapped' in their world, especially when he takes some of their valued Substance D. Filmed with real actors, then animated, which lends the film some style, but also keeps this rather artificial. The plot is uneven. Contains odd humorous touches, as well as identity-crisis elements a la BLADE RUNNER (1982). A misfire, much too immersed in its own weirdness. Screenplay by director Linklater.

**Scanners** (1981, CDN) **C-103m**. \*\*\* D: David Cronenberg. Starring Jennifer O'Neill, Stephen Lack, Patrick McGoohan, Lawrence Dane, Charles Shamata, Michael Ironside. Cronenberg's shocker about people who can read minds - and cause heads to explode. Well-scripted (by the director) and especially well-scored (by Howard Shore), film rates among the director's best films and is only marred by the protagonist's indifferent performance. The special effects are yucky but good. Followed by two sequels in 1991 and 1992, and a new SCANNER COP movie series in 1994.

**Scarab** (1982, USA/SPA) **C-94m**. \*½ D: Steven-Charles Jaffe. Starring Rip Torn, Robert Ginty, Cristina Sánchez Pascual, Isabel García Lorca, Donald Pickering. Tedious horror film about ancient Egyptian scarab cult that is reinstated by Torn and causes all kinds of violence. Anti-hero Ginty plays a reporter who investigates mysterious murders. Not completely without interest but causes boredom without relief. Director Jaffe later produced films like NEAR DARK (1987) or STRANGE DAYS (1995); he also cowrote MOTEL HELL (1980).

**Scared to Death** (1981, USA) **C-91m**. \*\* D: William Malone. Starring John Stinson, Diana Davidson, Jonathan David Moses, Tony Jannotta, Walker Edmister, Pamela Bowman,

William Malone. Straight horror film about mutated monster, which roams the sewers and kills young women. Ex-cop Stinson tackles the case. No surprises here, but okay for what it is, has a decent score. Followed by a sequel, SYNGENOR (1990). Also known as THE ABERDEEN EXPERIMENT.

**Scarlet Diva** (2000, ITA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Asia Argento. Starring Asia Argento, Jean Shepard, Herbert Fritsch, Vera Gemma, Daria Nicolodi, David Brandon. Intense self-portrait of actress Asia Argento (daughter of Dario), who plays a busy, successful actress with a childhood trauma, who's also essentially lonely. She travels around the world mainly to get her script produced, entitled *Scarlet Diva*. Then she learns that she is pregnant from an Australian rock singer. Occasionally pretentious but effective psycho drama with a great Argento performance – or is it a performance at all? Difficult to watch at times, but Argento has fashioned a true cult film. Might not work as well for non-fans, though. Dedicated to Anna Ceroli, Asia's half-sister, who died in an accident in 1994. Incidentally, Asia gave birth to a daughter called Anna in June 2001, a year after this film was first released. Brandon reprises his role from the 1986 *DELIRIA* (*STAGEFRIGHT / AQUARIUS*). Produced by Claudio and Dario Argento.

**Scars of Dracula** (1970, GBR) **C-95m. \*\*** D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring Christopher Lee, Dennis Waterman, Jenny Hanley, Patrick Houghton, Michael Ripper, Michael Gwynn. Sixth *DRACULA* movie by Hammer Films has the count resurrected by the blood of a bat. A young couple go in search of a missing brother and soon find themselves in hell's kitchen (or, the vampire's castle). Tired continuation of the series has lost most of its edge over the years. Only Lee is convincing. Followed by *DRACULA A.D.* 1972, which had old Drac move to contemporary London.

**Scary Movie** (2000, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Keenen Ivory Wayans. Starring Jon Abrahams, Rick Ducommun, Shannon Elizabeth, Carmen Electra, Anna Faris, Keenen Ivory Wayans. Spoof of the *SCREAM*-films (and other horror movies that followed) is a so-so sequence of gags, nothing more. Faris is good as Neve Campbell-like teenager who might be stalked by a masked murderer. Maybe someone should have told the Wayans brothers that *SCREAM* was a parody itself. Watchable.

**Scavenger Hunt** (1979, USA) **C-116m. \*\*** D: Michael Schultz. Starring Richard Benjamin, James Coco, Scatman Crothers, Ruth Gordon, Cloris Leachman, Cleavon Little, Roddy McDowall, Robert Morley, Richard Mulligan, Tony Randall, Dirk Benedict, Meat Loaf, Vincent Price, Avery Schreiber, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Attempt to create a big comedy along the lines of *IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD\$* (1963) is an interesting failure. Dying Price will leave his fortune to the one who will collect the most points in insane scavenger hunt. Sounds irresistible, but direction is totally incompetent, and the laughs are not there all the time. Too bad. Unavailable to the home video market for many years.

**Scherzo Diabolico** (2015, MEX/USA) **C-91m. \*\*\*½** D: Adrián García Bogliano. Starring Francisco Barreiro, Daniela Soto Vell, Jorge Molina, Milena Pezzi. Pitch-black thriller drama about ambitious but unsuccessful office worker Barreiro, who one day decides to kidnap a teenage girl to live out his fantasies of domination. And then all of a sudden his life takes a fortunate turn... or does it? Morality tale about a morally corrupt man goes overboard in the finale. Judge for yourself. Set to classical piano music, hence *scherzo*, which can also mean 'joke'.

**Schindler's List** (1993, USA) **C/B&W-197m. \*\*\*½** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, Ralph Fiennes, Caroline Goodall, Jonathan Sagall, Embeth Davidtz. "Whoever saves one life, saves the world entire." Emotionally exhausting war drama about real-life industrialist Oskar Schindler (Neeson), who during World War Two managed to save the

lives of hundreds of Jews by employing them in his factory. Film details his relationship with the Nazis (especially German commander Göth, played by Fiennes) and his growing obsession with saving lives – while risking his own fortune and safety. Set against the backdrop of the brutal killing of thousands of Jews in Krakow, this is director Spielberg's personal working up of the Holocaust and a great film for most of the way, with excellent performances by Neeson and Kingsley (as Neeson's Jewish assistant and conscience). Let down occasionally by narrative that seems to be infected by the war-time chaos and confusion that Spielberg so brilliantly, harrowingly depicts. Perfect black-and-white cinematography by Janusz Kaminski, haunting, unforgettable score by John Williams. Filmed on location in Poland, where most of this film is set. Script by Steve Zaillian, based on the novel by Thomas Keneally. Winner of seven Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Director (Spielberg's first), Best Score and Best Cinematography.

**Schizo** (1976, GBR) **C-109m**. \*\* D: Pete Walker. Starring Lynn Fredericks, John Leyton, Stephanie Beacham, John Fraser, Jack Watson. Producer-director Walker is at it again, this time his exploitation story centers around figure skater Fredericks, who is targeted and stalked by a (schizophrenic?) maniac, but nobody believes her. Did she know him when she was a child? Pretty much the same unpleasant bore that Walker gave us in *FRIGHTMARE* or *HOUSE OF WHIPCORD*, and overlong, to boot. Finale is interesting, though, so are some of the gore scenes. Also known as *AMOK*, and *BLOOD OF THE UNDEAD*.

**Schlangengrube und das Pendel, Die** (1967, GER) **C-83m**. \*\* D: Harald Reinl. Starring Christopher Lee, Lex Barker, Karin Dor, Carl Lange, Vladimir Medar. Barker and Dor are invited to a castle where Lee is waiting to be revenged on them. Not really bad and quite atmospheric but tacky and unconvincing. Based on E. A. Poe's *Pit and the Pendulum*. U.S. titles: *THE TORTURE CHAMBER OF DR. SADISM*, *THE BLOOD DEMON*, and *CASTLE OF THE WALKING DEAD*.

**Schneider Vs. Bax** (2015, NED) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Alex van Warmerdam. Starring Tom Dewispelaere, Alex van Warmerdam, Maria Kraakman, Gene Bervoets, Annet Malherbe, Pierre Bokma. Amusing black comedy about two hitmen, who are unknowingly pitted against each other. On Schneider's birthday, the family father reluctantly agrees to take the job of killing Bax, who is relaxing in a holiday home by a lake surrounded by reeds. Complicating matters are some supporting characters like Bax's father and his daughter, as well as a prostitute, who Schneider has to take along. A unique satire in a great setting, from the director of *BORGMAN* (2013).

**Schock** (1977, ITA) **C-92m**. \*½ D: Mario Bava. Starring Daria Nicolodi, John Steiner, David Colin Jr., Ivan Rassimov, Nicola Salerno. Maestro Mario Bava's final theatrical film unfortunately does not compare with his earlier shockers. After the death of her husband, Nicolodi moves back into their house with her new lover Steiner. When her son (Colin Jr.) starts behaving strangely, her world is slowly shattered by the ghosts of the past. Poorly scripted by Mario's son Lamberto (and three others), film lacks suspense, excitement and a fast pace. Direction and camerawork are stylish as usual, but otherwise this is utterly ordinary. Not the intended Freudian psycho thriller, as perhaps the title might suggest. Score by Goblin (as *Libra*). Theme reworked by Lamberto later in *FINO ALLA MORTE*. Alternative titles: *SHOCK*, and *BEYOND THE DOOR II* (this is actually a sequel to the *EXORCIST*-clone *CHI SEI?*, released in the U.S. as *BEYOND THE DOOR*).

**Schöne Ende dieser Welt, Das** (1984, GER) **C-100m**. \*\* D: Rainer Erler. Starring Robert Atzorn, Claire Oberman, Götz George, Judy Winter, Werner Kreindl. Atzorn plays an industrial chemist working for a company producing dangerous, toxic fertilizers. When he is sent to Australia to buy land for building a new factory, he starts having doubts about the

morality of his undertaking, especially when he is confronted with environmental activist George. Script by director Erler is ambitious as usual, but budgetary restrictions hamper this TV production considerably. It's just not convincing and never exciting. Some prints are titled FLASHBACK.

**School of Rock, The** (2003, USA) **C-109m.** \*\*\*½ D: Richard Linklater. Starring Jack Black, Joan Cusack, Mike White, Adam Pascal, Robert Tsai, Frank Whaley. Black (of HIGH FIDELITY fame) is a 30-something slacker who dreams of making it as a rock star but sees his chances crushed when he is kicked out of his own band. Then he takes up a job as a teacher (posing as his roommate White) at an elite school, where the children just happen to be fine musicians (in the classical sense). Black's performance is sensational, but the contrivances in the by-the-numbers script are often hard to take. Written by costar White.

**Schramm** (1993, GER) **C-65m.** ½ D: Jörg Buttgereit. Starring Florian Koerner, Monika M. Drastic horror film from Berlin sub-culture icon Jörg Buttgereit, whose films have been banned by German authorities, but surface now and then in video stores specializing on horror and trash. This nauseating 1993 release is about sexually disturbed serial killer Schramm (Koerner) and his unsuspecting roommate, a prostitute (Monika M.). Graphic mutilations, lots of gore, but in such a nihilistic presentation that it makes the film almost unwatchable. At least the filmmakers *intended* the film to have a deeper meaning. Some surreal scenes (quite well-edited) and a disquieting score add to the film's oppressive gruesomeness.

**Schwarze Abt, Der** (1963, FRA/GER) **C-90m.** SCOPE \*\* D: F. J. Gottlieb. Starring Joachim Fuchsberger, Charles Regnier, Dieter Borsche, Grit Boettcher, Klaus Kinski, Eddi Arent. 'The Black Abbot' (i.e. the English title of the movie) is stalking treasure hunters at a British castle. Fuchsberger, who is not playing the inspector this time, may have something to do with it. In this Edgar Wallace-inspired thriller the focus is on the (trivial) plot, there's hardly any suspense. Arent's funny antics save the film. Widescreen photography helps, too. English title: THE BLACK ABBOT.

**Schwarze Schaf, Das** (1960, GER) **95m.** \*\*\*½ D: Helmuth Ashley. Starring Heinz Rühmann, Siegfried Lowitz, Lina Carstens, Karl Schönböck, Maria Sebaldt. Famed German star actor Rühmann plays G.K. Chesterton's *Father Brown*, a priest with a particular interest in murder cases. When he solves one in his hometown, the bishop sends him away onto a small island which is said to be peaceful and quiet. When a murder happens nonetheless Father Brown is out to investigate. Crime comedy suffers from self-conscious humor but story develops into a compact whodunit, which makes the film worth watching. Followed by ER KANN'S NICHT LASSEN in 1962.

**Schweigende Stern, Der** (1960, GDR/POL) **C-94m.** SCOPE \*\* D: Kurt Maetzig. Starring Yoko Tani, Oldrich Lukes, Ignacy Machowski, Julius Ongewe. Based on Stanislaw Lem's novel *Astronauti*, this East German-Polish coproduction fails to make much of its potentially intriguing premise. After a strange piece of rock is explained to be from an extra-terrestrial spaceship that exploded on earth several decades ago, a handful of renowned scientists make the voyage to Venus, the planet the vessel is thought to have come from. They find its surface devastated and deserted. Has there ever existed life on the planet? Apart from the dated effects, film is sometimes incoherent and never terribly involving or entertaining. Worth a look for science-fiction buffs, however. English title: FIRST SPACESHIP ON VENUS. Released abroad at 78m.

**Scoop** (2006, GBR/USA) **C-96m.** \*\*\* D: Woody Allen. Starring Scarlett Johansson, Hugh Jackman, Woody Allen, Ian McShane, Charles Dance. Johansson is a young journalist just starting out in the business, who is contacted by a famous reporter just after he died(!). He

tells her that he knows who is the Tarot serial killer of late, thus giving her the opportunity for the ultimate scoop. Together with stage magician Allen, she tries to make the acquaintance of the purported killer (Jackman). Quite watchable mix of murder mystery and romantic comedy, this has some very funny dialogue. One of Allen's typical whimsical comedies; one wonders why he doesn't aim higher anymore, however.

**Scorched** (2003, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Gavin Grazer. Starring Alicia Silverstone, Rachael Leigh Cook, Woody Harrelson, John Cleese, Paulo Costanzo, David Krumholtz, Joshua Leonard, Ivan Sergei, Marcus Thomas, Jeffrey Tambor, Max Wein, Gavin Grazer. Amusing (if underdeveloped) crime comedy with an interesting cast: Silverstone, Harrelson and Costanzo all work for the same bank in the same village, and they are all planning (independently so!) to steal some money for the craziest reasons. Almost good. Cleese is fun to watch as an eccentric millionaire with a dog and sushi fetish.

**Scorpion King, The** (2002, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Chuck Russell. Starring The Rock (=Dwayne Johnson), Steven Brand, Michael Clarke Duncan, Kelly Hu, Bernard Hill. Lively, quite entertaining B-movie is a follow-up to the MUMMY movies. Pro wrestler The Rock plays the hunky title character who must kill evil ruler Brand in ancient Egypt. Blah script is mostly offset by some nice production design, non-stop action. Quite successful at the box office.

**Scorpion Thunderbolt** (1985, HGK) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Godfrey Ho. Starring Richard Harrison, Bernard Tsui, Juliet Chan, Nancy Lim. Truly odd obscurity about a journalist, who's also a snake monster, controlled by an evil witch. Some effective scenes, quite well-made, but hampered by inserted (and amateurishly filmed) scenes featuring Richard Harrison, an American in Hong Kong, who owns a ring the witch needs. A curio for horror buffs, others should stay away. Not to be confused with director Ho's COIL OF THE SNAKE / THE SNAKE STRIKES BACK.

**Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse** (2015, USA) **C-93m.** \*\*½ D: Christopher Landon. Starring Tye Sheridan, Logan Miller, Joey Morgan, Sarah Dumont, David Koechner, Halston Sage, Cloris Leachman. Surprisingly watchable and entertaining horror comedy about a small group of scouts, who stumble into a zombie apocalypse and must try to survive with their scout skills. Also known as SCOUTS VS. ZOMBIES.

**Scott Pilgrim vs. The World** (2010, USA/GBR/CDN) **C-112m.** \*\*\*½ D: Edgar Wright. Starring Michael Cera, Alison Pill, Mark Webber, Johnny Simmons, Ellen Wong, Kieran Culkin, Brie Larson, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Brandon Routh, Jason Schwartzman. Astounding fantasy romance, creatively written and directed by the maker of SHAUN OF THE DEAD (2004) and HOT FUZZ (2007). Title character Cera (priceless) is an aspiring rock musician still suffering from being dumped by his rock star ex-girlfriend a year ago. He is made fun of because of his new Chinese high-school girlfriend and just then meets the girl of his dreams, newcomer Winstead. To complicate matters, to be allowed to date her he must defeat her seven (evil!) ex-lovers, comic-book-style - whack! kapow! Absolutely fresh and original take on teen romances, an instant cult movie and a must-see.

**Scream** (1981, USA) **C-82m. BOMB** D: Byron Quisenberry. Starring Pepper Martin, Hank Worden, Ethan Wayne, Ann Bronston. Bottom-of-the-barrel slasher movie about a group of people who spend the night in a ghost town and are killed one by one. Cheap, amateurish, completely unappealing. Stay away.

**Scream** (1996, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Wes Craven. Starring Neve Campbell, Skeet Ulrich, Drew Barrymore, Rose McGowan, Courteney Cox, David Arquette, Jamie Kennedy, Liev Schreiber, Linda Blair. A year after Campbell's mother was found brutally murdered, the same murderer seems to go on another killing spree and anyone - including Campbell's

friends - could be the masked maniac. Tense, nerve-wrecking horror thriller isn't really more than typical teenie slasher fare but tremendously scary at that. Only let down by an exaggerated (and unsatisfactory) conclusion. Director Wes Craven has a funny cameo as Freddy Kruger. Followed by two sequels.

**Scream 2** (1997, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Wes Craven. Starring Neve Campbell, David Arquette, Courteney Cox, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Liev Schreiber, Jamie Kennedy, Laurie Metcalf, Jada Pinkett, David Warner, Lewis Arquette, Tori Spelling. Heather Graham, Kevin Williamson. Sequel to the horror hit SCREAM is even better thanks to complicated, exciting plot about now-college student Campbell, who is terrified when a new murder series similar to the first one starts. Is it an imitation killer? Film (again scripted by Kevin Williamson) applies horror (non-)logic but plays cleverly with its premise and adds hair-raising excitement. Perhaps not as scary and original as the first but sweat-inducing nevertheless. A bulls-eye horror thriller, the best since CANDYMAN.

**Scream 3** (2000, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring David Arquette, Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox Arquette, Patrick Dempsey, Scott Foley, Lance Henriksen, Matt Keeslar, Jenny McCarthy, Emily Mortimer, Parker Posey, Deon Richmond, Patrick Warburton, Liev Schreiber, Jamie Kennedy, Heather Matarazzo, Roger Corman. The last part of the popular horror trilogy is good, dirty fun in the best SCREAM-tradition. Campbell is on the run again from the masked serial killer. This time he seems to be following the script to STAB 3, a movie based on the original murders, Forget about any logic, just sit back and enjoy. Be warned, however: Those who haven't seen the first and second part might not as eagerly embrace this movie as those who have. Certainly the weakest part of the trilogy, but good fun.

**Scream 4** (2010, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Wes Craven. Starring Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox, David Arquette, Anna Paquin, Kristen Bell, Hayden Panettiere, Emma Roberts. Ten years after the original films, Wes Craven returns to his successful franchise and puts his hero back into jeopardy, as Woodsboro is rocked by another series of slasher murders. Most of the characters return here, but apart from the usual film buff jokes there's little to keep your attention. Barely any surprises, even the suspense seems blunt. It makes this sequel seem superfluous. And the acting is mediocre at best. Also known as SCREAM 4.

**Scream... and Die!** (1973, GBR) **C-98m. \*\* D:** Joseph (=José Ramón) Larraz. Starring Andrea Allan, Karl Lanchbury, Maggie Walker, Peter Forbes-Robertson, Judy Matheson. Strange sex-and-crime concoction about fashion model Allan, who stumbles into strange mansion with her boyfriend, only to witness a gruesome sex murder. She manages to escape, but her lover remains missing. Is the killer targeting her now? Sounds much more interesting than it plays, it goes nowhere after establishing the premise. Sluggish, talky thriller with a handful of rewarding features for buffs: Some stylish lighting, Allan's gorgeous physique (she can act, too!) and a bizarre love sequence involving a middle-aged woman. Film was written by Derek Ford (perhaps inspired by Italian B-movies of the period), who also edited part of it. Alternative titles: DON'T GO INTO THE BEDROOM, THE HOUSE THAT VANISHED, and PSYCHO SEX FIEND.

**Scream and Scream Again** (1970, GBR) **C-95m. \*½ D:** Gordon Hessler. Starring Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Judy Huxtable, Christopher Matthews, Alfred Marks, Peter Sallis. Strange, confusing supernatural thriller: The police are trying to catch a dangerous murderer whose victims are found drained of their blood. The puzzling killings may be in connection with a secret military organization which, it turns out, has diabolical plans for humanity. This premise indicates that original story (from Peter Saxon's novel *The Disorientated Man*) is not bad. The adaptation (by Christopher Wicking) is, a fact which can't

even be compensated by the (brief) appearances of three horror stars Price, Lee and Cushing.

**Scream, Baby, Scream** (1969, USA) **C-82m.** D: Joseph Adler. Starring Ross Harris, Eugenie Wingate, Chris Martell, Suzanne Stuart. Lurid American sex-and-crime thriller about teenager Harris, whose girlfriend gets drawn into mysterious schemes of her arts teacher. Seems like a direct descendant of the surfer pics of the 60s, this one is ultra-bad. Cheap, absurd concoction, written by none other than Larry Cohen. Alternatively known as NIGHTMARE HOUSE.

**Screamers** (1995, CDN) **C-108m.** \*\*½ D: Christian Duguay. Starring Peter Weller, Jennifer Rubin, Roy Dupuis, Andy Lauer, Charles Powell, Ron White. War has devastated a distant planet and military commander Weller has to contend with so-called Screamers, who are shapeshifters programmed to kill. Atmospheric sci-fi action starts impressively but then unfortunately loses its footing. Based on *Second Variety*, a short story by Philip K. Dick, the film is highly reminiscent of BLADE RUNNER.

**Screamtime** (1983, GBR) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Al Beresford (=Stanley A. Long). Starring Vincent Russo, Michael Gordon, Marie Scinto, Kevin Smith, Robin Bailey. Watchable, if considerably silly horror anthology, with frame story about two losers who steal video tapes and watch them at a randy friend's place. First story concerns an old puppeteer, who is harassed by his family. Second one deals with a woman who has visions of horror in her home. And the last one is about a small-time crook who tries to rob a house protected by fairies. Not-bad, but still pretty pointless and quite laughable. Written by Michael Armstrong (HEXEN BIS AUFS BLUT GEQUÄLT – MARK OF THE DEVIL).

**Scrooged** (1988, USA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Richard Donner. Starring Bill Murray, Karen Allen, John For-sythe, John Glover, Bobcat Goldthwaite, Carol Kane, Robert Mitchum, Buddy Hackett, Lee Majors. Need-lessly aggressive updating of the classic Charles Dickens story with Murray a cold-hearted TV executive who loses his contempt for Christmas when three ghosts visit him on Christmas Eve. Second ghost has the best moments in this quite funny modernization. The ending comes off forced, though.

**S. Darko** (2009, USA) **C-103m.** \*\*½ D: Chris Fisher. Starring Daveigh Chase, Briana Evigan, James Lafferty, Ed Westwick, Walter Platz, Elizabeth Berkley. Atmospheric follow-up to the cult hit DONNIE DARKO (2001) about Donnie's sister Samantha (Chase) who drifts across the country with her friend Evigan. And guess what: The world is about to end, and it'll all happen in a small town in the middle of nowhere. Road movie fantasy has the original's touch, and with a good, hypnotic score manages to draw you in, although plot twists make little sense. A throwback to Twin Peaks days (which isn't all that bad). Production design by Alfred Sole (COMMUNION). Released directly to video.

**Seabiscuit** (2003, USA) **C-141m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Gary Ross. Starring Jeff Bridges, Tobey Maguire, Chris Cooper, William H. Macy, Elizabeth Banks, Gary Stevens, James Keane, Gary Ross. Beautifully handled drama about opportunist Bridges, who loses most of his newly-gained wealth in stockmarket crash of 1929 and resorts to managing racing horses. One day he teams up with sensitive trainer Cooper and jockey Maguire to make once-injured horse Seabiscuit a champion. Excellent screenwriting introduces the story beautifully, and entire production is sublime. Good performances, immaculate period flavor, top Hollywood filmmaking. Written by director Ross, based on the book by Laura Hillenbrand. Was nominated for 7 Oscars, won none. Same story filmed before in 1949.

**Séance on a Wet Afternoon** (1964, GBR) **B&W-116m.** \*\*\*½ D: Bryan Forbes. Starring Kim Stanley, Richard Attenborough, Nanette Newman, Mark Eden, Gerald Sim, Patrick Magee, Judith Donner. Outstanding psycho drama about psychotic medium Stanley, who plots to

kidnap girl of rich family, hoping to get a reward for her “help” in locating the girl. Intimidated husband Attenborough reluctantly agrees to help with the scheme. Well-directed, brilliantly acted, not easily forgotten movie that some rightfully regard as a classic. Stanley should have won an Oscar (she was nominated). Interestingly, she suffered from psychosis in real life (revealed by director Forbes in an interview on the 2003 DVD). Terrific score by John Barry. Based on the novel by Mark McShane, remade by Kiyoshi Kurosawa for Japanese TV in 2000 (as KOREI). Referenced in Dario Argento’s TRAUMA (1993).

**Sea of Love** (1989, USA) **C-112m**. \*\*\* D: Harold Becker. Starring Al Pacino, Ellen Barkin, John Goodman, Michael Rooker, William Hickey, Richard Jenkins, Paul Calderon, Mark Phelan, Samuel L. Jackson. Police inspector Pacino is faced with brutal murders of men who put ads in the lonely hearts columns in newspapers. During the investigation he meets (and gradually falls in love with) possible suspect Barkin, a steamy femme fatale. Interesting, well-written thriller, a quintessential one of the late 1980s, with another excellent performance by Pacino. Good photography by Ronnie Taylor (OPERA). Scenes with Lorraine Bracco (as Pacino’s ex-wife) were cut out before the premiere.

**Searchers, The** (1956, USA) **C-120m**. \*\*\* D: John Ford. Starring John Wayne, Jeffrey Hunter, Vera Miles, Ward Bond, Natalie Wood, John Qualen, Olive Carey, Harry Carey Jr. Classic American western, usually cited as the best one, about war veteran Wayne’s embittered search for his niece, who has been abducted by Indians. Wayne spends years on their trail, aided by inexperienced Hunter. Western drama is unevenly structured and its intended emotional impact never fully realized. Negative, one-sided portrayal of Native Americans doesn’t help either. Well-paced, with a nice sense of humor, but cannot hold a candle to Sergio Leone’s operatic Dollar trilogy. Spawned many imitations. Shot in VistaVision.

**Seasoning House, The** (2012, GBR) **C-91m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Paul Hyett. Starring Rosie Day, Sean Pertwee, Kevin Howarth, Anna Walton. Shocking, extremely violent thriller set in a brothel somewhere on the Balkan peninsula during the 1990s war. Teenage girls are addicted to drugs and forced to prostitute themselves. The main character is a traumatized deaf-mute girl, who is spared this fate, but must clean up the girls and give them the shots. Is there a way of escaping this hell? Pretty depressing drama has its moments, especially in burst of violence that are sure to make you cringe. Plotwise it falls a bit short.

**Sebunsu Kôdo** (2013, JAP) **C-60m**. \*\*½ D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Atsuko Maeda, Ryôhei Suzuki, Aissy, Hiroshi Yamamoto. Odd drama set (and filmed) entirely in Vladivostok, Russia, where a Japanese woman has tracked down a businessman she met in Tokyo. She seems obsessed with meeting the man again, although he couldn’t care less. It turns out he has ties with the mafia or some other criminal organization. Meanwhile, the woman finds temporary refuge in a Chinese restaurant. Watchable, but any deeper meaning is elusive. English title: SEVENTH CODE.

**Second Best** (1993, GBR/USA) **C-105m**. \*\*\* D: Chris Menges. Starring William Hurt, John Hurt, Chris Cleary Miles, Keith Allen, Jane Horrocks, Prunella Scales, Alan Cumming. A self-conscious postmaster (William Hurt) decides to adopt a child and is matched with a troubled ten year-old (Miles), whose father is in prison. Hurt, whose childhood was not a happy one either, sees a chance to give each other the love they are both lacking in their lives. Good drama with superb performances, especially by William Hurt and Miles, could have been even better. Screenplay by David Cook, from his own novel. John Hurt’s role is no more than a cameo. Fine score by Simon Boswell (SANTA SANGRE). Set (and filmed) in Wales.

**Seconds** (1966, USA) **B&W-107m**. \*\*\* D: John Frankenheimer. Starring Rock Hudson, John Randolph, Frank Campanella, Murray Hamilton, Will Geer, Richard Anderson. Interesting drama, a milestone of its day, a social-fiction experiment. Middle-aged Randolph, stuck in

an unhappy marriage, is contacted by a friend he thought was dead and introduced into a secret company, which provides people with a new face and a new life. He subsequently turns into Hudson, a painter, who at first has to come to terms with his new self. Creatively directed by Frankenheimer, but film is uncomfortable to watch, daring for its time, but now rather old-fashioned, despite intriguing subject matter. Score by Jerry Goldsmith, photographed by James Wong Howe.

**Secretary** (2002, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D: Steven Shainberg. Starring James Spader, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jeremy Davies, Patrick Bauchau, Stephen McHattie, Oz Perkins, Jessica Tuck, Amy Locane, Lesley Ann Warren. Highly original drama about mentally imbalanced Gyllenhaal, who has just been released from a mental institution and tries to make a stand in real life. The self-mutilating, insecure young woman then takes a job as a secretary in lawyer Spader's firm, little knowing that he is a branded soul himself. Not consistently interesting, but this fresh drama is so well-performed you will forgive its dramatic shortcomings. Good score by Angelo Badalamenti. Based on a short story by Mary Gaitskill.

**Secret Ceremony** (1968, GBR) **C-109m.** \*\*\*\* D: Joseph Losey. Starring Elizabeth Taylor, Mia Farrow, Robert Mitchum, Peggy Ashcroft, Pamela Brown. Brilliantly acted chamber piece about Farrow and Taylor, whose meeting on the bus one day marks the beginning of a highly unusual relationship. Psychotic, girlish Farrow takes Taylor for her dead mother, who looked just like her. Taylor, in turn, accepts this role play hesitantly; Farrow's resemblance with her own (dead) daughter is striking. The arrival of Farrow's stepfather, lecherous Mitchum, puts a strain on their odd relationship. Completely fascinating psycho drama, difficult to watch but psychologically valid, with excellent direction by Losey (ACCIDENT), a must for cineastes. Farrow's performance is breathtaking. Scripted by playwright George Tabori, who adapted the novel *Ceremonia Secreta* by Marco Denevi. Appropriately bizarre score by Richard Rodney Bennett. Beware edited 101m. version.

**Secret des Selenites, Le** (1983, FRA) **C-82m.** \*½ D: Jean Image. Crude animation chronicles the adventures of the famed Baron Münchhausen as he sets out to find the Selenites, the secret inhabitants of the moon. Unpleasantly animated with many odd characters, film is not as interesting as it sounds.

**Secreto de Sus Ojos, El** (2009, ARG/SPA) **C-130m.** SCOPE \*\*\*½ D: Juan José Campanella. Starring Ricardo Darín, Soledad Villamil, Pablo Rago, Javier Godino, Guillermo Francella. Oscar-winning crime drama set in 1999 Buenos Aires about a retired attorney (Darín), who has never forgotten an unsolved crime from 1974 and decides to write a book about it, now that he has more time. In flashbacks we are told this story, which is not just about the rape and murder of a young girl, but also about how we deal with memories and the obsession with things unfinished. Slowly paced, but subtle drama improves as we go along, with a fine recreation of the mid-1970s, good performances and a fine score. Scripted by director Campanella and Eduardo Sacheri, whose novel this is based on. English title: THE SECRET IN THEIR EYES.

**Secretos del Corazón** (1997, SPA/POR/FRA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Montxo Armendáriz. Starring Carmelo Gómez, Charo López, Silvia Munt, Vicky Pena. Flat drama about a little boy who must live with his aunts and goes to a school run by priests. His mother is about to re-marry after his father's death, and he is fascinated by secrets all around him: an abandoned house, the cause of his father's death, all the secrets of grown-ups, including sexuality. The boy may be cute, but the unimaginative direction unconvincingly, flatly runs him through all kinds of vignettes. No dramatics here. Still, this was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Oscars. English title: SECRETS OF MY HEART.

**Secret Window** (2004, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Koepp. Starring Johnny Depp, John Turturro, Maria Bello, Timothy Hutton, Charles S. Dutton. Okay thriller about troubled writer Depp, who is harassed by another writer (Turturro), who claims that Depp has stolen his story. Strangely enough, Depp has a hard time proving that he is wrong. Improbable (and thus predictable) from the word go, this thriller is kept alive by fair pace and Depp's performance. Based on a short story by (you guessed it) Stephen King. Screenplay by the director. Score by Philip Glass.

**Secta Siniestra** (1982, SPA) **C-82m. \*½** D: Steve McCoy (=Ignacio F. Iquino). Starring Emma Quer, Carlos Martos, Concha Valero, Juan Zanni. Forgettable horror trash about a woman who enters a clinic for artificial insemination, but one of the doctors is actually from a satanic sect and impregnates her with the devil. Her lover, who was blinded by a crazy ex-girlfriend, becomes distrustful of their new (evil) maid. Rather cheap stuff. English title: BLOODY SECT.

**Secuestrados** (2010, SPA/FRA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Miguel Angel Vivas. Starring Fernando Cayo, Manuela Vellés, Ana Wagener. Terror-filled, unrelenting thriller about well-to-do family of three who have just moved into a large new villa, when several intruders brutally take them hostage. Father Cayo is forced to withdraw money from ATMs, while the mother and teenage daughter start a fight for their lives at home. Authentic, powerful, no-holds-barred film is composed of extremely long takes. Turns shockingly violent at the end. By no means perfect, but has to be seen for its viciousness. English title: KIDNAPPED.

**Secuestro** (2016, SPA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mar Targarona. Starring Blanca Portillo, Antonio Dechent, Vicente Romero, José Coronado. Mystery thriller about a deaf little boy who manages to escape a kidnapper and identifies him soon after. The suspect keeps eluding the police with alibis, so the boy's mother, a lawyer, takes the law in her own hands, which sets in motion a string of events that become more and more improbable. Slickly made, but plot is overly constructed. The suspense is also limited. (Misleading) English title: BOY MISSING.

**Seduction, The** (1982, USA) **C-104m. \*\*** D: David Schmoeller. Starring Morgan Fairchild, Michael Sarrazin, Vince Edwards, Andrew Stevens, Colleen Camp, Kevin Brophy. TV newswoman Fairchild is stalked by a fan of hers, photographer Stevens. There's not much more to say about the plot, it's predictable, slowly paced and rather stupid. Watch it if you are a fan of 80s stylistics and Morgan Fairchild in her prime (*anybody?*), stay away if you don't dig pink credits. Has trash movie appeal. Score by Lalo Schifrin. Frank Darabont was among the crew.

**Seduction of a Priest** (1990, GBR/SPA) **C-105m. \*\*** D: Paolo Lara. Starring Paul McGann. Weak rendition of a masterpiece of Gothic literature, *The Monk* (1791) by William Gregory Lewis. McGann stars as a righteous monk who is seduced by a woman and soon finds himself in earthly purgatory. In a second strand of action, a young nun is imprisoned by the Mother Superior upon hearing that she is pregnant. Well-acted but tame, poorly directed, nowhere near the classic original. Filmed before by Ado Kyrrou in 1972. Alternative title: THE MONK.

**See Jane Run** (2007, USA) **C-86m. \*½** D: Ryan Webb. Starring Jennifer Clary, Sasha Andreev, Joe Estevez, John Rodriguez, Kevin Haberer. Attempt at paying homage to horror exploitation movies (in particular T.C.M.) about four teenagers on the road, who end up in a house where a psychopath is intent on killing them. Low-budget, independent film starts not bad (excluding the odd opening scene), with less bad acting than usual, but fails to go anywhere from the first 20 minutes. There's no atmosphere or suspense, and the villain looks like the guy next door (in a polished suburban house!). Some gore effects, most of them unconvincingly done with the computer.

**Sei Donne per l'Assassino** (1964, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-89m.** \*\*\*½ D: Mario Bava. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Eva Bartok, Thomas Reiner, Arian Gorin, Dante di Paolo, Mary Arden, Frank Russel, Claude Dantes. Someone is killing fashion models for reasons that may be disclosed by the first victim's diary, which the killer is after. Inspector Reiner is investigating the case. Badly paced, second rate plot (co-authored by the director) almost overcome by striking direction, good photography (Ubaldo Terzano) and a fine dramatic score (Carlo Rustichelli). This is how a horror thriller should be handled. Quite violent for its time. A must for followers of the director. English title: BLOOD AND BLACK LACE.

**Seijū Gakuen** (1974, JAP) **C-91m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Noribumi Suzuki. Starring Yumi Takigawa, Emiko Yamauchi, Yayoi Watanabe, Ryouko Ima. Nunsplotation Nippon-style about a young woman who enters a convent in order to find out what happened to her late mother there. Episodic plot is barely there and merely an excuse for scenes of torture, sex and degradation. It does have some stylishly photographed bits, including a scene that might have inspired the famous hanging scene in *SUSPIRIA* (1977). A cult classic for some, perhaps owing to the colourful English titles: CONVENT OF THE SACRED BEAST and SCHOOL OF THE HOLY BEAST.

**Sei Mong Se Jun** (2004, HGK) **C-97m.** \*\*\* D: Oxide Pang. Starring Race Wong, Roseanne Wong, Anson Leung, Michelle Mee. Fascinating psycho horror drama about an emotionally unstable young art student, who discovers her fascination with death and becomes obsessed with photographing death scenes. She distances herself from her surroundings, even becomes suicidal... but that's not the end of the story. Plot is not always consistent, but film is stylishly directed, photographed and edited, another winner from cutting-edge filmmaker Pang. Written by the director and Thomas Pang. Produced by the Pang Brothers. English title: AB-NORMAL BEAUTY.

**Seins de Glace, Les** (1972, FRA) **C-105m.** \*\* D: Georges Lautner. Starring Mireille Darc, Alain Delon, Claude Brasseur, André Falcon, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Emilio Messina, Michel Peyrelon. Vague psycho drama about writer Brasseur, who encounters mysterious blonde Darc on the beach one day and immediately falls for her, trying to protect her from her overbearing protector, lawyer Delon. Interesting subject matter, done in by self-conscious direction and Brasseur's naïve role. The reception of this drama may depend on one's personal taste. Based on a novel by Richard Matheson. English title: ICY BREASTS.

**Seize the Day** (1986, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*\*½ D: Fielder Cook. Starring Robin Williams, Joseph Wiseman, Jerry Stiller, Glenna Headley, Tony Roberts, Richard Shull, John Fiedler, Jo van Fleet, William Hickey. Compelling drama about an unemployed loser (Williams), who's separated from his wife and slowly has to learn that he's a failure in life. Not even his own father (Wiseman) shows compassion for his son, who keeps trusting the wrong people. Brilliant acting by both Williams and Wiseman (who was the first Bond villain in screen history) elevate this serious drama, which is a little downbeat. Produced for television.

**Self Defense** (1983, CDN) **C-81m.** \*\* D: Paul Donovan, Marua O'Connell. Starring Brenda Bazinet, Jack Blum, Richard Collins. Quite intense but otherwise strictly by-the-numbers thriller about a group of thugs, who chase an eye witness to a murder in a gay bar and try to break into the apartment where he hides out. Violent fare, also known as SIEGE and NIGHT WARRIORS.

**Semana del Asesino, La** (1972, SPA) **C-98m.** \*\* D: Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Vicente Parra, Emma Cohen, Eusebio Poncela, Vicky Lagos, Lola Herrera, Rafael Hernández. Spanish horror film about a slaughterhouse worker (Parra), who accidentally kills a taxi driver, then must keep murdering to keep this a secret. Each murder leads to the next. Guess where he disposes of his victims! Slowly paced drama with some gory bits has a cult reputation, but fun it ain't, rather depressing with sub-standard acting. This was director Iglesias' follow-up

to the fascinating EL TECHO DE CRISTAL (1971). English titles: CANNIBAL MAN, THE APARTMENT ON THE 13TH FLOOR.

**Semana Santa** (2002, SPA/GBR/FRA/GER/ITA/DAN) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Pepe Danquart. Starring Mira Sorvino, Olivier Martinez, Féodor Atkine, Luis Tosar, Alida Valli, Peter Berling. Sorvino plays a troubled police woman, who comes to Sevilla, Spain, and soon finds herself in the middle of the hunt for a serial killer. Utterly conventional thriller, whose only novelty is the setting, the Semana Santa (Holy Week), during which religious processions crowd the narrow streets. The characters don't figure at all in this film, at least it features some glossy cinematography. Based on the novel by David Hewson.

**Semi-Pro** (2008, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D : Ken Alterman. Starring Will Ferrell, Woody Harrelson, André Benjamin, Maura Tierney, Andrew Daly, Will Arnett, Jackie Earle Haley. Great Ferrell comedy in which he plays a basketball promoter/coach/player, who's also a chartbuster. It's 1976 and his team must be in the top 4 of the league to be accepted into the NBA. Plot takes second chair to typically outrageous gags and set-pieces. Admittedly not to everyone's taste, but the 1970s atmosphere and songs won me over.

**Sender, The** (1982, USA/GBR) **C-91m. \*\*\*** D: Roger Christian. Starring Kathryn Harrold, Zeljko Ivanek, Shirley Knight, Paul Freeman, Sean Hewitt, Harry Ditson. Well-made supernatural thriller about hospital patient Ivanek, who unwittingly transforms his powerful and frightening hallucinations to the hospital staff. The key to these telepathic powers lies in his past, as doctor Harrold soon finds out. Surreal, complicated horror film, surprisingly good. Its only mistake may be that it relies too much on realistic thriller elements. First feature for both director Christian and cinematographer Roger Pratt (BATMAN, BRAZIL). Christian won an Oscar as an art director for STAR WARS.

**Sennentuntschi** (2011, SUI/AUT) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Michael Steiner. Starring Roxane Mesquida, Nicholas Ofczarek, Andrea Zogg, Carlos Leal, Joel Basman, Ueli Jäggi. Good mystery thriller with supernatural elements set in the Swiss Alps in 1975. A vicar is found hanged and during the funeral a mute, savage woman (Mesquida) appears. Despite fears of the community, she is taken in by policeman Ofczarek. She ultimately escapes to a hut higher up in the mountains, where three men fall prey to her. Where is she from, and why does her picture appear on a crime photograph that's 25 years old? Plot is a bit overlong but cleverly plays with clichés and conventions, the acting is raw and powerful, although beautiful Mesquida is given little to do. Excellent, dramatic score. Recommended viewing! Also known as CURSE OF THE ALPS.

**Sensi** (1986, ITA) **C-89m. \*½** D: Gabriele Lavia. Starring Monica Guerritore, Gabriele Lavia, Mimsy Farmer, Lewis E. Ciannelli, Dario Mazzoli. Lavia plays a hitman who is on the run because he is in possession of some incriminating documents. He hides in a brothel and falls in love with prostitute Guerritore. Poorly paced, poorly directed, pointless 'thriller' that also isn't very erotic. A disappointment. English title: EVIL SENSES.

**Sensoria** (2015, SWE) **C-81m. \*\*\*½** D: Christian Hallman. Starring Lanna Ohlsson, Norah Andersen, Alida Morberg, Raffael Pettersson. Swedish chiller pays tribute to Polanski in this REPULSION/TENANT mix that's unfortunately not very good, however. Middle-aged Ohlsson, depressed after breaking up with her boyfriend, moves into a new apartment. At first she doesn't notice the strange occurrences around her. The neighbors are equally weird. The prologue leaves no doubt that some evil went on in the apartment 30 years before. Apart from the Polanski references this is just one big tease without a satisfying conclusion. The score and the interesting camerawork put this slightly above average.

**Sentenza di Morte** (1968, ITA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Mario Lafranconi. Starring Robin Clarke, Richard Conte, Enrico Maria Salerno, Adolfo Celi, Tomas Milian, Eleonora Brown, Luciano

Rossi. Unusual spaghetti western about baby-faced Clarke, who is out to kill 4 colorful villains, who caused the death of his brother. Simple revenge formula is overcome by stylish direction, which celebrates the archetypes of the spaghetti western, and brilliant score by Gianni Ferrio, who rivals Morricone in his use of unusual instruments. For buffs. Might have been an inspiration for Tarantino's KILL BILL movies. English title: DEATH SENTENCE.

**Sentinel, The** (1977, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Michael Winner. Starring Chris Sarandon, Cristina Raines, Martin Balsam, John Carradine, José Ferrer, Ava Gardner, Arthur Kennedy, Burgess Meredith, Sylvia Miles, Deborah Raffin, Eli Wallach, Christopher Walken, Jerry Orbach, Beverly D'Angelo, Hank Garrett, Tom Berenger, William Hickey, Jeff Goldblum. Derivative but enjoyable supernatural thriller about young actress Raines, who moves into a New York apartment, unknowing that the blind priest upstairs is there for a special purpose – to guard the gate to hell. Despite so many stars in the cast, this is a B-movie with dramatic faults, but it remains interesting (especially because of compact running time) and even chilling. Make-up effects are good. Written by director Winner, who adapted the novel by Jeffrey Konvitz, whose book is an intriguing mix between ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968) and THE EXORCIST (1973).

**Seokkeul** (2003, KOR) **C-114m. \*\*½** D: Seung-bae Park. Starring Soo-yeon Kang, Woong-in Jeong, Jeong-yun Choi, Jae-ryong Jeon. Provocative drama from Korea about a cold-blooded killer, who after being caught bases his defense on the claim that he is the reincarnation of a killer from the 1930s. The (female) state attorney is furious, but there is more to this story than she wants to believe; in flashbacks we learn about a fatal love affair. Low-key, deliberately paced drama is a bit too heavy on the sap sometimes, especially towards the end. Not a horror film, as the DVD cover might have you believe; it does contain some graphic scenes, though. English title: THE CIRCLE.

**Seom** (2000, KOR) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Kim Ki-duk. Starring Suh Jung, Kim Yoosuk, Park Sung-hee, Jo Jae-hyeon, Jang Hang-seon. Quiet, disturbing drama about a mute woman, who rents out swimming huts on a lake to fishermen and occasionally sells her body, too. Her latest guest is equally introvert man, who has just committed a crime. Film charts their relationship in low-key, hypnotic fashion. Symbolic, raw film is difficult to watch. First big international success for director Kim, he won the Netpac prize at the Venice film festival and was nominated for the Golden Lion. English title: THE ISLE.

**Seoul Station** (2016, KOR) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Yeon Sang-ho. Starring (the voices of) Ryu Seung-ryong, Lee Joon, Shim Eun-kyung. Animated companion piece to the zombie shocker BUSANHAENG / TRAIN TO BUSAN (2016) looks at the start of the zombie epidemic from the viewpoint of a young woman and some homeless people at the Seoul train station. More grotesque than scary, film suffers from mediocre animation and a lack of structure. The wailing and screaming of the main characters becomes truly annoying. Also known as SEOULYEOK.

**Séptimo** (2013, SPA/ARG) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Patxi Amezcua. Starring Ricardo Darín, Belén Rueda, Luis Ziemkowski, Osvaldo Santoro. Mystery thriller set in Buenos Aires about lawyer Darín who is completing the divorce from his wife Rueda, when his two children are obviously kidnapped from the stairs in their apartment building while he was taking the elevator. In a frenzy he tries to find them and the person(s) responsible. Well-made and well-acted film falters at the end, the conclusion is a big letdown. English title: 7TH FLOOR.

**Sept Pèches Capitales, Les** (1961, FRA/ITA) **113m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Sylvain Dhomme, Edouard Molinaro, Philippe de Broca, Jacques Demy, Jean-Luc Godard, Roger Vadim, Claude Chabrol. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Eddie Constantine, Jean-Claude Brialy, Claude Brasseur, Marina Vlady. The Seven Capital Sins are interpreted by seven directors, most of whom

would go on to achieve international recognition. Interesting (to say the least) but also boring and sometimes pointless satire isn't funny enough to score a higher rating. Best of the stories is possibly de Broca's La Gourmandise episode (Gluttony). English title: 7 CAPITAL SINS.

**Seraphim Falls** (2006, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Von Ancken. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Liam Neeson, Michael Wincott, Ed Lauter, John Robinson, Robert Baker, Kevin O'Connor, Angelica Huston, Tom Noonan, Xander Berkeley, Wes Studi. John Toll's (expectedly) fine cinematography and two arresting lead performances are main attractions in this post-Civil War western about Neeson's quest to find and kill Brosnan in the wilderness, for reasons specified later in the movie. Rather episodic and obvious in its plotting, but well-worth seeing. Especially Neeson scores as a man bent on revenge. Cowritten by TV director Von Ancken.

**Serbuan Maut** (2011, INES/USA) **C-101m. \*\*½ D:** Gareth Evans. Starring Iko Uwais, Ananda George, Ray Sahetapy, Joe Taslim. Indonesian action movie about a police raid in a run-down apartment building that is controlled by a crime lord and infested by dozens of his henchmen. Non-stop action, gory effects, this is well-edited and in part similar to John Woo's **HARD BOILED** (1992), but fails to engage you emotionally. The continuous martial arts and shoot-outs numb you after a while. Still, a huge success, followed by a sequel in 2013. English title: **THE RAID – REDEMPTION**.

**Serendipity** (2001, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½ D:** Peter Chelsom. Starring John Cusack, Kate Beckinsale, Jeremy Piven, Bridget Moynahan, John Corbett, Eugene Levy. Sappy romance about Cusack and Beckinsale who meet by chance at Bloomingdale's and fall in love. Since both are about to be married, they leave it to fate if they ever meet again. Pretty contrived but still likable thanks to the stars' performances.

**Sergeant Rutledge** (1960, USA) **C-118m. \*\*½ D:** John Ford. Starring Woody Strode, Jeffrey Hunter, Constance Towers, Billie Burke. Interesting but predictable and clichéd western drama about court-martial of black sergeant Strode, who is accused of having murdered and raped a white girl. Well-acted, unusual western from one of the genre's most prolific directors is overlong and has some comic relief that doesn't really work. Not as groundbreaking in its anti-racist message as some claim it to be, if you consider that **12 ANGRY MEN** came three years earlier. Still, western buffs will like it anyway.

**Serial Lover** (1998, FRA) **C-83m. \*½ D:** James Huth. Starring Michèle Laroque, Albert Dupontel, Elise Tielrooy, Michel Vuillermoz, Zinedine Soualem, Antoine Basler, Gilles Privat. Annoying, derivative black comedy thinks itself very funny but works only in spurts. 34 year-old Laroque wants to marry but can't decide whom, so she invites all four candidates to a dinner party. She ends up with four dead bodies, a devastated flat, two idiotic criminals, and a very strange police detective. Tries to be as hip as Tarantino's films (especially **PULP FICTION**), but is more ridiculous than funny.

**Serial Mom** (1994, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½ D:** John Waters. Starring Kathleen Turner, Sam Waterston, Ricki Lake, Matthew Lillard, Mary Lo Catlett, Justin Whalin, Patricia Dunnock, Mink Stole, Patricia Hearst, Suzanne Somers, Traci Lords. Another one of writer-director Waters' suburban fantasies. Perfect housewife Turner would do anything to protect her family and her values, even kill, which she has been doing with the same care as she does her household chores. Nobody believes she could be the wanted killer in the neighborhood. Makes its point early on, but remains funny enough for the rest of the movie. Turner is terrific, even in unnecessary, predictable courtroom finale. Waters' fans shouldn't be disappointed. That's his voice as Ted Bundy on the tape.

**Serious Man, A** (2009, USA) **C-106m**. \*\*\*½ D: Joel and Ethan Coen. Starring Michael Stuhlbarg, Richard Kind, Fred Melamed, Sari Lennick, Adam Arkin, Michael Lerner. Another unbeatable concoction by the Coen brothers, this tragic comedy echoes, maybe even mirrors their masterpiece BARTON FINK (1991). Conservative Jewish math and physics professor Stuhlbarg feels the floor under his feet being swept away, when his wife asks for a divorce, one of his students tries to bribe him and he is in danger of losing his job. What's more, he has to contend with an aggressive neighbor and his own parasitic brother, who lives with them in their early 1960s suburban home. Film follows his odyssey as he is trying to keep his demeanor (as a 'serious man'), while everything seems to be going down the drain. Brilliantly cast and acted, especially by Stuhlbarg, film bears the mark of a true genius (or two, in this case). Photographed by Roger Deakins, score by Carter Burwell.

**Sero Hiki no Goshu** (1982, JAP) **C-61m**. \*\*\* D: Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Hideki Sasaki, Fuyumi Shiraishi, Masashi Amenomori. Intelligent mini-feature by anime master Takahata, based on a short novel by Kenji Miyazawa. A young cello player, who is in preparation for an important concert, is visited by several animals who ask him to teach them music. His initial doubts are blown away when he realizes how powerful his music can be. Some idyllic animation, with beautiful classical music, a real find for animation buffs. English titles: GAUCHE THE CELLIST, GOSHU THE CELLIST.

**Serpent, Le** (1972, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-113m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Yul Brynner, Henry Fonda, Dirk Bogarde, Philippe Noiret, Michel Bouquet, Martin Held, Farley Granger, Virna Lisi, Guy Tréjan, Marie Dubois, Elga Andersen, Robert Alda, Herbert Fux. Unnecessarily complicated thriller about Russian KGB agent Brynner, who asks for political asylum and intends to disclose some important information to the Americans. Soon, a web of espionage and intrigues is uncovered that reaches up to the highest positions. Despite good start, stellar cast and Ennio Morricone's elaborate score, this is a dud that's far too talky and doesn't thrill. Photographed by Claude Renoir, cowritten and produced by director Verneuil, whose great films (LE CORPS DE MON ENNEMI and I... COMME ICARE) were to come out later that decade. English titles: NIGHT FLIGHT FROM MOSCOW and THE SERPENT.

**Serpent and the Rainbow, The** (1988, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Wes Craven. Starring Bill Pullman, Cathy Tyson, Zakes Mokae, Paul Winfield, Brent Jennings, Michael Gough. Pullman plays a scientist who is sent to Haiti by a pharmaceutical firm, where he is supposed to research a so-called voodoo powder, which kills people and makes them return from the dead. Atmospheric, even sweat-inducing chiller makes great use of locations. All the more creepy when you consider it is based on a true story(!), written down in the book *The Serpent and the Rainbow* by Wade Davis.

**Serpent's Egg, The** (1977, USA/GER) **C-114m**. \*\*\*½ D: Ingmar Bergman. Starring David Carradine, Liv Ullman, Gert Fröbe, Heinz Bennent. Atmospheric drama set in 1923 Germany, about Jewish circus artist Carradine, who is the prime suspect in a murder spree investigated by inspector Fröbe. Bravura acting by Ullman, ingenious directorial touches by Bergman make this a worthwhile experience, although unpleasant, relentlessly sleazy subject matter weighs it down a lot. Written by the director. Photography by Sven Nykvist, produced by Dino de Laurentiis. German title: DAS SCHLANGENEI.

**Serpent Warriors, The** (1985, USA/HKG) **C-93m**. \*½ D: John Howard, Niels Rasmussen. Starring Clint Walker, Eartha Kitt, Christopher Mitchum, Ann Lockhart, Kathleen Lu. A woman is trying to find out more about a so-called snake cult, which – as she believes – has reason to kill her husband, who killed their leader when he was five years old. Almost incomprehensible trash shamelessly exploits the 1982 Hong Kong movie CALAMITY OF

SNAKES. The scenes from that film – snake attacks and fights – are furiously filmed. Is that flick available somewhere?!

**Serpiente del Mar** (1984, SPA) **C-92m.** D: Amando de Ossorio. Starring Timothy Bottoms, Taryn Power, Jared Martin, Ray Milland, Gérard Tichy, Carole James, Jack Taylor, León Klimovsky. A giant sea serpent is terrorizing sailors and tourists, and Bottoms wants to persuade the public that it really exists, with the help of traumatized tourist Power. Pretty much as bad as it gets. Sad to say, this was Milland's last theatrical film and also BLIND DEAD writer-director de Ossorio's swan song. English title: THE SEA SERPENT.

**Se Sei Vivo Spara** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Giulio Questi. Starring Tomas Milian, Marilù Tolo, Piero Lulli, Milo Quesada, Sancho Gracia, Ray Lovelock, Frank Brana. Unusual but sluggish western with a cult reputation. Half-breed Milian is shot by bandits and left for dead. He is saved by two Indians and prepared for revenge. The cowboys, with Milian's stash of gold, have intermediately found refuge in a small town, whose citizens are greedy and corrupt. Technically barely okay, as it lacks the timing and gusto of Sergio Leone's classics. Plot is interesting, but overall film just doesn't live up to its artsy, ultra-violent reputation. The Indians are just plain laughable. Many shorter versions are in existence. Photographed by Franco delli Colli. Lovelock's first film. English title: DJANGO, KILL... IF YOU LIVE, SHOOT!

**Session 9** (2001, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Brad Anderson. Starring David Caruso, Stephen Gevedon, Paul Guilfoyle, Josh Lucas, Peter Mullan, Brendan Sexton III. Creepy psycho drama set in a long-abandoned insane asylum, which was once self-contained and remains an impressive edifice, where five men sign up to do asbestos removal work. There's tension among the men from the start, and the eerie location is sure to bring out their inner demons. Then one of the men discovers interview tapes (=sessions) with a schizophrenic patient. Not a horror film per se, this is actually quite real and authentic and has a lot of daytime scenes, but creates an oppressive sense of horror in you nevertheless. A rough diamond of a movie that will stay with you for a long time. Mullan's performance is excellent. Director Anderson, who cowrote the picture with costar Gevedon and also edited it, followed this with the equally fascinating THE MACHINIST (2004).

**Setta, La** (1990, ITA) **C-117m. \*\*½** D: Michele Soavi. Starring Kelly Curtis, Herbert Lom, Tomas Arana, Mariangela Giordano, Carlo Cassola. Soavi's third feature is an almost incomprehensible horror thriller about young teacher Curtis, who befriends an old man (Lom), not knowing that he is the head of a devilish sect. Well-filmed and photographed film doesn't make sense for more than an hour(!), then finally goes for a ROSEMARY'S BABY-like finale. Cowritten and coproduced by Dario Argento, who clearly influenced the style (and even plot) of this thriller. Interesting for horror buffs, others beware of overlength and lack of logic. English title: THE SECT.

**7 di Marsa Matruh, I** (1970, ITA/EGY) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Mario Siciliano. Starring Ivan Rassimov, Monica Strebelt, Kirk Morris, Marcella Michelangeli, Aldo Bufi Landi. Agreeable war adventure set in Africa, where seven British individuals (four soldiers, three women) are caught between enemy lines and must try to reach their homebase. Good cinematography, score (by Stelvio Cipriani) put this slightly above average. English title: OVERRUN!

**7 Donne d'Oro Contro Due** (1966, ITA) **C-93m. \*½** D: Vincenzo Cascino. Starring Mickey Hargitay, Maria Vincent, Luciana Paoli, Vincenzo Cascino. Poor Eurospy entry is inane action comedy about agent Hargitay and his involvement with a Goya painting that is said to hold the key to Nazi treasure. Sounds a lot more colorful and interesting than it is. Talky, boring, no action apart from some fist fights, and no treasure, just men and women running and

driving around. Followed by a sequel(!), LE 7 CINESI D'ORO (1967). English title: 7 GOLDEN WOMEN AGAINST TWO 07.

**Sette Note in Nero** (1977, ITA) **C-93m. \*\*\*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Jennifer O'Neill, Gabriele Ferzetti, Marc Porel, Gianni Garko, Evelyn Stewart (=Ida Galli), Jenny Tamburi. Okay thriller about clairvoyant O'Neill, who has frightening visions of dead people, and she is trying to find out if a crime really happened and who did it. Rather talky, but interesting, especially after surprising twist. O'Neill is good, as is main theme (referenced in KILL BILL). Story and screenplay by director Fulci, Roberto Gianviti and Dardano Sacchetti. Remade in India(!) in 1991 (as 100 DAYS). English titles: SEVEN NOTES IN BLACK, MURDER TO THE TUNE OF THE SEVEN BLACK NOTES, and THE PSYCHIC.

**Sette Orchidee Macchiate di Rosso** (1971, ITA/GER) **C-88m.SCOPE \*\* D:** Umberto Lenzi. Starring Uschi Glas, Antonio Sabato, Marisa Mell, Pier Paolo Capponi, Petra Schürmann, Rossella Falk. One of the last German Edgar Wallace productions, made by Italian hands. Inspector Sabato is trailing serial killer in Rome, with Glas a potential victim. Some style, period flavor compensate for poor plotting. For giallo fans. Score by Riz Ortolani. Also known as DAS RÄTSEL DES SILBERNEN HALBMONDS and SEVEN BLOOD-STAINED ORCHIDS.

**7 Uomini d'Oro** (1965, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-86m. \*\*\*½ D:** Marco Vicario. Starring Rossana Podestà, Philippe Leroy, Gastone Moschin, Gabriele Tinti, Giampiero Albertini, Dario De Grassi, Manuel Zarzo, Maurice Poli, Ennio Balbo. One of the first European heist movies - which were all triggered by TOPKAPI (1964) - is quite enjoyable albeit slow crime comedy. 'Professor' Leroy has hired 6 international criminals to rob a bank in Geneva, and pulls off the heist with the help of stunning Podestà. Lacks a proper pace, but 60s fans will be delighted by Armando Trovajoli's jazzy score and Podestà's costumes. Followed by a sequel, IL GRANDE COLPO DEI 7 UOMINI'DORO (1966). English title: SEVEN GOLDEN MEN.

**Sette Winchester per un Massacro** (1968, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*D:** E.G. Rowland (=Enzo G. Castellari). Starring Edd Byrnes, Guy Madison, Ennio Girolami, Luisa Baratto, Piero Vida. Cheap, forgettable spaghetti western about a bunch of outlaws led by ex-colonel Madison, who are infiltrated by soldier Byrnes. Photography, direction are not bad, but plot is way overlong. Some interesting horror elements in the showdown at an Indian cemetery. Also known as BLAKE'S MARAUDERS, PAYMENT IN BLOOD and WINCHESTER FOR HIRE.

**7, Hyden Park. La Casa Maledetta** (1985, ITA) **C-89m. \*\*\*½ D:** Martin Herbert (=Alberto De Martino). Starring David Warbeck, Carroll Blumenberg, Christina Nagy, Rossano Brazzi, Andrea Bosic. Director De Martino's last film is a direct descendant of the giallo, about paralyzed woman Blumenberg, who falls in love with her therapist Warbeck but must contend with haunting memories of a priest who raped her as a little child. Now the nightmare seems to return... is someone trying to drive her mad? Intriguing (if somewhat familiar) mystery thriller is too sloppily made, although the attack scenes are not bad. Fans of Italian thrillers should give this one a look. English title: FORMULA FOR A MURDER.

**Settima Donna, La** (1978, ITA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Franco Prosperi. Starring Florinda Bolkan, Ray Lovelock, Flavio Andreini, Stefano Cedrati, Sherry Buchanan. Three bankrobbers on the run find refuge in a villa inhabited by sister Bolkan and her theater troupe of girls. There is violence, nudity, rape, murder and, ultimately, revenge. Basically just another poorly plotted LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972) ripoff with ridiculous bonding scenes. Also known as THE LAST HOUSE ON THE BEACH, and TERROR.

**Se Tutte le Donne del Mondo** (1966, ITA) **C-106m. \*\* D:** Henry Levin, Arduino Maiuri. Starring Mike Connors, Dorothy Provine, Raf Vallone, Terry-Thomas, Margaret Lee, Nicoletta Machiavelli, Marilù Tolo, Seyna Seyn. Indefensible James Bond imitation has acquired a cult following: Connors plays a suave spy who must investigate in Rio which evil plan Vallone is

concocting. He is helped by a British spy (Provine) and his driver (Thomas). Boring, uneventful film should be watched on a so-bad-it's-good basis. Appearance of Terry-Thomas (in a double role) and fairly good Italian cast make it endurable. It's been cited as Quentin Tarantino's favourite films. Some have even compared this to the plot of MOONRAKER (1979). English title: KISS THE GIRLS AND MAKE THEM DIE.

**Seul Contre Tous** (1998, FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gaspard No . Starring Philippe Nahon, Blandine Lenoir, Frankie Pain, Martine Audrain. Difficult-to-watch but fascinating drama with excellent directorial touches. Nahon is the main character, a fifty-year-old unemployed butcher, whose voice-over tells a grim story of how shitty his life is. After he abandons his ugly, pregnant wife, beating his unborn child to pulp, we follow him to Paris, where he tries to find a job. Depressing, but so unflinchingly close to the butcher's thoughts and feelings, it's almost a philosophical poem. It's uneven and lacks closure, but it's a movie from the gut, hitting you in the gut, an original cult movie. Director No 's feature debut, a follow-up to his 1991 short CARNE. Followed by IRREVERSIBLE (2002). English title: I STAND ALONE.

**Se7en** (1995, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Fincher. Starring Morgan Freeman, Brad Pitt, Kevin Spacey, Gwyneth Paltrow, R. Lee Ermey, Richard Roundtree, Richard Schiff. Moody, oppressively atmospheric thriller about weary cop Freeman, who is about to be replaced by hot-shot Pitt, when a murder series grips the gloomy city. It seems the killer is re-enacting the Seven Deadly Sins, in ultra-disgusting fashion. Gripping cult thriller drains out almost all colors, but its plot is fascinating and so is its artistic approach. Incredibly tense finale the highlight. Score by Howard Shore, photographed by Darius Khondji. From the director of FIGHT CLUB (1999).

**Seventh Curse, The** (1986, HGK) **C-84m. \*1/2 D:** Ngai Kai Lam. Starring Maggie Cheung, Chow Yun-Fat, Joyce Godenzi, Yasuaki Kurata, Elvis Tsui, Jing Wong. Worthless splatter movie about two adventurers who tell some friends about their dangerous trip to a superstitious jungle tribe. Gory, okay effects may make those watch who must. Plot triviality doesn't justify unnecessary narrative complexity. Ultra-low-brow humor another liability.

**7500 (Seventy-Five Hundred)** (2014, USA/JAP) **C-80m. \*\*1/2 D:** Takashi Shimizu. Starring Ryan Kwanten, Amy Smart, Leslie Bibb, Jamie Chung, Rick Kelly. Fairly good horror film plays a little like a disaster soap opera. Different people board a plane from L.A. to Tokyo. When a passenger dies mysteriously, there are some eerie going-ons on board. Is Flight 7500 doomed? Has a kind-of B-movie flair to it, but plot is interesting enough, despite some silly characters. An okay view. References the famous Twilight Zone episode with William Shatner, as well as Shimizu's own RABBIT HOUR 3D (2011).

**Seven Years in Tibet** (1997, USA) **C-136m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jean-Jacques Annaud. Starring Brad Pitt, David Thewlis, B.D. Wong, Mako, Danny Denzongpa, Victor Wong. Epic-scale adventure based on the real-life adventures of the Austrian mountaineer Heinrich Harrer (well-impersonated by Pitt), whose excursion to Tibet in 1939 is overshadowed by the outbreak of World War Two in Europe. He meets the 14-year-old Dalai Lama in the course of his adventures and becomes his friend. Very-well photographed, breathtaking locations, this drama also holds up in terms of plot.

**Severance** (2006, GBR/GER) **C-94m. \*\*1/2 D:** Christopher Smith. Starring Toby Stephens, Claudie Blakley, Andy Nyman, Babou Ceesay, Tim McInnerny, Laura Harris, Danny Dyer, David Gilliam. A group of employees of a weapons manufacturer are headed towards a team-building weekend in the Hungarian forests off Budapest. However, instead of the luxury lodge they find a derelict asylum, and there's some mad Russians on the loose, ready to kill. Horror film along the lines of HOSTEL (2005) has its moments but it doesn't know

whether it wants to be taken seriously or not. Horror fans will probably find this appealing. Cowritten by director Smith (CREEP).

**Sexo Canibal** (1981, SPA/GER/FRA) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Jess Franco. Starring Al Cliver, Sabrina Siani, Jérôme Foulon, Shirley Knight, Jess Franco. Notorious Jess Franco's version of cannibal exploitation is surprisingly ambitious. On an expedition down the Amazon, scientist Cliver loses his wife to a cannibal tribe, which abducts his little daughter. Following memory loss, Cliver travels there again (ten years later) only to discover that his daughter has become the cannibal tribe's 'white goddess'. Plot drags terribly in mid-section, but cannibal scenes are stylishly done (in slow-motion and with eerie sound effects) and film generally boasts atmospheric camerawork. For Franco completists. Also known as BARBARIAN GODDESS, CANNIBALS, MONDO CANNIBALE, WHITE CANNIBAL QUEEN and DIE BLONDE GÖTTIN.

**Sexy Beast** (2000, GBR/SPA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jonathan Glazer. Starring Ray Winstone, Ben Kingsley, Ian McShane, Amanda Redman, James Fox. 'Retired' crook Winstone is living the good life in Spain, when he is visited by former associate Kingsley who tries to talk him into making a comeback for a London heist. Winstone sees no reason to leave his luxurious finca, but Kingsley refuses to accept a no. A psycho battle between the men ensues. Strikingly directed thriller with an unhinged Kingsley performance, a stylish debut for director Glazer (BIRTH). Might reach cult film status in years to come.

**Sfida dei Giganti, La** (1965, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Maurice Bright (=Maurizio Lucidi). Starring Reg Park, Gia Sandri, Giovanni Gianfriglia, Audrey Amber (=Adriana Ambesi), Luigi Barbini, Franco Ressel. One of the very last peplum epics, this one is among the most violent. Hercules (Park) must enter the underworld to get a cure for his son, who has lost his mind in a lion attack. Meanwhile, the widowed queen of Syracuse is looking for Hercules to help her get rid of the men who have come to woo her, but ends up with Hercules' evil half-brother. Starts out bland, with production values slightly below standard, but when Herc goes to Hades, film picks up. Entire scenes lifted off Mario Bava's classic ERCOLE AL CENTRO DELLA TERRA (1961) and probably also SODOM E GOMORRAH (1962). For Hercules fans. English title: HERCULE THE AVENGER.

**Shadow Dancer, The** (2005, GBR/ITA/FRA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Brad Mirman. Starring Joshua Jackson, Harvey Keitel, Claire Forlani, John Rhys-Davies, Giancarlo Giannini, Armando Pucci. By-the-numbers romantic comedy drama about retired writer Keitel, who's living the good life in Tuscany, Italy, when greenhorn Jackson is sent to persuade him to make a comeback. Naturally, initial contempt for each other turns into friendship, and love also plays a role in this contrivance. Not bad, with an impressive cast and some beautiful Italian architecture. Written by the director. Also known as SHADOWS IN THE SUN (whatever that is supposed to mean).

**Shadow of the Vampire** (2000, GBR/USA/LUX) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: E. Elias Merhige. Starring John Malkovich, Willem Dafoe, Cary Elwes, Aden Gillett, Eddie Izzard, Udo Kier, Catherine McCormack. Original, interesting drama recounts (fictionally) the events surrounding the filming of F.W. Murnau's silent horror classic NOSFERATU (1922). Center of interest is enigmatic actor Max Schreck (Dafoe), who scares the crew, as he seems to believe to be a vampire himself. Good performances by Malkovich and Dafoe, although film sometimes suffers from an underdeveloped script, which should have been about more than just Schreck. Good score by Dan Jones.

**Shadows** (2009, ITA) **C-77m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Federico Zampaglione. Starring Jake Muxworthy, Karina Testa, Nuot Arquint, Chris Coppola, Ottaviano Blitch. Iraq war veteran Muxworthy has been looking forward to his mountainbiking vacation in some European woods. When he defends a young woman against two reckless hunters, they become the prey and must

run (or cycle) for their lives. DELIVERANCE-style opening gets a jarring twist after some 30 minutes, which shall not be revealed here. Suffice it say that it turns into a nightmarish horror thriller from there. Well-made, beautifully photographed film shows that its makers know the world of cult movies well. Nods range from T.C.M. to JACOB'S LADDER, and especially Italian horror, as becomes evident in the score. Recommended to horror fans. Assistant to the director was Roy (Fabrizio) Bava, Mario's grandson.

**Shadow Whip, The** (1971, HGK) **C-78m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lo Wei. Starring Cheng Pei-Pei, Ho Li Jen, Samo Hung, Kao Ming, Ku Feng, Lo Wei. Shaw Brothers eastern made by director Lo Wei just before he directed Bruce Lee in his breakthrough films. A gang of ruthless assassins are looking for a whip master, who has been in hiding for ten years. His daughter, similarly masterful in handling the whip tries to defend his hiding place. Nice wintry setting, rousing sword fights, okay of its type.

**Shadowzone** (1990, USA) **C-88m. \*½ D:** J.S. Cardone. Starring Louise Fletcher, David Beecroft, James Hong, Frederick Flynn, Shawn Weatherly. Low-budget, low-grade sci-fi horror flick from Full Moon Entertainment. A monster from another dimension is slowly diminishing the crew of an underground lab. A pretentious ALIEN-ripoff without style. A big come-down for Fletcher.

**Shadrach** (1998, USA) **C-86m. \*\*\* D:** Susanna Styron. Starring Harvey Keitel, Andie MacDowell, John Franklin Sawyer, Scott Terra, Danny Treat, Edward Bunker, narrated by Martin Sheen. Slight but authentic Americana set in 1935 Virginia, where ten-year-old boy Terra has a memorable encounter with former slave Sawyer, who has returned to his homeland, wanting to be buried there. Quiet, leisurely paced but nicely done, with good performances all around. Based on the short story by William Styron, the director's father.

**Shaft** (1971, USA) **C-100m. \*\*½ D:** Gordon Parks. Starring Richard Roundtree, Moses Gunn, Charles Cioffi, Christopher St. John, Drew Bundini Brown, Gwenn Mitchell, Lawrence Pressman, Antonio Fargas. A milestone in blaxploitation cinema, this action thriller became one of the genre's biggest hits and remains a cult film today. Black private detective John Shaft (Roundtree) investigates the kidnapping of the daughter of crime kingpin Gunn. Slow pace, lack of action and suspense do much to lessen film's effect, however, the emphasis is on coolness! Oscar-winner for Isaac Hayes' main theme. Followed by two immediate sequels, beginning with SHAFT'S BIG SCORE!, and a quasi-remake in 2000 starring Samuel L. Jackson in the title role.

**Shaft** (2000, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Singleton. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Vanessa L. Williams, Jeffrey Wright, Christian Bale, Busta Rhymes, Dan Hedaya, Toni Collette, Richard Roundtree. Quasi-remake of the 1971 cult classic about private detective John Shaft (Jackson) and his obsession with pinning down elusive rich brat Bale, who has killed an Afro-American. Stylishly filmed, cool thriller that tries to camouflage plot deficiencies with lots of explosions and shoot-outs, as well as an extensive use of Isaac Hayes' original title theme. Interest wanes dangerously in final third (unless you are delighted by the car chases). Richard Roundtree appears as 'Uncle' John Shaft. Cowritten by director Singleton.

**Shaft's Big Score!** (1972, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Gordon Parks. Starring Richard Roundtree, Moses Gunn, Drew Bundini Brown, Joseph Mascolo, Kathy Imrie, Wally Taylor, Joe Santos. Private eye Shaft (Roundtree) returns in this sequel, battling a crime syndicate which is responsible for the murder of a close friend. A definite improvement over the original, as this entry has more atmosphere, more action and a tighter plot. Watch out for that finale! Followed by SHAFT IN AFRICA.

**Shaft in Africa** (1973, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Guillermin. Starring Richard Roundtree, Frank Finlay, Vonetta McGee, Neda Arneric, Cy Grant, Jacques Herlin, Jacques

Marin. The most violent of the action film series has Shaft undergo training in order to go to Africa to stop slave-traders who have been shipping blacks to France. Roundtree is both smooth and vicious as usual. Perhaps the pinnacle of blaxploitation, and if not, certainly made at the time when the movement and its influence on contemporary cinema was strongest: For example, that same year James Bond had to fight a black villain in LIVE AND LET DIE. Not for the squeamish. The German version was cut by seven minutes. Written by Sterling Silliphant. Followed by a television series and the remake in 2000.

**Shakespeare in Love** (1998, GBR) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Madden. Starring Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Judi Dench, Geoffrey Rush, Colin Firth, Ben Affleck, Rupert Everett. In 1593 Will Shakespeare (Fiennes) suffers a writing blockade and is cured from it by a beautiful young lady (Paltrow), who becomes his mistress and muse. Shakespeare immediately starts writing 'Romeo and Juliet', but their love, it seems, is not to last. Time period nicely captured, although there is a distinctive 1990s flavor to the film that it just can't rub off. The two lead actors breathe life into the cute and a little uninspired story. Shakespeare purists may object to this fictional account of the Bard's love life. Oscars went to Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman for their sharp, witty script, Judi Dench for her (small) role as Queen Elizabeth, and to the lovely Gwyneth Paltrow. The Academy Award for Best Picture seems like a surprise, however, considering the competition that year (THE THIN RED LINE, SAVING PRIVATE RYAN).

**Shallow Grave** (1994, GBR) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Danny Boyle. Starring Kerry Fox, Christopher Ecclestone, Ewan McGregor, Ken Stott. Nifty little thriller about three friends, who live together in a large apartment. When they find their newest roommate dead – and a suitcase full of money under the bed – they decide to keep the money and bury the corpse. However, their triangular relationship is put to an extreme test. Good, not great directorial debut of TRAINSPOTTING director Boyle. Nothing special, but well-made thriller in the vein of BLOOD SIMPLE. Score by Simon Boswell.

**Shanghai Noon** (2000, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tom Dey. Starring Jackie Chan, Owen Wilson, Lucy Liu, Brandon Merrill, Roger Yuan, Xander Berkeley, Jason Connery, Yuen Biao. Amusing culture clash comedy – much like Jackie Chan's RUSH HOUR – about a Chinese fighter (Chan), who must travel to the Wild West to rescue a kidnapped princess (Liu). The greenhorn teams up with a cunning cowboy (Wilson) to complete this task. Some funny ideas, quite engaging, but film is overlong and the comedy outshines the action (can you believe that?). For Jackie Chan fans.

**Shanghai Triad** (1995, ROC/FRA) **C-109m. \*\*\* D:** Zhang Yimou. Starring Gong Li, Li Baotian, Li Suejian, Shun Chun, Wang Xiao Xiao. Extraordinary film (by an extraordinary filmmaker) about young boy who comes to Shanghai to serve mistress of the head of an underworld organization. Stunningly filmed gangster drama looks almost too beautiful, every frame is a masterful composition. Plot has its weaknesses, especially in deciding which character to focus on, the mistress's or the boy's. The latter is not convincingly portrayed. Gong Li is fine as singer, who realizes only after some time (in contrast to the boy, who learns in a matter of days) that the underworld is mean and cruel. The wrapping is more interesting than the content, so to speak.

**Shanks** (1974, USA) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** William Castle. Starring Marcel Marceau, Tsilla Chelton, Philippe Clay, Larryishop, William Castle. Director Castle's last film is macabre fantasy about a deaf-mute puppeteer, who is hired by an old recluse (also Marceau) to help him with experiments that can remote control dead animals - and people! Obscure little film with a fine score is highly interesting to watch - even if it bogs down a little towards the end. Unavailable for many years.

**Shaolin Death Squad** (1977, HGK) **C-84m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Joseph Kuo (=Kuo Nanhung). Starring Carter Wang, Ku Lung, Yang Wei. A despotic ruler sends two fighters after a supposedly rebellious general, who takes refuge in a shaolin monastery. Poor eastern completely disregards characterization and offers nonstop action. This becomes tedious after a while, especially because the fight scenes are rather lame. Original version runs longer, the German video version lacked all credits.

**Shaolin Master and the Kid** (1980, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Jen Yao-Tung. Starring Yeuh Hua, Tang Fei, Chen Sheng. A shaolin master, who is travelling through the country with a small kid, is pursued by a group of men who want to kill him. Episodic eastern with typical revenge motives utilizes themes from other movies, even a beautiful score sequence by Ennio Morricone!

**Shao-lin Si Di Si** (1982, HGK/ROC) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Hsu Sen, Leung Wing-Tai. Starring Zhang Feng-Yi, Wang Yiu-Pin, Wang Yi. A thief is after Buddha's tooth, which has been purloined from a monastery. Standard eastern comes up with ok choreography and is quite entertaining, but plot is petty and boring. Original version may run a bit longer.

**Shaolin Temple** (1976, HGK) **C-83m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Chang Cheh. Starring David Chiang, Alexander Fu-Sheng, Ti Lung, Chi Kuan-Chun. Below-average eastern about several youngsters who yearn to be taught the skill of Kung Fu in a Shaolin temple and eventually defend it against Manchu warriors after receiving a profound education. Action is restricted to the final twenty minutes. You might fall asleep before that, unless you are terribly interested in how Kung Fu is taught. Director Cheh has done better.

**Shaolin Wooden Men** (1976, HGK) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lo Wei, Chen Chi-Hwa. Starring Jackie Chan, Kim Kong, Lung Yuen. After witnessing the murder of his father as a child, Chan is traumatized (unable to speak) and enters a Shaolin monastery to learn the art of Kung-Fu. He is taught by a mysterious prisoner in the monastery's dungeon. Poorly paced but more serious than other Chan vehicles, this one takes its time but offers many explosive fights. Not bad, recommended to fans. Best bit: The Wooden Men challenge. Also known as SHAOLIN CHAMBER OF DEATH and 36 WOODEN MEN.

**Shark!** (1969, USA/MEX) **C-92m. \*\* D:** Samuel Fuller. Starring Burt Reynolds, Barry Sullivan, Arthur Kennedy, Silvia Pinal, Enrique Lucero. Odd action drama about drifter Reynolds and his involvement with a group of criminals who intend to dive for gold guarded by sharks. Little action, indifferently done, but not without appeal. Director Fuller distanced himself from the film. Alternative title: MAN-EATER.

**Shark Bait** (2006, USA/KOR) **C-77m. \*\* D:** Howard E. Baker, John Fox. Starring (the voices of) Freddie Prinze Jr., Rob Schneider, Evan Rachel Wood, Donal Logue, Andy Dick, Fran Drescher, John Rhys-Davies, R. Lee Ermey. Animated feature about a little fish on a coral reef, who loses his parents early in life, has trouble with sharks, falls in love and meets a mysterious turtle. Plot and design is awfully similar to that of FINDING NEMO (2003), but story consists only of loosely related vignettes. An okay view for kids, adults will find this rather poor. Also known as THE REEF, and PI'S STORY.

**Sharknado!** (2013, USA) **C-86m. \*½ D:** Anthony C. Ferrante. Starring Ian Ziering, Tara Reid, John Heard. Ridiculous horror trash made for television about a tornado that hits California and washes some hungry sharks ashore. As silly a sit sound, watch this one with the fast forward button, if you must. Followed by a sequel!

**Shark Rosso nell'Oceano** (1984, ITA/FRA) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Michael Sopkiw, Valentine Monnier, William Berger, Gianni Garko, Dagmar Lassander, Iris Peynado, Goffredo Unger. Standard JAWS rip-off about a genetically manipulated shark, who goes on a rampage smashing boats and killing people. Solidly filmed and told, but nothing to get

excited about. For undemanding viewers. Bava's third feature film. English title: DEVIL FISH and MONSTER SHARK.

**Shark Tale** (2004, USA) **C-90m.** \*\*\* D: Bibi Bergeron, Vicky Jenson, Rob Letterman. Starring (the voices of) Will Smith, Robert De Niro, Renée Zellweger, Jack Black, Angelina Jolie, Martin Scorsese, Ziggy Marley, Doug E. Doug, Peter Falk, Christina Aguilera. Funny underwater comedy (a Best Animated Feature nominee) about a fast-talking fish named Oscar (voiced by Will Smith) who yearns for fame and money in the underwater city where he lives. Then he gets mixed up with the mob (sharks voiced by De Niro et al) and their shy offspring. Hilarious ideas, engaging plot, this can stand comparison to FINDING NEMO (2003), although some saw this as a rip-off.

**Shatter** (1974, GBR/HGK) **C-90m.** D: Monte Hellman, Michael Carreras. Starring Stuart Whitman, Ti Lung, Li Li-Li, Peter Cushing, Anton Diffring, Lo Wei. Godawful thriller set in Hong Kong, about international assassin Whitman, who kills an important African politician and finds himself double-crossed by those that hired him. Hong Kong itself is a dangerous place for a hitman. Talky, leaden film whose troubled production really shows. Director Hellman was replaced by producer Carreras. The second and last Hong Kong venture of Hammer Films. Cushing's role is merely an artificial cameo. The Italians made these kinds of films in the mid-1960s! Alternative title: CALL HIM MR. SHATTER.

**Shaun of the Dead** (2004, GBR/FRA/USA) **C-99m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Edgar Wright. Starring Simon Pegg, Kate Ashfield, Nick Frost, Lucy Davis, Dylan Moran, Bill Nighy, Edgar Wright. Hellishly funny horror comedy which bases its plot outline on George Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) and its sequel DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978). Pegg's life is at a crossroads: He is stuck in a low-paid job, his roommate is a parasite, and his girlfriend Ashfield is giving him trouble. No wonder he's not paying attention when London starts being gripped by a zombie epidemic. When he does notice the chaos, he can finally prove what he's worth. Well-directed, often hilarious horror spoof with a knock-out performance by Pegg. Also works in serious sequences, an instant cult hit. Screenplay (by Pegg and the director himself) is a great homage to cult movies. First part in director Wright's Cornetto trilogy, followed by HOT FUZ (2007) and THE WORLD'S END (2013).

**Shaun the Sheep Movie** (2015, GBR/FRA) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Mark Burton, Richard Starzak. Big-screen spin-off of the Aardman TV series around black sheep Shaun. In this movie adventure he follows his farmer into the big city, where he is hospitalized as an amnesiac. Predictable complications ensue when the entire sheep family and the dog try to find their master. Small kids will not notice the lack of narrative momentum, but adults will. It's also not very funny, occasionally witty, perhaps, but it's a far cry from the WALLACE & GROMIT films. There is no intelligible dialogue.

**Shawshank Redemption, The** (1994, USA) **C-142m.** \*\*\*½ D: Frank Darabont. Starring Tim Robbins, Morgan Freeman, Bob Gunton, William Sadler, Clancy Brown, Gil Bellows, Mark Rolston, James Whitmore. Emotionally powerful prison drama about innocent banker Robbins, who is convicted of murder and sent to Shawshank correctional facility serving a life sentence. The intelligent prisoner manages to make friends among the fellow inmates (most notably narrator Freeman) and even the prison personnel, who eagerly embrace Robbins' financial advice. Exquisitely filmed epic deals with twenty years of prison life and strikes all the right notes. Fine performances, good direction and photography (by Coen-regular Roger Deakins), an excellent score (by Thomas Newman) and a thoughtful script (based on Stephen King's short story 'Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption') make this one of the most engrossing pictures of the 1990s. Freeman's voice-over narration is especially lyrical and touching. This was Robbins fourth great movie role after JACOB'S

LADDER (1990), BOB ROBERTS (1992) and THE HUDSUCKER PROXY (1994). He went on to direct DEAD MAN WALKING (1995), also a film about a prison inmate. Written by director Darabont. Nominated for 7 Academy Awards, but (undeservedly) didn't win any.

**She** (1965, GBR) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Day. Starring Ursula Andress, Peter Cushing, Bernard Cribbins, John Richardson, Rosenda Monteros, Christopher Lee. Typically earnest British adaptation of H. Rider Haggard's fantasy novel about three British gentlemen, who venture through the desert and discover mysterious kingdom ruled by beautiful Andress, who's immortal. Colorful adventure with second-rate plot and superficial characters. Photographed by Harry Waxman. Seventh(!) film version of the story, remade twice since. Followed by a sequel in 1968 (THE VENGEANCE OF SHE).

**Sheba, Baby** (1975, USA) **C-90m. \*\* D:** William Girdler. Starring Pam Grier, Austin Stoker, D'Urville Martin, Rudy Challenger. Grier plays a police-woman-turned-private-eye in this okay action movie. She tries to find out who is behind the threats against her father's loan office in Chicago. Good music, some effective action scenes, but revenge formula had worn thin by then. Basically just a retread of Grier's earlier movies like FRIDAY FOSTER, COFFY or FOXY BROWN.

**She-Devil** (1989, USA) **C-99m. \*\*½ D:** Susan Seidelman. Starring Meryl Streep, Roseanne Barr, Ed Begley Jr., Linda Hunt, Sylvia Miles, Elizabeth Peters. Roseanne plays an ugly housewife, who – after her husband walks out on her – decides to ruin his life. Farce in the WAR OF THE ROSES-vein is not always funny but quite amusing, especially Streep's portrayal of the neurotic romance writer, Roseanne's nemesis. A cult film for frustrated housewives. Based on Fay Weldon's novel.

**Sheitan** (2006, FRA) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Kim Chapiron. Starring Vincent Cassel, Olivier Barthelemy, Roxane Mesquida, Nicolas Le Phat Tan, Leila Bekhti, Monica Bellucci. Pretty outrageous movie about five young people, who leave a disco one night, get stuck in the countryside and are taken in by goat herder Cassel and his family of demented weirdos. Even though this sometimes feels like TCM, this is not a horror movie, but an over-the-top satire. Sexual references, nudity, blood and a house full of dolls... perfect ingredients for a cult movie. So outlandish you must keep watching, a guilty pleasure. Mesquida (of KISS OF THE ADMNED fame) and Bekhti are most seductive. Also known as SATAN.

**Sherlock Holmes** (2009, USA/GER) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Guy Ritchie. Starring Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Rachel McAdams, Mark Strong, Eddie Marsan, Robert Maillet, James Fox. Super-stylish revival of the legendary detective, ironically portrayed by Downey Jr. Plot concerns occult society run by Strong, who follows a mysterious (supernatural?) plan to overthrow the government. Holmes' assistant Law is planning to marry, and Holmes himself is faced with the involvement of his ex-wife McAdams. Performed with gusto among great sets, but best thing about this slightly overlong period piece is Hans Zimmer's brilliant score. Sequels most welcome!

**Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows** (2011, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Guy Ritchie. Starring Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Rachel McAdams, Jared Harris, Noomi Rapace, Stephen Fry, Paul Anderson. Exciting sequel offers more of the same tongue-in-cheek antics. Homes spoils Dr. Watson's wedding and honeymoon as the two must hurry to stop evil Dr. Moriarty's plan to plunge the world into war. Excellent production design and superb performances by its stars make this a lot of fun to watch, despite meandering, overly complicated plotline. Downey Jr. makes the role of Holmes his own like Johnny Depp did with Captain Jack Sparrow. Director Ritchie offers the same flashy stylistics, and Hans Zimmer's fine score is reused.

**She's All That** (1999, USA) **C-95m.** **\*\*½ D:** Robert Iscove. Starring Freddie Prinze, Jr., Rachael Leigh Cook, Matthew Lillard, Paul Walker, Jody Lin O'Keefe, Kevin Pollak, Anna Paquin, Kieran Culkin, Tim Matheson, Alexis Arquette, Sarah Michelle Gellar. Utterly predictable but entertaining teen romance about high school hunk Prinze, Jr., and a bet that forces him to turn ugly duckling Cook into the prom queen. Of course, he falls in love with her, and it turns out she's not so bad looking as everybody thought. Considering the plot, this is as good as it could get.

**She's the One** (1996, USA) **C-96m.** **\*\* D:** Edward Burns. Starring Jennifer Aniston, Cameron Diaz, Edward Burns, John Mahoney, Maxine Bahns, Mike McGlone, Leslie Mann, Anita Gillette, Frank Vincent. Supposedly hip and unusual romantic comedy focusing on two dissimilar brothers, one of whom is married but cheats on his wife (Aniston), and the other marries a woman after knowing her for 24 hours. Quite amusing, if not altogether believable plot complications ensue. Characters are hardly likable (except Aniston's) and film's funny, off-beat tone fades out in unsatisfactory finale. Executive produced by Robert Redford. The songs are by Tom Petty.

**Shikoku** (1999, JAP) **C-100m.** **\*\*\* D:** Shunichi Nagasaki. Starring Yui Natsukawa, Michitaka Tsutsui, Chiaki Kuriyama, Toshie Negishi, Ren Osugi. Unusual romantic horror film, a mystery chiller in the new Japanese tradition: After twenty years, Tsutsui returns to her hometown and friends, but must learn that one of her best friends has died. It turns out that her mother has initiated a rite that could bring her back from the dead – and other dead people with it. Much less spectacular than it sounds, often uneven and slowly paced, but still fascinating to watch. Good score, elaborate photography, impressive mystical finale, should appeal to horror fans, despite its drawbacks. From the producer of RINGU (1998).

**Shin Gojira** (2016, JAP) **C-120m.** **SCOPE \*\* D:** Hideaki Anno, Shinji Higuchi. Starring Hiroki Hasegawa, Satomi Ishihara, Jun Kunimura. Unremarkable remake (or umpteenth sequel) of the Japanese GODZILLA movies. A giant creature surfaces in Tokyo Bay and metamorphoses into Godzilla. The army is trying to control it, then destroy it. Updated special effects may be the only reason to watch this, but they are overwhelmed by endless discussions on how to stop the monster. Rather superfluous. English title: SHIN GODZILLA.

**Shinkansen Daibakuha** (1975, JAP) **C-152m.** **SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Junya Sato. Starring Ken Takakura, Shinichi Chiba (=Sonny Chiba), Kei Yamamoto, Eiji Go, Akira Oda, Raita Ryu, Takashi Shimura. Japanese disaster movie that – despite being an imitation of Irwin Allen's movies at the time – later served as a blueprint for SPEED (1994). A criminal and his assistants have put a bomb on a high-speed train that will detonate if it slows down below 80km/h (roughly 50 mph). Police and railway officials desperately try to keep the crew calm and find the gangsters before the bomb kills 1,500 passengers. Unlike American disaster movies, this is rather uninterested in the victims but focuses on the criminals and the officials. Surprisingly thoughtful, fairly exciting and kinda cool, despite length and relative lack of action. Also shown at 100m. and 115m. English title: THE BULLET TRAIN.

**Ship of Fools** (1965, USA) **149m.** **\*\*\* D:** Stanley Kramer. Starring Vivien Leigh, Oskar Werner, Simone Signoret, José Ferrer, Lee Marvin, Jose Greco, George Segal, Heinz Rühmann, Michael Dunn. Famous adaptation of Katherine Anne Porter's novel about diverse characters aboard a cruise ship from Mexico to pre-WW2 Germany. Superbly acted drama GRAND HOTEL-style seems to have deteriorated over the years. Some pretentious dialogue, artificial situations in supposed classic that seems like it was made in the early 1950s. Good black-and-white photography by Ernest Laszlo (he won an Academy Award). Score by Ernest Gold.

**Shipping News, The** (2001, USA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lasse Hallström. Starring Kevin Spacey, Julianne Moore, Judi Dench, Cate Blanchett, Pete Postlethwaite, Scott Glenn, Rhys Ifans. Engrossing drama, adapted from the novel by E. Annie Proulx. After a disastrous marriage Spacey has lost most of his self confidence. One day he is visited by his aunt Dench, who takes him and his daughter to the home of their ancestors, Newfoundland. This marks a unique chance for Spacey to start a new life. Good storytelling, fine performances; some plot strands are underdeveloped, though. Excellent score by Christopher Young, good photography by Oliver Stapleton.

**Shisha no Gakuensai** (2000, JAP) **C-101m. \*\*** D: Tetsuo Shinohara. Starring Kyôko Fukada, Asahi Uchida, Masaya Kato, Thane Camus. Thriller set a Japanese high school, where a girl has just committed suicide and some students want to stage her last play. Then a killer starts stalking them. Poorly paced and timed film makes some interesting reference to slasher movies, especially Italian ones, but romantic, TV-movie-style touch pretty much ruins it. Based on a novel by Jirô Akagawa. International title SCHOOL DAY OF THE DEAD is terribly misleading.

**Shiver** (2008, SPA) **C-95m. \*\*\*½** D: Isidro Ortiz. Starring Junio Valverde, Blanca Suárez, Jimmy Barnatán, Mar Sodupe, Francesc Orella. A teenager (Valverde) with a rare allergy to sunlight moves with his mother into a mountain village. Once there he is confronted with a murderous beast in the woods. And the townspeople don't seem to like strangers very much... Fairly suspenseful and well-made, but plot is second-rate and turns into a BLAIR WITCH PROJECT meets [REC] type of film. Valverde has a great way of looking terrified, but even that wears thin. Also known as ESKALOFRIO.

**Shivers** (1975, CDN) **C-80m. \*½** D: David Cronenberg. Starring Paul Hampton, Joe Silver, Lynn Lowry, Allen Magicovsky, Barbara Steele, Susan Petrie. Cult director Cronenberg's second feature (following a 1969 film that ran little over an hour) starts promising but doesn't go beyond its premise of ugly worm-like parasites turning people into sex maniacs. Film's twisted sense of humor won't have anyone laughing but horror fans. Not really that disgusting, though. Produced by Ivan Reitman (who also composed the score). Originally 87m. Other titles: THEY CAME FROM WITHIN and THE PARASITE MURDERS.

**Shock Waves** (1977, USA) **C-85m. \*\*** D: Ken Wiederhorn. Starring Peter Cushing, John Carradine, Brooke Adams, Luke Halpin. A group of tourists and fishermen are almost hit by a huge ship and end up on an island. In an abandoned hotel, the only inhabitant, SS commander Cushing utters crazy warnings. Indeed, there are underwater Nazi zombies ready to come out of their watery graves. Interesting idea done with a serious approach, but film bogs down immensely in second half. The score is not bad, but there's nothing really happening.

**Shogun Assassin** (1980, JAP/USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Robert Houston. Starring Tomisaburo Wakayama, Kayo Matsuo, Minoru Okhi, Akiji Kobayashi, Shin Kishida, Akiji Tomikawa. Actually not a movie on its own but a compilation of the first two of the famous LONE WOLF & CUB series about a travelling assassin, who has fallen from grace and is being chased by shogun warriors. He is pushing his baby son in a cart and engages in combat in all kinds of situations. Some astounding action scenes, with buckets of gore, but it's terribly uneven, the pace is just not right. You should stick with the originals. A follow-up to LIGHTNING SWORDS OF DEATH (1974), which used footage from the third movie in the six-part series.

**Shooting Fish** (1997, GBR) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Stefan Schwartz. Starring Dan Futterman, Stuart Townsend, Kate Beckinsale, Claire Cox, Dominic Mafham. Likable, superficial comedy about two friends (American Futterman and British Townsend) who 'earn' money by

'shooting fish', ripping people off by selling them things which don't exist. Beckinsale, their new secretary, provides the love interest. She thinks they are modern-day Robin Hoods, giving the money to orphanages. No depth whatsoever, but quite entertaining. At its best when portraying the budding relationship between Townsend and Beckinsale. Released in the U.S. at 93m.

**Shopgirl** (2005, USA/GBR/SUI) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Anand Tucker. Starring Claire Danes, Steve Martin, Jason Schwartzman, Bridgette Wilson, Sam Bottoms, Frances Conroy, Rebecca Pidgeon. Romantic comedy drama about a girl from Vermont (Danes), who's been living in Los Angeles for a while now, working as a shop assistant at Saeks. Then she finds herself caught between two men, disorganized music lover Schwartzman and suave rich-man Martin. Film is pretty much what it is. A harmless drama with okay performances, not very romantic, rather predictable. Written by Steve Martin, based on his own novella.

**Shorts** (2009, USA/UAE) **C-89m. \*\*\*** D: Robert Rodriguez. Starring Jimmy Bennett, Jake Short, Kat Dennings, Trevor Gagnon, Devon Gearhart, Jolie Vanier, Rebel Rodriguez, Leo Howard, Leslie Mann, Jon Cryer, William H. Macy, James Spader. Typically outrageous children's fantasy by the maker of the SPY KIDS films about an outsider, who finds a wishing rock and wishes for the craziest things imaginable. The story is told in five short episodes (hence the title), but beware, not chronologically. Still, entertaining, exciting and filled with creative ideas, a thrill-ride, especially for boys. Vanier is terrific, she'll remind you of a young Christina Ricci. Long title: SHORTS: THE ADVENTURES OF THE WISHING ROCK.

**Shot in the Dark, A** (1964, GBR/USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, Elke Sommer, George Sanders, Herbert Lom, Tracy Reed, Graham Stark, Burt Kwouk, Bryan Forbes. The bumbling inspector Clouseau from Edwards' THE PINK PANTHER returns in this farcical comedy based on the play *L'Idiot* by Marcel Achard. He falls in love with the prime suspect (Sommer) in a murder case and is convinced that landlord Sanders has committed the crime. Stagy, uneven, not always funny, but most of the gags hit home. Some even consider this to be the best of the series. Good song ("Sidewalks of Paris"), score by Henry Mancini. Cowritten by William Peter Blatty (THE EXORCIST, THE NINTH CONFIGURATION). Features the first appearances of Clouseau-associated (and much-loved) characters Cato (Kwouk) and Dreyfus (Lom). Followed ten years later by THE RETURN OF THE PINK PANTHER. INSPECTOR CLOUSEAU, a film starring Alan Arkin, was made in 1968 but has nothing to do with the series.

**Show Down** (1972, HGK) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*** D: N.N. Cast: N.N. A stranger saves a young woman from a raiding army and brings her to an inn, where he meets the woman he is supposed to marry. He discovers that her family is a band of 'ghost-riders'. Comic-book style eastern with very little action but an ambitious plot whose elements are only loosely tied together. Nicely shot, though, from unusual perspectives. Produced by Goh Thian Teng.

**Show Down** (1997, USA) **C-99m. Ⓜ** D: Sidney J. Furie. Starring Peter Weller, Dennis Hopper, Tia Carrere, David Alan Grier, Joe Pantoliano, Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa, Peter Coyote, Julie McCullough. Absolutely horrible action film about ex-con (and ex-cop!) Weller who goes to Las Vegas with his wife Carrere to get a divorce, but soon he is involved in a big-scale robbery of Hopper's casino! Set-up is okay but goes nowhere from there. The cast is the only interest here.

**Showgirls** (1995, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Elizabeth Berkeley, Kyle MacLachlan, Gina Gershon, Glenn Plummer, Robert Davi, Alan Rachins, Gina Ravera, Lin Tucci, Greg Travis, Al Ruscio, Patrick Bristow. Self-professed dancer Berkeley arrives in Las Vegas and works herself up on the career ladder, meeting all kinds of lurid characters on the way. Long, trashy plot is partly offset by the aggressive 'neon' look of the film and

Verhoeven's terrific direction (particularly during the dance scenes). Earned hisses from many critics, and it is offensive and overblown, but this is just the way Las Vegas is. Berkeley's vicious performance may be off-putting to some viewers, MacLachlan is cool as one of her 'mentors'. Joe Eszterhas (BASIC INSTINCT) wrote the screenplay. Verhoeven was the right man to make this; evidently, it's a matter of taste (like most of the director's films).

**Shrek** (2001, USA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Andrew Adamson, Vicky Jenson. Starring (the voices of) Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, John Lithgow, Vincent Cassel, Jim Cummings. Big box-office smash about an ogre (Myers), who only wants to be left in peace in his swamp, and must accept a mission by evil count Lithgow to rescue a princess to get just that. Well-animated, funny fairy tale spoof. Good for kids, although only adults will get all of the jokes. Based on the book by William Steig. Winner of the first Best Animated Feature Oscar. Followed by a sequel in 2004.

**Shrek 2** (2004, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: Andrew Adamson, Kelly Asbury, Conrad Vernon. Starring (the voices of) Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Julie Andrews, Antonio Banderas, John Cleese, Rupert Everett, Jennifer Saunders, Larry King. Shrek the Ogre returns in this bigger, more spectacular sequel as he and his bride get an invitation to her parents' kingdom. There, Prince Charming thinks he has been cheated out of his right to wed the princess, his mother, the Fairy Godmother, tries all her wizardry to bring Shrek and Fiona apart. Less original and cute, but still somehow seems better, more lively. There are certainly more jokes, although most of them are aimed at grown-ups (again).

**Shrek the Third** (2007, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½** D: Chris Miller. Starring (the voices of) Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews, John Cleese, Rupert Everett, Eric Idle, Justin Timberlake, Larry King, Ian McShane. Lesser sequel continues story from SHREK 2 (2004): With Shrek and Fiona still being in the kingdom of Far, Far Away, Shrek will become successor to the dying king if he doesn't find distant relative. In the meantime, Prince Charming is gathering all fairy-tale villains to create their own happy ending. And Fiona announces she is pregnant! Still funny enough for a few laughs, but plot is lacking momentum and just seems like a retread of the formula.

**Shrieker** (1997, USA) **C-74m. \*\*** D: Victoria Sloane (= David DeCoteau). Starring Rick Bouna, Chris Boyd, Roger Crowe, Alison Cuffe, Tanya Dempsey, Jamie Gannon. A mystical creature roams the halls of a deserted hospital, where six students have illegally taken residence. It turns out the ugly monster needs five victims to return into its dimension. Not bad horror thriller delivers a few shocks and is quite well-filmed, though abrupt conclusion decreases rating by half a star. Produced by Full Moon Pictures.

**Shurayukihime** (1973, JAP) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Toshiya Fujita. Starring Meiko Kaji, Toshio Kurosawa, Masaaki Daimon, Miyoko Akaza, Shinichi Uchida. Japanese revenge epic that served as a blueprint for Quentin Tarantino's KILL BILL movies. Kaji is a 20-year-old woman, who is driven by revenge that she must exact for her mother who died giving birth to her. Four people had raped and abused her for three days and it is those that she must seek out and kill. Cold but powerful movie with purple-prose narrative, excessive use of gore and good widescreen photography. Followed by a sequel in 1974. English titles: LADY SNOWBLOOD, BLOOD SNOW, SNOW OF BLOOD.

**Shura Yukihime** (2001, JAP) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Shinsuke Sato. Starring Hideaki Ito, Yumiko Shaku, Shirô Sano, Yoichi Numata, Kyusaku Shimada. Manga adaptation about a 20-year-old warrior "princess", who must come to terms with her family's dark history and decide whether she wants to keep being part of or run from underground syndicate which works as an assassination squad for the Japanese monarchy in the year 2500. Highly uneven mixture between action fantasy and low-budget post-apocalyptic drama. The action is good

but the story doesn't add up to much. Has very little to do with the 1973 revenge classic. English title: THE PRINCESS BLADE.

**Shutter** (2004, THA) **C-97m**. \*\*\* D: Parkpoom Wongpoom, Banjong Pisanthanakun. Starring Ananda Everingham, Natthaweeranuch Thongmee, Achita Sikamana, Unnop Chanpaibool. After a hit-and-run accident on the road, a young couple, photographer Everingham and his girlfriend, are haunted by the ghost of the dead girl, who starts appearing on his photographs. The 'haunting'-plot has become a genre convention, but film is well-directed, atmospheric and endowed with a superb score. Watch! Also known as SHUTTER: THEY ARE AROUND US.

**Shutter Island** (2010, USA) **C-138m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Martin Scorsese. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo, Ben Kingsley, Max von Sydow, Michelle Williams, Emily Mortimer, Patricia Clarkson, Jackie Earle Haley, Ted Levine, John Carroll Lynch, Elias Koteas, Robin Bartlett. Riveting psycho thriller drama marks a welcome return to director Scorsese's CAPE FEAR (1991) days. DiCaprio plays a troubled 1950s cop, who takes a case on a prison island. Together with his partner Ruffalo, he investigates the inexplicable disappearance of an inmate. Does ward Kingsley know more than he pretends? Perfectly cast, expertly filmed thriller is stunningly original – and manages to include nods to Hitchcock, Bava and Kubrick – it especially recalls the latter's SHINING (1980). A must-see, based on the novel by Dennis Lehane, screenplay by Laeta Kalogridis.

**Sid and Nancy** (1986, USA) **C-111m**. \*\*\* D: Alex Cox. Starring Gary Oldman, Chloe Webb, Drew Schofield, David Hayman, Debby Bishop, Courteney Love. Depressing, bleak but compelling look at the lives of two protagonists of the punk rock movement, Sid Vicious, member of the legendary Sex Pistols and his American girlfriend Nancy. Unrelenting drama shows that despite their success, Sid and Nancy's self-destructive behaviour left no room for enjoyment. Oldman and Webb give stand-out performances. A must for punk rock fans, others may find it off-putting. Courteney Love has a brief bit.

**Sieben Männer der Sumuru, Die** (1968, GER/SPA/ITA/USA) **C-83m**. D: Jess Franco. Starring Shirley Eaton, Richard Wyler, George Sanders, Walter Rilla. Trash film about the exploits of super criminal Sumuru, who has established an empire in the Amazon jungle, attempting to take over the world. Slow, meaningless, nonsensical pulp fiction. Grade Z stuff from the notorious Jess Franco.

**7 Zwerge** (2004, GER) **C-95m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Sven Unterwaldt Jr. Starring Otto Waalkes, Heinz Hoenig, Mirco Nontschew, Boris Aljinovic, Markus Majowski, Martin Schneider, Ralf Schmitz, Cosma Shiva Hagen, Nina Hagen, Hans-Werner Olm, Atze Schröder, Christian Tramitz, Mavie Hörbiger, Helge Schneider, Harald Schmidt, Tom Gerhardt. Silly spoof of fairy tales, in particular the Grimm's fairy tale *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* about the title characters, 7 men, who have all opted to live in the forest after a woman has disappointed them. Suddenly they are confronted with an innocent beauty (C.S. Hagen), who is sought after by the evil queen (N. Hagen). Some laughs, but lots of low-brow humor, not always funny. Followed by a sequel in 2006.

**Sie Tötete in Ekstase** (1970, GER/SPA) **C-77m**. \*\* D: Frank Hollman (=Jess Franco). Starring Susann Korda (=Soledad Miranda), Fred Williams, Howard Vernon, Paul Müller, Ewa Strömberg, Jess Franco, Horst Tappert. Typical sex-and-crime potboiler of that period, about doctor Williams, who conducts experiments with human embryos, which enrages the medical board. They ban him from the profession, which leads to his suicide. His wife cannot bear to live without him, so she goes on a murder spree and kills those she thinks responsible for his death. Rather inept, but any film with that cast and production year can't be bad. Miranda's last film (she died aged 27 in a road accident). Written by director Franco. The

classical parts of the score are by Bruno Nicolai. Alternative titles: SHE KILLED IN ECSTASY, MRS. HYDE.

**Signale – Ein Weltraumabenteuer** (1970, GDR/POL) **C-89m. SCOPE\***½ D: Gottfried Kolditz. Starring Gojko Mitic, Wolfgang Kieling, Iurie Darie. East-German/Polish coproduction about a space mission to rescue ship that has mysteriously disappeared. Absolutely tedious and uneven, redeemed somewhat by okay production values and camerawork. Comic relief is completely misplaced, dialogue is trivial (the Captain is asked at one point if he likes his tea with milk or lemon!). A curio at best. Based on motives from Carlos Rasch's novel *Asteroidenjäger*. Aka SIGNALS (with various subtitles).

**Sign of Four, The** (1983, GBR) **C-97m. \*\***½ D: Desmond Davis. Starring Ian Richardson, David Healy, Cherie Lunghi, Terence Rigby, Thorley Walters, John Pedrick, Joe Melia, Clive Merrison. Sherlock Holmes is asked by a young lady (Lunghi) to investigate the death of her father, presenting a map (signed by four men) which might lead to a treasure. Average puzzler elevated by Richardson's enjoyable performance as the famous sleuth. Rest of cast not very convincing (although the midget is pretty fierce). Good TV fare. Tobacco experiment previously realized in Billy Wilder's THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

**Signs** (2002, USA) **C-106m. \*\*\*\*** D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix, Rory Culkin, Abigail Breslin, Cherry Jones, M. Night Shyamalan. Patricia Kalmeber. Top-notch chiller from the maker of THE SIXTH SENSE (1999) and UNBREAKABLE (2000): Ex-reverend Gibson, still mourning for his wife who died by accident, is baffled to find giant patterns in his cornfields, suggesting that someone – or something – has visited him and his family from outer space. His little son's babyphone is already receiving strange sound patterns... are they voices? Quiet and low-key, but so powerfully suspenseful it will make you gag with excitement. A rare gem of a movie that does everything right; multiple viewing recommended. This superb cross between NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (1977) was written and produced by director Shyamalan. Excellent score by James Newton Howard. Photographed by Tak Fujimoto.

**Sigpress Contro Scotland Yard** (1968, ITA/GER) **C-96m. \*½** D: Guido Zurli. Starring George Martin, Ingrid Schoeller, Karin Field, Paolo Carlini, Gloria Paul, Klaus Kinski, Dick Palmer (=Mimmo Palmara). James Bond spoof about super-clever spy Sigpress (Martin), who helps find stolen goods but always takes 10% of the value for himself. Disjointed, weak plot is poison for anyone's attention. Based on a novel by Mike Widborg. Joe D'Amato (as Aristide Massaccesi) photographed the picture. Also known as THE PSYCHOPATH.

**Silence of the Lambs, The** (1991, USA) **C-118m. \*\*\*½** D: Jonathan Demme. Starring Jodie Foster, Anthony Hopkins, Scott Glenn, Ted Levine, Anthony Heald, Brooke Smith, Diane Baker, Kasi Lemmons, Charles Napier, Tracey Walter, Roger Corman, Chris Isaak. First-rate psycho thriller about FBI agent Foster, who is trying to track down serial killer and must ask psychoanalyst Hopkins, a murderer and cannibal, for help. This aid comes at a great price, however. Cleverly directed by Demme, whose subjective camera angles lend the film great immediacy. Suspenseful, intelligent, you could not ask more. The brilliant Hopkins won an Oscar, so did Foster, director Demme and the screenwriter Ted Tally, who adapted Thomas Harris' best-seller. In MANHUNTER, an earlier Harris adaptation, Hopkins character is played by Brian Cox. Followed by a sequel in 2001.

**Silent Hill** (2006, USA/CDN/JAP/FRA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Christophe Gans. Starring Radha Mitchell, Sean Bean, Laurie Holden, Deborah Kara Unger, Kim Coates, Tanya Allen, Alice Krige, Jodelle Ferland. When her daughter starts having nightmares about a place called Silent Hill, Mitchell decides to find out where it is and ends up in a ghost town. Then her daughter goes missing, and creatures start surfacing. Is the place doomed? Video game

adaptation by Roger Avary (of PULP FICTION fame) unfortunately proves that the interactivity of such games cannot easily be translated into a traditionally plotted film. Those who have played the game might find some merit here. Others will complain that it makes little sense. A major disappointment from the director of CRYING FREEMAN (1995) and LE PACTE DES LOUPS (2001). His visuals are the movie's only redeeming feature.

**Silent Hill: Revelation 3D** (2012, USA/CDN/FRA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael J. Bassett. Starring Adelaide Clemens, Kit Harington, Carrie-Ann Moss, Sean Bean, Radha Mitchell, Malcolm McDowell, Martin Donovan, Deborah Kara Unger. Just before her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Clemens' father disappears, who always protected her and warned her against the horror town Silent Hill. Now it seems the creatures are coming for her. She finds a companion in young Harington and enters Silent Hill in search of her father. Pretty gross horror sequel plays like any HELLRAISER sequel, with over-the-top monster creations and splatter effects. Improves only towards the end when it becomes truly visceral. For die-hard horror fans, although the plot sucks.

**Silent Night, Deadly Night** (1984, USA) **C-84m. \*\*** D: Charles E. Sellier Jr. Starring Lilyan Chauvin, Gilmer McCormick, Toni Nero, Robert Brian Wilson, Linnea Quigley. Typical 80s horror film about orphan Wilson, whose traumatic childhood leads to his going crazy at Christmas, murdering everyone in the way. OK gore effects, not that bad. Followed by four sequels! Also shown at 79m. and 81m. Alternative title: SLAYRIDE.

**Silent Night, Deadly Night Part 2** (1987, USA) **C-88m. \*\*** D: Lee Harry. Starring Eric Freeman, James Newman, Elizabeth Kaitan, Jean Miller, Linnea Quigley. The killer from the first film had a brother... and he is telling his whole story to a psychiatrist. The first half of the film is nothing but a summary of the original, with all the murder scenes intact, and continues it with the brother's Santa psychosis and subsequent axe murders. About as stupid as it gets, but director Harry keeps things at a swift pace (especially by his dynamic editing) and endows film with a quite daring finale.

**Silent Partner, The** (1978, CDN) **C-110m. \*\*\*½** D: Daryl Duke. Starring Elliott Gould, Christopher Plummer, Susannah York, Céline Lomez, Michael Kirby, John Candy. Unique, intriguing thriller about timid, boring bank clerk Gould, who one day finds out in advance that his bank is going to be robbed and decides to pull off a scheme. The bank robber (Plummer), realizing that he has been fouled, is out for violent revenge. One-of-a-kind film, don't miss this one. Based on Andres Bodelsen's novel *Think of a Number*. Screenplay written by Curtis Hanson.

**Silent Retreat** (2013, CDN) **C-85m. SCPOE \*\*** D: Tricia Lee. Starring Chelsea Jenish, Sofia Banzhaf, Robert Nolan, Jen Pogue. A young woman is sent to a camp of delinquent women somewhere in the Canadian wilderness. There they must keep absolutely silent and are subjected to a kind of brainwashing by camp doctor Nolan. And there seems to be something lurking in the woods... Not bad horror remains appropriately vague as to the what and why, but never mounts enough tension to thrill.

**Silent Scream** (1979, USA) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Denny Harris. Starring Rebecca Balding, Cameron Mitchell, Avery Schreiber, Barbara Steele, Yvonne De Carlo. Quite well-plotted and paced horror chiller about young student Balding, who rents a room in De Carlo's secluded villa at the seaside, where a murderer is on the loose. Not bad at all, with a good score by Roger Kellaway, but never rises above the material.

**Sil Jong** (2009, KOR) **C-99m. \*\*** D: Kim Sung-Hong. Starring Chu Ja-Hyeon, Ha Min-hee, Heo Gi-ho, Hwang Eun-jeong, Jeon Se-hong. Standard thriller about a young woman who disappears in rural village and her sister who goes in search of her. A serial killer keeps her locked up on his farm and abuses her. Not nearly as good as some Korean psycho thrillers

of late, this one focuses on torture and has no surprises to offer. Acting is okay. Also known as MISSING.

**Silver Hawk** (2004, HGK) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jingle Ma. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Richie Ren, Luke Goss, Brandon Chang, Daming Chen. Hong Kong gets its own masked avenger with Silver Hawk (Yeoh), a businesswoman with an alter ego that tries to eradicate crime. Here she battles a megalomaniac (Goss), who wants to steal an invention that can be used to control the minds of people. Her sidekick: A cop that she used to know as a child. Second-rate plot, but action scenes are well-done, with the finale the highlight of the picture. Yeoh also produced this one.

**Silver Linings Playbook** (2012, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David O. Russell. Starring Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Robert de Niro, Jacki Weaver, Chris Tucker, Julia Stiles. Kind-of original drama about psychotic Cooper, who moves back in with his parents after spending time in a mental institution. He refuses to give up hope of getting back together with his ex-wife, and just then equally troubled Lawrence enters his life, whose husband has died. Can they support each other in this difficult time? Well-acted slice-of-life has a few contrivances too many to make it thoroughly ring true – the comic undertones may even be completely superfluous. Written by the director, based on a novel by Matthew Quick.

**Silver Slime** (1981, FRA) **C-15m. n/r D:** Christophe Gans. Starring Aissa Djabri, Isabelle Wendling. Short film by CRYING FREEMAN and LE PACTE DES LOUPS director Christophe Gans, made when he was twenty-one. A young woman is stalked by a leather-clad assassin – or is she? Interesting, over-the-top experiment, an homage to Italian slasher movies. Dedicated to Mario Bava, who died a year earlier, though this is closer in spirit to a Dario Argento. Gans also edited and scripted.

**Silver Streak** (1976, USA) **C-114m. \*\*½ D:** Arthur Hiller. Starring Gene Wilder, Jill Clayburgh, Richard Pryor, Patrick McGeehan, Ned Beatty, Clifton James, Scatman Crothers, Richard Kiel. Aboard speed train 'Silver Streak', Wilder meets and falls in love with secretary Clayburgh, unaware that she is involved in murder. Meandering thriller comedy is unfortunately neither very thrilling nor funny. Pryor and Wilder give their best in their first film together, but only the final stunt really rocks. Score by Henry Mancini.

**Simple Plan, A** (1998, USA) **C-121m. \*\*½ D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Bill Paxton, Billy Bob Thornton, Bridget Fonda, Brent Briscoe, Gary Cole, Chelcie Ross, Jack Walsh, Becky Ann Baker. Unusual, low-key thriller drama set in wintry rural North America. Paxton is a hard-working, loving family father who stumbles with his brother and a friend over a plane wreck in the middle of the woods and discover a gym bag full of money. Their decision to keep the four million+ dollars is accompanied by a complicating of events later on. Interesting, even intriguing, but awfully slowly paced. Not without merit, however; fine score by Danny Elfman, good acting, and film improves in second half but never really catches fire. Screenplay by Scott B. Smith, based upon his novel.

**Simply Irresistible** (1999, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Mark Tarlov. Starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, Sean Patrick Flanery, Patricia Clarkson, Dylan Baker, Larry Gilliard Jr. Mild-mannered comedy about female chef Gellar, whose creations become something special when a magical crab endows her with extraordinary powers. Pleasant-enough movie for romance addicts and/or fans of the lead actress.

**Simpsons Movie, The** (2007, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** David Silverman. Starring (the voices of) Dan Castellaneta, Julie Kavner, Nancy Cartwright, Yeardley Smith, Harry Shearer, Hank Azaria, Joe Mantegna, Albert Brooks, Tom Hanks. After almost two decades of successful TV work, the Simpsons makers go for the big-screen and lose almost nothing of their quality. Admittedly, the story about president Schwarzenegger(!)'s plans to quarantine

and ultimately destroy Springfield after Homer dumps pig shit into their lake and makes it an ecological hazard is a bit over-the-top, but some of the typical black humor jokes are just as hilarious as in the TV series. A must for fans, good fun for others. Movie buffs will savor the Disney spoofs. Score by Hans Zimmer.

**Si Muore Solo Una Volta** (1967, ITA/SPA) **C-80m. SCOPE** D: Mino Guerrini, Don Reynolds (=Giancarlo Romitelli). Starring Ray Danton, Pamela Tudor, Julio Pena, Silvia Solar. Bottom-of-the-barrel James Bond clone about spy Danton, who investigates weapons dealings in sunny Lebanon. Some explosions, but plot is non-existent. Score by Carlo Savina. English title: YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE(!).

**Simya-ui FM** (2010, KOR) **C-106m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Kim Sang Man. Starring Ae Soo, Yu Ji-tae, Ma Dong-seok, Choi Song-hyeon. A bit contrived but exciting thriller about a radio host, whose midnight talk show has become a cult hit. On her last broadcast, a psycho breaks into her apartment and holds her sister and children hostage, demanding to be put on air. Starts okay, improves later with more suspense, a good performance by the leading lady and Korean filmmaking expertise. Cult movie references (TAXI DRIVER, THE FISHER KING, STRANGER THAN PARADISE) a further plus. English title: MIDNIGHT FM.

**Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas** (2003, USA) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Tim Johnson, Patrick Gilmore. Starring (the voices of) Brad Pitt, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Michelle Pfeiffer, Joseph Fiennes, Dennis Haysbert, Timothy West, Jim Cummings. Fast-paced, exciting update of the Sinbad stories (also spelled Sindbad in some countries) with distinctively modern dialogues. Here, the likable pirate is revealed to be a hedonistic slacker, who is deemed responsible for stealing an important book. Sinbad must seek it out in ten days to avoid a friend's execution. Good digital effects enhance the movie, direction provides excitement. Produced by DreamWorks Studios.

**Sin City** (2005, USA) **C/B&W-124m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez. Starring Jessica Alba, Alexis Bledel, Powers Boothe, Rosario Dawson, Benicio Del Toro, Michael Clarke Duncan, Rick Gomez, Carla Gugino, Josh Hartnett, Rutger Hauer, Jamie King, Michael Madsen, Frank Miller, Brittany Murphy, Clive Owen, Mickey Rourke, Nick Stahl, Bruce Willis, Elijah Wood. Another Robert Rodriguez extravaganza, this adaptation of Frank Miller's comic book series is extremely stylized (appropriately so) and ultra-violent. In the urban hellhole of Basin City, mostly immoral characters fight and kill their way through the night, with stories focusing on aging cop Willis, psychotic giant Rourke, avenger Owen, stripper Alba and an armed gang of hookers, among others. Episodes are loosely linked (a la PULP FICTION), but the plot is not the reason to tune in (though stories *do* catch your attention). The black-and-white look of the comic books is impressively recreated in a completely digital environment and the action set-pieces are stylishly done. This cool comic noir and instant cult film is clearly not for all tastes, though. 'Special guest director' Quentin Tarantino directed the sequence with Owen and Del Toro in the car. Later that year Rodriguez recut the movie and released it as a Special Edition DVD. This version runs 23 minutes longer. Followed by a sequel in 2014.

**Sin City: A Dame to Kill For** (2014, USA) **C/B&W-102m. \*\*\*** D: Robert Rodriguez, Frank Miller. Starring Mickey Rourke, Jessica Alba, Josh Brolin, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Rosario Dawson, Bruce Willis, Eva Green, Powers Boothe, Dennis Haysbert, Ray Liotta, Christopher Meloni, Jeremy Piven, Christopher Lloyd, Jamie King, Juno Temple. Long-awaited sequel to the 2004 graphic novel adaptation is another super-stylish fantasy action thriller. Episodic plot holds your interest throughout the four (related) segments, but it's the elaborate direction and camerawork that ultimately make this worth watching. Green (as an

intoxicating femme fatale) and Boothe (as the evil senator) are the stand-outs in a great cast.

**Sindrome di Stendhal, La** (1996, ITA) **C-118m. \*\*\* D:** Dario Argento. Starring Asia Argento, Thomas Kretschmann, Marco Leonardi, Luigi Diberti, Paolo Bonacelli, Julien Lambroschini, John Quentin, Veronica Lazar. Director Argento's daughter plays a young police woman, specialized on sex crimes, who suffers from the Stendhal Syndrome. Whenever she sees a painting she faints, believing she has entered it. In Florence, she encounters notorious sex killer Kretschmann, who rapes her but lets her live. Now the young woman has to cope with both the syndrome and the consequences of the rape, while searching for the killer in Rome. Complex, suspenseful script, based on Graziella Magherini's novel. Typical Argento stylistics, fine Ennio Morricone score. Argento also scripted and produced. Original running time reportedly 120m. English title: THE STENDHAL SYNDROME.

**Sinful Dwarf, The** (1973, USA/DAN) **C-92m. \*\* D:** Vidal Raski. Starring Torben Bille, Anne Sparrow, Tony Eades, Clara Keller, Werner Hedman. Pretty depraved exploitation film about a midget, who lives with his aging, drinking mother in a former nightclub, where they keep heroin-addicted girls as sex slaves for paying customers. A young couple, Sparrow and Eades, seem to be their next victims. Some amateurish bits, but film is surprisingly not bad. Graphic sex scenes alternate with less graphic (though sadistic) violence. For the B-movie enthusiasts out there. Original Danish title: DVAERGEN. Also known as TEENAGE BRIDE.

**Singe en Hiver, Un** (1962, FRA) **B&W-105m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean Gabin, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Suzanne Flon, Gabrielle Dorziat, Hella Petri, Henri Verneuil. In a little seaside community boozing war veteran Gabin swears off alcohol one day after miraculously surviving an air raid. Years later a lovesick young Spaniard (Belmondo) tempts him to return to his old habit. Catalyst drama benefits from fine performances, atmosphere, but is quite depressing. The plot also never catches fire. Verneuil reportedly considered this his best film. Based on a novel by Antoine Blondin. English title: A MONKEY IN WINTER, and IT'S HOT IN HELL.

**Singles** (1992, USA) **C-99m. \*\*\* D:** Cameron Crowe. Starring Bridget Fonda, Campbell Scott, Kyra Sedgwick, Sheila Kelley, Jim True-Frost, Matt Dillon, Bill Pullman, Matt Le Gros, Eric Stoltz, Jeremy Piven, Tom Skerritt, Eddie Vedder, Cameron Crowe, Chris Cornell, Tim Burton. Slight but likable slice-of-life set in Seattle, an important breeding ground for new (grunge) rock bands in the early 90s. Film follows affairs and frustrations of several singles, like Fonda's fling with rock "star" Dillon, or Sedgwick's surprising pregnancy. Not always on target but refreshingly natural; it also features a lot of rock stars of the time in cameos (like members of Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Alice in Chains, who all contributed to the soundtrack). Director Crowe (ALMOST FAMOUS) also scripted and coproduced. Photographed by Tak Fujimoto.

**Sinister** (2012, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Scott Derrickson. Starring Ethan Hawke, Juliet Rylance, James Ransone, Fred Dalton Thompson, Clare Foley. Oppressively scary horror movie provides a twist to the usual found-footage flicks. True-crime writer Hawke moves into a house that was a crime scene, intending to do research on the murder of the family that lived there before. Then he discovers rolls of Super 8 films in the attic that turn out to be snuff films, and a supernatural presence emerges... Not completely successful but undeniably scary, delivers some great shocks. Good work by Hawke. Excellent, unnerving score by Christopher Young. From the director of the good THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE (2005) and the blockbuster THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (2008).

**Sinister 2** (2015, USA/GBR) **C-97m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Ciarán Foy. Starring James Ransone, Shannyn Sossamon, Robert Sloan, Dartanian Sloan, Lea Coco. Silly sequel takes a minor

character from the first movie and sends him to Sossamon and her sons, who have moved into a house by an old church, where the demon may look for his next victims. The boys make contact with ghost children. Unimaginative and uninvolved, it's incredible that Scott Derrickson cowrote this. Director Foy's first feature CITADEL (2012) was also much better.

**Sin Nombre, Los** (1999, SPA) **C-99m**. \*\*\* D: Jaume Balagueró. Starring Emma Vilarasau, Karra Elejalde, Tristán Ulloa, Toni Sevilla, Brendan Price, Jordi Dauder. Original thriller about Vilarasau, whose daughter was found murdered, mutilated beyond recognition five years ago. Now, she receives a strange phone call from someone who claims to be her daughter, and she asks former policeman Elejalde for help, who's also lost someone important. It turns out her daughter may have fallen prey to a secret organization called The Nameless, which has its roots in Nazi Germany. Intriguing plot keeps you guessing until the chilling end. Promising debut by director Balagueró (FRAGILES, REC), based on the novel by Ramsey Campbell. Photographed by Xavi Gimenez (TRANSSIBERIAN, THE MACHINIST). English title: THE NAMELESS.

**Sirène du Mississippi, La** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-123m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: François Truffaut. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Cathérine Deneuve, Michel Bouquet, Nelly Borgeaud, Marcel Berbert. Deliberately unconventional crime drama about tobacco plant owner Belmondo, who orders a bride (Deneuve) by mail only to have her disrupt his entire life. It turns out she is not what she seems to be. Plot is not exactly brilliant, but star performances and incredibly poetic dialogues more than make up for it. This film written by Truffaut and based on the novel *Waltz Into Darkness* by Cornell Woolrich (writing as William Irish) is more likely to appeal to film buffs than anyone else. Set on the island La Réunion and France. Produced by Claude Miller. Also shown in 110m. version. English title: MISSISSIPPI MERMAID.

**Sisters** (1973, USA) **C-92m**. \*\*\* D: Brian De Palma. Starring Margot Kidder, Jennifer Salt, Charles Durning, William Finley, Olympia Dukakis. De Palma's first thriller is an homage to his idol Alfred Hitchcock. Salt plays a reporter, who incidentally witnesses a murder (a la REAR WINDOW) and must investigate herself when the police refuse to believe her. It turns out that psychotic Kidder has something to do with it ... or her diabolical twin sister? Uneven shocker hits bull's eye in the final third. Bernard Herrmann's chilling score ennobles this cult picture. Cowritten by De Palma, from his story.

**Sisters** (2006, USA) **C-92m**. \*½ D: Douglas Buck. Starring Chloe Sevigny, Stephen Rea, Lou Doillon, Dallas Roberts. Poor remake of De Palma's 1973 cult classic about a woman with a mentally ill twin sister, who is treated by controversial doctor Rea. Reporter Sevigny witnesses a murder and starts to investigate. Just as sluggish as the original, but here the characters are not convincing (despite good cast), and the finale is nowhere nearly as good. Pretty superfluous.

**Sisters of Death** (1977, USA) **C-87m**. \*\* D: Joseph Mazzuca. Starring Arthur Franz, Claudia Jennings, Cheri Howell, Sheri Boucher. Cheap, mostly unconvincing thriller about several friends who are reunited mysteriously and find themselves trapped in a large house. The father of a dead friend wants to take revenge for the alleged murder of his daughter. Quite muddled, but a certain cult potential cannot be denied. Filmed in 1972.

**Sitting Target** (1972, GBR) **C-93m**. \*½ D: Douglas Hickox. Starring Oliver Reed, Jill St. John, Ian McShane, Edward Woodward, Frank Finlay, Freddie Jones, Jill Townsend. Tedious thriller about Reed, who escapes from prison to get his revenge on his bride St. John, who said she wouldn't wait for his release in 15 years. Scenes go on and on and on, without meaning or reward. Car chase sequence at the end comes too late for this D.O.A. Good editing by John Glen, who edited and directed some Bond movies. Based on the novel by Laurence Henderson.

**Situation** (1973, AUT/ITA) **C-83m. \*\*** D: Peter Patzak. Starring Rita Tushingham, Mischa Hausserman, Frederick Jaeger, William Berger, Gordon Mitchell, Heinz Marecek, Heinz Petters, Gottfried Kumpf, Guido Wieland, Hans Dichand, Herwig Seeböck, Dolores Schmidinger. Poorly conceived but not uninteresting heist thriller. Tushingham is unaware of the fact that her new boyfriend is recruiting criminals for a complicated bank robbery with the use of remote controlled bombs. After a confusing start, film improves in second half, but technically it's a mess. Score is quite good and reminiscent of some Italian potboilers of the time. Director Patzak's first film. Also known as DEADLINE.

**Six Days Seven Nights** (1998, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Ivan Reitman. Starring Harrison Ford, Anne Heche, David Schwimmer, Jacqueline Obradors, Danny Trejo. Romantic adventure, strictly by-the-numbers, about successful business woman Heche and her holiday with dream lover Schwimmer, which turns into a nightmare when she crash-lands with pilot Ford on a deserted island. Predictable, rather contrived, but watchable. Schwimmer seems completely out of place (he's cast against type), though, and Heche could easily be Ford's daughter.

**Six-Pack** (2000, FRA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alain Berberian. Starring Richard Anconina, Frédéric Diefenthal, Chiara Mastroianni, Bernard Fresson. Jonathan Firth. Glossy thriller about brutal serial killer Firth and policeman Anconina's obsession with tracking him down. So much for originality. Stylishly filmed, fairly exciting, but grows almost unbearably improbable and pretentious in the second half. Overbearing 'suspense' score by Elia Cmiral. Based on the novel by Jean-Hugues Opiel.

**666 Satan Returns** (1996, HGK) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Ah Lun. Starring Chingmy Yau, Donnie Yen, Francis Ng, Spencer Lam. Psycho-thriller with horror elements about police woman Yau, who is plagued by nightmares in which an evil force is beckoning her. In real life, a serial killer is cutting out the hearts of his victims. Is he a maniac believing to be the Devil Incarnate, and why is he obsessed with finding women who were born on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1969? Flashy, stylishly shot thriller camouflages its faults rather well. Second-rate plot, pointless comic relief lessen effect. Yen is an appealing hero. Also known as 666 DEVIL REINCARNATES.

**16 Blocks** (2006, USA/GER) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Richard Donner. Starring Bruce Willis, Mos Def, David Morse, Jenna Stern, Casey Sander, Cylk Cozart, Richard Fitzpatrick. What looks like a change-of-pace for Willis – he plays an ugly, alcoholic, suicidal cop – turns into standard fare, when Willis must transport a witness to the court house, which is only 16 blocks away. Of course, things go wrong, and it turns out that Willis' ex-partner Morse is interested in getting rid of the witness. Fair thriller set in New York, whose streets seem almost impenetrable. A slight disappointment given the involvement of LETHA WEAPON director Donner.

**6<sup>th</sup> Day, The** (2000, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Roger Spottiswoode. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Michael Rapaport, Tony Goldwyn, Michael Rooker, Sarah Wynter, Robert Duvall. Sci-fi action thriller set in the near future where cloning pets is allowed. Goldwyn heads an illegal organization, which clones humans, but he hasn't reckoned with Schwarzenegger, who realizes he has been cloned and tries to bring the villain down. Lots of action, intriguing ideas, but story set-up is too fast and proceedings are a bit confusing. Major liability: An overemphasis on (American) family kitsch, which doesn't gel with the (violent) action. Sort of influenced by Schwarzenegger's TOTAL RECALL, but not as thrilling.

**Sixth Sense, The** (1999, USA) **C-106m. \*\*\*½** D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Bruce Willis, Toni Collette, Olivia Williams, Haley Joel Osment, Donnie Wahlberg, Mischa Barton, Glenn Fitzgerald. Unique, chilling psycho drama about child psychologist Willis, whose life changes drastically after one of his former patients nearly kills him. He accepts the case of nine year-

old Osment, who is continually afraid and terrified – the explanation for which shall not be revealed here. The treatment of the boy results in neglecting his own wife (Williams), and soon the case becomes very, very strange. Some dramatic flaws are offset by genuine creepy atmosphere and a brilliant ending that, if you think about it, is not entirely logical, but will send shivers up and down your spine. Osment is a stand-out as the suffering child, Willis adequate as the psychologist. Screenplay by director Shyamalan, who also appears briefly as a doctor. Fine photography by Tak Fujimoto.

**Skip Tracer** (1977, CDN) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Zale Dalen. Starring David Petersen, Al Rose, Sue Astley, Mike Grigg, John Lazarus. Independently produced drama about a ruthless debt collector/repo-man, who slowly realizes that his career is founded on the ruin of other people. Offers a bleak, sober view of society. Direction is not seamless. Also known as DEADLY BUSINESS.

**Skull, The** (1965, GBR) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Freddie Francis. Starring Peter Cushing, Patrick Wymark, Nigel Green, Patrick Magee, Christopher Lee, Michael Gough. Interesting horror from Amicus based on a short story by Robert Bloch. Collector Cushing is offered several artifacts by a seedy salesman, then learns that one of them might be the actual skull of none other than the Marquis de Sade, which drives people insane. Indeed, eerie things start to happen... Pace is major quibble in this chiller, but it's well-made and has some interesting parallels to later Argento trademarks such as curtains, POV shots etc. For the dedicated horror historian. Excellent cast.

**Skull & Bones** (2007, USA) **C-74m. BOMB** D: T.S. Slaughter. Starring Derrick Wolf, Michael Burke, Jared DiCroce, Ryan Metzger. An independent film about „homocidal“ mania, where two gay college students, bored with life, invite a straight classmate, drug him and abuse him. When he accidentally dies, they dispose of his body and soon find more victims in nearby Ivy League hunks. Poorly done, with unconvincing amateur performances and an increasing amount of (unaesthetic) violence.

**Skulls, The** (2000, USA) **C-106m.** \*\* D: Rob Cohen. Starring Joshua Jackson, Paul Walker, Hill Harper, Leslie Bibb, Christopher McDonald, Steve Harris, William Petersen, Craig T. Nelson, Rob Cohen. Hot-shot student Jackson, on the verge of entering an elite university, is offered the chance to join secret, influential community of the Skulls. After doing so he soon learns that they won't shy away from much to protect their members – not even murder. Contrived, marginally interesting thriller becomes increasingly stupid towards the end. Followed by two video sequels.

**Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow** (2004, USA/GBR/ITA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Kerry Conran. Starring Jude Law, Gwyneth Paltrow, Giovanni Ribisi, Michael Gambon, Bai Ling, Omid Djalili, Angelina Jolie. Interesting experiment, one of the first films shot entirely against a blue screen, with plenty of digital effects. In a world resembling the 1940s, but with incredible technology and super-gadgets, the title character (Law) joins forces with reporter Paltrow to find out mystery behind the killing of scientists. It turns out a certain Dr Totenkopf (Sir Laurence Olivier, whose performance was created with the help of archive footage) is out to destroy the world with flying robot planes. Impressively designed science-fiction, but plot is only so-so, relying too much on coincidences. Writer-director Conran spent years preparing the film.

**Skyfall** (2012, GBR/USA) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sam Mendes. Starring Daniel Craig, Judi Dench, Javier Bardem, Ralph Fiennes, Naomie Harris, Bérénice Marlohe, Albert Finney, Ben Whishaw, Rory Kinnear. Four years after QUANTUM OF SOLACE, Bond shows up in Turkey, chasing after stolen harddisk that contains the identities of undercover agents. After being officially declared dead, he returns just in time to help M (Dench), who is being targeted by

former spy Bardem. The investigations take him to Shanghai and Macao. Slam-bang opening sequence is never topped, but rest of film offers enough action set-pieces and settings to make up for lacklustre plot. Craig is focused as usual, Bardem a fine villain. Good title song by Adele.

**Skyjacked** (1972, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John Guillermin. Starring Charlton Heston, Yvette Mimieux, James Brolin, Claude Akins, Jeanne Crain, Susan Dey, Roosevelt Grier, Mariette Hartley, Walter Pidgeon, Mike Henry, John Hillerman. Made at a time when disaster movies were still trying to be original, this thriller details the hijacking of a plane and subsequent panic on board. Heston plays the pilot, Mimieux the stewardess (and Heston's lover in corny flashbacks). Short on suspense, but several twists make it interesting, with Brolin's performance a stand-out. Based on David Harper's novel *Hijacked*. Cinematography by Harry Stradling Jr.. Crain's last film to date. Also known as SKY TERROR.

**Slacker** (1991, USA) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Richard Linklater. Director Linklater's first film, shot when he was 21 years old, is an examination of today's youth, their ideas about life and their inconsequentiality in realizing them. Too episodic and slipshod to score a higher rating but frequently also entertaining and highly original. The cast consists of amateur actors, Linklater himself plays the guy in the taxi (who should have stayed at the bus station). See also DAZED AND CONFUSED.

**Slalom** (1965, ITA/FRA/EGY) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Luciano Salce. Starring Vittorio Gassman, Adolfo Celi, Daniela Bianchi, Beba Loncar. Quite entertaining spy comedy, obviously an attempt to spoof the James Bond series. Friends Celi and Gassman go on a skiing holiday in Italy, where they hope to get rid of their wives and have some affairs. Gassman's presumed nightcap, however, turns out to be a secret agent, and she abducts him to Egypt, where he must play the stand-in for a deceased spy. Comic sequences are exaggerated, but this bit of 60s nostalgia isn't bad, overall quite amusing. Reminiscent in some ways of THE PINK PANTHER (1963). Bianchi had played a Bond girl in FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE (1963), Celi did the villain in THUNDERBALL (1965). Score by Ennio Morricone. Original version might run longer.

**Slaughter** (1972, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jack Starrett. Starring Jim Brown, Stella Stevens, Rip Torn, Cameron Mitchell, Don Gordon, Marlene Clark, Norman Alfe. AIP's answer to SHAFT (1971) is above average blaxploitation as Brown goes after those responsible for killing his (criminal) father. Colorful support, good editing and Stella Stevens in the nude should make it fine for fans, although plotting does drag a little. Followed by SLAUGHTER'S BIG RIP-OFF (1973).

**Slaughterhouse** (1987, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½** D: Rick Roessler. Starring Joe B. Barton, Don Barrett, Sherry Leigh, Bill Brinsfield, Jason Collier. Quite good horror thriller about an old slaughterhouse owner and his fat, retarded son, who have their own ways of defending themselves against the local authorities who want to push them off their land. Body count rises when some teens decide to shoot an amateur horror movie on the premises. Doesn't sound as if it could work but it (almost) does. Better performances than usual, potent effects, this is not your ordinary, run-of-the-mill thriller, although some weaknesses are all too obvious. Still, hard to understand why this was writer-director Roessler's only movie. Followed by a sequel.

**Slaughterhouse Rock** (1988, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½** D: Dimitri Logothetis. Starring Toni Basil, Nicholas Celozzi, Tom Reilly, Donna Denton, Hope Marie Carlton. Fair horror movie about a musician who is plagued by nightmares and then visits the prison of Alcatraz where he finds the explanation for his dreams: A demon is trying to enter the world of the living and starts possessing his friends. Interesting mix between the Freddy Krueger films and possibly

HELLRAISER (1987), let down mostly by unconvincing sequences and poor acting. The effects are good, though. Atmospheric score by Mark Mothersbaugh. Alternative titles: HELL ISLAND, ALCATRAZ HORROR.

**Slayer, The** (1982, USA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: J. S. Cardone. Starring Frederick Flynn, Michael Holmes, Sarah Kendall, Carol Kottenbrook, Carl Kraines, Alan McRae. Above-average slasher pic set on a remote island, where Kendall has a sense of déjà vu and her friends soon fall prey to the attacks of a killer. Good classical score, honorable attempts at creating suspense, not bad for an early 1980s slasher movie. Still, mainly for horror fans. Alternative title: NIGHTMARE ISLAND.

**Sleepaway Camp** (1983, USA) **C-85m.** \*\* D: Robert Hiltzig. Starring Felissa Rose, Jonathan Tiersten, Karen Fields, Christopher Collet, Mike Kellin, Katherine Kamhi. Another camp horror movie, this one spawned a minor cult. Somebody is knocking off kids at Camp Arawak, but it couldn't possibly be the troubled, shy girl, who lost her family in a boating accident, or could it? Mostly wooden acting, flaccid pace. Score is not bad. Followed by several sequels.

**Sleeper** (1973, USA) **C-88m.** \*\*\*\*½ D: Woody Allen. Starring Woody Allen, Diane Keaton, John Beck, Mary Gregory, Don Keefer, John McLiam. Outrageously funny science-fiction satire about a man frozen in 1973 and woken up 200 years later. Like in BANANAS, he is used as a pawn in a big-scale revolution. Intelligent and hilarious, if not always on-target. Score is brilliant. One of Allen's best films.

**Sleepers** (1996, USA) **C-147m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Barry Levinson. Starring Kevin Bacon, Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, Jason Patric, Brad Pitt, Minnie Driver, Brad Renfro, Bruno Kirby, Vittorio Gassman. Four friends grow up together in New York City's 'Hell's Kitchen' and share time in prison, when a silly prank ends fatally. There they are viciously abused by a warden and have to wait many years to get their revenge. Based on the (allegedly) autobiographical novel by Lorenzo Carcaterra. Drama is well-acted and well-made, as you would expect from such a director and cast, but badly paced, overlong and incredible.

**Sleeping Beauty** (1959, USA) **C-75m. SCOPE** \*\*\*\* D: Clyde Geronimi. Starring (the voices of) Mary Costa, Bill Shirley, Eleanor Audley, Verna Felton, Barbara Luddy, Barbara Jo Allen, Taylor Holmes, Bill Thompson. One of Disney most beautiful animated features, this brings the classic fairy tale splendidly to the screen. Princess Aurora is cursed by an evil witch at birth, spends her childhood with fairies in the wood, who still fail to protect her from fateful touching of the spindle. Filmed in 70mm Super Technirama (a widescreen process), this is perhaps Disney's most stylish feature. Elements of fantasy are realized with great creativity and elegance, the voice performances and characters are immensely charming, and the orchestra score by George Bruns (Oscar-nominated) is simply excellent. Animator Don Bluth's first movie, and Chuck Jones also did some uncredited work on this. Wolfgang Reitherman (THE JUNGLE BOOK) did some 2<sup>nd</sup> unit directing.

**Sleepwalkers** (1992, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*\* D: Mick Garris. Starring Brian Krause, Mädchen Amick, Alice Krige, Jim Haynie, Cindy Pickett, Lyman Ward, Ron Perlman, Dan Martin, Glenn Shadix, cameos by Joe Dante, John Landis, Clive Barker, Tobe Hooper, Stephen King and Mark Hamill. Entertaining horror film, written by Stephen King, about a pair of Sleepwalkers (Krause and Krige), who are half human, half-feline and need the blood of virgins to rejuvenate themselves. Amick is to be their next victim, but the cats in town seem to object. Not terribly clever, but great fun, with good effects and a fine soundtrack. For horror fans and cat lovers (like King himself). Aka STEPHEN KING'S SLEEPWALKERS.

**Sleep With Me** (1994, USA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Rory Kelly. Starring Meg Tilly, Eric Stoltz, Craig Sheffer, Lewis Arquette, Todd Field, Parker Posey, Joey Lauren Adams, June Lockhart,

Quentin Tarantino. Disappointing romantic comedy drama about the relationships of various Generation X characters. Six writers contributed, resulting in a rather incoherent, hardly funny or enlightening drama. The only notable scene in this movie is Quentin Tarantino's cameo (explaining the subtext of TOP GUN). Posey has a nude scene.

**Sleepy Hollow** (1999, USA) **C-111m**. \*\*\*½ D: Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci, Michael Gambon, Casper Van Dien, Jeffrey Jones, Christopher Lee, Richard Griffiths, Ian McDiarmid, Michael Gough, Christopher Walken, Marc Pickering, Lisa Marie, Steven Waddington, Claire Skinner, Mark Spalding, Miranda Richardson. Dark horror fantasy in the tradition of director Burton's BATMAN movies, based on Washington Irving's story 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow'. Depp plays a constable from New York City who is sent to the remote village of Sleepy Hollow, where a headless horseman decapitates his victims and steals their heads. Wonderful photography by Emmanuel Lubetzki, immaculate production design, stellar cast, but script is unpleasant in tone and never manages to ignite much interest. Burton devotees will embrace this technically faultless fairy-tale, others may feel overcome with the richness of the décor that threatens to suffocate the plot. Most effective in the action scenes involving Headless Hess Walken. Filmed several times before, but never this auspiciously. Martin Landau appears unbilled in the opening scene.

**Sleuth** (1972, USA) **C-138m**. \*\*\*½ D: Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Starring Laurence Olivier, Michael Caine. A mystery writer (Olivier) invites his wife's lover (Caine) to his manor determined to make him pay. To reveal any more plot details would be unthinkable. Classic tour-de-force for two great British actors. Script by Anthony Shaffer, based on his play. Cinematography by Oswald Morris. Good score by John Addison. Last film of director Mankiewicz (JULIUS CAESAR, CLEOPATRA).

**Slime People, The** (1963, USA) **B&W-76m**. \*½ D: Robert Hutton. Starring Robert Hutton, Les Tremayne, Robert Burton, Susan Hart, William Boyce. Cheap, unconvincing monster movie about slime people, prehistoric creatures who were forced out of hiding under the earth's surface due to nuclear testing. A late example of the wave of American monster movies of the 50s and 60s, and possibly one of the cheesiest. The only competent thing about it is its score and that is probably stolen.

**Sling Blade** (1996, USA) **C-135m**. \*\*\*½ D: Billy Bob Thornton. Starring Billy Bob Thornton, Dwight Yoakam, J.T. Walsh, John Ritter, Lucas Black, Robert Duvall, Brent Briscoe, Jim Jarmusch. Partly engrossing drama about a mentally handicapped man (Thornton), whose killing of his mother's brutal lover sent him to an insane asylum. Now he is released and must deal with the world around him. He befriends a boy, who seems to suffer the same fate as he did all these years ago. Thornton, who wrote the script based on his own stage play (filmed in 1994 as a short), knows which buttons to push, but the movie is overlong and predictable, you *know* what will happen long before it does. Good performances. Thornton won an Oscar for his screenplay and was nominated for Best Actor. This film made him famous.

**Slink** (2013, USA) **C-80m**. \*½ D: Jared Masters. Starring Julia Faye West, Danika Galindo, Art Roberts, Dawna Lee Heising. Schlocky horror movie made by amateurs about a tanning saloon owner and his wife, who kill their female customers and make leather bags from their skin. Fun to some degree, but, hey, there was no ending! The gratuitous nudity is good for half a star, the ending would have added another half. Also known as VIRGIN LEATHERS.

**Slither** (1973, USA) **C-96m**. \*\*\* D: Howard Zieff. Starring James Caan, Peter Boyle, Sally Kellerman, Louise Lasser, Allen Garfield, Richard B. Shull, Alex Rocco. Entertaining, likable roadmovie comedy about ex-con Caan, who 'slithers' into a mad adventure as he joins Boyle in finding \$312,000 of embezzled money entrusted to a pal seven years ago. Funny and

unpredictable at first, film unfortunately bogs down towards the end. Still worth watching. Photographed by Laszlo Kovacs.

**Slither** (2006, USA/CDN) **C-96m. \*\*½ D:** James Gunn. Starring Nathan Fillion, Elizabeth Banks, Gregg Henry, Michael Rooker, Tania Saulnier, Don Thompson, Rob Zombie, Lloyd Kaufman, James Gunn. An alien, worm-like organism crashes near a small village and infects red-neckish Rooker, leading to a zombie-like epidemic. Yucky, nasty splatter movie plays like a cross between ALIEN (1979) and SHIVERS (1975), later becomes standard zombie-fare. Still, not bad, with good effects, a sense of humor and a couple of good performances. Horror movie fans will savor lots more references to genre classics. From the writer of the DAWN OF THE DEAD remake.

**Slugs, Muerte Viscosa** (1988, SPA/USA) **C-89m. \*½ D:** Juan Piquer Simon. Starring Michael Garfield, Santiago Alvarez, Philip MacHale, Alicia Moro, Frank Brana, Manuel de Blas. Pretty disgusting splatter movie in the vein of all the eco-horror movies of the 1970s. Slimy, black, bloodsucking slugs go on a rampage in a U.S. town. Worthless plot, ultra-gory effects. Also known as SLUGS – THE MOVIE.

**Slumdog Millionaire** (2008, GBR) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Danny Boyle. Starring Dev Patel, Anil Kapoor, Saurabh Shukla, Rajendranath Zutshi, Freida Pinto, Irrfan Khan. Exhilarating, well-filmed underdog story of Indian simpleton, who is one question short of winning 20 million Rupies in popular TV quiz show. In flashbacks we find out about his life story and how he came to know the answers to the most difficult questions. Perfectly captures the pulse-pounding lifestyle in overpopulated India, with fine music and compelling performances. A crowd-pleaser and multiple award-winner, including 8 Oscars (Best Picture, Director, Screenplay, Editing, Cinematography, Score, Song, Sound). Based on the novel Q & A by Vikas Swalup.

**Smoke** (1995, USA) **C-112m. \*\*\*½ D:** Wayne Wang. Starring Harvey Keitel, William Hurt, Stockard Channing, Harold Perrineau, Jr., Forest Whitaker, Victor Argo, Erica Gimpel, Clarice Taylor, Giancarlo Esposito, Ashley Judd. Keitel plays the owner of a cigar store at an intersection in Brooklyn, New York, at which several people's lives intertwine. Extraordinary script by Paul Auster manages to enchant the viewer with believable stories about people who seem real and not just invented. The cast is fine, and the music score is perfect. A small gem. Followed immediately by BLUE IN THE FACE.

**Smokin' Aces** (2006, USA/GBR/FRA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Joe Carnahan. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Ray Liotta, Joseph Ruskin, Alex Rocco, Wayne Newton, Jeremy Piven, Alicia Keys, Ben Affleck, Peter Berg, Martin Henderson, Common, Christopher Holley, Andy Garcia, Jason Bateman, Chris Pine, Tommy Flanagan, Curtis Armstrong. Pretty crazy gangster thriller about Las Vegas entertainer Piven, who's about to testify against the mafia, who want him dead and will give anyone who kills him one million dollars. Needless to say, there's bounty hunters, assassins and contract killers all closing in on his penthouse on Lake Tahoe. Cool, extremely violent thriller keeps you watching, but there's not much plot behind the countless shoot-outs. Written by the director.

**Smurfs, The** (2011, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*½ D:** Raja Gosnell. Starring Hank Azaria, Neil Patrick Harris, Jayma Mays, Sofia Vergara. Okay family fare about 70s cartoon characters the Smurfs, little blue creatures who live in an enchanted forest, always fearing evil (bumbling) wizard Gargamel (Azaria). When a portal opens on a blue moon night, they are sucked through to New York City, where they befriend a young couple. It's adventure time! Good for kids, a slight bore for adults.

**Snake Eyes** (1998, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Brian De Palma. Starring Nicholas Cage, Gary Sinise, John Heard, Carla Gugino, Stan Shaw, Kevin Dunn, Michael Rispoli, Joel Fabiani, Luis

Guzmán. During a box fight a crowd of 14,000 fans witness the shooting of the U.S. Defense Minister. His bodyguard (Sinise) is shattered to have failed to protect the man and his corrupt colleague (Cage) smells the chance to become a hero in the subsequent investigation. Soon he discovers the Minister may have fallen prey to a conspiracy, and there's a person in the box arena that may prove to be a key witness. Crackerjack thriller features dynamite performances by its stars and director De Palma keeps things at a breathless pace. Unfortunately, credibility wanes towards the end, but still, this is a superior, entertaining thriller that's never boring.

**Snake in the Eagle's Shadow** (1977, HGK) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Yuen Wo-Ping. Starring Cheng Long (=Jackie Chan), Yuan-Hsiao Tien, Huang Cheng-Li, Wang Chiang, Shih Tien, Hsu Hsia. Chan works as a servant in a martial arts academy and wants to become a fighter himself but is always kicked around by his superiors. One day he meets an old bum who turns out to be a master on the run from warriors who intend to steal a Kung Fu technique. Chan helps him and is taught that technique in return. A poorly plotted action film, not really a showcase for Chan's fighting expertise. Direction by Wo-Ping is quite good, but score is overbearing. Most interesting segment features a fight between a cat and a cobra! Produced and cowritten by Ng See-Yuen. The director and Chan reteamed a year later for the superior DRUNKEN MASTER.

**Snakes on a Plane** (2006, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\* D:** David R. Ellis. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Julianna Margulies, Nathan Phillips, Rachel Blanchard, Flex Alexander, Kenan Thompson, Keith Dallas, Lin Shaye, Gerard Plunkett. Much-hyped horror action thriller about Jackson, an FBI agent, who is protecting an important witness. On a continental flight they suddenly find themselves under attack by dozens of poisonous snakes. What sounds like the plot of a 70s AIRPORT sequel (that was too ridiculous to be made) becomes fairly exciting in latter half. With material this dumb they should have made a comedy, though. Trivia note: One of the first movies that thrived on internet buzz *before* release; it became so huge that producers found it necessary to arrange some reshoots to turn it from PG-13 material into an R-rated movie. Even so, it made little in returns.

**Snatch.** (2000, GBR/USA) **C-103m. \*\*½ D:** Guy Ritchie. Starring Benicio Del Toro, Dennis Farina, Vinnie Jones, Brad Pitt, Rade Serbedzija, Jason Flemyng, Guy Ritchie. More of the same from the director of LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS. A convoluted, occasionally funny gangster comedy about a group of petty criminals who get involved in a diamond robbery and a fixed bare-knuckle boxing fight. Pitt is amusing as an Irish gypsy, but everything about the coolness and hipness of this movie seems forced and pretentious. Approach and style are certainly original, but plot is basically just another PULP FICTION imitation. For those who prefer coolness over content.

**Snow Falling on Cedars** (1999, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Scott Hicks. Starring Ethan Hawke, Youki Kudoh, Rick Yune, Max von Sydow, James Rebhorn, James Cromwell, Richard Jenkins, Daniel von Bargaen, Max Wright, Sam Shepard, Zeljko Ivanek. Excellent cast in impressive filmization of the novel by David Guterson. In a coastal town of the 1950s, Japanese immigrant Yune is accused of having killed a fisherman. Their private feud and the upcoming anniversary of the Peal Harbor attack work against the defendant. Incidentally, reporter Hawke, who was once in love with Yune's wife, will be the deciding factor in the trial. Beautifully filmed, very well-directed drama loses its focus in the mid-section, and Hawke's character seems a little too weak for being the central one. Still, well-worth watching if only for director Hicks' visual style and sensitive approach. Score by James Newton Howard.

**Snowpiercer** (2013, USA/KOR/CZE/FRA) **C-126m**. \*\*\*½ D: Bong Joon-ho. Starring Chris Evans, Song Kang-ho, Tilda Swinton, Jamie Bell, Luke Pasqualino, John Hurt, Alison Pill, Ed Harris, Octavia Spencer, Ewen Bremner, Ko Ah-sung, Vlad Ivanov. Stylish, violent sci-fi extravaganza by the director of MEMORIES OF MURDER (2003) and MOTHER (2009). 17 years into the future (in 2031), the only survivors of a failed global warming experiment, which left the world totally frozen, are aboard a train that continually rides on, in a circle, across the globe. The poor and dirty tail-enders, sick and tired of being fed with disgusting protein blocks, are about to start a revolution led by Evans, against the train's inventor, who is protected by henchmen and soldiers. They enlist the help of drug-addicted security expert Song, who knows how to open the electric doors from one car to the next. They start to make their way to the front... Powerfully directed science-fiction drama is not fully without contrivances, which is especially evident in rugged start, but film soon hits its stride and becomes truly riveting. Extremely violent in parts, but properly so. An instant cult hit with great supporting characters, especially Swinton's (as a hysterical villain) and Ivanov's (as a Bondian heavy). Based on the French graphic novel Le Transperceneige. Good score by Marco Beltrami.

**Snowtown** (2011, AUS) **C-120m**. \*\*\* D: Justin Kurzel. Starring Lucas Pittaway, Daniel Henshall, Louise Harris, Frank Cwiertniak. Grim drama based on true events set in an Australian suburban neighbourhood with shabby social housing and hopeless, tired, depressed people living there. The focus is on a teenager who finds himself drawn to his mother's new boyfriend, a homophobic, dangerous psychopath. Bleak and difficult to watch, the power of this film lies in the harrowing realism of the setting and the characters. Don't mistake this for a thriller; it was based on a crime case of the 1990s ('Australia's worst serial killer') and can thus be best compared to HENRY – PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER in style and tone. Winner of two minor prizes at the Cannes festival. Aka THE SNOWTOWN MURDERS.

**Snow White** (1997, USA/GBR/CZE) **C-100m**. \*\*½ D: Michael Cohn. Starring Sigourney Weaver, Sam Neill, Gil Bellows, Taryn Davis, Brian Glover, David Conrad, Monica Keena. Flawed adaptation of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale, made for theaters but premiered on television or video. Snow White's evil step-mother Weaver does everything to get rid of the beautiful child. Father Neill suspects nothing of his wife's evil plans. Well-produced and quite atmospheric, but adds only few new aspects to the familiar story. Wants to be an adult version of the fairy tale but is too harmless for that. Filmed in the Czech Republic. Also known as THE GRIMM BROTHERS' SNOW WHITE and SNOW WHITE: A TALE OF TERROR.

**Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** (1937, USA) **C-83m**. \*\*\*½ D: William Cottrell, Wilfred Jackson, Larry Morey, Perce Pearce, Ben Sharpsteen. Starring (the voices of) Adriana Caselotti, Lucille La Verne, Pinto Colvig. This milestone in animation filmmaking was Walt Disney's first feature and remains immensely charming after so many decades. Classic story by the Grimm Brothers is brought to life with incredible detail and care. Excellent score by Leigh Harline. Winner of a special Oscar.

**Snuff Bottle Connection** (1980, HGK) **C-87m**. \*\*½ D: Tung Chin-Hu, Lily Li. Starring Alexander Fu-Sheng, Liu Chung-Liang, Huang Cheng-Li, Ti Lung, Roy Horan. Above-average eastern about two friends fighting a Russian espionage ring, who uses snuff bottles as a sign of recognition. Well-drawn characters, good score, OK direction, well-choreographed action; only the B-plot prevents the film from scoring a higher rating. Produced by Ng See-Yuen (GAME OF DEATH II).

**Snuff-Movie** (2005, GBR/ROM) **C-93m**. \*\*½ D: Bernard Rose. Starring Jeroen Krabbé, Lisa Enos, Hugo Myatt, Joe Reegan, Teri Harrison. Director Rose's follow-up to his acclaimed

IVANSXTC (2000) is pretty much a companion piece, as he tries to keep things as realistic as possible and still succeed in making a horror-themed movie. Krabbé plays a controversial filmmaker, who has retired after the cult murder of his pregnant wife 14 years ago (resembling the Polanski-Tate-Manson case of the late 60s). Now he is calling actors to his house, who will star in a re-enactment of the fateful day. Is everything real or 'just' a movie? Interesting experiment with cinematic techniques remains too pretentious as the actors are not convincing enough and the point of it all is not exactly clear. Some potent gore effects. Rose also scripted and photographed the picture. Also known as SNUFF.

**Soaked in Bleach** (2015, USA) **C-89m.** **\*\*½ D:** Benjamin Statler. Featuring Tom Grant, Dr. Cyril H. Wecht, Vernon Geberth. Documentary about the 1994 death of grunge superstar Kurt Cobain basically relates private investigator Tom Grant's conspiracy theory with some archive footage and scenes played by actors. Days before Cobain was found with an apparently self-inflicted shotgun wound to his head, Grant got hired by Cobain's wife Courtney Love to find the allegedly suicidal singer. Grant has since developed a theory that Love may have staged the suicide. Partly interesting, at times even intriguing account of the superstar's last days ultimately doesn't ring true... despite some inexplicable facts like the position of the bullet shell.

**Social Network, The** (2010, USA) **C-120m.** **SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David Fincher. Starring Jesse Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield, Justin Timberlake, Rooney Mara. Irresistible drama about the creator of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg (Eisenberg), who one day comes up with an idea that will change the internet and make him a rich man. The performances are top-notch, there is suspense and drama, all in all a highly compelling story expertly brought to the screen by director Fincher. Script by Aaron Sorkin won an Oscar.

**Society** (1989, USA) **C-99m.** **Ⓜ D:** Brian Yuzna. Starring Billy Warlock, Connie Danese, Ben Slack, Evan Richards, Patrice Jennings, Tim Bartell, Charles Lucia, Heidi Kozak. Teenager Warlock has been having some strange visions lately, and suspects his (real?) parents of being members of a secret and terrible society. Slowly, a conspiracy is unraveled. Awfully slow, awfully pretentious horror film is much too tame and conventional for over an hour, then resorts to off-putting splatter and gore. Jarring. Some of the effects are good, though. First film by the producer of RE-ANIMATOR.

**Sodom and Gomorrah** (1962, USA/ITA/FRA) **C-155m.** **\*\* D:** Robert Aldrich. Starring Stuart Granger, Pier Angeli, Stanley Baker, Rossana Podestà, Rik Battaglia, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Scilla Gabel, Antonio De Teffè (Anthony Steffen), Gabriele Tinti, Enzo Fiermonte, Daniele Vargas, Claudia Mori, Mimmo Palmara, Anouk Aimée, Tom Felleghy, Alice & Ellen Kessler. Second-rate biblical epic (not even in widescreen) about Hebrew Granger who leads his people toward title communities, learns that it's a city of vice. Talky drama, every bit as stale as standard sword-and-sandal fare, despite having a very good director at the helm (and Sergio Leone directing the second unit!). Score by Miklós Rozsa.

**Soeurs Bronte, Les** (1978, FRA) **C-115m.** **\*\*½ D:** André Téchiné. Starring Isabelle Adjani, Marie-France Pisier, Isabelle Huppert, Pascal Gregory, Patrick Magee. An attempted biography of the famous Bronte sisters, who produced literary masterpieces in England of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Good location-filming, but film is hampered by a slow pace, which makes it seem overlong. Nevertheless, a highly interesting film with a good cast. Filmed in French and English versions, the latter being titled THE BRONTE SISTERS.

**Solace** (2015, USA) **C-101m.** **SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Afonso Poyart. Starring Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Abbie Cornish, Anthony Hopkins, Xander Berkeley, Colin Farrell. Thriller featuring Hopkins as a parapsychic, who helps FBI agents Morgan and Cornish to crack a case about a serial

killer, who always seems one step ahead of them. Okay pace, performances, but nothing special.

**Solamente Nero** (1978, ITA) **C-108m.** \*\*\* D: Antonio Bido. Starring Lino Capolicchio, Stefania Casini, Craig Hill, Massimo Serato. Well-plotted giallo about young professor who returns to his home-town near Venice and is faced by a murder series that might have something to do with the killing of a young girl twenty years ago. Complex, suspenseful (and slowly paced) mystery with good score is reminiscent of Dario Argento's giallos of the 70s (if not as stylish) but can stand well on its own. It's also not very violent. English title: BLOOD STAINED SHADOW. Shot in Panoramic (1,85:1).

**Soldaat van Oranje** (1977, NED/BEL) **C-167m.** \*\*\* D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Rutger Hauer, Jeroen Krabbé, Susan Penhaligon, Edward Fox, Lex van Delden, Derek de Lint. Sprawling epic detailing the Dutch resistance movement during World War Two. Hauer is one of six students, who become resistance fighters for the Dutch queen. Well-acted, well-produced drama is almost impossible to rate in truncated, incoherent 114m. version. A good, maybe even great film, but a waste of time in shorter versions. Based on the book by Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema. English titles: SOLDIER OF ORANGE and SURVIVAL RUN.

**Solo** (1996, USA/MEX) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Norberto Barba. Starring Mario Van Peebles, William Sadler, Adrien Brody, Seidy Lopez, Abraham Verduzco, Barry Corbin. Van Peebles plays an android created in a secret government experiment, who should function as a killing machine. When he fails to fulfill his first mission because he refuses to kill innocent civilians, he flees from the wrath of a colonel (Sadler) into the jungle. OK action movie with few novelties. Not very violent, and also less mean-spirited than most shoot'em-up flicks. Based on the novel *Weapon* by Robert Mason.

**Sol Sangriento** (1974, SPA/FRA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Alfredo S. Brell (=Aldo Sambrell). Starring Christopher Mitchum, Claudine Auger, Michel Bouquet, Albert Minsky, Aldo Sambrell, Luis Induni. Odd mixture of adventure, romance and western about guitar-wielding stranger (Mitchum), who signs up to work at a coppermine and falls in love (unconvincingly) with the sleazy owner's wife (Auger). Some awkwardly directed scenes (Sambrell is better-known for countless spaghetti western roles), poorly scripted, with some expected exploitation thrown in, but watchable. Truly 70s. Based on the novel *La Dynamite Est Bonne à Boire* by Frédéric Dard. English titles: DYNAMITE IS GOOD TO DRINK, POWDERBURN, BLOODY SUN.

**Solyaris** (1972, RUS) **C/B&W-165m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Andrei Tarkovsky. Starring Natalya Bondarchuk, Donatas Banionis, Jüri Järvet, Vladislav Dvorzhetsky, Nikolai Grinko, Anatoli Solonitsyn. A science-fiction classic, the Russian counterpart, if you will, to Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. In the near future, where the study of the planet Solyaris has become a national endeavor, psychologist Banionis prepares to travel to the space station in the planet's orbit. He refuses to believe reports that strange powers are turning your subconscious into reality. The source of this seems to be Solyaris' ocean, which is compared to a giant brain. Philosophical, intellectual science-fiction, slow and pensive, like any of director Tarkovsky's works. A must-see, with excellent use of classical music by Johann Sebastian Bach. Based on Stanislaw Lem's novel *Solaris*. Also known as SOLARIS.

**Somebody to Love** (1994, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: Alexandre Rockwell. Starring Rosie Perez, Harvey Keitel, Anthony Quinn, Michael DeLorenzo, Steve Buscemi, Stanley Tucci, Samuel Fuller, Elizabeth Bracco, Edward Bunker, Tito Larriva, Sam Rockwell, Quentin Tarantino. Low-key, uneven but charming slice-of-life about luckless taxi dancer Perez, her former lover Keitel and her latest acquaintance DeLorenzo, who has hopelessly fallen in love with her. If you can tune in to the story, this is actually quite rewarding. The scene with filmmaker Fuller is especially touching. Another endearing 'loser-drama' from Rockwell (IN THE SOUP).

**Somebody Up There Likes Me** (1996, HGK) **C-113m.** \*\*\* D: Patrick Leung. Starring Aaron Kwok, Samo Hung, Ann Hui, Michael Tong, Clifton Ko. Earnest drama about Kwok, who enters the kickboxing world in order to still his desire for greatness and to impress his girlfriend Hui, whose brother is the Hong Kong champ. Meandering script is not perfect, but story is nicely unpretentious and features fine supporting work by Samo Hung as Kwok's coach. The grim finale is best part of the film. Executive produced by John Woo, who was assisted by director Leung in his classics *THE KILLER* (1989) and *HARD-BOILED* (1992). Leung followed this with *BEYOND HYPOTHERMIA* (1996). Also known as *THE TRIUMPH*.

**Some Girls Do** (1969, GBR) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Ralph Thomas. Starring Richard Johnson, Daliah Lavi, Beba Loncar, James Villiers, Vanessa Howard, Maurice Denham, Robert Morley, Sydne Rome, Adrienne Posta, Florence Desmond, Joanna Lumley. Sequel to *DEADLIER THAN THE MALE* (1967) and all the other earlier Bulldog Drummond pictures is fairly enjoyable, as gentleman spy Drummond goes after villain who intends to use supersonic device and an army of sexy girl robots to rule the world. Somewhat muddled plot, little action but exotic settings, funny performances and a lot of eye candy keep your attention. Rome, in her first film appearance (aged 17!) is drop-dead gorgeous. This was also Lumley's first role. Unavailable on home video for almost four decades(!), it was released to DVD in Britain in 2005.

**Some Kind of Hate** (2015, USA) **C-82m.** SCOPE \*½ D: Adam Egypt Mortimer. Starring Grace Phipps, Spencer Breslin, Sierra McCormick, Lexi Atkins. Bullied kid with aggressive tendencies gets sent to a remote brat camp, where he continues to be the victim. After a seemingly endless, boring introduction, he meets the ghost of a bullied girl, who uses telekinesis on his perpetrators. Uninteresting horror film from another new American wannabe auteur.

**Someone's Watching Me!** (1978, USA) **C-97m.** \*\*½ D: John Carpenter. Starring Lauren Hutton, David Birney, Adrienne Barbeau, Charles Cyphers, Grainger Hines. TV director Hutton moves into high rise apartment complex, is targeted by psychopath who spies on her day and night. Okay thriller with references to Hitchcock (particularly *REAR WINDOW*) and a competent performance by Hutton. Though sometimes you will wonder why her apartment is so brightly lit and the curtains are not drawn. Interestingly, this premiered about a month after Carpenter's horror classic *HALLOWEEN*. Made for television. Aka *HIGH RISE*.

**Something Evil** (1972, USA) **C-73m.** \*\*½ D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Sandy Dennis, Darren McGavin, Ralph Bellamy, Jeff Corey, Johnny Whitaker, John Rubinstein, David Knapp, Steven Spielberg. Interesting early Spielberg effort (made for TV) about a family who move into a house in the country and slowly learn that it is haunted by an evil spirit. Quite eerie and atmospheric, but also annoying in the hysteria scenes concerning mother Dennis. Rather slow, despite short running time. Still, one of the better 'evil house' films. Written by Robert Clouse (*ENTER THE DRAGON*).

**Something for Everyone** (1970, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*½ D: Harold Prince. Starring Angela Lansbury, Michael York, Anthony Higgins, Heidelinde Weis, Jane Carr. All-but-forgotten curio based on a novel by Harry Kressing that probably had a more satirical edge than this movie. York plays a drifter who tricks his way into an aristocratic but poor family in post-WW2 Germany (near the Austrian border). Leisurely paced drama has a fine performance by Lansbury in one of only four feature films she did in the 1970s (the other ones being *BEDKNOBS & BROOMSTICKS*, *DEATH ON THE NILE* and *THE LADY VANISHES*). Fascinating to some degree, but should have been edgier.

**Something's Gotta Give** (2003, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Nancy Meyers. Starring Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Keanu Reeves, Frances McDormand, Amanda Peet, Jon Favreau, Paul Michael Galsler, Rachel Ticotin. Wonderful comedy drama about womanizer Nicholson, whose latest girlfriend is writer Keaton's daughter. When he is taken ill with heart problems, Keaton looks after him and a romance starts budding, which neither of them could have foreseen. Well-observed character study, with fine performances. Keaton and Nicholson make a great match.

**Somos Lo Que Hay** (2010, MEX) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jorge Michel Grau. Starring Francisco Barreiro, Adrián Aguirre, Miriam Balderas, Paulina Gaitan. Horror drama about an isolated, poor family somewhere in Mexico City, who are terrified when their father dies, as he was always the one who would 'provide' for them. It turns out that the grown-up boys must now go hunting for food (gulp!). Pretty shocking bursts of violence occasionally break downbeat tone with too many repetitive scenes. Remade in 2013 as **WE ARE WHAT WE ARE**, which was also this film's English title.

**Sonatine** (1993, JAP) **C-94m.** D: Takeshi Kitano. Starring „Beat“ Takeshi, Aya Kokumai, Tetsu Watanabe. Very strange comedy about a group of Yakuza gangsters who come to Okinawa and soon find themselves under attack by a rival gang. They withdraw to a remote beach and wait for something to happen. You'll also wait for something to happen in this violent gangster film. All comic situations are misfires (at least to Western audiences), and the fact that the violence should be considered funny here, makes the film all the more questionable. Japanese television star Kitano has been compared to Quentin Tarantino, but the only similarity can be found in the comic-book violence that pervades both men's films.

**Song of the Sea** (2014, EIR/DEN/BEL/LUX/FRA) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Tomm Moore. Starring (the voices of) David Rawle, Brendan Gleeson, Lisa Hannigan, Fionnula Flanagan. Beautiful animated fable set in Ireland, a tale right out of Irish folklore (although the screenplay is original). A boy finds growing up difficult alongside his single dad, especially since his mother died giving birth to his little sister, who doesn't speak. She seems to have a special connection to the sea and marine life, perhaps owing to their mother's wonderful stories. Poetic, beautifully animated tale lacks a properly dramatic and well-paced plot, but design and score are always marvelous. Nominated for the Best Animated Feature Oscar.

**Sonno Profondo** (2013, ARG) **C-65m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Luciano Onetti. Starring Luciano Onetti, Daiana Garcia, Silvia Duhalde. Exercise in style is one long homage to the looks and sounds of the giallo, the Italian horror thriller genre that saw its heyday in the early 1970s. The story about an anonymous killer with black gloves, who becomes a victim of blackmail, is fragmentary and takes second chair to (overly indulgent) stylistics that are there only for their own sake. Even at this running time it becomes tiring, but the 70s Techniscope look is amazing. Onetti followed this with **FRANCESCA** (2015). English title: **DEEP SLEEP**.

**Son of Rambow** (2007, GBR/FRA/GER) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Garth Jennings. Starring Bill Milner, Will Poulter, Jessica Hynes, Paul Ritter. In early 1980s England, a little boy, who comes from strictly religious family, meets his complete opposite, a little bully, who passes his free time illegally copying video cassettes for his elder brother. The two boys become friends and decide to shoot a sequel to the latest blockbuster **FIRST BLOOD** (1982). Off-beat, poignant character drama with appealing actors, an independent hit. Written by the director.

**Sono Sartana, il Vostro Becchino** (1969, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring John (Gianni) Garko, Frank Wolff, Klaus Kinski, Gordon Mitchell, Ettore Manni, Sal Borgese. Standard spaghetti western about cool gunslinger Sartana (Garko), who is double-crossed by someone robbing a bank in his guise. He tries to

seek out those responsible – in special Sartana fashion. Prolific western director Carnimeo shows style, but film's plotting is listless. No suspense whatsoever. English titles: ANGEL OF DEATH: SARTANA, I AM SARTANA YOUR ANGEL OF DEATH, I'LL DIG YOUR GRAVE, SARTANA THE GRAVEDIGGER.

**Sons and Lovers** (1960, GBR) **103m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Jack Cardiff. Starring Trevor Howard, Dean Stockwell, Wendy Hiller, Mary Ure, Heather Sears, William Lucas, Donald Pleasence. Serious, intelligent drama about aspiring young artist Stockwell, who turns down an offer to go to London just to stay with his family in a coalmining town. Complex coming-of-age film topicalizes love, friendship, emancipation and life in general. A thoughtful portrait of a young man who is unable to make a stand because of his domineering mother. Based on D.H. Lawrence's novel. Fine, Oscar-winning cinematography by Freddie Francis.

**Sora Tobu Yûreisen** (1969, JAP) **C-61m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Hiroshi Ikeda. Starring (the voices of) Kyôko Ai, Hiroshi Masuoka, Gorô Naya, Judy Ongg. A young boy saves his father's company's boss after a road accident, brings him into an old mansion, where they make the acquaintance of a skeleton captain and his flying phantom ship. However, the real menace comes from a seemingly harmless softdrink that is supposed to bring world domination to its creator. So fast-paced (and short) it almost seems like a TV series episode, this anime is quite uneven, but has some astounding, spectacular action set-pieces. Hayao Miyazaki contributed to the animation of the giant robot (an interesting prelude to those in LAPUTA). Dramatic score by Kosuke Onozaki. English title: FLYING PHANTOM SHIP.

**Sorcerers, The** (1967, GBR) **C-83m. \*\*½ D:** Michael Reeves. Starring Boris Karloff, Catherine Lacey, Ian Ogilvy, Elizabeth Ercy, Victor Henry, Susan George. Nice directorial touches enliven unconvincing tale of scientist Karloff's hypnosis experiment with Ogilvy, which allows him and his wife to control the young man's will. Watch for some early psychedelic elements. British wunderkind/enfant terrible Reeves made one more film – the acclaimed WITCHFINDER GENERAL (1968) – before committing suicide at the age of 24.

**Sorella di Ursula, La** (1977, ITA) **C-91m. \*½ D:** Enzo Milioni. Starring Barbara Magnolfi, Stefania D'Amario, Vanni Materassi, Marc Porel, Anna Zinnemann. Two Austrian sisters are on holiday in Italy looking for their mother who abandoned them when they were young. One of the young women seems to be a psychic, and then a killer starts his work in the hotel. Cheap, poorly plotted and poorly acted thriller, a late giallo, but far from exciting. Filled with gratuitous nudity and sex. Also known as THE SISTER OF URSULA, and CURSE OF URSULA.

**Sorority Babes in the Slimeball Bowl-O-Rama** (1988, USA) **C-80m. \*\* D:** David DeCoteau. Starring Andras Jones, Linnea Quigley, Robin Stille, Hal Havins, John Stuart Wildman, Brinke Stevens, Michelle Bauer, George 'Buck' Flower. What a title! Mindless horror comedy about three college pals who break into a shopping center with some 'sorority babes' at night and just happen to release an imp from his prison (a trophy). The creature then unleashes his magic powers on them. Starts nice, but bogs down later. At least it's short. Alternative title: THE IMP.

**Sorority House Massacre** (1986, USA) **C-90m. \*½ D:** Carol Frank. Starring Angela O'Neill, Wendy Martel, Pamela Ross, Nicole Rio. Typical 80s slasher pic unashamedly rips off the plot of HALLOWEEN as brutal killer escapes asylum to terrorize girls at a sorority. O'Neill has frightening dreams until the real horror starts. Unintentionally hilarious dialogue, poor direction. Improves a little in the second half, but good only for a few laughs. Originally released at 74m., followed by a sequel in 1991.

**Sôseiji** (1999, JAP) **C-83m. \*\*\*½ D:** Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Masahiro Motoki, Ryô, Yasutaka Tsutsui, Shiho Fujimura. Artsy psycho horror drama set at the turn of the century about a young doctor, who has taken in an amnesiac woman and fallen in love with her,

much to the chagrin of his parents. When his parents suddenly die, he suspects she may be the reason, but as it turns out, there's a mysterious, cruel twin who wants to take over his identity. Interesting, to say the least, but also quite off-putting and heavy-going. Cult director Tsukamoto adapted a novel by mystery writer Rampo Edogawa. As usual, he also photographed and edited the movie. English title: GEMINI.

**Soul Surfer** (2011, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Sean McNamara. Starring AnnaSophia Robb, Helen Hunt, Dennis Quaid, Kevin Sorbo, Carrie Underwood, Craig T. Nelson. Outstanding biopic about real-life surfer Bethany Hamilton, who grows up in a family of surfers and is on her way to becoming a professional, when a shark bite makes her lose not only her arm but also her hope and positive outlook. Compelling drama is top in all compartments, with enticing Hawaii footage, awesome underwater shots and surfing action, as well as a touching screenplay and heart-felt performances. A winner, just like Bethany herself, whose own home movies are shown during the closing credits.

**Sound City** (2013, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*** D: Dave Grohl. Starring Dave Grohl, Tom Petty, Frank Black, Mick Fleetwood, John Fogerty, Rick Springfield. Good documentary by the lead singer of the Foo Fighters (and ex-Nirvana drummer) Grohl, who tells the 40-year story of a recording studio (and its sound board) from the beginnings in the early 1970s to the decline in the 1990s with the introduction of digital recording techniques. Lots of interviews with stars, it's a piece of music history, makes a bygone era come alive.

**Soupe aux Choux, La** (1981, FRA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Jean Girault. Starring Louis de Funès, Jean Carmet, Jacques Villeret, Claude Gensac, Henri Génès, Marco Perrin, Christine Dejoux. Latter-day de Funès comedy (his next-to-last movie) about two old-timers (de Funès and Carmet) living happily somewhere in rural France, who are suddenly visited by an extra-terrestrial (Villeret). De Funès cordially invites the hapless alien in and offers him his cabbage soup ("soupe aux choux"), not knowing that it will become a big hit in space – and change his life forever. Plot sounds ridiculous but film is very funny and at the same time sentimental, even philosophical. Among fans this is one of de Funès' most fondly remembered movies. He even cowrote the screenplay, an adaptation of a novel by René Fallet. Good score by Raymond Lefevre.

**Source Code** (2011, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Duncan Jones. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Monaghan, Vera Farmiga, Jeffrey Wright, Michael Arden. Intriguing sci-fi thriller about soldier Gyllenhaal, who wakes up inside another man's body aboard a train to Chicago that blows up in a terrorist bombing. It turns out scientists have placed him inside somebody's persona to find out who placed the bomb, and he can go back again and again for 8 minutes until he finds the terrorist. Good story idea, slightly reminiscent of DEJA VU (2006), a bit too self-conscious perhaps, with Farmiga and Wright strangely ineffective or miscast, but delivers a life-affirming conclusion. From the director of MOON (2009).

**Souris Chez les Hommes, Une** (1964, FRA) **B&W-90m. \*\*\*½** D: Jacques Poitrenaud. Starring Dany Saval, Louis de Funès, Maurice Biraud, Robert Manuel, Dora Doll, Jean Lefebvre, Claude Piéplu, Dany Carrel. De Funès and his buddy Biraud lead double lives: By day they are respectable members of society, by night they are burglars. One day they are observed by teen Saval, who wants to become their assistant. Mild comedy, based on a novel by Francis Ryck. This was released only weeks before de Funès' international breakthrough with LE GENDARME DE ST. TROPEZ. Also known as UN DROLE DE CAID, and A MOUSE WITH THE MEN.

**Southbound** (2015, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Radio Silence, David Bruckner, Patrick Horvath, Roxanne Benjamin. Starring Chad Villella, Matt Bettinelli-Olpin, Kristina Pesic, voice of Larry Fessenden. Original horror anthology presents five connected tales that all follow

nightmare logic. In the first, two guys are chased by eerie creatures and can't seem to escape a desert truck stop. In the second, a group of travelling musicians are picked up by members of a strange sect. In the third story, an accident leads a driver to an abandoned emergency room. The fourth segment deals with a man trying to free his abducted sister. The fifth one reveals a terrible truth to a picture-perfect family. Stories are not fully satisfying, but they're fast-paced, unpredictable, and set to a great pounding soundtrack (by The Gifted) sounding like vintage John Carpenter. The third story provides the most adrenaline, and the last one offers a nice round-up.

**Southern Star, The** (1969, GBR/FRA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Sidney Hayers. Starring George Segal, Ursula Andress, Orson Welles, Ian Hendry, Johnny Sekka, Michel Constantin, Charles Lamb. Jules Verne adaptation set in Africa (Senegal, to be exact) where Segal and Andress chase a precious diamond known as the 'Southern Star'. Welles adds spice as villainous, Colonel Kurtz-like character, but interest comes and goes at whim, despite solid direction and nice location filming. Segal is nicely subdued, Andress is briefly seen in the nude. Orson Welles is said to have directed the opening sequence of the film.

**Southland Tales** (2006, USA/FRA/GER) **C-145m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Richard Kelly. Starring Dwayne Johnson, Seann William Scott, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Janeane Garofalo, Beth Grant, Christophe Lambert, John Larroquette, Bai Ling, Jon Lovitz, Mandy Moore, Miranda Richardson, Wallace Shawn, Justin Timberlake, Zeld Rubinstein, Curtis Armstrong. Writer-director Kelly's follow-up to his cult hit *DONNIE DARKO* (2001) has a similar science-fiction scenario. In (the near future of) 2008, our society is on the brink of upheaval. Presidential election campaigns are overshadowed by a quasi-terrorist movement, and two main characters' lives are examined in this setting: Johnson, a movie star with political ties, suddenly suffers from amnesia, and private Scott, who seems to have a twin brother, is a pawn in a clandestine operation. And there is Liquid Karma, a new invention that works like a perpetuum mobile, and an intriguing rift in the time-space continuum. Difficult to follow at times, with a Bible-quoting stream-of-consciousness narrative, but fascinating, even hypnotic all the way, referencing enough cult movies to satisfy buffs. This can best be compared to the works of David Lynch. Good score by Moby. Film's release was accompanied by the publication of three graphic novels (by Kelly), which stand as prequels to the story told here. Originally premiered in Cannes at 160m.

**Soylent Green** (1973, USA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Richard Fleischer. Starring Charlton Heston, Edward G. Robinson, Leigh Taylor-Young, Chuck Connors, Joseph Cotten, Brock Peters, Dick Van Patten. Science-fiction drama set in 2022, about police detective Heston, who investigates the death of a wealthy government official. 40 million people live in Manhattan alone, most of them starving, making New York City a place of constant riots. Soylent Green denotes a special food product that may secure the survival of the human race. Poorly paced sci-fi lacks excitement and suspense. A disappointment, based on the novel *Make Room! Make Room!* by Harry Harrison. Robinson, as Heston's assistant, is marvelous in his final film appearance.

**Spaceballs** (1987, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Mel Brooks. Starring Mel Brooks, Rick Moranis, Bill Pullman, Daphne Zuniga, John Candy, George Wyner, Dick Van Patten, Michael Winslow, John Hurt, voices of Dom DeLuise, Joan Rivers. Hilarious *STAR WARS* spoof masterminded by Brooks. Lord Dark Helmet (Moranis) is piloting space ship Spaceballs 1 to steal a planet's atmosphere, and the princess who lives there has just run away from her wedding to Prince Valium. Enter mercenary Lone Starr (Pullman), who not only falls in love with the princess but also battles Dark Helmet with the help of his assistant Barf. Lots of gags, most of which work. Also spoofs other sci-fi classics along the way. Especially good fun for buffs.

**Space Cowboys** (2000, USA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Tommy Lee Jones, Donald Sutherland, James Garner, James Cromwell, Marcia Gay Harden, William Devane, Rade Serbedzija. Eastwood plays a former air force pilot, who almost made it into space in the late 1950s. When an old Russian satellite threatens to plummet onto the Earth, he is finally sent up (with his former buddies, all in their sixties), because he is the only one who can repair it. Well-filmed but completely unbelievable space thriller/drama, worth watching only if you want to see Eastwood, Jones, Sutherland and Garner enjoy themselves.

**Space Truckers** (1996, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Dennis Hopper, Stephen Dorff, Debi Mazar, George Wendt, Vernon Wells, Barbara Crampton, Shane Rimmer, Charles Dance. Hopper is a 'space trucker' who tries to save the world when he notices that his cargo is robots programmed to kill. Dorff and Mazar lend a hand. Careful script saves this sci-fi action comedy which could easily have bombed. Story thrust is lost after fifty minutes. Not very violent.

**Spada per Brando, Una** (1970, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE □** D: Alfio Caltabiano. Starring Paul Winston, Karin Schubert, Tano Cimarosa. Robin Hood-like hero (stone-faced Winston) fights against a secret society whose members wear skull-masks. Silly, incoherent adventure with horror motives also goes for some low-brow comedy, which destroys the film. Title means 'A Sabre for Brando'.

**Spanish Prisoner, The** (1997, USA) **C-110m. \*\*\*** D: David Mamet. Starring Campbell Scott, Steve Martin, Ben Gazzarra, Ricky Jay, Rebecca Pidgeon, Felicity Huffman, Ed O'Neill. Scott plays an inventor, whose latest coup would help his firm to ensure market domination for several years. However, his superior Gazzarra hesitates when it comes to paying him a bonus. It turns out that a chance acquaintance, millionaire Martin, might help him in this situation. Further details shall not be revealed. Mamet uses his writing skills to provide a complicated but logical and even intriguing plot, but this is basically for the brain and not for the eyes, ears or the gut. Slightly too calculated but overall worthwhile.

**Spartacus** (1960, USA) **C-187m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Kirk Douglas, Laurence Olivier, Jean Simmons, Charles Laughton, Peter Ustinov, John Gavin, Nina Foch, John Ireland, Herbert Lom, Charles McGraw, Woody Strode, Tony Curtis, Richard Farnsworth. Lively, dramatic epic about the life of Roman slave Spartacus (Douglas) and his rebellion against Roman authorities, which leads to a war of giant proportions. Exceptional, like all of director Kubrick's projects, this is one of his most magnificent films, topped only perhaps by his 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968). Excellent screenplay (based on the novel by Howard Fast) includes more human aspects than all of its imitations combined and is brilliantly performed (especially by Olivier as Spartacus' antagonist). A technical triumph, which becomes especially evident in the 1991 restored version: Expert direction by Kubrick, marvellous cinematography by Russell Metty (TOUCH OF EVIL), and a brilliant, incredibly rich score by Alex North. Only fault is overlength. A definite influence on BRAVEHEART (1995) and GLADIATOR (2000), both Best Picture Oscar-winners, which this film didn't achieve despite being better. It did win Oscars for Peter Ustinov (Best Supporting Actor), Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, Best Cinematography and Best Costume Design. Trivia note: Anthony Hopkins dubbed Laurence Olivier in the restored bathing scene, because Olivier had died and the original soundtrack was damaged beyond repair. Fully restored version runs 198m. Italian in-name-only sequel: IL FIGLIO DI SPARTACUS (1963) starring Steve Reeves.

**Spasmo** (1974, ITA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Robert Hoffmann, Suzy Kendall, Ivan Rassimov, Adolfo Lastretti, Monica Monet, Guido Alberti, Tom Felleghy. One

of exploitation filmmaker Lenzi's best movies is a typical giallo about Hoffmann, who takes off with somebody's girlfriend (Kendall), then kills a stalker in self-defense. Then doubts arise: Did he really kill someone? Which role does his rich brother Rassimov play? Is he going insane? Thriller is slightly uneven, but well-worth watching for fans, especially because of beautiful Ennio Morricone theme. Trivia note: George A. Romero shot 10 minutes worth of footage inserted for the film's U.S. release! Also known as THE DEATH DEALER.

**Spasms** (1983, CDN) **C-86m.** \*½ D: William Fruet. Starring Peter Fonda, Oliver Reed, Kerrie Keane, Al Waxman, Miguel Fernández, Angus MacInnes. Scientist Reed has a telepathic link to a giant, deadly serpent(!) and asks ESP expert Fonda to help him out. If that's not enough to make you laugh out loud, the rest of the plot will – unless it will make you cry, because it's so bad. One or two good attack scenes and that's it. Filmed in 1981. Score by Tangerine Dream. Based on the novel *Death Bite*, which is also the film's alternative title.

**Special Effects** (1984, USA) **C-105m.** \*\*½ D: Larry Cohen. Starring Zoe Tamerlis, Eric Bogosian, Brad Rijn, Kevin O'Connor, Bill Oland. Ambitious B-movie about a starlet, who has abandoned her family to make it in Hollywood, only to fall prey to (and be killed by) a lecherous film director. He even persuades her desperate husband to star in a film about her murder. Interesting, even intriguing thriller, but slow pace, redundant stretches bring it down. Bogosian is too harmless to be a credible villain. But make sure you stick around for the ending. A 93m. print also exists.

**Specialisti, Gli** (1969, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-84m.** **SCOPE \*\*** D: Sergio Corbucci. Starring Johnny Halliday, Mario Adorf, Gastone Moschin, Sylvie Fennec, Françoise Fabian. French rock star Johnny Halliday is a poor man's Clint Eastwood, who comes to the Western town of Blackstone to avenge the death of his brother. The decadent citizens would rather see him dead. Mario Adorf plays a Mexican. Did anyone say THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY? Still, spaghetti western is not bad, with the characters better defined than usual; it just could have used a better script. Fennec, who plays Sheba, is stunningly beautiful. English title: DROP THEM OR I'LL SHOOT.

**Specters** (1987, ITA) **C-93m.** \*½ D: Marcello Avallone. Starring John Pepper, Katrine Michelsen, Donald Pleasence, Massimo de Rossi, Erna Schurer. Tedious, dull horror movie made in Italy about hidden chamber discovered in the Roman catacombs, which houses a terrible monster. Pleasence plays an archeologist who works there. Not badly made, but the story is simply atrocious. Italian title: SPETTRI.

**Spectre** (2015, GBR/USA) **C-148m.** **SCOPE \*\*\***½ D: Sam Mendes. Starring Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux, Ralph Fiennes, Monica Bellucci, Ben Whishaw, Naomie Harris, Dave Bautista, Andrew Scott, Rory Kinnear, Jesper Christensen, Judi Dench. Distinguished, globe-trotting James Bond adventure brings back his arch-enemy, the crime organization SPECTRE, which is trying to take control of all the information gathered by secret services around the globe. Bond's mission takes him to Mexico, Rome, the Austrian Alps and the Moroccan desert and ultimately pits him against Austrian villain Oberhauser (Waltz). Craig's fourth 007 outing forfeits a frenzied pace in favor of more deliberate plotting. Once the action kicks in, it's appropriately big-scale. Beautifully ties in recent Bond productions as well as the classics (one set-piece is a satisfying nod to one of the most famous fist fights in Bond history from FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE). Excellent production design, fine score, great supporting characters, this is highly enjoyable and never boring despite excessive length.

**Spellbound** (1945, USA) **B&W-111m.** \*\*\* D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Ingrid Bergman, Gregory Peck, Michael Chekhov, Leo G. Carroll, Alfred Hitchcock. A bit of Freudian psychology from the Master, this melodrama centers around psychoanalyst Bergman's infatuation with newly arrived doctor Peck. Soon she realizes that he is a troubled man with

a terrible secret, he cannot even himself disclose. Slightly overlong but always on-target, the dream sequences (designed by Salvador Dalí) are especially stunning. Good work from Hitch. Based on Francis Beeding's novel *The House of Dr. Edwardes*. Fine dramatic score by Miklós Rózsa, produced by David O. Selznick.

**Spermula** (1976, FRA) **C-87m. BOMB D:** Charles Matton. Starring Dayle Hadden, Udo Kier, Francois Dunoyer, Georges Géret. Atrocious sexploitation with a sci-fi touch: The planet of Spermula is about to be destroyed, so the so-called Spermulites are sent to Earth in order to neuter the male population and take control. And that's about it for story. Boring and uninteresting. Original French version (running 103m.) omits the frame narrative of the planet's extinction and deals with a sect, but it's doubtful whether this is an improvement, as some have suggested. It's titled L'AMOUR EST UN FLEUVE EN RUSSIE.

**Spetters** (1980, NED) **C-112m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Verhoeven. Starring Hans van Tongeren, Toon Agterberg, Renée Soutendijk, Maarten Spanjer, Marianne Boyer, Jeroen Krabbé, Rutger Hauer. Original coming-of-age drama about the lives of three friends, who are all ambitious motorcyclists and dream of being champion one day. Tramp Soutendijk tries to give their careers a boost. Film shows that triumph and tragedy are often closely related. Well-scripted, well-paced, another compelling drama by Dutch director Verhoeven. Hauer - star of Verhoeven's *TURKS FRUIT* - plays a race champion; his role is quite small. Original version allegedly runs 122m.

**Spettro, Lo** (1963, ITA) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Hampton (=Riccardo Freda). Starring Barbara Steele, Peter Baldwin, Leonard Elliott, Harriet Medin, Umbero Raho. Follow-up to *L'ORRIBILE SEGRETO DEL DOTTOR HICHCOCK* (1962), about crippled, suicidal doctor Elliott, whose wife Steele plots to kill him with the help of her lover Baldwin. However, the body does not stay dead for long. Atmospheric, moody Gothic chiller is slowly paced but consistently interesting, quite violent for its time, too. Good score and main theme by Francesco de Masi, Franco Mannino, Román Vlad. Cowritten by director Freda. English titles: *THE GHOST, THE SPECTRE*.

**Sphere** (1998, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Barry Levinson. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone, Samuel L. Jackson, Peter Coyote, Liev Schreiber, Queen Latifah. Filmization of Michael Crichton's excellent science-fiction novel is pure edge-of-your-seat entertainment, but not without flaws. A group of scientists is flown to a vessel which was discovered on the Pacific ocean floor. It seems the (space?) ship has been there for almost 300 years, but how is that possible? A strange sphere inside it may know the answer. Film is off to an abrupt start, and despite being tightly paced not really evenly structured. It leaves open a few questions, which those who have read the novel won't mind. The suspense is extremely fine, which is what makes up the film's rating.

**Spider** (2002, GBR/CDN) **C-98m. \*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Miranda Richardson, Gabriel Byrne, Lynn Redgrave, John Neville. Psycho drama about mental patient Fiennes, who takes board at a London home/asylum some time around WW2. Slowly we learn through flashbacks what made him the broken man he is. Intriguing premise, but plodding execution makes this a lesser Cronenberg effort. The fact that we are asked to identify with or care for the handicapped main character makes the movie difficult to access, if not even depressing. Classical score by Howard Shore makes things even worse. Written by Patrick McGrath, based on his novel.

**Spider Baby or, The Maddest Story Ever Told** (1968, USA) **B&W-84m. \*\* D:** Jack Hill. Starring Lon Chaney Jr., Carol Ohmart, Quinn Redeker, Beverly Washburn, Jill Banner, Sid Haig. Corny, bizarre curio about a retarded backwoods family, whose caretaker (Chaney, in his last film role) is in charge. The adolescent girls play strange murder games, and the ,boy'

(Haig) is the bald and handicapped title character. When some other, straight family members come to claim their inheritance, there is murder and mayhem. Filmed in the mid-60s, which accounts for relative tameness of the going-ons, but overall subject matter is quite bizarre, so buffs should seek this out. Director Hill also scripted and edited the picture. Also known as ATTACK OF THE LIVER EATERS, CANNIBAL ORGY, and THE LIVER EATERS.

**Spider-Man** (2002, USA) **C-121m. \*\* D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Tobey Maguire, Willem Dafoe, Kirsten Dunst, James Franco, Cliff Robertson, Rosemary Harris, J.K. Simmons, Ted Raimi, Bruce Campbell, Randy Savage, Macy Gray, Scott Spiegel, Lucy Lawless, Robert Kerman, Stan Lee. Big-budget adaptation of the comic book by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko is one big disappointment. Uninvolving plot, ordinary design (remember DICK TRACY or the BATMAN movies?), and special effects that make the film look like a computer game. What's left is some exciting action footage and Dafoe's great performance as the villain. Sticks relatively close to its source. Score cowritten by Danny Elfman.

**Spider-Man 2** (2004, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, James Franco, Alfred Molina, Rosemary Harris, J.K. Simmons, Donna Murphy, Bill Nunn, Willem Dafoe, Cliff Robertson, Ted Raimi, Elizabeth Banks, Bruce Campbell, Stan Lee, John Landis. First sequel to the 2002 blockbuster is a better movie, as Spidey aka Peter Parker (Maguire) is faced with tremendous personal problems (his job, his family, his love interest), as well as a fierce villain in the form of scientist-turned-tentacled-monster Molina. Better effects, better storyline, this one includes a lot of emotions to make for engrossing viewing. And the action set-pieces are a wow. Oscar-winner for Best Visual Effects. Version 2.1 runs 9m. longer. Score by Danny Elfman.

**Spider-Man 3** (2007, USA) **C-139m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Sam Raimi. Starring Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, James Franco, Thomas Haden Church, Topher Grace, Bryce Dallas Howard, Rosemary Harris, J.K. Simmons, James Cromwell, Theresa Russell, Dylan Baker, Bill Nunn, Bruce Campbell, Ted Raimi, Willem Dafoe, Cliff Robertson, Stan Lee. Bigger, longer, but not better sequel brings on two new villains, the Sandman, an ex-con, who was involved in the murder of Spiderman's uncle, and (later in the story) a creepy fungus-infected Spiderman-rival (Venom). Makes Spidey appear foolish too often and has many plot contrivances, but the action delivers again. Score by Christopher Young this time.

**Spider-Man Homecoming** (2017, USA) **C-133m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jon Watts. Starring Tom Holland, Michael Keaton, Robert Downey Jr., Marisa Tomei, Jon Favreau, Gwyneth Paltrow. Yet another reboot of the comic-book superhero, who gets fully integrated into the Avengers, with Iron Man Downey Jr. playing his mentor. Spiderman is a quite shy 15-year-old student, who is not taken seriously by Iron Man, even when salvager Burton comes in possession of alien technology and uses it in heists. Story is only so-so, effects and pace mostly compensate. Another Marvel moneymaker.

**Spiderwick Chronicles, The** (2008, USA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Mark Waters. Starring Freddie Highmore, Mary-Louise Parker, Nick Nolte, Sarah Bolger, Joan Plowright, David Strathairn, Andrew McCarthy, and the voices of Seth Rogen, Martin Short. Fantasy adventure based on the books by Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black about three siblings (a teenage girl and two twin boys, both played by Highmore), who move into the old, derelict estate of their great-aunt with their mother. It turns out the place is home to many secrets, among the most precious the children's great-great uncle's Guide to Fairies, which describes a magical world they at first cannot see. When they learn that an evil ogre is after the book, a fantastic adventure for them begins... Well-made, effective fantasy does the books justice and adds some fun ingredients. Not great, but pretty well-done. Good score by James

Horner. Adaptation by Karey Kirkpatrick, David Berenbaum and John Sayles. Photographed by Caleb Deschanel.

**Spies Like Us** (1985, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: John Landis. Starring Chevy Chase, Dan Aykroyd, Steve Forrest, Donna Dixon, Bruce Davison, Frank Oz, Terry Gilliam, Costa-Gavras, Ray Harryhausen, Matt Frewer, Bob Hope, Joel Coen, Sam Raimi, Michael Apted, B.B. King, Larry Cohen, Martin Brest. Enjoyable comedy makes fun of the Cold War, as two bumbling idiots (Aykroyd and Chase) are sent out as spies (read: decoys) to Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. Film offers a couple of genuine belly-laughs, Chase and Aykroyd are a great team. Lots of cameos add to the fun. Cowritten by Dan Aykroyd.

**Spie Uccidono in Silenzio, Le** (1966, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-85m. SCOPE\*½** D: Mario Caiano. Starring Lang Jeffries, Erika Blanc, Andrea Bosisic, Emma Danieli. Italian James Bond imitation whose plot isn't worth mentioning. Too serious and too pretentious, this – unlike the Bond series – has aged terribly. Some nice directorial touches cannot save it. English titles: SPIES KILL SILENTLY, SPY STRIKES SILENTLY.

**Spie Vengono dal Semi Freddo, Le** (1966, ITA) **C-79m. ½** D: Mario Bava. Starring Vincent Price, Fabian, Laura Antonelli. Idiotic comedy about mad scientist who plants bombs into attractive women that explode when kissed. This way he wants to attain world domination. Too bad no one planted a bomb in this trashy sequel to DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE BIKINI MACHINE. It seems incredible Bava made this because it's badly directed! And isn't Vincent Price's voice dubbed? Other prints run 85m. English title: DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE GIRL BOMBS

**Spirited Away** (2001, JAP) **C-125m. \*\*\*** D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Daveigh Chase, Suzanne Pleshette, Jason Marsden, John Ratzenberger (English version). Complex, often fascinating animated feature from Japanese genre master Miyazaki. A little girl, about to move to a new home in the country, follows her parents into an abandoned theme park, which is a resting place for spirits. Separated from her parents, the frightened girl finds refuge in a huge bath house and must try to fit in with all kinds of weird characters. Anime of epic proportions creates a marvelous, inspiring fantasy world (much like the director's PRINCESS MONONOKE), but remains perhaps slightly too grotesque for its own good, as this renders the film a bit episodic. Still, first-rate in many respects. Excellent score by Joe Hisaishi. Oscar winner for Best Animated Feature. Filmed in an aspect ratio of 2.00:1. Also known as SEN, SEN AND THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF CHIHIRO, and most commonly SPIRITED AWAY. Japanese original title: SEN TO CHIHIRO NO KAMIKAKUSHI.

**Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron** (2002, USA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Kelly Asbury, Lorna Cook. Featuring the voices of Matt Damon, James Cromwell, Daniel Studi, Chopper Bernet, Charles Napier. Pleasant-enough animated feature from DreamWorks follows the exploits of a wild stallion, as it grows up to be the leader of its herd and must live through one or the other adventure in the Old West. Very little interest springs from derivative plot, the (computer-animated scenes don't really thrill. For horse-loving, indiscriminating kids.

**Spiritual Kung Fu** (1979, HGK) **C-94m. SCOPE \*½** D: Lo Wei. Starring Jackie Chan. Someone steals a valuable book containing instructions for an almost unbeatable fighting technique from a Shaolin monastery. Chan, with the help of red-haired ghosts(!), tries to get it back from the villain. Weak, incoherent eastern with poor comic elements contains enough action to please Jackie's fans but hardly anyone else. Produced by the director, who reworked this in 1985.

**Splinter** (2008, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Toby Wilkins. Starring Shea Whigham, Paulo Costanzo, Jill Wagner, Rachel Kerbs. Not-bad but barely original horror movie set in and around a gas station where two young lovers have been taken hostage by a pair of criminals.

Too bad, there's also an infectious splinter-like virus around. Some nice gore effects, but movie never rises to full-fledged excitement. Has been compared to George Romero's DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978), but that's too much praise for it. Performances are fairly good, direction a bit too hectic. Director Wilkins also coscripted.

**Split** (2016, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring James McAvoy, Anya Taylor-Joy, Betty Buckley, Haley Lu Richardson, Jessica Sula. Three teenage girls are abducted and locked into a basement by psychopath McAvoy, who it turns out has 23 split personalities. The girls must find out who they can cooperate with to escape, before he unleashes personality #24, the 'beast'. Quite disturbing and tense, with good performances, and not without humor. Not a full return to form for writer-director Shyamalan, but clearly set in his universe, as the final scene will show.

**SpongeBob SquarePants Movie, The** (2004, USA) **C-90m. \*½** D: Stephen Hillenburg. Starring (the voices of) Tom Kenny, Clancy Brown, Rodger Bumpass, Bill Fagerbakke, Jeffrey Tambor, Scarlett Johansson, Alec Baldwin, and (in person) David Hasselhoff. Pretty obnoxious big screen version of the TV series contains the same low-brow, dark-humor jokes, packed into a story of SpongeBob and Patrick trying to find Neptune's crown and thereby saving Mr. Krabs from his certain demise. Fans might boost the rating by a star, but for others this is just too hysterical and violent.

**SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water** (2015, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½** D: Paul Tibbitt. Starring Antonio Banderas and (the voices of) Tom Kenny, Bill Fagerbakke, Rodger Bumpass. It was unavoidable: A 3-D movie featuring everyone's favourite ocean sponge. When the krabby patty formula is stolen by pirate Banderas, SpongeBob has to travel back in time(!) to get it. Acceptable movie for kids.

**Spontaneous Combustion** (1990, USA) **C-97m. \*½** D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Brad Dourif, Cynthia Bain, John Cypher, William Prince, Dey Young, John Landis. In the 1950s a young couple suffers radioactive contamination due to the government's nuclear testing. The woman nevertheless gives birth to a boy, who some thirty years later has the power to set people on fire. Ambitious story (by Hooper) goes absolutely nowhere with a completely unconvincing script. Dourif is quite good in the lead role.

**Spooked: The Ghosts of Waverly Hills Sanatorium** (2006, USA) **C-82m. \*\*½** D: Christopher Saint Booth. Featuring Charles Mattingly, Tina Mattingly, Keith Age, Christopher Saint Booth, Philip Adrian Booth. Interesting documentary about Waverly Hills Sanatorium a monstrous, derelict building that used to be a hospital, and has now a reputation of being haunted. Through interviews and historical flashbacks filmmaker Booth tries to explain its fascination and offers paranormal evidence from orbs, EVPs to actual ghost apparitions. Not fully convincing but quite chilling.

**Spotlight** (2015, USA/CDN) **C-128m. \*\*\*** D: Tom McCarthy. Starring Mark Ruffalo, Michael Keaton, Rachel McAdams, Live Schreiber, John Slattery, Stanley Tucci. Compelling drama based on a true story about four journalists who tackle a story about child molestation in the Catholic Church and realize there's a network of cover-ups. Well-acted, very authentic piece of real-life. Nominated for 6 Academy Awards.

**Spring** (2014, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Justin Benson, Aaron Moorhead. Starring Lou Taylor Pucci, Nadia Hilker, Vanessa Bednar, Jeremy Gardner. Moody horror drama mostly set in Italy, where troubled Pucci travels to run away from his sad existence in the States. He meets and falls in love with free-spirited student Hilker, who has problems keeping relationships and harbours a dark secret. Intriguing story in nice setting might make you forgive its slow pace, awkward comic relief and occasional talkiness. Very metaphorical, almost poetic, has cult possibilities.

**Spring Breakers** (2012, USA) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Harmony Korine. Starring Selena Gomez, Vanessa Hudgens, Ashley Benson, Rachel Korine, James Franco. A group of four teenage girls long for a spring break vacation, and step over the line by robbing some diner guests with fake guns, thus getting enough money for their holiday. There they hang loose but soon come in conflict with the law again. Steel-toothed Franco, a wanna-be rap star and small-time criminal, helps them out of jail and exerts a strange influence on the girls. Teen drama is hypnotic to watch, stylishly directed by Korine (then 19-year-old screenwriter of KIDS), but also a matter-of-taste. Labelling this as a comedy led some to have false expectations about it. It's certainly no AMERICAN PIE. The casting of Disney star Gomez also seems too obviously against her reputation, although her character is not convincing.

**Spy Game** (2001, USA/GBR) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tony Scott. Starring Robert Redford, Brad Pitt, Catherine McCormack, Stephen Dillane, Larry Bryggman, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, David Hemmings, Charlotte Rampling. Redford plays a CIA man who is about to retire, when he hears of the imprisonment of a colleague he trained (Pitt). In flashbacks, we learn about the men's relationship, while there are only 24 hours for Redford to persuade the CIA to save Pitt from execution. Starts out interesting, but loses its way in the second half, when there is at least one flashback too many, making the story seem like a contrivance. The stars are good, though, as is Scott's direction.

**Spy Kids** (2001, USA) **C-88m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Antonio Banderas, Carla Gugino, Alexa Vega, Daryl Sabara, Alan Cumming, Tony Shalhoub, Teri Hatcher, Cheech Marin, Robert Patrick, Danny Trejo, Mike Judge, Richard Linklater, George Clooney. Fast-paced actioner about former spies Banderas and Gugino, who have two children now and are living a quiet existence. Then one day they called back into action and their kids are thrust into an adventure of giant proportions. Loud, effects-filled, well-designed movie is aimed at children, but adults will find it fun, too. A bit too comic-bookish perhaps in characterization and plot. Sort-of the follow-up to Rodriguez' episode in FOUR ROOMS (1995). Score by Danny Elfman. Followed by two sequels.

**Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams** (2002, USA) **C-100m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Antonio Banderas, Carla Gugino, Alexa Vega, Daryl Sabara, Steve Buscemi, Mike Judge, Danny Trejo, Cheech Marin, Matt O'Leary, Emily Osment, Ricardo Montalban, Holland Taylor, Alan Cumming, Bill Paxton, Tony Shalhoub. Exciting, hi-tech sequel pits the spy kids against rival spies from their O.S.S. organisation, which assigns them to retrieve a special device hidden somewhere on a mysterious island. Plot again serves as the excuse for some stunning computer-generated effects, but laughs and scares are also there. A tad better than the first film. Vega gives another eye-opening performance.

**Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over** (2003, USA) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Robert Rodriguez. Starring Antonio Banderas, Carla Gugino, Alexa Vega, Daryl Sabara, Ricardo Montalban, Holland Taylor, Sylvester Stallone, Mike Judge, Salma Hayek, Matt O'Leary, Emily Osment, Cheech Marin, Danny Trejo, Tony Shalhoub, Steve Buscemi, Bill Paxton, George Clooney, Elijah Wood. Disappointing continuation of the series plunges the boy (Sabara) into a virtual reality computer game in order to save his sister, who's stuck in Level 4. Most of the film takes place inside the computer game, a completely digital environment. This 'digital file', as Rodriguez calls it, is kept alive only by some star cameos. Game-addicted kids might like it.

**Spy Next Door, The** (2010, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Brian Levant. Starring Jackie Chan, Amber Valetta, Madeline Carroll, Will Shadley, Alina Foley, Magnús Scheving, Billy Ray Cyrus, George Lopez. Chan plays a spy, who romances a suburban single mom in his cover identity. When he has the chance to babysit her children, he eagerly embraces this opportunity to

win their trust. However, a Russian villain has set his eyes on his home and a valuable file on his computer. Paper-thin plot has been done several times before, but Jackie Chan is so likable, he pulls this off with ease, despite some sub-par performances. Also known as DOUBLE MISSION, SPY DADDY.

**Spy Who Loved Me, The** (1977, GBR) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Lewis Gilbert. Starring Roger Moore, Barbara Bach, Curd Jürgens, Richard Kiel, Caroline Munro, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn. James Bond goes against villain Jürgens, who has abducted nuclear weapons – planning to destroy the world! 007 must join forces with beautiful Russian agent Bach in order to stop the madman's evil scheme. Exceptional globetrotting adventure, loaded with gimmicks, more serious than other Bond films, but not without the trademark humor. Excellent production values make this the best 70s Bond. Marvelous photography by Claude Renoir. Followed by MOONRAKER.

**Squadra Antiscippo** (1976, ITA) **C-95m. \*\* D:** Bruno Corbucci. Starring Tomas Milian, Jack Palance, Maria Rosaria Omaggio, Toni Ucci, Alberto Longoni. Slightly sub-standard police movie about grungy cop Milian, who may be the only one with the wits to stop ruthless crimelord Palance. Quite violent fare, with a plot that drags on. Milian is the whole show here; he is so cool that he even wears his woolly cap in bed! Film started an entire series and was followed by ten(!) sequels. English title: THE COP IN BLUE JEANS.

**Squartatore di New York, Lo** (1982, ITA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Jack Hedley, Almanta Suska, Howard Ross, Andrea Ochipinti, Alexandra delli Colli, Lucio Fulci. Gory slasher movie by none other than splat-master Lucio Fulci. A psycho killer, talking like Donald Duck, is stalking women in the streets of New York. Police investigators are baffled. Typically violent for its time, a direct descendant of the giallo, only less intricate and atmospheric. Some nice directorial touches and good photography by Luigi Kuveiller (PROFONDO ROSSO) make it worthwhile for genre fans. Cowritten by Fulci. English titles: THE NEW YORK RIPPER, PSYCHO RIPPER and THE RIPPER.

**Squirm** (1976, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Jeff Lieberman. Starring Don Scardino, Patricia Percy, Peter Mac-Lean. If you think worms are ugly then stay away from this shocker about young New Yorker who has to contend with slimy creatures who are driven out of the earth by a power shock. The direction lifts it above average but film is rather an ecological thriller than a horror film. The American PG-rating tells it all.

**Srpski Film** (2010, SRB) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Srdjan Spasojevic. Starring Srdjan Todorovic, Sergej Trifunovic, Jelena Gavrilovic, Slobodan Bestic. Infamous shock drama from Serbia. A retired porn star, now a happy family father, reluctantly signs a lucrative deal for one more movie. It turns out that the maniacal director intends to film and market everything controversial and forbidden to well-paying international customers, from child porn to snuff movies. Solidly made and well-acted, a bit ponderous and slow, but becomes an intoxicating, powerful experience towards the end. Extremely graphic and sickening, banned in many countries. Not a gratuitous exploitation film but a sour comment on the Serbia's weak economy and lack of innovation, not to mention moral decay. Fine subliminal score by Sky Wikluh. English title: A SERBIAN MOVIE.

**Stage Fright** (2014, CDN) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jerome Sable. Starring Allie MacDonald, Douglas Smith, Minnie Driver, Meat Loaf, James McGowan. Another offbeat Canadian horror movie that is at the same time a musical! MacDonald is still traumatized by the murder of her mother ten years ago, she now works as a cook at the musical academy of Meat Loaf. She then sees the chance to get the part in the musical that made her mother famous, but then the same killer seems to be stalking the crew. The score, especially the

Prog Rock, is not bad, the movie quite involving on the whole. Give it a shot if you like slasher movies. It's also quite gory.

**Stalker** (1979, RUS) **C/B&W-161m**. \*\*\*½ D: Andrei Tarkovsky. Starring Aleksandr Kajdanovsky, Alisa Frejndlikh, Anatoli Solonitsyn, Nikolai Grinko, Natasha Abramova. Art film drama with science-fiction elements: Ex-convict Stalker agrees to lead two intellectuals, writer Solonitsyn and scientist Grinko into the 'Forbidden Zone', a deserted wasteland that is said to have strange powers ever since a meteorite crashed into it. The Zone and its laws seem beyond human comprehension... Long, slow, hypnotic masterpiece of filmmaking, perhaps just a tad too cold, reflects upon mankind's need to 'know' and human fallability. Again, Tarkovsky makes excellent use of classical music. He also cowrote the script with Arkadi and Boris Strugatsky, based on their story. Shot in an aspect ratio of 1.37:1.

**Stand, The** (1994, USA) **C-360m**. \*\*½ D: Mick Garris. Starring Gary Sinise, Molly Ringwald, Jamey Sheridan. TV-adaptation of Stephen King's mega-novel about disease wiping out civilization, which leads to a good-versus-evil fight among the few survivors. Film is well-made and interesting to say the least, but it stands and falls with Sheridan's devil/bad guy, who looks and behaves all too human. Besides, the ending really drags. Cameos include Sam Raimi, Kathy Bates and King himself, who also penned the teleplay (and none too well).

**Stand by Me** (1986, USA) **C-89m**. \*\*\* D: Rob Reiner. Starring Will Wheaton, River Phoenix, Corey Feldman, Jerry O'Connell, Gary Riley, Kiefer Sutherland, Richard Dreyfuss, John Cusack, Madeleine Swift. Classic coming-of-age tale written by Stephen King (of all people), about four twelve-year-old friends in 1960 Maine, who embark on a journey to find the dead body of a kid in the woods. Effective drama about friendship and growing up uncovers childhood traumata with shocking simplicity. A bit slight but funny, with some priceless oldies on the soundtrack. The screenplay was Oscar-nominated. Wheaton is remarkable as Stephen King's alter ego.

**Stanley Kubrick: A Life in Pictures** (2001, USA) **C-142m**. \*\*\* D: Jan Harlan. Narrated by Tom Cruise. Featuring interviews with Woody Allen, Arthur C. Clarke, Shelley Duvall, Nicole Kidman, Malcolm McDowell, Matthew Modine, Jack Nicholson, Alan Parker, Sidney Pollack, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Douglas Trumbull, Peter Ustinov, the Kubrick family. Meticulous documentary about the life and oeuvre of Stanley Kubrick, one of the most acclaimed, most maniacal, most ingenious film directors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His upbringing and education, his early jobs are revealed, his films are discussed and commented upon by collaborators and admirers. Highly interesting stuff, although sheer length numbs you a little. One would also have expected more information about the movies themselves. Still, no film buff should miss this. Some of the most interesting (and intelligent) commentary comes from Martin Scorsese and Jack Nicholson.

**Starcrash** (1978, ITA/USA) **C-92m**. \*\* D: Lewis Coates (=Luigi Cozzi). Starring Marjoe Gortner, Caroline Munro, Christopher Plummer, David Hasselhoff, Robert Tessier, Joe Spinell, Nadia Cassini. Incredibly cheesy but sincere science-fiction film, an obvious attempt to imitate STAR WARS. Gortner (terrible) and Munro (sexy) play smugglers, who get drawn into a galactic fight between emperor Plummer and villain Spinell. Some terrible acting, cheap effects, but Plummer, retaining his dignity, and hot Munro keep this watchable. There's also a typical John Barry score to enjoy! Also known as FEMALE SPACE INVADERS.

**Stardust** (2007, GBR/USA) **C-127m**. **SCOPE** \*\* D: Matthew Vaughn. Starring Ben Barnes, Clare Danes, Sienna Miller, Henry Cavill, Nathaniel Parker, Peter O'Toole, Rupert Everett, Michelle Pfeiffer, Robert De Niro, Ricky Gervais. Fantasy adventure based on a book by Neil Gaiman about a fantasy world in 19th century England which can be accessed through a hole in a stone wall. A young man fathers a child with an imprisoned princess there, many

years later the son, who grew up in the real world, has the chance to become the prince, if he can find magic stone before an evil witch. Despite swift pace, this has too much of everything, too much wacky humor, too much violence and in the end it doesn't gel – unless watching De Niro in women's clothes is your idea of fun. Even Danes seems miscast.

**Star Quest** (1994, USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Rick Jacobson. Starring Steven Bauer, Brenda Bakke, Alan Rachins, Emma Samms, Cliff De Young, Ming-Na Wen. Eight international scientists on a mission to a distant solar system are shocked to find one of their crew members dead after they are waken from hibernation ... and more deaths follow soon. B-sci-fi, produced for television, is derivative (it rips off the first scene of PLANET OF THE APES) but otherwise not that bad. Interesting plot twists make it watchable. De Young is good. U.K. title: TERMINAL VOYAGE.

**Starquest II** (1997, USA) **C-93m.** Ⓜ D: Fred Gallo. Starring Adam Baldwin, Gretchen Palmer, Robert Englund, Jerry Trimble, Duane Davis. Perfectly unbearable science-fiction about several characters waking up aboard a space vessel, only to discover that the Earth has been destroyed in a nuclear war. It turns out that human-looking aliens (led by Englund) want to breed humans. Offensively stupid characters, pointless violence, nudity and simulated sex. For the least demanding viewers only. One wonders why Englund signed up for this trash. Alternative title: MIND BREAKERS. No obvious relation to STAR QUEST.

**Starry Eyes** (2014, USA/BEL) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kevin Kolsch, Dennis Widmayer. Starring Alex Essoe, Amanda Fuller, Noah Segan, Fabianne Therese, Shane Coffey. Horror drama about an aspiring actress, who hates her everyday life working as a waitress in a cheap restaurant and struggles for respect among her friends. Then she auditions for a new role and soon must ask herself what she is willing to do to get the part. Needless to say, it will be a horrible experience. Interesting psycho drama with horror and slasher elements is too heavy-going in the mid-section. Its reception may depend on how much you can identify with the main character and her plight, and how likable you find her.

**Starship** (1985, AUS/GBR) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Roger Christian. Starring John Tarrant, Deep Roy, Donogh Rees, Cassandra Webb, Arthur Sherman. Science-fiction film from a STAR WARS collaborator about a mining colony in outer space, where humans are used as workers. When some of them find out they are about to be replaced by robots, they rebel against the authorities. Low budget hampers film considerably, though it also isn't very entertaining or exciting. Watchable but rather boring. Andrew Lesnie (LORD OF THE RINGS) did the 2<sup>nd</sup> unit photography. Alternative titles: 2084, and LORCA AND THE OUTLAWS.

**Starship Troopers** (1997, USA) **C-129m.** Ⓜ D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Casper Van Dien, Dina Meyer, Denise Richards, Jake Busey, Neil Patrick Harris, Clanc Brown, Seth Gilliam, Michael Ironside. Mankind is at war with gigantic insects in this worthless science-fiction film - or is it a satire? Either way, some impressive effects and over-the-top violence (as expected) cannot save this adaptation of Robert A. Heinlein's award-winning science-fiction novel. The human drama is laughable, the acting atrocious (by a *Beverly Hills 90210/Melrose Place* cast). You know you're in trouble when the audience in the movie theater considers almost every scene a laugh riot. This is actually worse than INDEPENDENCE DAY!

**Starsky & Hutch** (2004, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Todd Phillips. Starring Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Snoop Dogg, Fred Williamson, Vince Vaughn, Juliette Lewis, Jason Bateman, Amy Smart, Carmen Electra, Chris Penn, Paul Michael Glaser, David Soul, Will Ferrell. Quite funny revival/spoofing of the TV series of the late 1970s with Stiller and Wilson playing cops, who try to pin cocaine dealer Vaughn. Something's missing from the plot, but if you want to see what the 70s were like in terms of clothes, styles, applications etc. then this is your movie.

**Star Trek Beyond** (2016, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Justin Lin. Starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana, Karl Urban, Simon Pegg, John Cho, Anton Yelchin, Idris Elba. More of the same modern-day Star Trek sci-fi, as the Enterprise is lured into a nebula that turns out to be a trap. With the ship destroyed and most of the crew dead, Kirk and his colleagues must try to beat their opponent on an alien planet. Some truly spectacular visual effects highlight, even carry this film. It's the lackluster plot you don't really care about, which also mutes the action scenes. All the characters seem to grow better into their roles, especially no-nonsense Bones (Urban). Cowritten by Pegg.

**Star Trek - The Motion Picture** (1979, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Robert Wise. Starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, Stephen Collins, Persis Khambatta, James Doohan, Nichelle Nichols, Walter Koenig, George Takei. The 'Star Trek' crew makes a welcome return to the screen after their exciting TV adventures in the late 1960s. The big-budget somewhat belies their origins, and film's simple story hints at this incompatibility. A huge energy field approaches the Earth, destroying everything in its path and the Enterprise tries everything in its power to avert disaster. The likable characters (portrayed by the - still young - actors from the original series) carry this film. Excellent score by Jerry Goldsmith provides the excitement denied by the plot, and Douglas Trumbull's brilliant effects are reminiscent of his work for Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. A must for Trekkies, acceptable sci-fi for others. Also shown at 143m. Followed by eight sequels until 1998.

**Star Trek Into Darkness** (2013, USA) **C-132m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** J.J. Abrams. Starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana, Karl Urban, Simon Pegg, John Cho, Benedict Cumberbatch, Peter Weller, Leonard Nimoy. Twelfth STAR TREK feature, the second since the series revival in 2009. The Starfleet suffers a major terrorist attack and Captain Kirk (Pine) is assigned to hunt down the criminal, who has fled to the Klingon system. It turns out the terrorist (Cumberbatch) has superhuman capabilities and it actually part of a superior race. Lots of talk and politics, some welcome comic relief, but the action sequences seem to be there for their own sake, and the plot is not very engaging, although everyone tries very hard. Excellent production values, nice references to the original series, but there is little to no adventure to the story... something the original series thrived on.

**Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace** (1999, USA) **C-136m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** George Lucas. Starring Liam Neeson, Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Jake Lloyd, Ian McDiarmid, Pernilla August, Hugh Quarshie, Frank Oz, Terence Stamp, Brian Blessed, Samuel L. Jackson, Sofia Coppola. The beginning of the most successful space saga of all time has Qui-Gon Jinn (Neeson) and Obi-Wan Kenobi (McGregor) trying to negotiate peace, but soon they find themselves in the midst of an intergalactic political crisis, which might escalate any moment. On a rescue mission they make the acquaintance of Anakin Skywalker (Lloyd), a young boy with the gift of a Jedi... Excellent digital effects will take your breath away (especially during the race sequence and the bombastic finale), although the plot lacks scope and transparency – just what the beginning of an epic saga actually needs. The story and the characters would have needed more fleshing out, but the film's pace doesn't seem to leave enough time. Still, good fun all the way. Sequels in existence: STAR WARS (EPISODE IV), THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (EPISODE V) and RETURN OF THE JEDI (EPISODE VI).

**Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope** (1977, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE\*\*\*½ D:** George Lucas. Starring Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Cushing, Alec Guinness, David Prowse, Peter Mayhew, voice of James Earl Jones. 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...' Fast-paced, exciting science-fiction adventure that has become the most popular film of all time. Story – obviously aimed at kids - concerns rebellion against the Dark Force in unnamed galaxy. Protagonists Luke Skywalker (Hamill), Han Solo (Ford), Princess Leia (Fisher), Obi-

Wan Kenobi (Guinness) join forces against the mysterious, invincible Darth Vader. Dazzling special effects, spirited direction, a film that revolutionized the sci-fi genre and created a cult following, the biggest in all filmdom (it's a close race with STAR TREK). C-3PO and R2D2 provide brilliant comic relief. Try comparing the characters with those in THE LORD OF THE RINGS. Winner of seven Oscars (including one for John Williams' memorable score). Originally released at 121m., restored in 1997. Followed by two sequels and three prequels, starting with STAR WARS: EPISODE V – THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (1980).

**Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back** (1980, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Irvin Kershner. Starring Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Billy Dee Williams, Anthony Daniels, David Prowse, Peter Mayhew, Kenny Baker, Frank Oz, Alec Guinness, Jack Purvis, Julian Glover, Christopher Malcolm, John Ratzenberger, Treat Williams, voice of James Earl Jones. Sequel to the original STAR WARS (1977) is perfect entertainment. Story is merely a continuation of the battle between good and evil forces in space. Skywalker (Hamill), Leia (Fisher) and Solo (Ford) are trying to flee from deadly, increasingly powerful grasp of Darth Vader. However, their paths separate soon after a decisive battle on an ice planet. THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK is a rollercoaster ride of a movie: Brilliant pacing (especially in the first 40 minutes), first-rate effects and more intriguing plotting than in EPISODE IV make for an awe-inspiring experience. This is without a doubt the best STAR WARS movie, an impressive achievement, one of the top three science-fiction movies of the decade. Story by George Lucas, screenplay by Leigh Brackett and Lawrence Kasdan. Winner of two Oscars, Best Sound and Best Visual Effects. Restored version released in 1997. Followed by STAR WARS: EPISODE VI – RETURN OF THE JEDI (1983).

**Star Wars: Episode VI – Return of the Jedi** (1983, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Richard Marquand. Starring Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Billy Dee Williams, Anthony Daniels, Peter Mayhew, Sebastian Shaw, Ian McDiarmid, Frank Oz, David Prowse, Alec Guinness, Warwick Davis, Jack Purvis, voice of James Earl Jones. Final installment in the much-loved STAR WARS series is a slight disappointment considering the high standard of its predecessor. The Empire is about to complete a new Death Star and Luke Skywalker seeks out Darth Vader for a final confrontation. Episodic, less thrilling, but production design and special effects are still dazzling. David Fincher was among the visual effects crew. Restored version released in 1997. Followed by two EWOK films made for TV and the prequel STAR WARS: EPISODE I – THE PHANTOM MENACE (1999).

**Star Wars Holiday Special, The** (1978, USA) **C-97m. BOMB** D: Steve Binder. Starring Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Anthony Daniels, Peter Mayhew, Bea Arthur, Art Carney, Harvey Korman. Infamous but terrible television special set in the STAR WARS universe about Chewbacca's (obnoxious) family, who are waiting for him to return for Life Day, a holiday like our Christmas. Mostly set in the family's treehouse, some clips with the STAR WARS actors are interspersed. Cheap, boring, not even 'so-bad-it's-good'. Avoid.

**State of Grace** (1990, USA) **C-134m. \*\*½** D: Phil Joanou. Starring Sean Penn, Gary Oldman, Ed Harris, Robin Wright (Penn), John Turturro, John C. Reilly, Joe Viterelli, Burgess Meredith, James Russo. After a ten-year absence, Penn returns to his home turf of Hell's Kitchen, N.Y.C., and joins forces with Oldman and his brother Harris, who are the leaders of a powerful gang. Strong characterizations in unfocused script that does not justify film's overlength. Some stylish bits, but should have been a much better film. Score by Ennio Morricone. Photographed by Jordan Cronenweth (BLADE RUNNER).

**Stay Awake, The** (1987, SAF) **C-91m. \*½** D: John Bernard. Starring Shirley Jane Harris, Tanya Gordon, Jayne Hutton, Ken Marshall, Heath Porter. Some twenty years after a serial killer's execution the man's ghost terrorizes some girls spending a 'stay-awake' night at their

sorority. Absolutely nothing happens in the first 40 minutes, the rest plays in semi-darkness. Some stylish camerawork aside, this is a stupid horror film (from South Africa).

**Stealing Beauty** (1996, ITA/FRA/GBR) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Bernardo Bertolucci. Starring Jeremy Irons, Liv Tyler, Joseph Fiennes, Sinead Cusack, Rachel Weisz, Stefania Sandrelli, Jean Marais, Jason Flemyng. Quiet, stimulating coming-of-age drama about 19-year-old American (virgin) Tyler, who spends her holiday in Tuscany, Italy, with friends, who have all known her late mother. While trying to find her roots, she also discovers her own character and sexuality. Playful, perhaps too light-weight but film escapes heavy-handedness thanks to fine direction and score. Ravishing Tyler's naturalness provides a heavy dose of eroticism. Irons is also fine as a dying admirer of her beauty.

**Step Brothers** (2008, USA) **C-98m. \*\*½** D: Adam McKay. Starring Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Mary Steenburgen, Richard Jenkins, Adam Scott, Kathryn Hahn, Seth Rogen. Low-brow comedy about two 40-year-old men, who still live at home. When Ferrell's mom falls in love with Reilly's dad and marries him, they are forced to share their laziness and become competitors. Juvenile humor abound, but also features some laugh-out-loud gags. For Ferrell's fans.

**Stepfather, The** (1987, USA) **C-89m. \*\*½** D: Joseph Ruben. Starring Terry O'Quinn, Jill Schoelen, Shelley Hack, Charles Lanyer, Stephen Shellen, Stephen E. Miller. Contrived, partially effective thriller about psychopath O'Quinn, who has just killed his entire family and moves on to a new one, obviously having wiped out all traces. How long does it take his anxious stepdaughter to find out about him? Story plays out with these typical plot coincidences, but O'Quinn's performance is convincing. Followed by two sequels.

**Stepford Wives, The** (2004, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Frank Oz. Starring Nicole Kidman, Matthew Broderick, Bette Midler, Glenn Close, Christopher Walken, Roger Bart, David Marshall Grant, Jon Lovitz, Faith Hill. Remake of the 1975 horror film becomes a satire on the picture-perfect suburban existence. Ousted network exec Kidman moves to Stepford with her husband Broderick and their two children, and soon learns that not everything is as neat and perfect as it seems. Watchable until the finale, which undermines film. This should have remained as serious as the original. Based on the novel by Ira Levin.

**Stepmom** (1998, USA) **C-125m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Chris Columbus. Starring Julia Roberts, Ed Harris, Susan Sarandon, Jena Malone, Liam Aiken, Lynn Whitfield, Darrell Larson. Sarandon can't come to terms with the fact that her ex-husband Harris's new girlfriend Roberts has no feeling for their kids. This triangular relationship is constantly in danger of exploding and finally does when Roberts fails to look after the son, young Aiken. Sarandon decides to fight for her children, at any cost, but is forced to cooperate when she learns that she may be incurably ill. Well-acted, especially by Sarandon, but creates contradictory feelings in the viewer, as to whom of the women to like. Satisfactory plot development makes this slightly overlong drama recommendable, but Hollywood haters should stay away.

**Step Up** (2006, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Anne Fletcher. Starring Channing Tatum, Jenna Dewan, Damaine Radcliffe, De'Shawn Washington, Mario, Drew Sidora, Rachel Griffiths, Josh Henderson. Romantic comedy drama about social underdog and foster child Tatum, who breaks into a dance and drama school one day and destroys some props. He is caught by the police and ordered to do some social work at that school. Since he can dance very well, he is discovered by dance student Dewan, whose partner just injured himself. Contrived movie for dance fanatics. Some of the editing in the early scenes is really good. Followed by a sequel.

**Sterben im Reich der Wollust** (2005, GER) **C-75m. n/r** D: Eva Bense. German documentary about the Japanese obsession with sex and death (eros and thanatos), which has become

part of their culture. Director Bense looks at the film history (from the Pink Eiga sexploitation movies of the 1960s and 1970s to present-day erotic cinema), the sex industry and interviews filmmakers and artists who work in this field. A good pick for those interested in this aspect of Japanese culture, also contains some interesting information for movie buffs.

**Sterminatori dell'Anno 3000, Gli** (1983, ITA/SPA) **C-83m. SCOPE\*½** D: Jules Harrison (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring Fred Harris, Alicia Moro, Robert Jannuci, Venantino Venantini, Luca Venantini. Poor MAD MAX imitation has several characters trying to find water on a barren, post-apocalyptic Earth. The usual car stunts ensue. Director Carnimeo tries to make this a spectacle, but film is neither thrilling nor entertaining. Aka DEATH WARRIORS, EXTERMINATORS OF THE YEAR 3000.

**Steve Jobs** (2015, USA/GBR) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Danny Boyle. Starring Michael Fassbender, Kate Winslet, Seth Rogen, Jeff Daniels, Michael Stuhlbarg, Katherine Waterstone. Biography about the late Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, irresistibly brought to the screen by director Boyle. By picking three moments in time, the computer genius is portrayed always just before big product launches, and works in his relationship with workmates, as well as his estranged wife and daughter, who Jobs at first refuses to acknowledge. Superbly acted and directed film also packs an emotional wallop, whether you like the man and his products or not. Based on a book by Walter Isaacson.

**Steve McQueen: The King of Cool** (1998, USA) **C-84m. \*\*\*** D: Robert Katz. Featuring Steve McQueen, Neile Adams (=McQueen), Bud Ekins, Martin Landau, Norman Jewison, Chad McQueen, Barbara McQueen Ginty, narrated by Kevin Spacey. Portrait of one of the coolest and most fascinating movie stars of the 1960s and 1970s, perhaps of all time. Chronologically goes through most films of his filmography and features interviews with his friends, colleagues and most importantly family. A good insight of what he was like and what made him tick.

**St. Helens** (1981, USA) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: Ernest Pintoff. Starring Art Carney, David Huffman, Cassie Yates, Albert Salmi, Ron O'Neal, Tim Thomerson. Obviously constructed story about the events leading up to 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens. Geologist Huffman travels to St. Helens to study it, Yates is his love interest. Carney plays a stubborn hermit called Harry Truman. Characters are awfully clichéd, but still film has something going for it. Quiet narrative, with lots of nature shots, punctuated by devastating climax (with real footage). Interesting score by Goblin, of all people. Also known as ST. HELENS, KILLER VOLCANO.

**Stigmata** (1999, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Rupert Wainwright. Starring Patricia Arquette, Gabriel Byrne, Jonathan Pryce, Nia Long, Thomas Kopache, Rade Serbedzija. Flashy, stylish camerawork (by Jeffrey L. Kimball, who shot JACOB'S LADDER and TRUE ROMANCE) and direction save this otherwise uninspired horror thriller about party girl Arquette, who one day suddenly suffers Stigmata, the wounds of Jesus Christ upon crucifixion. Byrne, an investigator from the Vatican, takes some time to figure out the meaning. Effective despite a one-dimensional plot, film also comes up with a message at the end, but serious movie goers might not last that long. The Smashing Pumpkins' Billy Corgan contributed to the music score.

**Still Smokin'** (1983, USA/NED) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Tommy Chong. Starring Cheech Marin, Tommy Chong, Hans van in't Veld, Linnea Quigley. Fifth film venture for cult comedy duo Cheech & Chong is one of their weakest. They travel to Amsterdam, where they should attend a film festival. This premise serves as a framework for some stand-up routines of the boys, most of which aren't funny, some are even tasteless. Only for their fans, who will probably like it (the wrestling match with the invisible man is actually quite good).

**Stir of Echoes, A** (1999, USA) **C-99m. \*\*\*** D: David Koepp. Starring Kevin Bacon, Kathryn Erbe, Kevin Dunn, Illeana Douglas, Liza Weil. Eerie chiller about family father Bacon, who is hypnotized by a friend and suddenly has frightening visions of murder. Strangely, his five-year-old son may be in touch with a dead girl who is haunting their Chicago home. Slightly predictable horror thriller bears resemblance to the superior *THE SIXTH SENSE* but delivers the goods nevertheless, with Bacon's performance a highlight. Based on the novel by Richard Matheson.

**Stitches** (2012, EIR) **C-86m. \*½** D: Conor McMahon. Staring Ross Noble, Tommy Knight, Shane Murray-Corcoran, Gemma-Leah Devereux. Gorehounds might enjoy this horror film about a shabby clown, who dies in a freak accident during a birthday party. Six years later he returns and takes revenge on the kids who gave him a hard time during the party. Pretty dull and disgusting, perhaps inspired by Peter Jackson's *BRAINDEAD* (1992) but nowhere near as funny or creative. Director O'Connor followed this with the superior *FROM THE DARK* (2014).

**Stoker** (2013, USA/GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Park Chan-Wook. Starring Mia Wasikowska, Nicole Kidman, Matthew Goode, Dermot Mulroney, Jacki Weaver. Interesting psycho mystery drama about an 18-year-old girl, who lives in an estate with her mother Kidman. After her father Mulroney's death, her uncle Goode moves in with them and exerts a strange influence on the mother and the girl. What are his plans, and is the girl imagining things? Moody puzzler, brilliantly directed by Park, whose cinematic treatment makes all the difference. Good score by Clint Mansell.

**Stonehearst Asylum** (2014, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Brad Anderson. Starring Kate Beckinsale, Jim Sturgess, David Thewlis, Brendan Gleeson, Ben Kingsley, Michael Caine, Jason Flemyng, Sinéad Cusack. Good-looking, solidly made Gothic drama based on a story by Edgar Allan Poe. In 1899, young doctor Sturgess travels to remote title institution, a lunatics asylum, to get some practice dealing with the insane. Once there, he falls in love with patient Beckinsale and discovers that superintendent Kingsley has a secret. Good cast fails to enliven lacklustre plot that has a few unlikely twists too many. Sumptuous production design and fine score. Filmed in Bulgaria. Originally released as *ELIZA GRAVES*, but retitled immediately. J.L. Moctezuma's *LA MANSION DE LA LOCURA* (1973) was based on the same story.

**Stoner** (1975, HGK/AUS/USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Huang Feng. Starring George Lazenby, Angela Mao, Samo Hung, Betty Ting-Pei, Yuen Wah. Solidly filmed but slowly paced action thriller about Australian cop Stoner (Lazenby), who travels to Hong Kong in order to infiltrate and stop crime syndicate that is getting its latest drug, a heroin derivative, ready for the mass market. One of three Hong Kong action films with Lazenby, made after he failed to hold on to the James Bond role. Climactic fights are good, rest is too sluggish. Produced by Raymond Chow and Leonard Ho. Also known as *HONG KONG HITMAN* and *A MAN CALLED STONER*.

**Stone Tape, The** (1972, GBR) **C-90m. \*\*** D: Peter Sasdy. Starring Michael Bryant, Jane Asher, Iain Cuthbertson, Michael Bates, Reginald Marsh. Horror chiller made for British television about a crew of research scientists, who work on developing a new recording medium when they discover that a room in the house seems to be haunted. Team leader Bryant believes the house 'recorded' a death and wants to use this 'technology' to his advantage. TV play usually receives acclaim, but it's talky and looks dated. It's also not chilling at all. Written by Nigel Kneale. The (paranormal) concept of a Stone Tape (residual hauntings) has existed since the 1960s.

**Storia Moderna, Una** (1963, ITA) **94m. \*\*\*½** D: Marco Ferreri. Starring Ugo Tognazzi, Marina Vlady, Walter Giller, Linda Sini, Riccardo Fellini, Achille Majeroni, Pietro Tattanelli. Mildly

amusing sex comedy about 40-ish playboy Tognazzi and his marriage to virgin Vlady. He is unable to cope with his 'new' life as a husband, and their sex life suffers. Nicely shot, but lacks the edge of Ferreri's later work. Subtitled version is not recommended. On-screen title: L'APE REGINA. Aka THE CONJUGAL BED.

**Story of Us, The** (1999, USA) **C-95m.** \*\*\*½ D: Rob Reiner. Starring Michelle Pfeiffer, Bruce Willis, Rita Wilson, Rob Reiner, Julie Hagerty, Tim Matheson, Red Buttons, Paul Reiser. Sporadically funny comedy about the marriage and separation of Willis and Pfeiffer, a couple who go through a seemingly typical estrangement procedure. Interesting structure, good performances by its stars, but film doesn't treat its central issue seriously (or funnily) enough. It wavers undecidedly between comedy and drama. The stars' fans won't mind.

**Storytelling** (2001, USA) **C-87m.** \*\*\*½ D: Todd Solondz. Starring Selma Blair, Leo Fitzpatrick, Robert Wisdom, Paul Giamatti, Xander Berkeley, Mark Webber, John Goodman, Julie Hagerty, Franka Potente, Conan O'Brien. Another attack by Solondz (HAPPINESS) on American bourgeois manners in this uneven two-part film. In the first story, student Blair has problems with her disabled boyfriend and ultimately degrades herself. In the second, longer segment, loser Giamatti tries his hands at documentary filmmaking and starts following the life of aimless teenager Webber in a typical American family. Provocative study of sexuality and teenage boredom has some daring sequences and good performances, but ending is weak. Written by the director.

**Strada, La** (1953, ITA) **102m.** \*\*\*½ D: Federico Fellini. Starring Anthony Quinn, Giulietta Masina, Richard Basehart, Aldo Silvano, Marcella Rovere, Livia Venturini. Classic tragedy, Federico Fellini's first big international success. Simple but moving tale of young girl (Masina) who is 'sold' to a variety artist (Quinn) by her family and has to endure his brutishness and rough treatment. On the road they encounter circus clown Basehart, who offers her to travel with him, but the simple-minded woman prefers to stay with her master, whom she obviously hopes to change. Wide-eyed Masina (Fellini's wife) is absolutely unforgettable, Quinn is no less impressive. Fine score by Nino Rota. Script by Tullio Pinelli and the director. Produced by Carlo Ponti and Dino de Laurentiis. Oscar-winner for Best Foreign Film. Original version runs 115m. and may be an improvement over 102m. print that is shown on German television.

**Strada per Forte Alamo, La** (1964, ITA) **C-67m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Mario Bava. Starring Ken Clark, Jany Clair, Michel Lemoine, Adreina Paul. Rare Mario Bava western (his first) is a rousing spectacle despite short running time. Outlaw Clark goes straight, after an innocent woman gets killed in one of his bank robberies and defends a caravan to Fort Alamo against violent hordes of Indians. Bava has created a romantic western with an unusual but universal theme – the thin line between good and evil. Made at the advent of Euro westerns, this is certainly his best. Bava used the pseudonym John Old and also photographed the picture in collaboration with Ubaldo Terzano. Good score by Piero Umiliani. Some prints may run 82m. English titles: THE ROAD TO FORT ALAMO and ARIZONA BILL.

**Strage dei Vampiri, La** (1962, ITA) **B&W-78m.** \*\*\*½ D: Roberto Mauri. Starring Walter Brandi, Graziella Granata, Paolo Solvay (=Luigi Batzella), Dieter Eppler, Alfredo Rizzo. Gothic horror film is a simplified version of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Count Brandi and his wife Granata celebrate their wedding, when a vampire appears and bites the bride. Hapless Brandi finds help in doctor Nietzsche(!). Atmospheric vampire movie, with good photography, a nice score and a seductive leading lady. Drawbacks: Brandi and vampire Eppler give campy performances, and the pace is slow. English titles: CURSE OF THE BLOOD GHOULS, CURSES OF THE GHOULS, and SLAUGHTER OF THE VAMPIRES.

**Straight Story, The** (1999, USA/FRA) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: David Lynch. Starring Richard Farnsworth, Sissy Spacek, Jane Heitz, Everett McGill, Jennifer Edwards-Hughes, Harry Dean Stanton. Stubborn 73 year-old Alvin Straight (Farnsworth), living a quiet suburban existence, repairs his lawn-mower one day and intends to drive with it to his brother, who lives more than 300 miles away. Straight hasn't seen his brother Lyle in ten years and considers it time to reconcile with him, since Lyle has recently suffered a stroke. Alvin encounters many different people on his way, most of them he shares his 'wisdoms' with, but there are also those who spur him on in his journey. As slowly paced as Straight's odyssey, this film is a triumph of acting. Farnsworth creates true fireworks (especially in the scene with that fellow WW2 veteran). Spry cinematography by the legendary Freddie Francis, who captures the American countryside in poetic images, heartfelt score by Angelo Badalamenti. For director Lynch, an unusually soft-spoken drama, out of step with the modern world of action movies. This will leave the viewer somewhat changed after leaving the theatre. Based on a real story. French title: UNE HISTOIRE VRAIE.

**Strange Circus** (2005, JAP) **C-108m. \*\*½** D: Shion Sono. Starring Masumi Miyazaki, Issei Ishida, Rie Kuwana, Mai Takahashi. Strange, indeed: Avantgarde psycho drama about perversion and the results of childhood traumata. A young girl is first forced to watch her parents have sex, then is repeatedly raped by her father, resulting in a kind of competitive relationship with her mother. As an adult she becomes a successful writer, who writes about these terrible events. Film becomes increasingly surreal, when an assistant of her publishing house tries to make more of her persona. Difficult to watch, often beautifully staged, but ultimately a mixed bag. Judge for yourself. Sono has become a cult director for stuff like this.

**Strange Days** (1995, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Kathryn Bigelow. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Angela Bassett, Juliette Lewis, Tom Sizemore, Michael Wincott, Vincent D'Onofrio, Glenn Plummer, Brigitte Bako, Richard Edson, William Fichtner, Josef Sommer. Riveting, very well-made futuristic action thriller: In 1999 L.A., ex-cop Fiennes has turned to dealing with so-called Squid, CDs which contain recorded first-person experiences. Now, on the brink of a new millenium, a politically motivated killing causes street violence and chaos. What's more, a killer is using the device to record his murders. Fiennes looks for help in tough driver Bassett, while his ex-girlfriend Lewis has now joined villain Wincott. Stylish, intriguing sci-fi thriller, from a story by James Cameron. Fiennes is excellent in this **BLADE RUNNER** (1982) derivate.

**Strangeland** (1998, USA) **C-81m. \*\*** D: John Pieplow. Starring Kevin Gage, Elizabeth Pena, Brett Harrelson, Robert Englund, Linda Cardellini, Tucker Smallwood, Dee Snider. Grisly modern horror thriller starring performance artist Snider as an excessively tattooed and pierced serial killer who abducts, abuses teen girls and stitches their mouths shut. Detective Gage is the one who must track him down. Not bad in terms of direction, even the plot tries to be unpredictable, but film itself is hardly exceptional. Englund and Pena have cameos at best. Also known as **DEE SNIDER'S STRANGELAND**.

**Stranger, The** (2014, CHL) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Guillermo Amoedo. Starring Lorenza Izzo, Cristobal Tapia Mont, Ariel Levy, Aaron Burns, Luis Gnecco. Heavy-handed horror drama made by Chilean hands, set in Canada, filmed in English. A stranger arrives in a small community and tries to redeem something that happened 16 years ago. He is carrying a strange disease that has something to do with his blood. Everything feels strangely fake in this movie, the score is overblown, the story is plodding. Judge for yourself if you like its ethereal tone. Produced by Eli Roth. Also known as **BAD BLOOD**.

**Stranger in Our House** (1978, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Wes Craven. Starring Linda Blair, Lee Purcell, Jeremy Slate, Jeff McCracken, Fran Drescher. After **LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT** and

HILLS HAVE EYES, director Craven went on to make this incredibly tame but okay TV movie. After her parents die in a car crash, Blair's cousin goes to live with them and soon strange things start to happen. Is it witchcraft? Watchable but Craven fans will miss his humour and horror. Also known as SUMMER OF FEAR.

**Strangers, The** (2008, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Bryan Bertino. Starring Liv Tyler, Scott Speedman. A young couple leave a wedding they are attending to spend the night in a remote house. He proposes to her with a ring, but she says no, which leaves everyone (including the viewer) depressed for the first 20 minutes. Then some masked individuals start wreaking terror on the two. Do they want to get into the house? Why? You wait in vain for an explanation for the going-ons. Most of the characters' actions are illogical and apart from some shock scenes, this horror thriller is nothing but annoying.

**Stranger Than Fiction** (2006, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½ D:** Marc Forster. Starring Will Ferrell, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman, Queen Latifah, Tom Hulce, Linda Hunt. Fantasy drama about Ferrell, who leads an exceptionally boring life working for the IRS. One day he hears a voice that seems to be narrating his life, and when that voice announces his pending death, Ferrell is anxious to find out who the voice is. Actually it belongs to acclaimed writer Thompson, whose latest novel seems to be about him. Comedy drama has some good performances, but script works on a few coincidences and unlikelihoods too many. The score is good.

**Stranger Than Paradise** (1984, USA/GER) **89m. \*\*\* D:** Jim Jarmusch. Starring John Lurie, Eszter Balint, Richard Edson, Cecilla Stark, Tom DiCillo. Original, independently filmed road-movie about three disoriented, aimless young people touring America. Jarmusch's first feature film (expanded from a 30m. short) takes the viewer on a black-and-white odyssey through a strange place. Stylish, slow, with dry humor, film is not for all tastes but fascinating once you are attuned to it. Winner of the Camera D'Or in Cannes (Tom DiCillo) and Best Film in Locarno. Written and edited by the director. Paul Bartel and Wim Wenders receive special thanks.

**Strangolatore di Vienna, Lo** (1972, ITA/GER) **C-81m. \*\* D:** Guido Zurli. Starring Victor Buono, Brad Harris, Franca Polesello, Karin Field, John Ireland. Buono plays a butcher, who has just been released from the nut house, where he spent three years after hitting somebody with a liver(!). Once back he takes up his business again, much to the chagrin of his wife. Soon he'll find a new way of stuffing his sausages. Gulp! Horror film with black humor has nice Viennese settings but doesn't thrill or create suspense. Buono seemingly recreates his role from the 1964 THE STRANGLER. A curio, for buffs. Interesting score by Alex Alexander. English titles: THE MAD BUTCHER, THE MAD BUTCHER OF VIENNA, MEAT IS MEAT, THE STRANGLER OF VIENNA, THE VIENNA STRANGLER.

**Strano Vizio della Signora Wardh, Lo** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sergio Martino. Starring George Hilton, Edwige Fenech, Ivan Rassimov, Alberto de Mendoza, Cristina (Conchita) Airoidi, Carlo Alighiero. Interesting giallo-mystery about Fenech, the bored wife of businessman de Mendoza, who seems to have masochistic fantasies involving former lover Rassimov. During a stay in Vienna, she becomes involved with ladykiller Hilton, while there is a real killer stalking young women at night. Serpentine story does not always make sense, and film has some pacing flaws, but overall remains a most watchable thriller with stylish, creative direction and a good score by Nora Orlandi (reused by Quentin Tarantino in KILL BILL: VOL.2!). Fenech's tour-de-force performance makes this an absolute must for her fans. More in Dario Argento's psychological mold than other examples of this genre. Cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi. Beware edited prints. English titles: BLADE OF THE RIPPER, NEXT!, THE NEXT VICTIM, and THE STRANGE VICE OF MRS. WARDH.

**Strategia del Ragno, La** (1970, ITA) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: Bernardo Bertolucci. Starring Giulio Brogi, Alida Valli, Pippo Campanini, Franco Giovannelli, Tino Scotti, Allen Midgette. Stunning mystery drama about Brogi's visit of a quiet village somewhere in rural Italy. He intends to find out the truth about his father, a revered anti-Fascist, who was murdered there in 1936. Valli, his father's former lover, seems to be the only person happy to see him. Why are the other inhabitants behaving so strangely? Bertolucci's brilliant direction shows a man seeking for a truth which constantly evades him, which, in turn, keeps him going. Enigmatic, beautifully shot, a must-see, although this sometimes seems like a cinematic experiment. Valli is excellent. Photographed by Vittorio Storaro, fine use of music by Verdi and Schönberg. Based on the story 'Theme of the Traitor and Hero' by Jorge Luis Borges. English title: THE SPIDER'S STRATAGEM.

**Straw Dogs** (1972, USA) **C-118m.** \*\*\*½ D: Sam Peckinpah. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Susan George. Mathematician Hoffman moves to rural Cornwall with his beautiful wife and finds himself menaced by the local people. Superbly edited, well-filmed treatise on violence with Hoffman delivering a first-rate performance. This thriller-drama rates among Peckinpah's best films, with the showdown a real stunner.

**Street Fighter, The** (1974, JAP) **C-91m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Shigehiro Ozawa. Starring Sonny Chiba, Doris Nakajima. Tough, violent eastern featuring Sonny Chiba in his breakthrough role: he plays a man without compromise, who lives by his own code of ethics. This first of four STREET FIGHTER films details his one-man battle against the Yakuza. Technically well-made but with a poorly constructed plot, film benefits from Chiba's fierce portrayal of the hero. The showdown is the definite highlight. Followed by RETURN OF THE STREET FIGHTER.

**Street Trash** (1987, USA) **C-102m.** ½ D: Jim Muro. Starring Mike Lackey, Bill Chepil, Marc Sferrazza, Jane Arakawa, Nicole Potter, Roy Frumkes. Infamous splatter movie about a deadly booze that makes local bums melt. A low-budget mess that lives up to its title. Rather poor effects, an absolutely dreadful picture. One wonders what Peter Jackson might have made of this material. Written by Roy Frumkes (DOCUMENT OF THE DEAD).

**Strings** (2004, DEN/SWE/NOR/GBR) **C-92m. SCOPE** \*\*\*\* D: Anders Ronnow Klarlund. Starring (the voices of) James McAvoy, Catherine McCormack, Julian Glover, Derek Jacobi, Ian Hart, Claire Skinner, David Harewood, Samantha Bond. Beautiful, poetic fantasy drama set in a mystic kingdom of puppets, whose strings reach up into the heavens. After the suicide of the king, his son is deceived by his uncle into believing his father was murdered by the enemy, so he sets out to get his revenge, little-knowing that the man accompanying him has been ordered to kill him. Meanwhile, his sister becomes wooed by the evil army commander and his uncle is preparing for the throne. While it may take a while to get attuned to wooden puppets acting out a story, this easily manages to engross you, as it's superbly directed, with incredibly atmospheric, stylish cinematography and an excellent classical score. Philosophical plot is epic in its proportions, almost Shakespearean. Even the puppets have a hauntingly beautiful aura. A must-see, but a bit too dramatic for young children. Despite its extensive festival run, it remains too little known, may become a cult film. Movie references range from STAR WARS to LORD OF THE RINGS. From the director of BESAT (1999).

**Stripes** (1981, USA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Ivan Reitman. Starring Bill Murray, Harold Ramis, Warren Oates, P.J. Soles, Sean Young, John Candy, John Larroquette, Judge Reinhold, Bill Paxton. Low-brow but engaging comedy with a cast of stars-to-be. Loser Murray enlists in the army with his pal Ramis and turns the whole company upside down. Some funny, raunchy bits, a cult film for some. Cowritten by Ramis, who would later direct Murray in GROUNDHOG DAY.

**Stuart Little** (1999, USA) **C-82m.** \*\*\*½ D: Rob Minkoff. Starring Geena Davis, Hugh Laurie, Jonathan Lipnicki, Jeffrey Jones, Julia Sweeney, Estelle Getty and the voices of Michael J. Fox, Nathan Lane, Chazz Palmintieri, Jennifer Tilly, Bruno Kirby. Fantasy comedy about little orphaned mouse Stuart Little, who is adopted by a family and must make friends with his new brother – and the cat who'd rather have him out of the house. Cute is the word to describe this comedy, which comes up with dazzling animal effects, but might not appeal to anyone older than 7. Based on a novel by E. B. White.

**Stuck** (2007, USA/CDN/GBR/GER) **C-85m.** \*½ D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Mena Suvari, Stephen Rea, Russell Hornsby, Rukiya Bernard, Carolyn Purdy-Gordon, Stuart Gordon. Another low-point in RE-ANIMATOR (1985) director Stuart Gordon's career (not to mention Suvari's). Based on a true story, this real-life horror story is about a nurse (Suvari) who runs over a bum (Rea) with her car – only he gets stuck in her windshield and survives. She panics and doesn't know what to do. Rather pointless, shock and suspense-free story that would have been okay as a 60-minute Masters of Horror episode, but as a feature it's too weak.

**Study in Terror, A** (1965, GBR) **C-84m.** \*\*\* D: James Hill. Starring John Neville, Donald Houston, John Fraser, Anthony Quayle, Robert Morley, Barbara Windsor, Adrienne Corri, Frank Finlay, Judi Dench, Peter Carsten, Christiane Maybach, Charles Régnier. Victorian sleuth Sherlock Holmes (Neville) investigates killings of prostitutes in London's Whitechapel, must face infamous Jack the Ripper. Excellent cast in mystery thriller that's always on-target, exciting during finale. Good British filmmaking, with atmospheric cinematography by Desmond Dickinson. Based on a story written by Ellery Queen, character of Holmes of course based on writings by Arthur Conan Doyle. Also known as FOG and reportedly shown at 94m.

**Stuff, The** (1985, USA) **C-87m.** \*\*\*½ D: Larry Cohen. Starring Michael Moriarty, Andrea Marcovicci, Garrett Morris, Paul Sorvino, Scott Bloom, Danny Aiello, James Dixon, Brooke Adams. Quite funny, entertaining horror comedy about a new dairy product, titled 'The Stuff', which turns out to be addictive - and lethal. Not bad, with surprisingly good effects, but some plot elements are improbable, even for a horror film. Moriarty is almost too laid-back as an industrial spy trying to get behind the recipe. Director Cohen (Q, IT'S ALIVE) also scripted and executive produced the film. Also shown at 93m.

**Stung** (2015, USA/GER) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Benni Diez. Starring Clifton Collins Jr., Jessica Cook, Lance Henriksen, Matt O'Leary. Eco-horror film about a garden party that turns into a nightmare for the attendants when giant killer insects come out of the ground. Once stung the victims turn into hosts for even bigger creatures. Slimy, gory, but plot is worthless and the shaky direction and frenzied editing are nauseating.

**subUrbia** (1996, USA) **C-121m.** \*\*\* D: Richard Linklater. Starring Giovanni Ribisi, Steve Zahn, Annie Carey, Samia Shoaib, Ajay Naidu, Nicky Katt, Jayce Bartok, Parker Posey, Dina Spybey. Scathing, compelling portrayal of an aimless youth, from the director of SLACKER and BEFORE SUNRISE. A group of 20 year-olds, sick and tired of their lives, hang out in a suburban parking lot, conversing about racism, fame, sex and their futures. The visit of a former pal - now a famous rock star - stirs up emotions in them as they begin contemplating the point of their existence. Intelligent script by Eric Bogosian (whose stage play this is based on) and outstanding performances (especially Ribisi's) make this a must for anyone who can identify with what is being discussed in the film. Music composed and performed by cult band Sonic Youth; the entire soundtrack (which features other bands, too) is fine.

**Suburra** (2015, ITA/FRA) **C-135m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Stefano Sollima. Starring Greta Scarano, Pierfrancesco Favino, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Elio Germano, Lidia Vitale, Giulia Gorietti, Alessandro Borghi. Outstanding political thriller drama about the final days of the Italian government and the interactions of several characters trying to profit from a real estate

project on the outskirts of Rome. Immoral politician Favino will try to pass a controversial law in the parliament to pave the way for a Las Vegas-type casino project. The Mafia, a local gangland boss and a brutal gypsy leader clash in this stylishly shot, superbly scored drama. If remade in Hollywood, this would have Oscar potential. The director is Sergio Sollima's son. **Suchimubôji** (2004, JAP) **C-126m. \*\*\*½ D:** Katsuhiko Otomo. Starring (the voices of) Anne Suzuki, Masane Tsukayama, Katsuo Nakamura, Manami Konishi, Kiyoshi Kodama. Amazing science-fiction anime does not take place in the future but in 1860s England, which is brimming with new inventions at the start of the Industrial Revolution. Young Jimmy Ray Steam's father and grandfather have developed an extremely powerful steam-driven device by capturing a geyser in Iceland, and now everyone seems to be after it, in order to present it at the world EXPO in London. With his father corrupted by the machine's power, the boy is at a loss who to trust and to believe when he comes in possession of the device. Spectacular, riveting anime maintains a fever pitch and is stunningly animated, with incredibly detailed depictions of Victorian buildings and life. Excellent score by Steve Jablonsky. From the director of AKIRA (1991), who spent no less than 8 years on this. Beware 106m. version. English title: STEAMBOY.

**Sucker Punch** (2011, USA/CDN) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Zack Snyder. Starring Emily Browning, Vanessa Hudgens, Abbie Cornish, Jena Malone, Jamie Chung, Carla Gugino, Oscar Isaac, Scott Glenn. Astounding action fantasy from the director of 300 (2007) about a 20-year-old girl, who accidentally kills her sister while trying to fight off her evil stepfather. She is transported off to a mental asylum, which turns out to be a brothel (or does it?), where she performs special dances to customers, during which she transforms into a superhero on several fantasy missions. The ultimate mission, it turns out, is to escape from the place. An ultra-stylish, eye-popping delight, simply awesome! If you can buy into the story - much like in SCOTT PILGRIM VS. THE WORLD (2009) - you'll be rewarded with a one-of-a-kind thrill-ride. Even if the main actress Browning is just okay, the other girls, Malone, and especially Cornish, totally rock. Wow!

**Sudden Fury** (1975, CDN) **C-91m. \*\*½ D:** D. Brian Damude. Starring Dominic Hogan, Dan Hennessey, Hollis McLaren, David Yorston, Gay Rowan. On a trip through the country-side, a couple starts quarreling about the woman's inheritance. After a terrible accident, the man sees the chance of getting rid of his wife... if it wasn't for a car driver that saw them both. Story-driven, intriguing little thriller, too redundant in spots, but a pleasant surprise for those willing to discover it.

**Sudden Impact** (1983, USA) **C-117m. \*\*½ D:** Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Sondra Locke, Pat Hingle, Bradford Dillman, Paul Drake. Third sequel to DIRTY HARRY has Eastwood go after female revenge killers. Not much originality, but solidly filmed, even exciting, a definite showcase for Eastwood's macho character. Violent and nasty, but this is why HARRY is DIRTY. Fans of the series will like it. Score by Lalo Schiffrin. Followed by THE DEAD POOL.

**Sudor Frío** (2011, ARG) **C-80m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Adrián García Bogliano. Starring Facundo Espinosa, Marina Glezer, Camila Velasco, Omar Musa, Omar Gioiosa. Interesting little horror thriller about Espinosa, whose girlfriend has disappeared and may be held captive in derelict townhouse in suburban Buenos Aires. It turns out two demented elderly men torture women in there with nitroglycerine, and there's a basement full of victims. Not completely convincing, but atmospheric and stylishly shot, with some surreal touches a la SUSPIRIA (1977). It's sexy, too. From the director of PENUMBRA (2011). English title: COLD SWEAT.

**Sugar & Spice** (2001, USA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Francine McDougall. Starring Marla Sokoloff, Marley Shelton, Melissa George, Mena Suvari, Rachel Blanchard, Alexandra

Holden, Sara Marsh, James Marsden, Sean Young, Kurt Loder, Jerry Springer, Conan O'Brien. Quite amusing farcical comedy about a group of cheerleaders, one of whom (Shelton) is pregnant by her highschool sweetheart (Marsden). When she learns the hardships of life, she and her friends decide to rob a bank, seeking advice from old movies. Starts out as a fast-paced homage to such 90s classics as RESERVOIR DOGS (1992) or SCREAM (1996) with a teen twist, but script becomes a little too silly in second half. Short running time helps.

**Sugar Colt** (1966, ITA/SPA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Franco Giraldi. Starring Hunt Powers (=Jack Betts), James Parker (=Joaquín Parra), Soledad Miranda, Georges Rigaud. Former gunslinger Powers is hired to clear up mystery of disappeared army corps, who were returning from the Civil War (circa 1866). He disguises as a doctor and travels to Snake Valley, the place of the supposed disappearance. Direction, editing not bad, has a better screenplay than usual, but film is overlong and story is dull. For patient western fans. Star Powers looks like a young George Clooney.

**Sugar Hill** (1974, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: Paul Maslansky. Starring Marki Bey, Robert Quarry, Don Pedro Colley, Richard Lawson, Betty Anne Rees, Zara Cully. Interesting but poorly plotted and slowly paced blaxploitation horror movie about title character (Bey) who conjures up an army of black zombies in order to avenge the murder of her lover. Effective arrangements of faces, otherwise pretty flat. Originality boosts this rating from \*½ to \*\*. Also shown at 83m. Alternative titles: VOODOO WOMAN and THE ZOMBIES OF SUGAR HILL.

**Sugarland Express** (1974, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Goldie Hawn, Ben Johnson, Michael Sacks, William Atherton, Gregory Walcott, Steve Kanaly. Young mother Hawn helps her husband Atherton to flee from a correctional facility, and together they take it on the lam (fleeing from dozens of police cars) to pick up their child from a foster family in Sugarland, Texas. Soon their naïve determination turns them into heroes, with hundreds of people spurning them on in their plight. Stunning, first-rate drama with a great sense of humour, well-directed (this was Spielberg's first theatrical feature!) and lushly photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond. Atherton gives the performance of a lifetime. The finale is especially effective and shows a maturity not to be found in most other debut films. Score by John Williams.

**Suicide Squad** (2016, USA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: David Ayer. Starring Will Smith, Margot Robbie, Viola Davis, Jared Leto, James McGowan, Jay Hernandez, Cara Delevingne, Ben Affleck. Davis assembles a squad of anti-heroes, each with special powers or talents, in order to be able to defend the world if necessary. When one of these members summons her demon brother, the squad has to prove what it's worth. After a flashy start, the plot of this comic book adaptation disintegrates into pointless action sequences. You just don't care about the characters despite a lengthy introduction. Another soul-less Hollywood product. Use of 60s and 70s rock songs especially pointless.

**Sûito Hому** (1989, JAP) **C-100m. \*\*½** D: Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Starring Juzo Itami, Nobuko Miyamoto, Nokko, Shingo Yamashiro, Tsutomu Yamazaki. Uneven mix of horror and comedy about a television crew, who are granted access to a mysterious mansion that is said to be haunted. They want to make a documentary about the works of an artist who died there 30 years ago, but soon find themselves in eerie situations. The characters are caricatures, but film wants to sell you serious horror with potent splatter effects, so this isn't convincing and will work only for hardcore fans, others beware. A major hit in Japan, also adapted as a video game. Good cinematography. Written by the director. English title: SWEET HOME.

**Sully** (2016, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Tom Hanks, Aaron Eckhart, Laura Linney, Valerie Mahaffey, Mike O'Malley. Engrossing re-telling of the 2009 crash landing of an Airbus on the Hudson River. The plane's pilot 'Sully' Sullenberger became a

hero in the media, but it took some time until his name was cleared of having done the right thing. Captivating, not overly long, with Hanks ideal in this type of role. Based on a book by Sullenberger, who appears during the closing credits.

**Summer of Sam, The** (1999, USA) **C-142m.** \*\*½ D: Spike Lee. Starring John Leguizamo, Adrien Brody, Mira Sorvino, Jennifer Esposito, Michael Rispoli, Anthony LaPaglia, Ben Gazzara. Period drama (based on a real case) set in the 1970s when a serial killer roamed the streets of New York City. A partly interesting account of the people living in the area, focusing mostly on punk Brody. Quite long, which weighs it down a bit, and more drama than thriller. Still, some consider this essential Spike Lee fare.

**Sum of All Fears, The** (2002, USA/GER) **C-124m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Phil Alden Robinson. Starring Ben Affleck, Morgan Freeman, James Cromwell, Ken Jenkins, Liev Schreiber, Bruce McGill, John Beasley, Philip Baker Hall, Alan Bates, Bridget Moynahan, Josef Sommer, Ciarán Hinds, Ron Rifkin. Tom Clancy adaptation with Affleck taking over Jack Ryan role from Harrison Ford. The CIA man becomes a key figure in a conflict between the U.S. and Russia deliberately created by Neo-Nazi Bates, who is in possession of an old atomic bomb and intends the super-powers to wipe out each other. Script is preposterous, but entertainment and excitement you cannot deny. One of Jerry Goldsmith's last film scores.

**Sung Horn** (2003, THA) **C-80m.** \*\* D: Thammarak Kamuttmanoch. Starring Apichej Kittikornjaroen, Woravej Danuwong, Kavee Tanjararak, Supatchaya Reunreung, Pisamai Wilaisak. Three young men who have known each other since childhood and are colleagues at work have strange encounters with 3 different people. One of them, an old woman, seems to be able to foretell the future. What does this all mean? Good question. The famous Pang brothers (writers and editors) leave us groping in the dark for too long and film isn't very well made. A sub-par mystery with a competent score. English title: OMEN.

**Sunshine** (2007, GBR/USA) **C-107m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Danny Boyle. Starring Cillian Murphy, Cliff Curtis, Michelle Yeoh, Hiroyuki Sanada, Rose Byrne, Benedict Wong, Chris Evans, Troy Garity, Mark Strong. In the near future, mankind faces extinction due to a dying sun. Something is preventing nuclear fusion to take place and has turned the Earth into a frozen wasteland. Years after a failed mission, another spaceship, Icarus 2, is sent to the sun with a massive bomb intended to be dropped into the star to restart it. The mission is mankind's last hope. Well-made, suspenseful science-fiction thriller with (appropriate) nods to Kubrick and Scott has a few unnecessary, contrived script complications, but it's all feasible and remains compelling throughout. Good, symphonic score by Underworld. Fine effects. Written by Alex Garland.

**Superbad** (2007, USA) **C-119m.** \*\*½ D: Greg Mottola. Starring Jonah Hill, Michael Cera, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Bill Hader, Seth Rogen, Martha MacIsaac, Emma Stone. Three high school seniors are looking forward to their last party before college and intend to have fun with girls and alcohol, but their fake ID doesn't work and they go on an odyssey through the night to get alcohol, meeting all kinds of demented characters. Comedy starts out hilarious and maintains this pitch for half an hour, but then the policemen joke is padded out over the rest of the film, which is kind of annoying. For the AMERICAN PIE crowd.

**Supercolpo da 7 Miliardi** (1967, ITA) **C-101m.** \*\*½ D: Bitto Albertini. Starring Brad Harris, Elina De Witt, Franco Andrei, Ferdinando Poggi, Arrigo Peri, Dana Andrews. Agreeable Euro-heist movie features Harris as a James Bond-like specialist, who prepares for a daring diamond robbery: He wants to steal the world's largest diamond from a ship by docking on it with a submarine and drilling a hole in the hull! Interesting heist sequences should satisfy fans. English titles: THE 1000 CARAT DIAMOND, and THE TEN MILLION DOLLAR GRAB.

**Super 8** (2011, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: J.J. Abrams. Starring Joel Courtney, Elle Fanning, Ryan Lee, Zach Mills, Riley Griffiths, Gabriel Basso, Kyle Chandler, Ron Eldard. Terrific science-fiction adventure about a troubled boy, whose mother has recently died in an accident. He joins a group of kids who spend the summer of 1979 shooting a horror movie on Super 8. One night, they are witness to a mysterious train crash near their hometown. An air force train gets derailed and something unspeakable escapes from the train wreck. Riveting mystery thriller teleports you back into the late 1970s, and everything - the cars, the hair, the furniture, the music, the bikes, the entire neighborhood - is perfectly recreated. Even the cinematography looks stunningly like it's some thirty years old. Some minor drawbacks in logic don't mar this astounding, even touching gem. Movie buffs should love this. Fanning is brilliant. Produced by Steven Spielberg, whose movies from the time are echoed throughout.

**Superfly** (1972, USA) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Gordon Parks Jr. Starring Ron O'Neal, Carl Lee, Sheila Frazier, Julius Harris, Charles McGregor. 70s blaxploitation cult about drug pusher O'Neal, whose life is followed until his attempts to break out of the business. Hardly any plot or action worth speaking of, only some groovy music (by Curtis Mayfield) and the general blaxploitation coolness. Followed by SUPERFLY T.N.T. (1973) and THE RETURN OF SUPERFLY (1990).

**Superman** (1978, GBR) **C-143m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Richard Donner. Starring Marlon Brando, Gene Hackman, Christopher Reeve, Ned Beatty, Jackie Cooper, Glenn Ford, Trevor Howard, Margot Kidder, Jack O'Halloran, Valerie Perrine, Maria Schell, Terence Stamp, Phyllis Thaxter, Susannah York, Larry Hagman, John Ratzenberger, Richard Donner. Long-awaited modern-day send-up of the famous comic (and 40s/50s serial) is nothing but grand-scale tomfoolery. Film follows the Man of Steel's upbringing, youth and manhood - from the Planet Krypton, via his foster parents' Smallville to Metropolis (New York in disguise), where he must finally come to terms with his superpowers and defend his city against megalomaniac Hackman. Longish story setup, unexciting, often redundant plot and relatively poor effects put the legend to shame. It's more a drama for Supie's fans than a thrilling action movie. Won many rave reviews when originally released. Robert Benton and Mario Puzo(!) were among the writers, Richard Lester coproduced sans credit. John Williams' score is strangely unmemorable. Co-edited by Stuart Baird. Photographed by Geoffrey Unsworth. Winner of a Special Oscar for Visual Effects. Restored to 151m. in 2000. Followed by three sequels.

**Superman II** (1980, GBR) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Richard Lester. Starring Gene Hackman, Christopher Reeve, Ned Beatty, Jackie Cooper, Sarah Douglas, Margot Kidder, Jack O'Halloran, Valerie Perrine, Susannah York, Clifton James, E.G. Marshall, Terence Stamp, John Ratzenberger, Richard Donner. In this sequel, Superman must battle escaped criminal Luthor (Hackman) and three galactic villains, who were introduced in the first film. The superhero also finally makes out with Lois Lane (Kidder). Plot is childish and at the same time also violent and mean-spirited. All scenes involving the villains (led by Stamp) are utterly annoying. Filmed back-to-back with the original SUPERMAN, with much of the same crew. Some alternative versions are in circulation. Followed by SUPERMAN III.

**Superman Returns** (2006, USA/AUS) **C-154m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Bryan Singer. Starring Brando Routh, Kate Bosworth, Kevin Spacey, James Marsden, Parker Posey, Frank Langella, Sam Huntington, Eva Marie Saint. Entertaining revival of the DC comics superhero. Superman (Routh) returns after being gone for 5 years (and still looks like he's in his early 20s). Lois Lane (Bosworth) is married and has a son, and Lex Luthor (Spacey) is bent on world

domination again. Spectacular special effects enliven this often overlong fantasy. There's not much plot to be had, but it's professionally done by the X-MEN director.

**Supermarkt** (1974, GER) **C-84m. \*\*** D: Roland Klick. Starring Charly Wierzejewski, Michael Degen, Walter Kohut, Eva Mattes, Hans-Michael Rehberg, Eva Schukardt. Thriller drama detailing 18 year-old Wierzejewski's descent into criminality, as he flees from a police station and gets swept into the underworld of Hamburg, Germany. Unpleasant, muddled and depressing film received some critical praise in its homecountry. Writer-director Klick's follow-up to DEADLOCK.

**Supernova** (2000, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Thomas Lee. Starring James Spader, Angela Bassett, Robert Forster, Lou Diamond Phillips, Peter Facinelli, Robin Tunney. A rescue ship receives a distress call from deep space, and when they arrive there, they lose almost all of their fuel. A blue giant nearby might be on the verge of turning into a supernova, and then a survivor approaches the vessel, carrying an unusual object that emanates a deadly force. Direction, editing, cinematography are tops in this sci-fi horror movie that isn't always on-target plotwise but manages to create suspense. Excellent special-effects. Recommended to sci-fi fans. Thomas Lee is a pseudonym for Walter Hill, who had his name removed during post-production. Film was reportedly edited by Francis Ford Coppola and Jack Sholder!

**Super Power** (1979, H GK) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Lin Chin Wie. Starring Carl R. Scott, Billy Chong. When an influential man refuses to side with opium smugglers, they try to kill him and face fierce opposition in the man's sons. Very violent kung fu actioner set in modern day Hong Kong is pretty dull but improves in the second half. Nothing extraordinary, though.

**Super Size Me** (2004, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*** D: Morgan Spurlock. Naive experiment becomes starting point for interesting examination of America's eating habits, as every-day guy Spurlock decides to live off McDonald's food (and nothing but) for a period of 30 days. Three doctors, his girlfriend and himself comment on the truly alarming changes in his body (and mind). Throughout we are told some unsettling facts about what and how we eat. A Michael Moore-like attack on the fast-food industry and its customers that includes some bitter truths. Interestingly, McDonald's dropped the Super Size Me option on its meals soon after film premiered.

**Superstition** (1982, CDN) **C-88m. \*\*** D: James W. Roberson. Starring James Houghton, Albert Salmi, Lynn Carlin, Larry Pennell. A 17<sup>th</sup> century witch, drowned instead of burned, resurfaces in the present day to kill a family who have just moved into their new house. Standard witch horror, unimaginatively directed and rather pretentious, still has some effective scenes. Horror buffs might want to give this one a look, it's surprisingly watchable despite flaws. Produced by Mario Kassar and Andrew G. Vajna (one of their first films). Also known as THE WITCH in many countries.

**Supervixens** (1975, USA) **C-102m. \*\*** D: Russ Meyer. Starring Shari Eubank, Charles Napier, Uschi Digard, Henry Rowland, Christy Hartburg, Sharon Kelly, John LaZar, Stuart Lancaster, Haji, Russ Meyer. Bizarre, almost surreal sex film about a man who runs from the law because he is suspected of having killed his lover. On his journey through the desert he meets several characters, most of them randy women with large breasts. Episodic, overlong film is helped by some comic relief, good editing (by Meyer himself) and a delicious performance by Charles Napier as a deranged, impotent lawman. Meyer also produced, wrote, and photographed the film. Art direction by Michel Levesque (SWEET SUGAR). Originally 105m.

**Surf's Up** (2007, USA) **C-82m. \*\*½** D: Ash Brannon, Chris Buck. Starring (the voices of) Shia LaBeouf, Jeff Bridges, Zooey Deschanel, Jon Heder, James Woods, Diedrich Bader, Mario Cantone, Kelly Slater, Ash Brannon, Chris Buck. Animated comedy about penguin surfer

Cody (LaBeouf), who travels from Antarctica all the way to a Pacific island, where the annual Big Z memorial contest takes place (to mark the anniversary of the legendary surfer's death in the waves). It's a hyped-up event, and our little hero seems to stand no chance against superstar Tank (Bader), when he meets someone special in the island's jungle. Some impressive animation, especially in the surfing scenes, but not funny or gripping enough to make it stand out. You have to give the filmmakers credit for using a documentary-like approach (with the two directors providing the off-screen voices of the crew), but smaller children will probably not understand that.

**Sur Le Seuil** (2003, CDN) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Eric Tessier. Starring Michael Côté, Patrick Huard, Catherine Florent, Albert Millaire, Nicolas Canuel. Interesting Canadian supernatural thriller about psychiatrist Côté, who is treating a famous writer who has cut off his fingers. At the same time there was a horrendous shooting of school children, where the writer may have been present. The clues lead to a group of priests. Some unevenness, but generally an engrossing, well-acted thriller. Based on Patrick Sénechal's novel scripted by Director Tessier (5150 RUE DES ORMES). English title: EVIL WORDS.

**Surrogates** (2009, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jonathan Mostow. Starring Bruce Willis, Radha Mitchell, Rosamund Pike, Boris Kodjoe, James Francis Ginty, James Cromwell, Ving Rhames. Interesting science-fiction thriller that utilizes themes from sci-fi writer Philip K. Dick (BLADE RUNNER, TOTAL RECALL). In the not-so distant future most people make use of so-called Surrogates, incredibly human-like androids that can be remote-controlled from the users' homes. They see, hear and feel everything that their surrogates do. Willis is a cop who investigates a possible murder – the first in years – and interviews Crimwell, the renegade inventor of the surrogates. Not a world-beater, but entertaining, exciting and fun to watch. Based on a graphic novel by Robert Venditti and Brett Weldele.

**Sur un Arbre Perché** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-86m. \*\*½ D:** Serge Korber. Starring Louis de Funès, Geraldine Chaplin, Olivier de Funès, Pierre Richard. Rather silly comedy about highway magnate de Funès misfortunes when he picks up two hitchhikers and has an accident, driving off a cliff. The car's fall is stopped by a tree growing out of the rocks! Consequently they spend several days getting to know each other and waiting for help. Energetic de Funès must sit still for once and apart from some fine photography, film remains flat. Film buffs are called to attention: The Nosferatu-spoof as film within the film is a riot! Otherwise the film features a little bit of everything. Mostly for fans of the comedian and the time period.

**Survival of the Dead** (2009, USA) **C-90m. \*\* D:** George A. Romero. Starring Alan Van Sprang, Joshua Peace, Hardee T. Lineham. George Romero's sixth DEAD movie is a slight improvement over DIARY but still a far cry from the originals. Mercenaries stumble upon money transporter and ultimately find themselves in the middle of a family feud on an island, where there seem to be two different beliefs: Either kill all 'deadheads', or try and domesticize them, feeding them animal flesh. Basically just a series of creatively grisly zombie killings, with hardly any atmosphere or suspense. For Romero's fans.

**Survival Zone** (1983, SAF) **C-77m. \*\* D:** Percival Rubens. Starring Gary Lockwood, Camilla Sparv, Morgan Stevens, Zoli Marki. Quite obvious MAD MAX clone tries not only to imitate the action but also the classic's intensity. In the near future, a ruthless gang led by brute 'Bigman' terrorizes a farmer's family. A blond hero comes to their rescue. Low budget hampers proceedings considerably, but for a no-budget movie results are respectable. Uncut print runs 90m.

**Survive Style 5+** (2004, JAP) **C-120m. \*\*½ D:** Gen Sekiguchi. Starring Tadanobu Asano, Reika Hashimoto, Kyôko Koizumi, Hiroshi Abe, Ittoko Kishibe, Yumi Asou, Vinnie Jones, Sonny Chiba. Completely whacked-out cult thriller fantasy about several characters whose lives are

intertwined: Asano wants his wife dead – and stay dead – and hired killer Jones should do the job. In another plot strand a family father is hypnotised into believing he's a chicken, with the weirdest results. Goes from hypnotic to pretentious in the wink of an eye, but has to be seen to be believed. Jones has the best scenes as the impulsive hitman, who keeps asking everyone "What is your function in life?" For cult movie fans.

**Survivor, The** (1981, AUS) **C-81m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** David Hemmings. Starring Robert Powell, Jenny Agutter, Joseph Cotton, Angela Punch-McGregor, Peter Sumner, Lorna Lesley. Interesting, barely known horror mystery from Australia. Pilot Powell is the only survivor after a plane crashes mysteriously seconds after take-off. Teacher Agutter suspects supernatural causes, and indeed, there are mysterious going-ons concerning children in the area. Nice photography by John Seale, elaborate score by Brian May, this is one of several movies directed by Hemmings in his native Australia at the time and his only horror film as a director. Here, he shows some expertise gained by working with Dario Argento on PROFONDO ROSSO (1975), e.g. the doll, the eerie children, some bloody murders, so it's interesting for fans. Story itself, based on a James Herbert novel, is only so-so. Longer versions supposedly run 87m. or even 99m.

**Suspect, The** (1944, USA) **85m. \*\*\* D:** Robert Siodmak. Starring Charles Laughton, Ella Raines, Dean Harens, Molly Lamont, Henry Daniell, Rosalind Ivan. Laughton's marriage is unhappy (to say the least) but his wife Ivan won't divorce him, not even when he dates beautiful Raines. Murder seems the only possible solution. Laughton is fine in good suspenser. Ivan may be the bitchiest wife in movie history. Based on *This Way Out*, a novel by James Ronald.

**Suspects, Les** (1974, FRA/ITA) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Michel Wyn. Starring Mimsy Farmer, Paul Meurisse, Michel Bouquet, Michel Lonsdale, Luigi Pistilli, Edmund Purdom. Murder mystery, fashioned like a police report, which tries to reconstruct the weeks leading up to American tourist Farmer's murder. Solidly filmed, with a good cast, but uninteresting and boring. Based on a novel by Paul Andréota.

**Suspiria** (1977, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Dario Argento. Starring Jessica Harper, Stefania Casini, Joan Bennett, Alida Valli, Flavio Bucci, Udo Kier, Rudolf Schündler. Argento's follow-up to PROFONDO ROSSO was to be his breakthrough film, a breathtaking symphony of terror about a young American student (Harper) who comes to a ballet school in Freiburg, Germany, and slowly discovers that it is ruled by an evil witch. Chilling, terrifying horror opus punches its shock scenes across, brilliant soundtrack (by Goblin and Dario Argento) contributes to one of the densest, most hauntingly sinister atmospheres ever created on film. Superb art direction and cinematography (by Luciano Tovoli) plunge the architecture of the sets in stylish red and blue. Perhaps Argento's artistically most accomplished piece of work. Watch it in a theater for maximum effect. Screenplay by Argento and Daria Nicolodi. Produced by Claudio Argento (SANTA SANGRE). SUSPIRIA is the first part of the 'Three Mothers'-trilogy, based on *Suspiria de Profundis* by Thomas de Quincey, followed by INFERNO in 1980 and LA TERZA MADRE in 2007. Stunningly restored for a 2017 BluRay release.

**Suture** (1993, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\* D:** Scott McGehee, David Siegel. Starring Dennis Haysbert, Mel Harris, Sab Shimono, Dina Merrill, Michael Harris. Remarkable, intelligent drama about identity and how it can be asserted and understood. After the murder of their father, two half-brothers (Haysbert, Michael Harris) are re-united. Miller cold-bloodedly plots to use their striking resemblance to switch identities by killing Haysbert with a car bomb, so that he is rid of suspicions involving the death of their father. However, Haysbert survives the explosion – as an amnesiac – and unknowingly is taken for his half-brother. An intriguing

point only the audience knows: The brothers actually don't resemble each other at all, as Miller is white and Haysbert is black! Complicated, uneven, slow, but highly interesting, with some good acting and a riveting finale. Siegel and McGehee's first film was executive produced by Steven Soderbergh.

**Svegliati e Uccidi (Lutring)** (1966, ITA/FRA) **C-102m.** \*½ D: Carlo Lizzani. Starring Robert Hoffmann, Lisa Gastoni, Gian Maria Volonté, Claudio Camaso, Renato Niccolai, Ottavio Fanfani. Early Italian crime movie lacks the pace and verve of later examples. Film chronicles the relationship between jewel thief Hoffmann and nightclub singer Gastoni, as they run from the police. Then Gastoni contacts the commissioner to prevent Hoffmann from getting in too deep. Barely interesting. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. A song is by Ennio Morricone. English titles: TOO SOON TO DIE, WAKE UP AND DIE.

**Swarm, The** (1978, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE** ½ D: Irwin Allen. Starring Michael Caine, Katharine Ross, Richard Widmark, Richard Chamberlain, Olivia de Havilland, Ben Johnson, Lee Grant, José Ferrer, Patty Duke, Slim Pickens, Bradford Dillman, Fred MacMurray, Henry Fonda, Cameron Mitchell. Terrible disaster movie from Mister Disaster himself, Irwin Allen. Caine plays a scientist, who may be the only one who can stop giant swarm of African killer bees terrorizing an American town (and soon the whole country). Almost completely worthless plot, no suspense at all. Incredible, why so many vintage Hollywood stars signed up for this one. The pits. Expanded to 156m.(!) for home video. Scripted by Stirling Silliphant, from a novel by Arthur Herzog Jr. Score by Jerry Goldsmith.

**S.W.A.T.** (2003, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Clark Johnson. Starring Samuel L. Jackson, Colin Farrell, Michelle Rodriguez, LL Cool J, Josh Charles, Olivier Martinez. Entertaining-enough action movie about ousted cop Farrell, who gets a chance of redemption on Jackson's S.W.A.T. team, especially when French prisoner Martinez is offering anyone who frees him \$100 million. Some good action scenes, but with cardboard characters and an instantly forgettable plotline. Based on a TV series from the mid-1970s.

**Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street** (2007, USA/GBR) **C-116m. \*\*\*** D: Tim Burton. Starring Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Alan Rickman, Timothy Spall, Sacha Baron Cohen, Jamie Campbell Bower, Laura Michelle Kelly. Tim Burton takes us to 19<sup>th</sup> century London, where barber Depp returns after spending 15 years in exile. He intends to get his revenge on corrupt judge Rickman, who once stole his wife and his now planning to marry his daughter. Depp, using a new persona, joins forces with widow Carter, who takes him up in her house. Soon there is murder and mayhem. Beautifully designed musical, right out of Burton's universe. Great songs, too. Oscar-winner for Best Art Direction.

**Sweet Angel Mine** (1996, CDN/GBR) **C-89m. \*\*** D: Curtis Radclyffe. Starring Oliver Milburn, Margaret Langrick, Anna Massey, Alberta Watson. A young man searching for his lost father stumbles upon a farmhouse in the middle of nowhere, which is inhabited by three women, mother, daughter and grandmother. Odd psycho thriller whose script is so enigmatic it seems pretentious. Some of the photo-graphy is nice and the guitar score not bad either. Worth a look but depends on your taste.

**Sweet Bird of Youth** (1962, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Richard Brooks. Starring Paul Newman, Geraldine Page, Shirley Knight, Ed Begley, Rip Torn, Mildred Dunnock, Madeleine Sherwood, Philip Abbot, Corey Allen. Writer-director Brooks' second adaptation of a Tennessee Williams play after the classic CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF. Newman again excels in the lead role as an ambitious young man who returns to his hometown after seeking his fortune in Hollywood. All he has come back with is an alcoholic former movie queen (Page). Influential politician Begley, whose daughter Newman once planned to marry, does not want to have him in town. There are indications that this play about people lost in their

dreams and hopes may have been better in the original stage version. Still, the superb cast makes this a memorable experience. Begley won an Oscar for his commanding performance.

**Sweetest Thing, The** (2002, USA) **C-90m.** \*½ D: Roger Kumble. Starring Cameron Diaz, Christina Applegate, Thomas Jane, Selma Blair, Parker Posey, Lillian Adams, Jason Bateman, James Mangold, Johnathon Schaech. Obnoxious comedy about a trio of girlfriends (late twens, presumably), who are all looking for fun... and Mr Right. One day Diaz passes up the opportunity to date Jane, then decides to follow him across the state to his brother's wedding. Filled with pointless, mostly unfunny vignettes and at least one awful song. Rather dumb film targeted at women has a handful of amusing scenes to save it from total disaster. From the director of CRUEL INTENTIONS (1999).

**Sweet Hereafter, The** (1997, CDN) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Atom Egoyan. Starring Ian Holm, Sarah Polley, Bruce Greenwood, Tom McCamus, Arsinée Khanjian, Alberta Watson, Gabrielle Rose, Maury Chaykin, David Hemblen. Egoyan's best film, adapted from a novel by Russell Banks. Lawyer Holm travels to remote Canadian town which has been shattered by a school-bus accident that killed nearly all of the town's children. He tries to persuade the mourning parents to sue whoever may be responsible – if in fact anybody is. Holm's motivation is his drug-addicted daughter, whom he hasn't seen in a long time, but who keeps calling him for help – which he isn't ready to give. Stunning film, operating on three time levels, is richly textured and superbly acted, especially by Holm. Slow, but very rewarding, an experience you will not soon forget. Egoyan also produced. Winner of the Palm D'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

**Sweet Home Alabama** (2002, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Andy Tennant. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Josh Lucas, Patrick Dempsey, Candice Bergen, Mary Kay Place, Fred Ward. Utterly contrived comedy about hot-shot fashion designer Witherspoon, whose upcoming marriage to the son (Dempsey) of the New York mayoress (Bergen) may be prevented by one obstacle: She's still married to some guy in her home-town of Greenville, Alabama. She travels there, intending to get her divorce, but the past catches up with her. Some good performances make this scripting mess watchable. Goes expectedly overboard in the finale. For fans of Witherspoon (who's gorgeous).

**Sweet November** (2001, USA) **C-119m.** \*½ D: Pat O'Connor. Starring Keanu Reeves, Charlize Theron, Jason Isaacs, Greg Germann, Liam Aiken, Frank Langella. Romantic drama about ad exec Reeves, who lives for work, until he loses both his job and his girlfriend one day. How convenient that beauty Theron has just offered him to spend a month with him to cure him of stress and other bad character traits. Artificial and contrived from the word go, this drama turns into a tear-jerker at the end and becomes *very* annoying. Theron seems very natural and comes off best. Otherwise, this is pure Hollywood kitsch; a remake of a 1968 movie.

**Sweet Sugar** (1972, USA) **C-86m.** \*½ D: Michel Levesque. Starring Phyllis Davis, Pamela Collins. Standard W.I.P. exploitation: Good-looking Davis is convicted to Camp 21, a sugar plantation, where there's violence and lesbian love. What distinguishes this one from the rest is some (incredibly profane) comic relief and over-the-top performances, which makes the film almost recommendable - on a so-bad-it's-good basis - since there are some truly laughable scenes. Released at 90m. in the U.S. (and given inexplicably better reviews).

**Sweet Sweet Lonely Girl** (2016, USA) **C-76m.** \*½ D: A.D. Calvo. Starring Quinn Shephard, Susan Kellermann, Erin Wilhelmi. Anemic psycho drama set around 1980 about a shy girl (Wilhelmi), who takes care of her aunt, who suffers from heart disease. Film charts her tentative romance with outgoing, sexy Shephard. Nothing of interest really happens.

**Swept From the Sea** (1998, GBR/USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Beeban Kidron. Starring Rachel Weisz, Vincent Perez, Ian McKellen, Kathy Bates, Josh Ackland, Tony Haygarth, Zoë

Wanamaker, Tom Bell. Impressively filmed love epic set in Cornwall about the romance between social underdog Weisz and her ship-wrecked Russian lover Perez. Despite the scepticism of the villagers they fight for respect and plan to have a family. Story thrust is almost non-existent, although wonderful photography (by Dick Pope) and grand score (by John Barry) make it seem better than it really is. From the novel *Amy Foster* by Joseph Conrad.

**Swiri** (1999, KOR) **C-125m.** \*\*½ D: Kang Je-gyu. Starring Han Suk-kyu, Choi Min-sik, Kim Yunjin, Song Kang-ho, Johnny Kim. Action melodrama is one of the first Korean blockbusters, with a story about a police squad, who must stop specially trained terrorists who intend to blow up a mega-bomb during a crucial football match between North and South Korea. What could have become a Korean DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE (1995) is much too talky and slowly paced. Still, an ambitious film, with several explosive action set-pieces. Written by the director. Also known as SHIRI.

**Swiss Army Man** (2016, USA) **C-97m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Daniels (Dan Kwan, Daniel Scheinert). Starring Paul Dano, Daniel Radcliffe, Mary Elizabeth Winstead. Bizarre fantasy drama about shipwreck Dano, who is about to hang himself, when he finds a dead man (Radcliffe) washed ashore. He gains new hope from this and starts carrying him around everywhere, until the guy starts showing signs of life. Pretty unique idea for a movie, this has some stylistic flourishes and shows heart, but cannot quite escape its own weirdness. It also shows too much affinity to butts (gay subtext?).

**Swiss Conspiracy, The** (1976, USA/GER) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Jack Arnold. Starring David Janssen, Senta Berger, John Ireland, John Saxon, Ray Milland, Elke Sommer, Anton Diffring, David Hess. Thriller about the mysterious blackmailing of five wealthy customers of a Swiss bank, who are asked for ransom or else their secrets will be made known. Poorly plotted, but setting and B-movie all-star cast makes this watchable (although Milland and especially Sommer are terrible). Director Arnold's last feature.

**Swiss Family Robinson** (1960, USA) **C-126m.** **SCORE** \*\*\* D: Ken Annakin. Starring John Mills, Dorothy McGuire, James MacArthur, Janet Munro, Sessue Hayakawa, Tommy Kirk. Great family adventure, fast-paced and exciting. A Swiss family of five become shipwrecks on their way to New Guinea and must set up new existence on an uncharted island with an abundance of wildlife. Sweepingly made by veteran Annakin, rousing performances and production values, everyone seems to be having a great time. Same concept filmed several times before and since.

**Switchblade Sisters** (1975, USA) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Jack Hill. Starring Robbie Lee, Joanne Nail, Monica Gayle, Asher Brauner, Chase Newhart, Marlene Clark, Kitty Bruce. Better-than-usual B-action drama about a girl gang led by Lee, who clash with rival gangs, the police – and themselves. Rather cheap, but corny performances (especially by Lee and Gayle) make it worthwhile. Rediscovered by Quentin Tarantino's Rolling Thunder Pictures. Tak Fujimoto was second unit photographer. Also known as THE JEZEBELS, PLAYGIRL GANG.

**Swordsman, The** (1990, HGK/TIW) **C-120m.** \*\*\* D: King Hu, Tsui Hark, Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Sam Hui, Jackie Cheung, Cecilia Yip, Liu Suen, Lau Siu-Ming. Kinetic fantasy action adventure has several clans in search of stolen ancient scroll that gives the owner magical sword-fighting power. Good choreography and less screwy plot than usual make this a terrific Hong Kong actioner. Legendary director Hu's (A TOUCH OF ZEN) last film. Based on an epic novel by Louis Cha. Followed by two sequels. Original title: SIU NGOU GONGWU.

**Swordsman 2** (1992, HGK) **C-106m.** \*\*\* D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Jet Li, Brigitte Ching-Xia Lin, Michelle Li, Rosamund Kwan, Yan Yee-Kwan, Fannie Yuen. Follow-up to THE SWORDSMAN is fantastic martial arts spectacle, stylishly directed and very well-choreographed: Members of the Sun-Moon sect are out to rescue their master, who has

been kidnapped by evil usurpers. The battle may be decided by an ancient, magical scroll. The plot is sometimes hard to follow, but atmosphere, established by stylish color cinematography, and tremendous action sequences make this a must for genre fans. Extensive use of gore may make the film unsuitable for squeamish viewers, however. Original title: TUNG FONG BAT BAI II. Tsui Hark produced and cowrote the screenplay, which is based on a novel by Louis Cha.

**Swordsman 3** (1994, HGK) **C-93m**. \*\*\* D: Ching Siu-Tung, Raymond Li. Starring Brigitte Ching-Xia Lin, Joey Wang, Yu Rong Guang, Steve Lee. Third film in the SWORDSMAN series is no less fascinating, as Kung Fu master Asia (Lin) returns from the dead to exact revenge on those who are using her name for foul purposes. Guang plays a warrior who has led Spanish conquerors to her grave searching for a powerful scroll. His initial admiration for her turns into contempt after he sees what Asia does to her former (female) lover Wang. A highly aesthetic martial-arts fantasy with stunning use of slow-motion, like its predecessors based on writings by Louis Cha. Produced by Tsui Hark. Alternative English title: THE EAST IS RED. Original running time is 100m., original title TUNG FONG BAT BAI III.

**sxtape** (2013, USA) **C-84m**. \*\*½ D: Bernard Rose. Starring Caitlyn Folley, Ian Duncan, Julie Marcus, Chris Coy, Diana Garcia. Director Rose, in his first straight horror film since the classic CANDYMAN (1992) tackles the found-footage genre. Two lovers enter an abandoned hospital in L.A., seeking sexual thrills and a nice filming location, then supernatural events occur, leading to terror and panic. Fairly good example of its kind, but could have used a dose of cleverness. Plot is too standard by now. Rose also photographed and edited the picture. Aka SX\_TAPE.

**Symptoms** (1974, GBR/BEL) **C-91m**. \*\*½ D: José Ramón Larraz. Starring Angela Pleasance, Peter Vaughan, Lorna Heilbron, Raymond Huntley. Esoteric, dreamy – and slow – horror film about two young women, who spend a few days at a country house. One of them feels something terrible is about to happen, and it may be in the form of caretaker Vaughan. Quite atmospheric chiller with a nice turn by Pleasance, daughter of Donald. This rather obscure film is also known as THE BLOOD VIRGIN. It premiered in Cannes!

**Szaffi** (1986, HUN/GER/CDN) **C-72m**. \*\*\*½ D: Attila Dargay. Starring (the voices of) András Kern, Judit Pogány, Hilda Gobbi, Györgyi Bárdy. Historical animated feature about Hungarian prince Jonas, who grows up among gypsies after Austrians take over his castle and his father is murdered. As a young adult, he comes to claim his inheritance. This fairy tale comedy is okay for kids. Quality of the animation is fair. German title: JONAS UND DER VERSCHWUNDENE SCHATZ.

**Table aux Crevés, Le** (1952, FRA) **92m**. \*\*½ D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Fernandel, Nicolas Amato, Edmond Ardisson, Marcel Charvey, Marthe Marty, Mado Stelli. Odd drama about farmer Fernandel, who one day finds his wife hanging from the ceiling. His lover's brother goes to jail for having smuggled cigarettes and thinks Fernandel tipped off the police. Despite dramatic plot elements, film also provides comic relief. Interesting, if not entirely successful rural drama, an early one from director Verneuil. The setting is impressively authentic. Based on the novel by Marcel Aymé.

**Tag: The Assassination Game** (1982, USA) **C-90m**. \*\* D: Nick Castle. Starring Robert Carradine, Linda Hamilton, Kristine DeBell, Perry Lang, Michael Winslow, Bruce Abbott, Xander Berkeley, Forest Whitaker. Minor cult item for Gotcha! freaks. A group of college students take part in assassination game, where the contestants battle each other with plastic toy guns. Only, the dethroned champion has decided to play with real bullets. Meager plot is anything but lively, but Hamilton is a tough, convincing heroine and film has an interesting cast. Also known as EVERYBODY GETS IT IN THE END, and KISS ME, KILL ME.

**Tai-Chi** (1993, HK) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Yuen Wo-Ping. Starring Jet Li, Michelle Khan, Chin Siu-Hau. Average Hong Kong action that almost qualifies as a slapstick comedy. Two good friends take opposite sides after they have been thrown out of school. The plot is very weak, film is saved by good martial arts sequences. May also be of interest for its two action stars Li (BLACK MASK) and Khan (TOMORROW NEVER DIES). Original title: TAIGIK CHEUNG SAM-FUNG.

**Taiji ga Mitsuryô Suru Toki** (1966, JAP) **B&W-73m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Kôji Wakamatsu. Starring Miharuru Shima, Hatsuo Yamaya. Japanese exploitation drama about a psychopath, who lures a young woman to his apartment and proceeds to torture and humiliate her, all because his wife wanted a child and he didn't. In flashbacks we see how their marriage fell apart. Watchable but becomes repetitive after some time, despite short running time. Some have called this groundbreaking, probably because of early nudity and the embryo imagery. English title: THE EMBRYO HUNTS IN SECRET.

**Tailor of Panama, The** (2001, USA/EIR) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Boorman. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Geoffrey Rush, Jamie Lee Curtis, Leonor Varela, Brendan Gleeson, Harold Pinter, Catherine McCormack, Daniel Radcliffe, Mark Margolis, Jon Polito. Brosnan, who works for the British Secret Service, is relocated to Panama and picks prominent tailor Rush to be his 'source'. Rush, however, provides only information which can't get him into hell's kitchen. How soon will Brosnan realize the tailor's true nature? Stunningly directed character study goes on and on and on. Like Boorman's THE GENERAL (1998) this will not appeal to a wide audience, unless you are looking for a strong cast. A very eccentric insider-adaptation of John Le Carré's novel (he coscripted with Andrew Davies and the director).

**Taiyo no Oki: Horusu no Daiboken** (1968, JAP) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Isao Takahata. Starring (the voices of) Hisako Ôkata, Etsuko Ichihara, Mikijiro Hira, Yukari Asai, Masao Mishima. Remarkable fantasy epic, director Takahata's first animated feature. In Northern Europe of the Iron Age, a young boy loses his father and is told to go find the rest of his people. On his quest, he faces an evil warlord that people call the devil and his sad sister Hilda. Can the boy re-forged the Sword of the Sun and defeat the villain? Strikingly directed and animated mini-epic that properly exploits the mysticism of the age and comes up with an irresistible tale of bravery and valor. An excellent mystical fantasy adventure. Stands as the first collaboration of the Ghibli founders Takahata and Hayao Miyazaki, who is credited as animator and scene designer. This film is also considered to be the first modern anime. English titles: THE LITTLE NORSE PRINCE, and PRINCE OF THE SUN: THE GREAT ADVENTURE OF HORUS.

**Taken** (2008, USA/FRA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Pierre Morel. Starring Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen, Leland Orser, Rasha Bukvic, Katie Cassidy, Xander Berkeley, Jon Gries. DEATH-WISH-type film about ex-secret agent Neeson, who's almost lost contact to his 17-year-old daughter, who lives with his ex-wife and her rich stepfather in California. When she goes on a trip to Paris and is abducted there, Neeson goes on a rampage to get her back, using his old spy skills. Indefensible plot with bad stereotypes, but in-your-face action and compact running time (not to mention Neeson's earnest performance) keep this exciting. Co-written and produced by Luc Besson. PG-13 version runs 91m.

**Taken 2** (2012, FRA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Olivier Megaton. Starring Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen, Maggie Grace, Leland Orser, Jon Gries, D.B. Sweeney, Rade Serbedzija. Sequel to TAKEN (2008) repeats the successful formula. Neeson is visited by ex-wife and his daughter in Istanbul, not knowing that relatives of the Albanian victims from the first movie are setting a trap for him and his family. Plot is contrived again, but with the same hard-hitting action

and adrenaline-pumped chases, it's difficult not to enjoy it. Not as uncompromising as the first movie, also not as good, but if you liked the first one...

**Taken 3** (2014, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Olivier Megaton. Starring Liam Neeson, Forest Whitaker, Fanke Janssen, Maggie Grace, Dougray Scott, Leland Orser. A step down for the TAKEN franchise, with a plodding start. Neeson is framed for the murder of his ex-wife and must try to prove his innocence. Police detective Whitaker is trying to hunt him down. Not as energetic as the previous two films, it suffers from improbabilities as well. Pace picks up a little in the second half.

**Take the Money and Run** (1969, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½** D: Woody Allen. Starring Woody Allen, Janet Margolin, Louise Lasser. Allen's first solo project is quirky biographical comedy about a man destined to be a criminal, but a poor one at that. Film follows his romance with Margolin and different robbery attempts. Some amusing bits, but most jokes just don't take off.

**Taking, The** (2014, USA) **C-90m. \*\*** D: Adam Robitel. Starring Jill Larson, Anne Ramsay, Michelle Ang, Ryan Cutrona. Mockumentary in the vein of PARANORMAL ACTIVITY about a camera team, who shoots a report on Alzheimer patient Larson, then must contend with unusual fits and an obvious demonic(?) possession. Interesting combination of a real disease with horror, but that's about the only thing that stands in its favour. Obvious, at times even stupid 'scary situations'. For die-hard fans of the genre. Larson is quite creepy. Also known as THE TAKING OF DEBORAH LOGAN.

**Taking Lives** (2004, USA/CDN) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: D.J. Caruso. Starring Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke, Kiefer Sutherland, Gena Rowlands, Olivier Martinez, Tchéky Karyo, Jean-Hugues Anglade. Quite good thriller about FBI profiler Jolie, who travels to Montreal, Canada, to track down a serial killer, who has been active for almost two decades and takes on the identity of every new victim. Hawke is a key witness, Sutherland may be the psycho killer. Interesting cast, quite well-made, but script (based on a novel by Michael Pye) takes a few bizarre turns that take away all credibility. Jolie looks sexy but her performance is cold. Nice score by Philip Glass.

**Taking of Pelham One Two Three, The** (1974, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Joseph Sargent. Starring Walter Matthau, Robert Shaw, Martin Balsam, Hector Elizondo, Earl Hindman, James Broderick, Jerry Stiller, Tony Roberts. Terrific thriller about the hijacking of a New York subway train by Shaw and his accomplices, who demand 1 million dollar ransom to be delivered in one hour, or else they will shoot one of their hostages every extra minute! Negotiator Matthau has a tough nut to crack, especially as the hijackers make no concessions. Exceptional thriller hits bull's-eye after about 40 minutes and maintains a fever pitch until the end. One of the best thrillers of the decade, the 1970s equivalent of SPEED (1994). Screenplay by Peter Stone, based on the novel by John Godey. Good score by David Shire. The villains' names were adapted by Quentin Tarantino for his RESERVOIR DOGS (1992). Remade for TV in 1998.

**Taking the Heat** (1993, USA) **C-90m. Ⓜ** D: Tom Mankiewicz. Starring Tony Goldwyn, Lynn Whitfield, George Segal, Peter Boyle, Will Patton, Alan Arkin. Unbelievably stupid and contrived action thriller, made for TV, about tough female cop Whitfield, who has to take an eye witness, an arrogant yuppie (Goldwyn), to court. However, some gangsters will do anything to keep them from reaching it alive. What's more, L.A. is struck by a heatwave. Film suffers from artificial situations and silly dialogues. Goldwyn's character is offensively idiotic, and it seems incredible how Whitfield's initial aversion turns into love (then again, in such films the leads *sa/ways* fall in love).

**Talented Mr. Ripley, The** (1999, USA) **C-139m. \*\*\*** D: Anthony Minghella. Starring Mark Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Jack Davenport, James Rebhorn, Sergio Rubini, Philip Baker Hall, Celia Weston. Fine, elaborate adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's novel, previously filmed as *PLEIN SOLEIL* in 1959. Damon plays a young college grad who is hired by Law's father to find his son in Italy and persuade him to return to the States. However, the young man is enticed by Law and his lover Paltrow's lifestyle and may want to copy it. Is there a chance of becoming a different person? Well-written (by Minghella), generally well-produced thriller drama keeps interest throughout. Beautifully shot on location in Italy.

**Tale of Desperaux, The** (2008, USA/GBR) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Sam Fell, Robert Stevenhagen. Starring (the voices of) Matthew Broderick, Dustin Hoffman, Emma Watson, Tracey Ullman, Kevin Kline, William H. Macy, Stanley Tucci, Ciarán Hinds, Robby Coltrane, Frank Langella, Christopher Lloyd, narrated by Sigourney Weaver. Just okay animated feature with a star-studded voice cast. A little mouse with giant ears plays an important role in story about a fictional kingdom, which has become dark and depressed ever since their queen died on Soup Day because of a rat. Oddly structured plot also features an unlikely princess and an ousted rat. Fairly entertaining, for children.

**Tales From the Darkside: The Movie** (1990, USA) **C-93m. \*½** D: John Harrison. Starring Deborah Harry, Christian Slater, Steve Buscemi, Julianne Moore, William Hickey, Mark Margolis, James Remar, Rae Dawn Chong. Horror anthology *CREEPSHOW*-style: In the frame narrative a paperboy wants to delay evil Harry's plan to cook him by telling three horror stories (a la *Arabian Nights*): In the first, starring Buscemi, Slater and Moore, a mummy comes alive on a college campus, the second deals with a professional hitman whose latest target is a black cat, and the third story is about a gargoyle-monster, who turns a luckless artist into a happy person – at a high price. Stories are rather dumb and film lacks thrills. The first story is originally by Arthur Conan Doyle, for the second episode none other than George Romero adapted a short story by Stephen King. This was the follow-up to a TV series of the mid-1980s. Moore's second film (following an inauspicious movie debut in *SLAUGHTERHOUSE 2*).

**Tales from the Hood** (1995, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½** D: Rusty Cundieff. Starring Corbin Bernsen, Rosalind Cash, Rusty Cundieff, David Allen Grier, Anthony Griffith, Wings Hauser, Paula Jai Parker, Clarence Williams III. Four-part horror film in which three hoodlums go to a mortician who promised them drugs. Instead he tells them four eerie stories: The first, about the vengeful ghost of a black politician killed by corrupt cops, is way overdone (it does have an intense performance by Hauser). In the second one a troubled schoolboy is complaining to his teacher about a monster in his room. This one is undermined by a finale that is – again – overdone. The third story features Bernsen as a right-wing politician whose house harbors the souls of murdered slaves in the form of puppets. And the last segment (the best) is about a hoodlum who must undergo a therapy in a secret government lab. Interesting to watch, suspenseful and contains more verve than other anthologies, but all in all just quite good. Cowritten by the director, executive produced by Spike Lee.

**Tales of Halloween** (2015, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Darren Lynn Bousman, Neil Marshall, Mike Mendez, several others. Starring Adrienne Barbeau, Lin Shaye, Barbara Crampton, Adrienne Curry, John Landis, Joe Dante, Stuart Gordon, Mick Garris. Halloween anthology featuring ten short films held together (if at all) by Barbeau's frame narration. Stories are mild at best, with very little imagination or surprises. Three or four of the stories rate \*\*½ (like the second and the fourth), whereas the majority is quite weak or even pointless. Lalo Schifrin composed the title music.

**Tales That Witness Madness** (1973, GBR) **C-90m**. \*½ D: Freddie Francis. Starring Donald Pleasance, Jack Hawkins, Georgia Brown, Suzy Kendall, Joan Collins, Kim Novak. Weak horror tales framed by scientist Pleasance, who attempts to prove that his stories about asylum inmates are true. Neither of the segments chills or thrills, the final episode (featuring a good Kim Novak) is the best but still unintentionally funny. Skip it.

**Tall Man, The** (2012, FRA/CDN) **C-106m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Pascal Laugier. Starring Jessica Biel, Jodelle Ferland, William B. Davis, Stephen McHattie. Nothing seems right in this horror thriller set in a remote community, where children have gone missing. Townspeople blame a local legend, The Tall Man, but when nurse Biel's son is abducted, he seems very real. Then the movie offers us a shocking twist and slightly improves. Biel's suffering is hard to watch, though. From the director of MARTYRS (2008).

**Tango & Cash** (1989, USA) **C-98m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Andrei Konchalovsky, Albert Magnoli. Starring Sylvester Stallone, Kurt Russell, Teri Hatcher, Jack Palance, Brion James, James Hong, Robert Z'Dar, Lewis Arquette, Edward Bunker, Geoffrey Lewis. Okay action movie about unlikely duo of Stallone and Russell, the best crime fighters of the city, who are double-crossed and framed, then have to fight their way out of prison and get their revenge on villain Palance. Artificial plot keeps this movie from soaring. The action is quite good, so is the mood of the stars. Magnoli replaced director Konchalovsky.

**Tank Girl** (1995, USA) **C-104m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Rachel Talalay. Starring Lori Petty, Ice-T, Naomi Watts, Don Harvey, Jeff Kober, Malcolm McDowell, Iggy Pop, James Hong. Nonsensical but fairly entertaining adaptation of the comic strip by Alan Martin and Jamie Hewlett. Petty plays a punk on post-apocalyptic (waterless) Earth, who gets involved with big Water and Power company leader McDowell. Outrageous, flashy, hip sci-fi comedy becomes ultimately dull after an hour or so. Some good songs by Portishead, Scott Weiland, Björk, Bush.

**Tape** (2001, USA) **C-87m**. \*\*½ D: Richard Linklater. Starring Ethan Hawke, Robert Sean Leonard, Uma Thurman. In an anonymous motel room, Hawke meets former friend Leonard. In their ensuing conversation they learn what both of them have become. Leonard is an up-and-coming filmmaker, Hawke a drifter and drug abuser with a fiendish plan up his sleeve. Chamber drama based on the stage play by Stephen Belber is fascinating to some degree, with good performances, but most of the dialogue (consisting of why/because/if phrases) seems stilted and the point of the whole thing is dubious. A matter of taste, some found this good. Shot on digital video.

**Tarantola dal Ventre Nero, La** (1971, ITA/FRA) **C-98m**. \*\* D: Paolo Cavara. Starring Giancarlo Giannini, Claudine Auger, Barbara Bouchet, Rossella Falk, Silvano Tranquilli, Stefania Sandrelli, Barbara Bach. A killer is on the loose, injecting his victims with a poison that paralyzes them before butchering them. Weary cop Giannini is on the case. Typical giallo has a great title and killing method, but it's poorly paced and none too interesting. At least there's a dreamy, unsettling Ennio Morricone score. English title BLACK BELLY OF THE TARANTULA.

**Tarantula** (1955, USA) **80m**. \*\*\* D: Jack Arnold. Starring John Agar, Mara Corday, Leo G. Carroll, Nestor Paiva, Clint Eastwood. Exciting B-movie classic about a scientist's experiments with a growth formula, which leads to the escape of a giant spider (the title creature). It seems the huge monster cannot be stopped. Dramatic, and serious, highly recommended. Cowritten by Arnold. Score by Henry Mancini. Eastwood's film debut (he plays a jet pilot).

**Tara Road** (2005, EIR) **C-98m**. \*\* D: Gillies MacKinnon. Starring Andie MacDowell, Olivia Williams, Stephen Rea, Brenda Fricker, Jean-Marc Barr, Sarah Bolger, Heike Makatsch. Soap opera from British novelist Maeve Binchy about the fate of two different women: American McDowell has just lost her 15-year-old son in a motorcycle accident, pregnant Irish Williams has just been left by her philandering husband. They decide to swap houses for a while so that they can get away from it all. An okay view, if you like these Rosamunde Pilcher-like stories and can accept all the stereotypes.

**Target of an Assassin** (1976, SAF) **C-105m**. \*\*½ D: Peter Collinson. Starring Anthony Quinn, John Phillip Law, Simon Sabela, Marius Weyers, Sandra Prinsloo. Interesting if contrived thriller filmed in South Africa. Quinn is fine as a male nurse, who sees no way out of his problems but to kidnap a patient at his hospital, the president of an African country. Little do they know that there's an assassin (Law) waiting for an opportunity to kill the politician. Dialogue is at times corny, melodramatic but earnest performances help. Based on the Jon Burmeister novel *Running Scared*. Also known as AFRICAN RAGE, FATAL ASSASSIN, PORTRAIT OF AN ASSASSIN, THE LONG SHOT, and TIGERS DON'T CRY.

**Tarzan** (1999, USA) **C-88m**. \*\*\* D: Kevin Lima, Chris Buck. Starring (the voices of) Tony Goldwyn, Minnie Driver, Glenn Close, Rosie O'Donnell, Brian Blessed, Nigel Hawthorne, Lance Henriksen, Wayne Knight. Disney's interpretation of the famed jungle story by Edgar Rice Burroughs offers few novelties apart from some excellent action animation. The plot includes Tarzan's upbringing by a family of apes and his discovery by an expedition of British hunters. His love interest Jane and the threat posed by ruthless human predators round off a rather ordinary storyline. Just okay by Disney standards, no match for its dramatically charged predecessor MULAN.

**Tarzan and His Mate** (1934, USA) **B&W-103m**. \*\*\* D: Cedric Gibbons. Starring Johnny Weissmuller, Maureen O'Sullivan, Neil Hamilton, Paul Cavanagh. Usually regarded as the best of the early TARZAN movies, this adventure sends Hamilton back into the jungle with a friend who wants ivory. They meet Jane who has grown accustomed to living with the Ape Man. Fast paced and exciting, especially at the beginning, and also quite violent and even sexy. Drags a little in the mid-section with repeated animal attacks. Followed by TARZAN ESCAPES (1936).

**Tarzana, Sesso Selvaggio** (1969, ITA) **C-86m**. \*\* D: Guido Malatesta. Starring Ken Clark, Franca Polesello, Beryl Cunningham, Femi Benussi, Franco Ressel, Raf Baldassarre. Rather silly update of the TARZAN movies to the early exploitation film era about an expedition to the jungle, which aims to find out if a little girl has survived a plane crash sixteen years earlier. Of course she has, and she calls herself Tarzana (Benussi). Uneventful plot uses a lot of stock footage, which makes the production seem cheap. Benussi and Polesello's topless scenes make it worthwhile for aficionados. English title: TARZANA, THE WILD GIRL.

**Tarzan Escapes** (1936, USA) **B&W-89m**. \*\*½ D: Richard Thorpe. Starring Johnny Weissmuller, Maureen O'Sullivan, John Buckler, Benita Hume, William Henry. Weissmuller's third TARZAN appearance is typical sequel. Yet another group of Brits trek through the jungle to find Jane (this time it's about an inheritance), but she won't leave her man behind. They even consider bringing Tarzan back as some kind of circus attraction. Followed by TARZAN FINDS A SON! (1939).

**Tarzan Finds a Son!** (1939, USA) **B&W-82m**. \*\*½ D: Richard Thorpe. Starring Johnny Weissmuller, Maureen O'Hara, John Sheffield, Ian Hunter. Agreeable TARZAN picture, the fourth in the series. Tarzan and Jane adopt a baby – the only survivor of a plane crash in the jungle. A few years later an expedition arrives, looking for evidence of the plane crash. Of

course, they ultimately want 'Boy' back. Fairly engaging entry for fans. To others, it's the same all over again. Followed by TARZAN'S SECRET TREASURE.

**Tarzan's Three Challenges** (1963, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Robert Day. Starring Jock Mahoney, Woody Strode, Ricky Der, Tsuruko Kobayashi, Earl Cameron. Jungle adventure, set in Thailand this time, where Tarzan has to protect a young heir to the throne from usurpers. Pretty senseless and rather cheap, film's best scene is the climactic sword fight. Mahoney is inauspicious in the lead role.

**Tarzan the Ape Man** (1932, USA) **B&W-100m. \*\*\*** D: W.S. Van Dyke. Starring Johnny Weissmuller, Maureen O'Sullivan, Neil Hamilton, C. Aubrey Smith, Doris Lloyd. Weissmuller's first appearance as Tarzan, while not being the first Tarzan movie of all time, this is one of the most enduring. Jane (O'Sullivan) accompanies her father on a jungle expedition in search of the legendary graveyard of elephants, when they soon stumble across a white man who lives among apes. Engaging adventure with a charismatic turn by O'Sullivan. Followed by TARZAN AND HIS MATE.

**Taste of Fear** (1961, GBR) **B&W-81m. \*\*\*** D: Seth Holt. Starring Susan Strasberg, Ronald Lewis, Ann Todd, Christopher Lee, John Serret. Taut chiller from 'Mr. Hammer' Jimmy Sangster about disabled young woman, who returns to her father's home in a wheelchair after nine years. Her father has mysteriously gone away and with only the stepmom and a driver there, she soon believes that they are trying to cheat her out of her inheritance, especially after her father's corpse turns up everywhere! Is she imagining everything? Two terrific twists make this a fun puzzler, even if it owes a bit to LES DIABOLIQUES (1954). Photographed by Douglas Slocombe. Also known as SCREAM OF FEAR.

**Taste the Blood of Dracula** (1970, GBR) **C-91m. \*½** D: Peter Sasdy. Starring Christopher Lee, Geoffrey Keen, Gwen Watford, Linda Hayden, Peter Sallis, Ralph Bates, Roy Kinnear. Low-point in Hammer's DRACULA series: Lee has an extended cameo as the Count and story is unimaginative and deadly boring. Three lecherous businessmen resurrect the Prince of Darkness and pay for it later. No better than a typical FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup> clone. The fifth in the series, followed immediately by SCARS OF DRACULA.

**Tatoué, Le** (1968, FRA/ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Denys de la Patellière. Starring Louis de Funès, Jean Gabin. Engagingly performed comedy has arts expert de Funès going to great lengths to get the valuable tattoo on the back of eccentric legionnaire Gabin - who just wants to be left alone. The two stars pull the vehicle off with ease.

**Tatsu no ko Tarô** (1979, JAP) **C-75m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Kiriro Uruyama, Peter Fernandez. Starring (the voices of) Junya Kato, Katsuo Kitamura, Sayuri Yoshinaga. Animated feature based on a novel by Miyoko Matsutani. The title character, Taro the Dragon Boy, goes in search of his mother, who has been changed into a dragon. On his way he defeats two demons and helps farmers. Simple animated tale, with roots in Japanese mythology, a bit too hard to access. Worth a look for anime buffs. English title: TARO THE DRAGON BOY.

**Taxi Driver** (1976, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*½** D: Martin Scorsese. Starring Robert De Niro, Jodie Foster, Albert Brooks, Harvey Keitel, Leonard Harris, Peter Boyle, Cybill Shepherd, Martin Scorsese, Joe Spinell, Ralph Singleton. Director Scorsese (MEAN STREETS) celebrates the rhinestone of New York City in this dark, pessimistic, exhilarating psycho drama. De Niro plays the title character, a mentally disturbed Vietnam vet, whose traumatic encounters in the netherworld of prostitution, drugs and violence turn him into a psychopath. Beautiful Shepherd, who is his only link to a sane reality, refuses him, which paves the way for the ultimate tragedy. A matter of taste, but has become a cult film, down-beat, depressing but utterly fascinating. The brutality of the showdown is one of the most shocking bursts of violence in film history. De Niro's intense performance and Bernard Herrmann's moody,

haunting score (his last) are unforgettable. Major point of criticism is film's overlength, caused in part by multiple endings (endowing the movie with a questionable moral), which may, however, be a good starting point for discussion. Written by Paul Schrader. Photographed by Michael Chapman. Legend has it that Steven Spielberg was among the editors.

**Taxi Mauve, Un** (1977, FRA/EIR/ITA) **C-120m.** \*\*½ D: Yves Boisset. Starring Charlotte Rampling, Philippe Noiret, Peter Ustinov, Agostina Belli, Edward Albert, Fred Astaire, Jack Watson. *Very* interesting cast saddled with second-rate adaptation of Michel Déon's novel about group of disparate characters in Irish coastal town. Noiret has come there to hunt and forget, Albert is his American companion, whose sister Rampling's arrival spices things up. Ustinov as a stubborn Russian and Astaire as physician and driver of the title vehicle also populate this lumbering drama. Beautiful cinematography by Tonino Delli Colli and score by Philippe Sarde provide a dreamy quality. Otherwise this curio is much too vague and talky. Boisset also scripted. English title: THE PURPLE TAXI.

**Taxi, Roulotte et Corrida** (1958, FRA) **86m.** \*\*\* D: André Hunebelle. Starring Louis de Funès, Raymond Bussières, Annette Poivre, Guy Bertil, Véra Valmont, Paulette Dubost. Amusing, light-hearted comedy about a French family who go on holiday to Spain (using papa's taxi and a trailer), and fall prey to some smugglers. Really harmless, almost idyllic, a carefree comedy, with Louis de Funès giving an excellent performance as the bumbling patriarch.

**Teacher, The** (1974, USA) **C-69m.** \*½ D: Hikmet (=Howard) Avedis. Starring Angel Tompkins, Jay North, Anthony James, Marlene Schmidt. Sloppy C-movie about 18-year-old North, whose friend has a fatal accident while peeping on gorgeous neighbor Tompkins. Later, Tompkins seduced North, for no apparent reason. Pretty lame movie is purported to run 98 minutes in its original version. Beware! Also known as THE SEDUCTRESS.

**Tears of the Sun** (2003, USA) **C-121m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Antoine Fuqua. Starring Bruce Willis, Monica Bellucci, Cole Hauser, Eamonn Walker, Johnny Messner, Tom Skerritt. War drama set in Nigeria, Africa, where hardened colonel Willis is assigned to rescue doctor Bellucci, who does her work amidst civil war dangers. When she refuses to leave alone and leave her helpers and friends behind, Willis is faced with a dilemma. Meaningful, slickly made drama whose major mistake is that it neglects the characters and thus does not involve the viewer fully. Sweeping score by Hans Zimmer.

**Tea with Mussolini** (1999, GBR/ITA) **C-117m.** \*\*\*½ D: Franco Zeffirelli. Starring Cher, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright, Maggie Smith, Lily Tomlin, Baird Wallace, Charlie Lucas. Priceless period piece set during WW2 in idyllic Tuscany, where a group of elderly ladies have set up a British enclave. One of them, Plowright, has taken up the task of turning a little Italian boy into a British gentleman. Then a free-spirited American woman, Cher, arrives and takes him under her wings. Wonderful cast and settings, touching storyline and a fine score make this an engrossing experience. Script by John Mortimer, based on Franco Zeffirelli's autobiography.

**Techo di Cristal, El** (1971, SPA) **C-92m.** \*\*\* D: Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Carmen Sevilla, Dean Selmier, Patty Shepard, Emma Cohen, Hugo Blanco, Javier Campos. Remarkable, partly surreal mystery about two women who are upstairs-downstairs neighbors in an apartment house. During the summer, their husbands travel abroad. Soon Sevilla has reason to believe that the upstairs neighbor's husband never left... was he murdered? Psycho thriller drama weaves an intriguing puzzle around enigmatic characters and will rivet your attention... despite a relatively slow pace. From the director of LA SEMANA DEL ASESINO (CANNIBAL MAN), who also scripted with Antonio Fos. English title: THE GLASS CEILING.

**Teen Wolf** (1985, USA) **C-91m. \*\*\*** D: Rod Daniel. Starring Michael J. Fox, James Hampton, Susan Ursitti, Jerry Levine, Matt Adler, Lorie Griffin, Mark Arnold. Good-natured fantasy comedy about troubled teen Fox, who is slowly turning into a werewolf(!) and must come to terms with his new talents. He becomes a star on his basketball team and gets the girl he always dreamed of. Inoffensive, entertaining film with an appealing Fox, who also did **BACK TO THE FUTURE** the same year. Followed by a TV series and a sequel, **TEEN WOLF TOO** (1987).

**Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon** (1970, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\*** D: Otto Preminger. Starring Liza Minnelli, Ken Howard, Robert Moore, James Coco, Kay Thomson, Fred Williamson. Engrossing underdog drama about three friends, facially scarred Minnelli, epileptic Howard and wheelchair-bound homosexual Moore, who move into a house together and try to come to terms with their flaws. Quite lightweight and whimsical, well-handled by director Preminger. Written by Marjorie Kellogg, based on her novel. Unavailable for many years.

**Telmisseomding** (1999, KOR) **C-118m. \*\*** D: Chang Yoon-Hyun. Starring Han Suk-kyu, Shim Eun-ha, Jang Hang-Seon, Yum Jung-ah, Yu Jun-Sang. Korean thriller about a weary cop, who takes over the investigation when several corpses turn up, all with missing body parts. It seems the serial killer is creating a human of his own. A young doctor seems to be the first suspect, since she knew all those killed. Fairly atmospheric, with good use of music and songs (Enya, Nick Cave), but film is disastrously paced, with scenes extended for no particular reason. Too bad. English title: **TELL ME SOMETHING**.

**Témoin, Le** (1978, FRA/ITA) **C-90m. \*\*\*** D: Jean-Pierre Mocky. Starring Alberto Sordi, Philippe Noiret, Roland Dubillard, Gisèle Préville, Sandra Dabriglia, Paul Crauchet, Paul Muller, Dominique Zardi, Henri Attal. Sardonic crime drama with comic touches by the director of **L'IBIS ROUGE** (1975). Italian restaurator Sordi pays a visit to his friend, businessman Noiret, in order to restore some old paintings, then becomes mixed up in crime investigation when one of his models is found murdered. Well-paced, engagingly acted, typically irreverent Mocky. Based on a novel by Harrison Jude. English title: **THE WITNESS**.

**Tempo di Massacro** (1966, ITA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Franco Nero, George Hilton, Lyn Shayne, John MacDouglas (=Giuseppe Addobbati), Nino Castelnuovo, Tom Felleghy, John Bartha, Sal Borgese, Romano Puppo. Gunslinger Django (Nero) returns home but finds it considerably changed. A sadistic rancher rules the town. Django's brother (Hilton) might be of help in breaking his rule. Interesting Lucio Fulci western, with some well-directed scenes, loses its drive early on and becomes a slightly pretentious western drama. Some consider this an official **DJANGO** (1966) sequel. Produced by Fulci, scripted by Fernando Di Leo. Full Italian title: **LE COLT CANTARONO LA MORTE E FU... TEMPO DI MASSACRO**. English titles: **THE BRUTE AND THE BEAST**, **COLT CONCERT**, **MASSACRE TIME**.

**Temps des Loups, Le** (1969, FRA/ITA) **C-105m. \*\*\*** D: Sergio Gobbi. Starring Robert Hossein, Charles Aznavour, Virna Lisi, Marcel Bozzuffi, Albert Minsky, Fred Ulysse. Police detective Aznavour is after elusive criminal Hossein, who calls himself Dillinger (after Al Capone's notorious companion). The two of them know each other from school. Tough, violent thriller shows more character depth than usual, but overall, film is dramatically flawed, with the flashback sequences not as they should be. What makes the film worth watching in the end is Hossein's excellent portrayal of the cold-blooded criminal, who sees his life as a *cul-de-sac*. English titles: **TIME OF THE WOLVES** and **THE HEIST**, the latter version running 85/92m.

**Temps du Loup, Le** (2003, FRA/AUT/GER) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Michael Haneke. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Béatrice Dalle, Patrice Chéreau, Rona Hartner, Maurice Bénichou, Olivier Gourmet. Apocalyptic drama set somewhere in rural France, where an unidentified global(?)

disaster has led to social collapse. Huppert's family must try to survive. Unfortunately, Haneke again proves himself to be a passive filmmaker that, like in the disastrous FUNNY GAMES (1995), just "shows" without making a comment. Gloomy widescreen cinematography helps. English title: THE TIME OF THE WOLF.

**Temptation of a Monk** (1993, HGK) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Clara Law. Starring Joan Chen, Michael Lee, Lisa Lu, Zhang Fengyi. Drama with epic dimensions about one of the emperor's bodyguards, who is double-crossed and blamed for his master's death in a hinterhalt. Film follows his flight to a monastery, where he is forced to live by a monk's code of ethics. Drama is more slowly paced that fascinating and remains too unfocused, with unsuccessful comic relief. Still, this is interesting and elevated by fine cinematography (which is meaningless on a TV screen). Original title YOU SENG.

**Tenant, The** (1976, USA/FRA) **C-125m. \*\*\*\* D:** Roman Polanski. Starring Roman Polanski, Isabelle Adjani, Melvyn Douglas, Jo Van Fleet, Shelley Winters, Bernard Fresson, Lila Kedrova, Claude Dauphin, Claude Piéplu, Rufus, Gérard Jugnot, Alain Sarde. Brilliant psycho drama / horror film is the final part in director Polanski's (inofficial) apartment house trilogy. Urban lost soul Trelkovsky (Polanski himself) rents a Parisian apartment, whose previous tenant has jumped out of the window. Slowly paranoia creeps up on the shy man, as the landlord (Douglas), the concierge (Winters), and virtually all the neighbors are obviously trying to drive him insane. Subtly frightening masterpiece is no less fascinating than Polanski's REPULSION (1965) or ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968), which also dealt with apartment house horrors. Low-key but chilling, simply a must. Superbly mounted script written by Polanski and Gérard Brach, based on the novella by Roland Topor. Striking cinematography by Sven Nykvist, eerie score by Philippe Sarde. French title: LE LOCATAIRE.

**10 Cloverfield Lane** (2016, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Dan Trachtenberg. Starring John Goodman, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, John Gallagher Jr. Follow-up to CLOVERFIELD (2008) plays in the same universe. Winstead has a car accident and is rescued by Goodman, who lives in a subterranean bunker because he believes there's a war going on outside and the air is toxic. At first Winstead is convinced that she has been abducted and plots an escape with a fellow 'inmate', but that's not the end of the story. Mostly slowly paced, and despite Goodman's nicely psychopathic performance (BARTON FINK, anybody?), this doesn't make the cut. Some even hated the ending. Maybe producer J.J. Abrams should have directed as well.

**Ten Commandments, The** (1956, USA) **C-220m. \*\*\*½ D:** Cecil B. DeMille. Starring Charlton Heston, Yul Brynner, Anne Baxter, Edward G. Robinson, Yvonne De Carlo, Debra Paget, John Derek, Cedric Hardwicke, Nina Foch, Martha Scott, Judith Anderson, Vincent Price, John Carradine, Fraser C. Heston, Woody Strode, Richard Farnsworth, Gordon Mitchell, Robert Vaughn, narrated by Cecil B. DeMille. Sumptuous biblical epic chronicles the life of Moses (Heston), from his abandonment at birth and discovery by Egyptian princess to his upbringing as Egyptian Prince and subsequent downfall. Of course, he would return to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt. Occasionally corny, but Heston and Brynner are good, story is well-told throughout. Contains some of the most famous (Oscar-winning) special effects ever filmed. Director DeMille's last film (he had filmed the story before in 1923). Score by Elmer Bernstein. Filmed in 1.85:1 VistaVision, the 1989 re-release was expanded to a 2.20:1 widescreen format.

**Tenebrae** (1982, ITA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Dario Argento. Starring Anthony Franciosa, John Saxon, Daria Nicolodi, Giuliano Gemma, Mirella D'Angelo, John Steiner. After SUSPIRIA and INFERNO, Argento's return to the thriller-genre features immaculate camerawork by Luciano Tovoli and memorable murder set-pieces, if not a memorable plot. Writer Franciosa,

advertising his latest mystery novel in Rome, receives death threats by a traumatized, black-gloved killer who is hacking up women. Police inspector Gemma is at a loss, and the writer is forced to investigate on his own behalf to clear himself of suspicion. Has little continuity, like most Argento films, but manages to arrest and thrill the audience with elaborate camerawork and murder scenes that had then become the trademark of any Argento chiller. Note: This is not the conclusion of the 'Three Mothers'-trilogy, as the title had some believe. Uncut print runs 100m. Written by the director. English title: UNSANE, also known as TENEBRE.

**Tenkû no Shiro Rapyuta** (1986, JAP) **C-125m. \*\*\*½ D:** Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Mayumi Tanaka, Keiko Yokozawa, Kotoe Hatsui, Minori Terada. Awe-inspiring animated extravaganza from Japanese master Miyazaki. A young girl who possesses a magical crystal is pursued by sky pirates and the army. She enters the life of an orphaned boy, who helps her find a magical island in the sky, whose existence his father was trying to prove. Film creates a wondrous universe of places and characters and fills you with awe and wonder, taking you on a roller-coaster ride like no other movie of this kind. Its astounding action sequences put most real action movies to shame! Some consider this to be Miyazaki's masterpiece. Great score by Joe Hisaishi. English dub voiced by Anna Paquin, Mark Hamill among others. English titles: LAPUTA – CASTLE IN THE SKY, and LAPUTA: THE FLYING ISLAND.

**Ten Little Indians** (1965, GBR) **B&W-90m. \*\*\*½ D:** George Pollock. Starring Hugh O'Brian, Shirley Eaton, Fabian, Leo Genn, Stanley Holloway, Wilfrid Hyde-White, Daliah Lavi, Dennis Price, Marianne Hoppe, Mario Adorf. Another film version of Agatha Christie's formidable whodunit *And Then There Were None*. 10 people are trapped in a remote mansion in the Alps, fall prey one by one to killer who is among them. Direction not on top of the material (Pollock had had some Agatha Christie experience though), but still able to capture. Par for the course. That's Christopher Lee's voice coming from the speaker. Filmed before as *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE* (1945), *TEN LITTLE INDIANS* (1959, for TV). Later remade in 1974 and 1989. There is also a Russian and an Indian version of the story.

**Tentacoli** (1977, ITA/USA) **C-102m. SCOPE BOMB D:** Oliver Hellman (=Ovidio G. Assonitis). Starring John Huston, Shelley Winters, Bo Hopkins, Henry Fonda, Delia Boccardo, Cesare Danova, Alan Boyd, Claude Akins. Horrible horror a la *JAWS* about a giant octopus that is terrorizing a sea-side resort. Very poorly constructed, an embarrassment for Huston, Winters and Fonda (their roles are small, though). English title: *TENTACLES*.

**10 Things I Hate About You** (1999, USA) **C-97m. \*\* D:** Gil Junger. Starring Heath Ledger, Julia Stiles, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Larisa Oleynik, David Krumholtz. Beautiful teenager Stiles can only go out on a date if her sister does so, but nobody seems to want to ask the unfriendly girl out. Until one boy agrees to seduce her – for \$500. Predictable teen fare is quite funny but a notch below *SHE'S ALL THAT*, its rival at the box-office that year. Very loosely based on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

**Terminal Man, The** (1974, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** Mike Hodges. Starring George Segal, Joan Hackett, Richard A. Dysart, Donald Moffat, Michael C. Gwynne, William Hansen, Jill Clayburgh, Norman Burton, James (B.) Sikking, Steve Kanaly, Victor Argo. Unusual science-fiction tale originally written by Michael Crichton. Segal plays a computer scientist, whose violent seizures are thought to be the result of a brain damage. A research team around doctor Hackett intend to implant electrodes in his brain, in order to control his seizures better. Intriguing, thoughtful science-fiction is almost ruined by Hodges uninvolved direction and leaden pace. He compensates somewhat with some stylish shots, but story and actor Segal are the real stars here. A possible cult favorite in years to come. Hodges (PULP) also scripted. Good use of music by Johann Sebastian Bach.

**Terminator, The** (1984, USA/GBR) **C-107m. \*\*\*½ D:** James Cameron. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Michael Biehn, Linda Hamilton, Paul Winfield, Lance Henriksen, Earl Boen, Bill Paxton. Science-fiction thriller classic rightfully put James Cameron on the map. In 2025, a brutal war is raging between man and machine. A human-looking cyborg (Schwarzenegger) is sent back to the year 1984 to kill the mother (Hamilton) of the future rebel leader. Biehn (a vulnerable human) also travels through the time portal to protect her, but the killing machine cannot be stopped. Time has not been all too kind to the film, especially to its effects, but it's still amazingly creative, well-edited and well-directed. Finale is best part. Followed by three sequels.

**Terminator 2: Judgment Day** (1991, USA) **C-137m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** James Cameron. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, Robert Patrick, Joe Morton, Earl Boen, Xander Berkeley. Sequel to the 1984 hit THE TERMINATOR cannot match the film's originality, but tops it in terms of effects. Hamilton's nemesis from the first film returns after some ten years – not to destroy her, but to protect her from ultra-sophisticated android designed to kill her son and pave the way for the domination of the machines thirty years in the future. Big-scale tomfoolery, with some gigantic action set-pieces and startling (Oscar-winning) special effects, which make the film worth watching, though its shortcomings are hard to overlook (awkward comic relief, a much too cocky Furlong, and a sudden voice-over narration by Hamilton, which starts rather late). Cameron coscripted and coproduced this massive box-office success. Score by Brad Fiedel. The awesome liquid metal effects are by Stan Winston. Later released on video and DVD as T2: ULTIMATE EDITION and T2: EXTREME EDITION, which feature almost 20 minutes of deleted scenes.

**Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines** (2003, USA/GER) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jonathan Mostow. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Nick Stahl, Claire Danes, Kristanna Loken, David Andrews. Continuation of THE TERMINATOR saga has a dull, often gleefully absurd plot. This time Schwarzenegger must protect the savior of mankind (Stahl, who's really a slacker) from ultra-vicious terminatrix Loken. There's not much more to say about the story. Action set-pieces are explosive (the crane scene is a wow) and film is endowed with an interesting twist ending. Otherwise, this is big budget and no brain.

**Terminator Genisys** (2015, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Alan Taylor. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jason Clarke, Emilia Clarke, Jai Courtney, J.K. Simmons, Courtney B. Vance, Sandrine Holt. Fifth TERMINATOR movie is good action fare. On the day of the planned overthrow of the machines, John Connor (Jason Clarke) sends his long-time friend Courtney back in time to 1984 (=exactly what happened before the first movie), but there he has to learn that Sarah Connor (Emilia Clarke) is not unaware of the danger she's in; in fact, she has been preparing to travel forward in time with her terminator-friend to stop SkyNet. It turns out that SkyNet is about to launch a new App called Genisys that will overthrow humanity. Complicated story is well-paced and told with tongue in cheek, as well as great special effects. Schwarzenegger's presence is a big plus; digital wizardry makes him play his Terminator character in 1984, 1997 and 2017, there's even a flashback to 1973! Clarke is an appealing heroine.

**Terms of Endearment** (1983, USA) **C-132m. \*\*\*½ D:** James L. Brooks. Starring Shirley MacLaine, Debra Winger, Jack Nicholson, John Lithgow, Jeff Daniels, Lisa Hart Carroll, Danny DeVito. Exceptional family saga about widowed mother MacLaine and her relationship to her grown-up daughter Winger, who both are faced with everyday problems over the years. Refreshing look at the American bourgeois culture, simultaneously humorous and sad. Eloquent, completely believable script by director Brooks (AS GOOD AS IT GETS), who based his first motion picture on Larry McMurtry's novel. Won Oscars for Best Picture, Director,

Screenplay, Actress (MacLaine) and Supporting Actor (Nicholson). Followed by a sequel in 1996, called THE EVENING STAR.

**Terra-Cotta Warrior, A** (1990, HGK) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Zhang Yimou, Gong Li. Awe-inspiring fantasy epic starring Zhang (director of RAISE THE RED LANTERN, TO LIVE) as warrior who falls in love with the emperor's concubine. When their affair is discovered she is executed and he is turned into a terra-cotta warrior who has to guard the emperor's mausoleum in all eternity. 3000 years later, however, in the 1930s, he is accidentally woken up - by the reincarnation of his lover. Superbly made film is staggeringly beautiful in the first half, loses momentum in the mid-section, only to deliver an incredible finale. A rare gem; not to be missed. Original running time: 145m.

**Terror** (1978, GBR) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Norman J. Warren. Starring John Nolan, Carolyn Courage, James Aubrey, Sarah Keller, Trishia Walsh, Glynis Barber. At a film producer's party an attempted hypnosis has weird effects. It turns out that a witch's curse will catch up with everybody from that party in the following days. Okay horror pic provides enough gory effects if not much continuity. In second half tries to wreak havoc a la SUSPIRIA (1977), but remains rather unconvincing. Barber's film debut. STAR WARS' Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew) can be seen in the role of the mechanic (sans make-up).

**Terror Caníbal** (1981, SPA/FRA) **C-89m. D:** Julio Pérez Taberner. Starring Burt Altman, Annabelle, Mariam Camacho, Antoine Fontaine. Cheap, incredibly amateurish trash involving some kidnapers, who take refuge in the jungle, only to fall prey to a cannibal tribe. Filmmakers show no expertise whatsoever, this is like watching someone's home-movies. Even cannibal lovers will be disappointed. English title: CANNIBAL TERROR.

**Terrore dei Barbari, Il** (1959, ITA/USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Carlo Campogalliano. Starring Steeve Reeves, Chelo Alonso, Bruce Cabot, Giulia Rubini, Arturo Dominici, Andrea Checchi, Paul Muller. After the two successful HERCULES movies, Reeves simply plays a muscleman here, who tries to help his folks against the brutal rule of the Huns. More carefully plotted than others, but still boring, with only some nice camerawork to recommend it. Co-funded by AIP, when production ran out of money. Edited by Franco Fraticelli. Uncut version runs some 100m. English title: GOLIATH AND THE BARBARIANS.

**Terrore nello Spazio** (1965, ITA/SPA) **C-88m. \*\*\*½ D:** Mario Bava. Starring Barry Sullivan, Norma Bengell, Angel Aranda, Evi Marandi, Ivan Rassimov. When space commander Sullivan receives a call for help from a nearby planet, his ship lands and he and the crew investigate. It turns out that souls of the dead want to possess their bodies. Tacky special effects and slow pace mar this well-directed science-fiction film that also boasts some effective scenes of horror. Photography is incredibly atmospheric. For Bava fans. Based on Renato Pestrinero's story "One Night of 21 Hours". Best-known U.S. titles: PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES and DEMON PLANET.

**Terrorgang** (1980, SPA) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Tomàs Aznar. Starring Raquel Ramirez. Action film turns into horror film when a 'terrorgang' of five falls prey to the curse of a dying victim. Unconventional plot maintains interest but sadistic scenes are likely to turn conservative viewers off. Still, picture manages to create some suspense, and there are also some eerie sequences in the ruins of an old castle.

**Terror in the Aisles** (1984, USA) **C-85m. \*\*½ D:** Andrew J. Kuehn. Starring Donald Pleasance, Nancy Allen. A compilation of horror film clips (from such classic as PSYCHO, HALLOWEEN and THE EXORCIST), loosely arranged, held together only by Pleasance and Allen's narration. Well-edited, even effective in parts, but not very meaningful, critical or intelligent. Still, a must for horror buffs, if only to try and identify the movies featured (only a few titles are

mentioned). Interesting trivia note: SUSPIRIA (featured *very* briefly towards the end) is the only European horror movie in the compilation.

**Terror in the Wax Museum** (1973, USA) **C-93m**. \*½ D: George Fenady. Starring Ray Milland, Broderick Crawford, Elsa Lanchester, Maurice Evans, Shani Wallis, John Carradine. A murderer is loose in Carradine's wax museum and the makers of this film tease the audience until the very last second about his identity. Strictly by-the-numbers murder mystery, not a horror film. Unexciting and all in all a big bore.

**Terror of Mechagodzilla** (1974, JAP) **C-83m**. **SCOPE** ② D: Inoshiro Honda. Starring Katsuhiko Sasaki, Akihiko Hirata, Tomoko Ai, Tadao Nakamura. Poor, cheap monster trash from the Japanese Toho studios about revival of Mechagodzilla by aliens who look like humans. The creature battles Godzilla and a Titanosaurus. The special-effects are unconvincing. Sci-fi/fantasy expert Honda's last film.

**Terror of the Tongs** (1961, GBR) **C-75m**. \*\*½ D: Anthony Bushell. Starring Christopher Lee, Geoffrey Toone, Brian Worth, Richard Leech, Burt Kwouk. Interesting B-film from the Hammer studios about secret society in Hong Kong, which is infiltrated by sea captain Toone, whose 16 year-old daughter was killed by them. Pretty fierce little film, with a credible performance by Lee as the evil leader of the sect.

**Terza Madre, La** (2007, ITA) **C-98m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Asia Argento, Cristian Solimeno, Adam James, Moran Atias, Valeria Cavalli, Philippe Leroy, Daria Nicolodi, Coralina Cataldi-Tassoni, Udo Kier, Jun Ichikawa. Long-awaited conclusion of cult director Argento's Three Mothers trilogy following SUSPIRIA (1977) and INFERNO (1980) is a welcome return to supernatural elements for the filmmaker's fans. A young woman (Argento) is drawn into a witches' revival when her boyfriend, an archaeologist, is sent an urn with occult objects. A magic tunica inside will resurrect the most powerful witch of them all, Mater Lacrimarum, the Mother of Tears. Rome is plunged into chaos, and the young woman must find ways of escaping the witch's grasps and putting an end to the terror. Less uncompromisingly stylish than its predecessors, Argento still delivers, with potent gore effects, atmospheric settings and appropriate nods to his own horror classics. Some unnecessary plot elements (the involvement of the police, in fact any element of realism, could have been completely left out) don't really mar the fun. Great score by Claudio Simonetti (former Goblin member) recalls the brilliant SUSPIRIA soundtrack. Cowritten and coproduced by Dario Argento, whose daughter delivers a convincing lead performance. English title: MOTHER OF TEARS: THE THIRD MOTHER.

**Teseo Contro il Minotauro** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Silvio Amadio. Starring Bob Mathias, Rosanna Schiaffino, Alberto Lupo, Rik Battaglia, Carlo Tamberlani, Nico Pepe, Susanne Loret. Quite tense, atmospheric and rather violent muscleman epic with a supernatural gimmick: a minotaur. Theseus (or Teseo) fights evil queen, who keeps feeding virgins to a beast living in the sewers of her city. Plot is confusing and unnecessarily complex. This one sounds much more interesting than it plays, and the minotaur appears only at the very end – for three minutes. Alberto de Martino (HORROR) was assistant director, Giorgio Capitani (OGNUNO PER SE) directed the 2nd unit. Osvaldo Civirani made the stills and Carlo Rustichelli did the music. English titles: THE MINOTAUR and WARLORD OF CRETE.

**Tesis** (1996, SPA) **C-123m**. \*\*\*½ D: Alejandro Amenàbar. Starring Ana Torrent, Fele Martínez, Eduardo Noriega, Miguel Picazo, Javier Elorriaga. Film student Torrent, researching for her thesis on violence in the media, stumbles upon a so-called snuff film, which shows young women being tortured and killed. She begins investigating the case with a fellow student, and they soon find themselves pursued by the killer. Complex, extremely suspenseful thriller packs a wallop thanks to a tight pacing and a heart-pounding score (by

first-time director Amenàbar). Eventually let down by some inconsistencies in the plot but the tension it creates makes more than up for it. An intelligent, telling comment on the voyeuristic (and increasingly capitalistic) depiction of violence in the media, and alongside NIGHTWATCH one of the most dazzling films to come out of Europe in the mid-90s. Lead actress Ana Torrent made her film debut back in 1973 with the highly acclaimed EL ESPIRITU DE LA COLMENA (THE SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE).

**Tess** (1979, FRA/GBR) **C-172m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Roman Polanski. Starring Nastassia Kinski, Peter Firth, John Bett, Tom Chadbon, Rosemary Martin, Leigh Lawson, Sylvia Coleridge. Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) is splendidly brought to the screen by producer Claude Berri and director Roman Polanski. The story of naive, melancholy Tess (Kinski) and the men in her life is wonderfully filmed and beautifully photographed. Overlong and slowly paced but the pure beauty of the film overcomes these flaws easily. Oscar-winning cinematography by Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet. Oscars also awarded for Costume Design (Anthony Powell) and Art Direction. No film caught life in the country better than TESS.

**Testa T'Amazzo, Croce... Sei Morto... Mi Chiamano Alleluja**(1971, ITA/SPA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Anthony Ascott (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring George Hilton, Charles Southwood, Agata Flori, Roberto Camardiel, Andrea Bosis, Goffredo Unger. Leaden (in both senses of the word) spaghetti western about gunslinger Hilton and his attempts to get his hands on valuable jewelry also craved by assorted bandits. Plot is extremely weak, you may only find some value in director Carnimeo's visual experiments. Alternative titles: A FISTFUL OF LEAD, DEEP WEST, GUNS FOR DOLLARS, HEADS I KILL YOU, TAILS YOU'RE DEAD, THEY CALL ME HALLELUJAH.

**Testament du Docteur Cordelier, Le** (1959, FRA) **B&W-95m. \*\*\* D:** Jean Renoir. Starring Jean-Louis Barrault, Teddy Bilis, Sylviane Margollé, Michel Vitold, Bernard Fresson. To some it may come as a surprise that master director Jean Renoir also tried his hands at horror, but he did: Barrault plays the title character, who delivers a strange testament to his notary-friend Bilis. After his death, the doctor will pass on his wealth to a stranger. The notary is baffled when just this mysterious man is seen attacking people. What is the mystery behind Cordelier? Renoir keeps things a little too scientific and talky, but his film works. An interesting early outing for the post-WW2 European horror film. Renoir himself appears in brief prologue. English titles: THE TESTAMENT OF DOCTOR CORDELIER, EXPERIMENT IN EVIL, THE DOCTOR'S HORRIBLE EXPERIMENT, and strangely also THE HORRIBLE DOCTOR HITCHCOCK, which is also the English title of the Riccardo Freda chiller L'ORRIBILE SEGRETO DEL DR. HITCHCOCK (1962).

**Tetsuo** (1989, JAP) **B&W-67m. \*\*\* D :** Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Tomorrowo Taguchi, Kei Fujiwara, Nobu Kanaoka, Shinya Tsukamoto. Bold, expressionistic art film that marked Shinya Tsukamoto's breakthrough. A Japanese businessman is haunted by terrifying visions of an iron maniac, and what's more, he seems to be slowly turning into metal. Tsukamoto's own editing keeps this at a frenzied pace, with extreme violence, erotica and bizarre characters. An astounding visual poem that elaborates the relationship and conflict between man and machine. Tsukamoto also produced, photographed, wrote the script and did the art direction. Followed by TETSUO II: BODY HAMMER (1992) and TETSUO: THE BULLET MAN (2009). English titles: TETSUO: THE IRON MAN, and THE IRONMAN.

**Teufel Kam Aus Akasawa, Der** (1971, GER/SPA) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Jess Franco. Starring Fred Williams, Susann Korda (=Soledad Miranda), Horst Tappert, Ewa Strömberg, Walter Rilla, Paul Müller, Howard Vernon, Jess Franco. Trivial adventure about a mineralogist who goes missing after he has discovered a sort-of radioactive mineral that can turn metal into gold.

Several agents are out to investigate. Thriller is trashy but not bad, a nice showcase for stunning Miranda, whose last film this was (she died in a road accident at the age of 27). Allegedly based on a novel by Edgar Wallace. Director Franco, who has a bigger role than usual, also coscripted. English title: THE DEVIL CAME FROM AKASAWA.

**Teufelscamp der Verlorenen Frauen** (1977, AUT/GER/SPA) **C-95m.** \*½ D: Hubert Frank. Starring Patricia Adriani, Barbara Rey, Brigitte Stein, José Antonio Ceinos, Miguel Angel Godo, Eric Wedekind, Manù. Unbelievable trash production starring sexy Adriani, who survives being pushed off a plane(!) and meets a group of sexually liberated kidnappers(!) hiding on a small island. Don't ask for more plot details! Despite all of these shortcomings, film is quite handsome and underscored by some nice music. German title means 'Devil Camp of the Lost Women', but don't expect to find any of these! The international title DIRTY JOBS doesn't make sense either. After seeing this movie you'll know what 'trash appeal' means. Written and edited by director Frank (CATHERINE CHERIE).

**Texas Chain Saw Massacre, The** (1974, USA) **C-84m.** \*\*\*\* D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Marilyn Burns, Gunnar Hansen, Edwin Neal, Allen Danzinger, Paul A. Partain, William Vail, narrated by John Larroquette. A horror masterpiece, an early tour-de-force for cowriter-producer-director Tobe Hooper. Five young people (one of them wheelchairbound) take a trip to the country to visit a grandfather's estate. When they take a seemingly deranged hitchhiker along they are plunged into a nihilistic nightmare. Brilliant score by Hooper, the excellent, claustrophobic direction transfers the anxieties of the protagonists seamlessly to the viewer (especially during the chase sequences). The second half of this film is an unrelenting, shocking descent into terror and horror, capable of immobilizing and hypnotizing the viewer. A must-see for horror film buffs. Try comparing this to SUSPIRIA (as regards score) and NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (as regards plot, technique, realism)! Followed by three inferior sequels. Remade in 2003.

**Texas Chainsaw Massacre, The** (2003, USA) **C-98m.** \*\*½ D: Marcus Nispel. Starring Jessica Biel, Jonathan Tucker, Erica Leerhsen, Mike Vogel, Eric Balfour, Andrew Bryniarski, Harry Jay Knowles, narrated by John Larroquette. Remake of the 1974 horror classic treads the same paths and does so quite well. Biel and her friends drive through rural Texas to attend a concert, but when they pick up a disturbed woman on the road who kills herself in their car, a nightmare for them all begins. Quite intense, unsettling and terror-filled like the original movie, it only makes a few detours too many (especially toward the end) and it's 10 or 15 minutes too long. Everything else is stylishly done (expectedly so, as Nispel is a music video director). For horror fans. Tobe Hooper co-produced. DP Daniel Pearl also photographed the original TCM. Followed by a sequel itself.

**Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2, The** (1986, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Tobe Hooper. Starring Dennis Hopper, Caroline Williams, Jim Siedow, Bill Moseley, Bill Johnson, Ken Evert, Tobe Hooper. Director Hooper returned to his star-making concept twelve years later, but this movie is a mere caricature of the first film. The family of cannibals is out to kill again, only this time they are recorded by small-time radio journalist Williams. She teams up with vengeful lunatic Hopper, whose son died in the original bloodfest. Succeeds as a terror-movie, but is far less original and suspenseful than its predecessor. Rather illogical, with an absurd sense of humor. That subterranean lab/cave is impressive, though. Tom Savini's effects are showcased appropriately. Hooper also did the music and coproduced (with Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus). Danny Elfman provided a song. Also available in an 111m. version, which adds some deleted scenes. Followed by LEATHERFACE: TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE III (1990).

**Texas Chainsaw 3D** (2013, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** John Luessenhop. Starring Alexandra Daddario, Dan Yeager, Trey Songz, Scott Eastwood, Bill Moseley, Gunnar Hansen, Marilyn Burns. Yet another CHAINSAW variation, this sums up the events of the original in less than three minutes, then continues about twenty years later. Daddario plays the only heir to the Sawyer family estate. She travels to the place in Texas with a few friends in tow but little does she know that Leatherface is still residing in the basement. Plot sounds silly, but it's actually okay. Good photography and score, and of course Daddario's stunning looks make it an above-average view.

**Tex Willer e il Signore degli Abissi** (1985, ITA) **C-94m. \*½ D:** Duccio Tessari. Starring Giuliano Gemma, William Berger, Carlo Mucari, Isabel Russinova, Aldo Sambrell, Flavio Bucci, Frank Brana. INDIANA JONES-type western adventure about Gemma and Berger, who find out about old Inca curse that mummifies people. Score, photography are quite good, but plotting is terrible. Characters are based on an Italian comic strip. English title: **TEX AND THE LORD OF THE DEEP.**

**Thale** (2012, NOR) **C-76m. \*\* D:** Aleksander Nordaas. Starring Silje Reinamo, Erlend Nervold, Jon Sigve Skard. Norwegian horror film about two workers, who clean up a crime scene and discover a female creature in the basement. It seems the owner of the house has kept her hidden from someone – or something. Low-budget film is ambitious but suffers from a leaden pace and unpleasant characters. The bearded worker doesn't act at all! Based on Norwegian folklore.

**Thank You for Smoking** (2005, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jason Reitman. Starring Aaron Eckhart, William H. Macy, J.K. Simmons, Robert Duvall, Maria Bello, David Koechner, Katie Holmes, Kim Dickens, Daniel Travis, Cameron Bright, Adam Brody, Rob Lowe, Sam Elliott, Christopher Buckley. Well-made satire on the way big corporations use spin doctors to make the truth seem favorable for their purposes. Film focuses on Eckhart, who is the spokesperson for Big Tobacco. As a lobbyist he must defend the cigarette-industry, while trying to be a good dad for pre-teen Bright, who is just waking up to the world around him. Comedy has some great ideas and performances (Eckhart is perfect in the lead). Based on the novel by Christopher Buckley, adapted by the director.

**Tharus, Figlio di Attila** (1962, ITA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Roberto Bianchi Montero. Starring Jerome Courtland, Lisa Gastoni, Mimmo Palmara, Rik van Nutter, Ricardo Montalban. Talky, uninvolved sword-and-sandal film that is like dozens of others. A ruler must defend himself against a horde of huns, who have sent their leader's son incognito. Very little action. English title: **COLUSSUS AND THE HUNS.**

**Theatre Bizarre, The** (2011, USA/FRA/CDN) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jeremy Kasten (frame story). Starring Udo Kier, Virginia Newcomb, Catriona MacColl. Horror anthology consisting of six horror tales, framed by a story set in an abandoned theatre where the sole guest, a woman, gets a dose of the macabre from M.C. Kier. The first segment, directed by Richard Stanley and titled 'The Mother of Toads' is a nice homage to Dario Argento's supernatural horror films in terms of photography and score (by Simon Boswell!), but the story of the American tourist that gets seduced by a gypsy woman doesn't ring true. Story two, directed by Buddy Giovinazzo, takes a completely different direction, as a woman breaks up with her lover, hurting him with stories of how she cheated on him. Fairly well-acted, especially by Suzan Anbeh. The third segment was directed by none other than Tom Savini and deals with an adulterer's scary dreams about losing his penis. Probably the sickest of the stories. Tale #4 is called The Accident and was directed by Douglas Buck. It's the shortest segment, but also the best: A thoughtful rumination about life and death, as a mother explains the death of a motorbiker to her daughter. The 5<sup>th</sup> story, directed by Karim Hussain, follows a young

woman who has become a 'biographer' of suicidal people. At the moment of their death she injects their eye liquid into her own eye, thus gaining access to their life stories. A pretty gross gimmick, quite disturbing and original. Finally, there is 'Sweets', a truly disgusting CLOCKWORK ORANGE-type story about gluttony. All in all, this never gets boring and has some treats to offer. Recommended to horror fans.

**Theatre of Blood** (1973, GBR) **C-104m. \*\*\* D:** Douglas Hickox. Starring Vincent Price, Diana Rigg, Ian Hendry, Robert Morley. Great latter-day role for Price: As a Shakespearean actor he exacts bloody revenge on his critics, killing them off by recreating famous scenes from the Bard's plays. Well-directed horror thriller is one of the best British genre films of the 1970s but unfortunately becomes more improbable as it goes along.

**Theory of Everything** **The** (2014, GBR/USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** James Marsh. Starring Eddie Redmayne, Felicity Jones, Tom Prior, David Thewlis, Emily Watson. Fine biopic about genius physicist Stephen Hawking (Redmayne), who we meet as a student in the 1960s as he falls in love with Jones and suffers from early syndromes of ALS (a nervous system disorder), which would later confine him to a wheelchair. Inspiring, well-made, carried by an excellent score by Johann Johannsson. Redmayne won an Oscar for his incredible work. One wishes there was more physics in it, but for those there's still the excellent *A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME* (1991).

**There's Something About Mary** (1998, USA) **C-119m. \*\*½ D:** Bobby and Peter Farrelly. Starring Cameron Diaz, Matt Dillon, Ben Stiller, Lee Evans, Lin Shaye, Jeffrey Tambor, Markie Post, Keith David. Stiller plays a single who decides that it's time to look for his old high school love (Diaz), because he wants to marry. He hires a private eye (Dillon), but the man falls in love with the girl! Just what is there about Mary? Longish comedy is entertaining enough, with a few laugh-out-loud gags. Diaz is smashingly beautiful in the lead role. A step up for the Farrelly Brothers (*DUMB AND DUMBER*) but still no classic.

**There Was a Crooked Man...** (1970, USA) **C-126m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Starring Kirk Douglas, Henry Fonda, Hume Cronyn, Warren Oates, Burgess Meredith, John Randolph, Lee Grant, Victor French. Ribald western comedy about criminal *par excellence* Douglas, who finds himself in prison but gets by well, thanks to his wits, but all this changes when Fonda becomes the new warden. Stars are in fine form in this solid piece of entertainment. Written by David Newman and Robert Benton. Photographed by Harry Stradling Jr.

**There Was a Little Girl** (1981, USA) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Ovidio G. Assonitis. Starring Trish Everly, Michael MacRae, Dennis Robertson, Morgan Hart. Violent horror thriller about speech therapist Everly, whose twin sister, hideous in appearance and quite demented, has escaped from the hospital to terrorize her. Pretty illogical, but at least it creates some slight suspense. Makes reference to vintage horror movies like Brian De Palma's *SISTERS* (1973), Tobe Hooper's *TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE* (1974) and Dario Argento's *SUSPIRIA* (1977). Assonitis (CHI SEI?) coscripted and produced. Score by Riz Ortolani. Also known as *MADHOUSE*, *FLESH AND THE BEAST*, and *AND WHEN SHE WAS MAD*.

**These Final Hours** (2013, AUS) **C-87m. \*\* D:** Zak Hilditch. Starring Nathan Phillips, Kathryn Beck, Sarah Snook, Jessica De Gouw. Apocalyptic thriller drama set and filmed in Australia where a global disaster has already destroyed half the planet and will also kill everyone in Down Under in twelve hours. Phillips tries to make his way through a deserted landscape, when a twelve-year-old girl catches his attention. They spend the rest of the film fleeing together. Some powerful doses of adrenaline in the opening scenes, but film is heavy-going and depressive, and puts a child in unnecessary danger. Some people liked it anyway. Written by director Hilditch.

**They** (2002, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Robert Harmon, Rick Bota. Starring Laura Regan, Marc Blucas, Ethan Embry, Dagmara Dominczyk, Jon Abrahams. Fairly good mystery horror about psychology student Regan, who is contacted by a childhood friend who tells her that their 'night terrors' have come back to kill them. And indeed, a creature, only afraid of the light, is starting to haunt them. Two alternate endings exist. "Presented" by Wes Craven.

**They Live** (1988, USA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\* D:** John Carpenter. Starring Roddy Piper, Keith David, Meg Foster, George 'Buck' Flower, Peter Jason, Larry J. Franco. Low-brow sci-fi actioner with an intriguing premise. Drifter Piper (of WWF fame) finds sunshades and realizes that they show people's real nature. Most of the population are actually aliens from Deep Space! Solidly filmed but after premise has been established (after 40 minutes!), film really goes nowhere. For fans. Carpenter wrote the screenplay (using a pseudonym), based on Ray Nelson's short story 'Eight O'Clock in the Morning'.

**They Shoot Horses, Don't They?** (1969, USA) **C-121m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Sidney Pollack. Starring Jane Fonda, Michael Sarrazin, Susannah York, Gig Young, Red Buttons, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Dern, Al Lewis. Pessimistic drama portraying the dark side of the American dream, set during the Depression era. Disillusioned Fonda teams up with loser Sarrazin to compete in a grueling dance marathon, whose organizer (Young, in a brilliant, Oscar-winning performance) is only out for money, disregarding that the contestants are human beings. Superb cast makes the most of Horace McCoy's novel.

**Thief Lord, The** (2006, GBR/GER/LUX) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Richard Claus. Starring Aaron Johnson, Jasper Harris, Rollo Weeks, Alice Connor, George MacKay, Caroline Goodall, Vanessa Redgrave. Okay kids adventure based on the Cornelia Funke novel *Der Herr der Diebe*. Two orphans run away to Venice, Italy, and join a group of pickpockets who live in an old cinema and are led by the title character. Soon they join their thieving escapades. Fairly fast-paced but most of the characters are clichéd and there is no heart to the story. Kids might enjoy it.

**Thin Blue Line, The** (1988, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*½ D:** Errol Morris. Featuring Randall Adams, David Harris, Gus Rose Jackie Johnson, Edith Rose. First-rate documentary about a man who spent years on death row for the murder of a police officer in 1976 Dallas County. Throughout the film it becomes clear that the man who blamed him might have done it, and the other witnesses were not reliable at all. Shocking examination of the justice system in America, well-made and with a fine score by Philip Glass. Adams was later released based on evidence brought forward by this film. Harris was executed in 2004 for an unrelated murder.

**Thing, The** (1982, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Carpenter. Starring Kurt Russell, Wilford Brimley, T.K. Carter, David Clennon, Keith David, Richard Dysart, Donald Moffat. Remake of the 1951 science-fiction classic THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD puts the emphasis on effects and gore. In the Antarctic, the American lab crew are faced with a shapeshifting alien life form that seems impossible to outwit. Plot is a bit lifeless (not to mention confusing), but the over-the-top (excellent) special effects have earned this a cult movie reputation over the years. Remade again in 2011. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Thing Called Love, The** (1993, USA) **C-116m. \*\* D:** Peter Bogdanovich. Starring River Phoenix, Samantha Mathis, Dermot Mulroney, Sandra Bullock, K.T. Oslin, Anthony Clark. Drama focussing on the lives of several young musicians who try to make it in Nashville. Cast is okay (including River Phoenix, a year before his demise), plot is overlong and clichéd. Nothing outstanding, basically a film to fall asleep.

**Things Are Tough All Over** (1982, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Thomas K. Avildsen. Starring Cheech Marin, Tommy Chong, Evelyn Guerrero, Ben Powers, John Steadman, George

Wallace, Dave Coulier. Arguably the funniest of all the sequels to UP IN SMOKE, the pot-smoking duo Cheech & Chong's first film. This time the focus is not on drugs (unless you take it for granted that they are permanently stoned anyway). The boys are featured in double roles, as two unemployed idiots and two Arab businessmen-brothers who have a conflict over a car that has to be transported to Las Vegas (money, not hash, is hidden inside). Mostly funny, with some boring stretches towards the end. This was actually Cheech and Chong's last picture in the UP IN SMOKE series, but more projects followed, where their exploits could be followed in different settings.

**Thinner** (1996, USA) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Tom Holland. Starring Robert John Burke, Joe Mantegna, Lucinda Jenney, Joy Lenz, Michael Constantine, Sam Freed. Solidly paced adaptation of the novel by Richard Bachman (alias Stephen King) about obese lawyer (Burke) who is cursed by an old gypsy leader (Constantine) and starts losing weight dramatically. The only way to avert a terrible fate seems to ask the old man to reverse the curse. Second-rate plot keeps film from scoring a better rating. Not very violent, but horror fans should get their dose nevertheless. Stephen King has a cameo.

**Thin Red Line, The** (1998, USA) **C-165m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Terrence Malick. Starring Sean Penn, Adrien Brody, Jim Caviezel, Ben Chaplin, George Clooney, John Cusack, Woody Harrelson, Elias Koteas, Nick Nolte, John C. Reilly, John Travolta. Powerful, moving war drama, writer-director Malick's first feature film in twenty years. The setting is World War Two, where U.S. soldiers, most of them young and inexperienced, are sent to Guadalcanal, a small island in the South Pacific, which is held by the Japanese and considered to be the strategic key to the whole area. Deliberately paced film ventures deep into the psyche of various characters as they prepare for combat. Pensive voice-overs philosophize over the harrowing going-ons. John Toll's exceptional camerawork juxtaposes the untouchable beauty of nature to the unspeakable horrors of war. The two are separated only by a very thin line. Film is at its best when depicting the insanity of killing. After the climax, it continues for several more minutes and unfortunately loses some of its effectiveness. Well-acted by almost the entire cast, with Nolte giving a breathtaking performance as a sergeant determined to attack even if it costs the lives of his men. Be warned: Some of the stars billed have very small roles. Fine score by Hans Zimmer. Malick scripted from James Jones' novel. This was his third feature film, following *BADLANDS* (1973), and *DAYS OF HEAVEN* (1978). *THE THIN RED LINE* was filmed before in 1964 by Andrew Marton.

**Thirst** (1979, AUS) **C-95m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Rod Hardy. Starring Chantal Contouri, David Hemmings, Henry Silva. Unusual, strange horror film about a woman who is abducted into a mysterious community, where she is told that she is the last descendant of the legendary Baroness Elizabeth Bathory - and thus a vampire! She puts up resistance as she is conditioned to be a bloodsucker. Well-directed, subtle tale of the unexpected with a good score may be too vague for some viewers, but story remains interesting throughout.

**Thirsty Dead, The** (1974, USA/FIL) **C-88m.** \*\* D: Terry Becker. Starring Jennifer Billingsley, Judith McConnell, John Considine, Tani Guthrie. Several young women are abducted by hooded men and brought to a secret society in the jungle, who created a kind of paradise for themselves. However, they need blood to rejuvenate themselves and throw those sucked dry into subterranean dungeons. Corny horror trash is not bad in the first half (also thanks to an eerie score by Richard LaSalle), but bogs down in the second. Alternative titles: *THE BLOOD CULT OF SHANGRI-LA*, *BLOOD HUNT*.

**Thirteen** (2003, USA/GBR) **C-100m.** \*\*\*½ D: Catherine Hardwicke. Starring Holly Hunter, Evan Rachel Wood, Nikki Reed, Jeremy Sisto, Brady Corbet, Deborah Kara Unger. Remarkably good teenage drama about thirteen-year-old Wood, who gets to know

precocious, trailer-trash girl Reed and is introduced in the 'wanna-be-adult' world of her friends. Sex, drugs, shopping (and shoplifting) seem to be the only things that count. Wood's single mother Hunter, trying hard to cope with life herself, realizes the changes in her 'baby' too late. Amazingly real, well-acted portrait of a misled teenager, incredibly cowritten by costar Reed. Hardwicke's direction gives movie an authentic feel. Recommended.

**Thirteen Chairs, The** (1969, ITA/FRA) **C-95m**. **\*\*½ D**: Nicholas Gessner. Starring Vittorio Gassman, Sharon Tate, Orson Welles, Vittorio de Sica, Terry-Thomas, Mylene Demongeot, John Steiner. Barber Gassman inherits thirteen chairs in Britain and immediately sells them in order to buy a return ticket to the States. When he finds out that there's a fortune hidden in one of them he goes to extremes to get them back. Tate tags along. More turbulent than funny comedy with an interesting cast. Beautiful Sharon Tate, in her last film appearance, steals the film (brief nudity!). She was murdered shortly after the film finished shooting. Italian title: UNA SU 13. Same story filmed many times before (and after).

**Thirteen Days** (2000, USA) **C-145m**. **\*\*\* D**: Roger Donaldson. Starring Kevin Costner, Bruce Greenwood, Steven Culp, Dylan Baker, Michael Fairman. Compelling cinematic recreation of the major crisis in 1962 (which lasted 13 days), when U.S. radar discovered Russian missiles on Cuba. Film captures the tension of the situation very well and paints a believable picture of a world on the brink of war. Greenwood (as President Kennedy) and Costner (as his advisor) lead a fine cast. Long but engrossing.

**13 Eerie** (2013, CDN) **C-87m**. **\*\*½ D**: Lowell Dean. Starring Katharine Isabelle, Michael Shanks, Brendan Fehr, Brendan Fletcher, Nick Moran. Agreeable zombie horror set on a remote island where a group of forensic students are assigned to find some dead bodies and do a crime scene investigation. It turns out that not all bodies are dead due to some prior biological experiments. Some poor acting and cardboard characters, but film is okay for a survival zombie actioner. From the director of WOLFCOP (2014).

**13 Game Sayawng** (2009, THA) **C-114m**. **\*\* D**: Matthew Chookiat Sakveerakul. Pretty tasteless horror thriller aspires to be a kind of SAW, but lacks style and cleverness. An employee is down on his luck and in bad need of money, when he is invited to a game, which consists of 13 challenges that could win him a lot of money. At first he only needs to eat a fly, later dog poop, then murder is involved. If he rejects a challenge, all the money is gone. Soon, there is no turning back any more. Poorly acted, barely convincing stuff. Remade as 13 SINS in 2014.

**Thir13en Ghosts** (2001, USA) **C-91m**. **\*½ D**: Steve Beck. Starring Tony Shalhoub, Matthew Lillard, Shannon Elizabeth, Rah Digga, Embeth Davidtz, F. Murray Abraham. Modern ghost story, based on the 1960 film by William Castle. Shalhoub and his family inherit a most unusually constructed mansion and are soon confronted with an army of ghosts, which the previous owner had locked up there. Serious special-effects orgy is seriously awful in the non-thnk tradition of the Castle-remake HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL (1999). Just one effect after the other doesn't make a movie scary! Joel Silver and Robert Zemeckis were among the producers. Actor Shalhoub went through a quite different hell in BARTON FINK ten years earlier.

**13 Going on 30** (2004, USA) **C-98m**. **\*\*½ D**: Gary Winick. Starring Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo, Judy Greer, Andy Serkis, Kathy Baker, Phil Reeves. Quite entertaining body-switch comedy finds an unhappy 13-year-old suddenly in her 30-year-old self (Garner), when she wishes she were older and sexier. She is a successful magazine editor, but has become estranged from her former best friend (Ruffalo). Good story idea (somewhat lifted from BIG), but plot is inconsequential and ending goes too far. Garner is ambitious in her first starring vehicle.

**Thirteenth Floor, The** (1999, USA/GER) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Josef Rusnak. Starring Craig Bierko, Armin Müller-Stahl, Gretchen Mol, Vincent D'Onofrio, Dennis Haysbert. Scientists have created a simulated version of 1937 L.A., where the computer-generated but lifelike inhabitants lead their own lives and have no idea that they are only part of a simulation. When a murder happens, software developer Bierko searches for clues in the artificial world by entering a character's personality. This is just the beginning of a fascinating story. Science-fiction film noir has a most intriguing theme, and production values, as well as direction and photography, are more than adequate. Sci-fi fans take note! This crossbreed of *BLADE RUNNER* (1982) and *THE MATRIX* (1999) is not completely satisfying but basic idea is chilling. Based on the novel *Simulacron-3* by Daniel F. Galouye, which was previously filmed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder in 1974.

**13<sup>th</sup> Warrior, The** (1999, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: John McTiernan. Starring Antonio Banderas, Vladimir Kulich, Dennis Storhoi, Neil Maffin, John DeSantis, Clive Russell, Omar Sharif. Fast paced action set in 922 A.D. about Arab nobleman Banderas, who is chosen by a band of Norsemen to be their '13<sup>th</sup> warrior' in defending their home against an evil entity. Superficial characterization mars potentially exciting and fascinating film. Action fans won't mind. Based on *Eaters of the Dead* by Michael Crichton, who also produced and cowrote the picture.

**30 Days of Night** (2007, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: David Slade. Starring Josh Hartnett, Melissa George, Danny Huston, Ben Foster, Mark Boone Junior, Mark Rendall, Amber Sainsbury. In a remote town in North Alaska the remaining population is just getting ready for 30 days of polar night, when a group of blood-thirsty vampires/zombies hit the town for a blood feast. Sheriff Hartnett is leading those trying to survive the onslaught. Barely original horror movie is an umpteenth paraphrase of *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, only here it's 30 NIGHTS. The acting is substandard, including Hartnett's. What keeps this movie alive is some flashy directing, excellent, grisly special effects and Huston's frightening turn as the monsters' leader. Non-horror fans won't be so forgiving. Based on a comic by Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith. From the director of *HARD CANDY* (2005). Coproduced by Sam Raimi.

**31** (2016, USA/GBR) **C-103m. SCOPE BOMB** D: Rob Zombie. Starring Sheri Moon Zombie, Jeff Daniel Phillips, Lawrence Hilton-Jacobs, Meg Foster, Kevin Jackson, Malcolm McDowell. Sadistic, almost impossible to watch horror thriller about a group of carnival workers, who become players in a sick game organized by McDowell, who has a group of crazy killers chase them through a warehouse. Some flashy camerawork, but direction and editing are terrible and are likely to give you a headache. The content is vile and degrading, simply disgusting. Avoid at all costs.

**36 Crazy Fists, The** (1977, HGK) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½** D: Chen Chi-Hwa. Starring Hsiung Kuang (=Tony Leung Siu Hung), Fung Ke-An (=Fung Hark-On). Bad martial arts comedy with a plot like a thousand others. Young fighter takes lessons to avenge his father's death. Jackie Chan did the martial arts direction for this one, which is why you might stumble across it. He doesn't act, but it wouldn't have made this movie better anyway. Also known as *BLOOD PACT*, *MASTER AND THE BOXER*.

**36<sup>th</sup> Chamber of Shaolin, The** (1978, HGK) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Liu Chia-Liang. Starring Liu Chia-Hui, Huang Yu, Lo Lieh. A young student flees from the Manchus into a Shaolin monastery, where he is taught the art of Kung Fu in order to avenge the death of his family. Interesting eastern tells you something about the traditions of the 15th century but doesn't succeed as entertainment. Released in the U.S. in 1984 as *MASTER KILLER*. Original title: *SHAOLIN SAN-SHIH-LIU FANG*.

**This is 40** (2012, USA) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Judd Apatow. Starring Paul Rudd, Leslie Mann, Maude Apatow, Iris Apatow, Jason Segel, Megan Fox, Graham Parker. Occasionally hilarious comedy about a family with all the typical (plus some contrived) dysfunctionalities. Mum and dad are turning 40, with all the common problems, their older daughter is entering the puberty phase, and their fathers-in-law have their own patchwork families. Episodic but true-to-life with some laugh-out-loud situations. Good writing by director Apatow (KNOCKED UP, of which this is a spin-off).

**This Is the End** (2013, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen. Starring James Franco, Jonah Hill, Seth Rogen, Jay Baruchel, Danny McBride, Craig Robinson, Michael Cera, Emma Watson, Rihanna, Paul Rudd, Channing Tatum. Raucously funny comedy about a party at James Franco's place (the stars are all playing themselves), which gets out of hand when an earthquake shatters L.A. and monsters are unleashed. Franco and his pals board up in his house and wait for this nightmare to end. Mostly silly, but has some truly hilarious scenes. A nice companion piece to THE WORLD'S END (2013).

**This Island Earth** (1954, USA) **C-86m. \*\*\*** D: Joseph Newman. Starring Jeff Morrow, Faith Domergue, Rex Reason, Lance Fuller, Russell Johnson. Douglas Spencer. One of the best science-fiction films of the 1950s, intelligently handled: Several top scientists are abducted by humanoid extra-terrestrials and forced to save their planet, which is under constant attack by space debris. Good script complications, suspenseful direction (including action and horror elements), a fine example of what can be done on a meager budget. Uncredited codirection by genre acolyte Jack Arnold, music coauthored by Henry Mancini. Film was spoofed 39 years later in MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000.

**This Story of Love** (1987, JAP) **C-92m. \*\*** D: Toshio Masuda. Starring Yuko Kazu, Masashiko Kondo, Masatoshi Nakamura, Jinpachi Nezu. Action drama (with the emphasis on drama) about a professional stuntman who must take care of his new-born daughter after his wife commits suicide. The girl grows up among stuntmen, whose dangerous lives are followed here. Some action set-pieces are thrown in here and there, but film is dramatically flat. Not at all interesting. First screen credit of Takashi Miike (ODISHON - AUDITION), as assistant director. Original version, titled KONO AINO MONOGATARI, runs 117m.

**This World, Then the Fireworks** (1997, USA) **C-100m. \*\*\*½** D: Michael Oblowitz. Starring Billy Zane, Gina Gershon, Sheryl Lee, Rue McClanahan, Seymour Cassel, Will Patton, Richard Edson. Stylish thriller drama set in the 50s about pair of twins Zane and Gershon, who reunite to pull off a scheme involving beautiful cop Lee and her real estate. Well-made, intriguing, but interest wanes in second half when the plotting loses all focus. The style doesn't quite triumph over the content in this film noir imitation. Zane (TITANIC) also co-executive produced the film. Based on a story by Jim Thompson.

**Thomas Crown Affair, The** (1999, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: John McTiernan. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Rene Russo, Denis Leary, Frankie Faison, Faye Dunaway, Fritz Weaver, Ben Gazzara, Charles Keating, Michael Lombard. Remake of the 1968 Steve McQueen thriller is not bad, as Brosnan takes over his role as super-rich businessman, who gets his kicks out of stealing expensive paintings. However, in insurance expert Russo he meets a woman who may outsmart him. Agreeable, mildly entertaining, if not terribly exciting or suspense-filled. Stick with the stylish original.

**Thor** (2011, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Kenneth Branagh. Starring Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Tom Hiddleston, Anthony Hopkins, Stellan Skarsgard, Idris Elba. Another Marvel adaptation, this one is loosely based on Norse mythology and features a Brad Pitt-like hunk (Chris Hemsworth) as the title character, who is first cast out of his father Anthony Hopkins' space kingdom, then lands in New Mexico to mess up the life of scientist Natalie Portman.

Of course, it all comes down to a battle of epic proportions between him and an army of ice people headed by his evil half brother. Poorly scripted fantasy is not bad but seems overlong most of the way. The (3D) effects are good, of course, but storywise this can't convince.

**Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines** (1965, GBR) **C-138m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Ken Annakin. Starring Stuart Whitman, Sarah Miles, James Fox, Alberto Sordi, Robert Morley, Gert Fröbe, Jean-Pierre Cassel, Irina Demick, Eric Sykes, Red Skelton, Terry-Thomas, Benny Hill, Karl Michael Vogler, Sam Wanamaker, Gordon Jackson, Ferdie Mayne. Grand-scale comedy about tycoon Morley, who initiates an air race from London to Paris in 1910, inviting people from different nations to compete against each other. Typically colorful 60s fun, well-produced and directed, although plot is rather uneventful. Satire on different countries is great, though, especially Sordi's Italian and Fröbe's German. Followed by **MONTE CARLO OR BUST!** (1969) aka **THOSE DARING YOUNG MEN IN THEIR JAUNTY JALOPIES.**

**Thou Shalt Not Kill ... Except** (1986, USA) **C-86m. \*½ D:** Josh Becker. Starring Brian Schulz, John Manfredi, Cheryl Hanson, Perry Mallette, Robert Rickman, Sam Raimi, Ted Raimi, Scott Spiegel. Violent low-budget outing, filmed entirely in and around Detroit, Michigan, about four vietnam vets who wipe out a sect of deranged lunatics living in the woods. This atrocious story was made up by Josh Becker, Scott Spiegel (the director of **INTRUDER**) and Bruce Campbell. One or two quite funny scenes, but nothing more. Not worth your time, unless you want to see cult director Sam Raimi's delicious, freaked-out performance as the leader of the group of loonies. Ted Raimi appears as Chain Man, Scott Spiegel, who also did the art direction(!), as Pin Cushion. Director Becker also photographed and edited the picture.

**Three Days of the Condor** (1975, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Sidney Pollack. Starring Robert Redford, Faye Dunaway, Cliff Robertson, Max von Sydow, John Houseman, Carlin Glynn. After all his colleagues at a secret C.I.A. office are killed, Redford become a hunted man, and he can trust nobody - not even the C.I.A. itself. He finds refuge in Dunaway's apartment and slowly begins to unravel the story behind the killings. Suspense thriller is not great but maintains interest throughout.

**300** (2006, USA) **C-117m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*½ D:** Zack Snyder. Starring Gerard Butler, Lena Headey, Dominic West, David Wenham, Vincent Regan, Michael Fassbender, Tom Wisdom, Andrew Pleavin, Stephen McHattie. Stylish, visually magnificent war movie with fantasy and horror elements. Based on a comic book by Frank Miller and Lynn Varley, this action extravaganza deals with 300 Spartans circa 480 BC, who are led by their king Leonidas into a battle against thousands of Persians led by Xerxes. A passionate, moving tale about valor and bravery, spiced up with terrific battle sequences. From the director the **DAWN OF THE DEAD** remake. Same historic battle filmed before as **THE 300 SPARTANS** (1962).

**300: Rise of an Empire** (2014, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Noam Murro. Starring Sullivan Stapleton, Eva Green, Lena Headey, Hans Matheson, Callan Mulvey, David Wenham, Rodrigo Santoro. Slam-bang sequel to the the seminal comic book adaptation **300** (2006) bases itself on Frank Miller's graphic novel *Xerxes*. The plot unfolds parallel to the original's and focuses on the Greek hero Themistocles (Stapleton), who tries to avert the threat of Xerxes' gigantic army against Greece. The Persian God's warlord Green seeks a personal vendetta against the Greeks. Exciting fantasy horror action deliciously steps over the line with great digital effects and gore galore. Green is perfect as sexy but sadistic villain. A triumph of style over substance and a worthy follow-up to the original. Zack Snyder co-scripted.

**Three Investigators and the Secret of Skeleton Island, The** (2007, SAF/GER) **C-90m. \*\*\* D:** Florian Baxmeyer. Starring Chancellor Miller, Nick Price, Cameron Monaghan, Naima Sebe,

Nigel Whitmey, James Faulkner. Engaging kids adventure based on the popular books by Robert Arthur about three kids who have formed a detective club and solve interesting cases all over the world. This one brings them to South Africa, where they must find out if the title island is really haunted and recover a legendary treasure. Great for kids, adults will occasionally fret about uneven acting and logical loopholes. Followed by a sequel in 2009.

**Three Investigators and the Secret of Terror Castle, The** (2009, SAF/GER) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Florian Baxmeyer. Starring Chacellor Miller, Nick Price, Cameron Monaghan, Annette Kemp, James Faulkner, Jonathan Pienaar. The three detectives from Rocky Beach face their toughest challenge yet, as Miller's parents have left a final clue to a secret device before their death by accident. A video message leads them to California, where a ghost is said to haunt the spooky old mansion of an inventor. Gimmicky fun, with good performances and a nice sense of humor. German title: DIE DREI ??? UND DAS VERFLUCHTE SCHLOSS.

**Three Kings** (1999, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*½** D: David O. Russel. Starring George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg, Ice Cube, Spike Jonze, Nora Dunn, Jamie Kennedy. Action thriller set right after the end of the Gulf War (1991), about a team of American soldiers who decide to take a chance and go after Kuwaiti gold, hidden somewhere in the desert by Saddam Hussein's forces. Completely artificial hokum tries to make you care for the incredibly poor and repressed Iraqi people, while being a violent and mean-spirited action movie. Carries the morally questionable message that war and violence *can* be justified. Probably made American audiences very satisfied and proud of themselves. Technically good, but anyone with a critical opinion about the United States' role as the world police should reject this. Score by Carter Burwell, written by the director.

**Three on a Couch** (1966, USA) **C-109m. \*½** D: Jerry Lewis. Starring Lerry Lewis, Janet Leigh, James Best, Leslie Parrish, Mary Ann Mobley, Gila Golan, Kathleen Freeman, Buddy Lester, Scatman Crothers. Stupid comedy about artist Lewis, who has the opportunity to go to Paris for an important job, but his fiancée Leigh, a psychiatrist, would rather stay at home and treat her three problem patients. Lewis then assumes several roles to make these women happy. Almost completely unfunny, with a semi-serious turn by Lewis.

**Threesome** (1994, USA) **C-95m. \*\*\*** D: Andrew Fleming. Starring Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, Josh Charles, Alexis Arquette. Hilarious comedy drama about three room-mates whose relationship is more than unusual: Boyle has the hots for Charles, who's gay and finds Baldwin sexy, who's only interested in Boyle. A witty, though improbable examination of the problems that arise and the friendship that holds the three together. One of the best films of its kind.

**Three to Tango** (1999, USA) **C-98m. \*\*\*½** D: Damon Santostefano. Starring Matthew Perry, Neve Campbell, Dylan McDermott, Oliver Platt. Amusing comedy about architect Perry, who is somehow drawn into spying on his client McDermott's girlfriend Campbell, both thinking that he is gay. Perry provides most of the laughs and Campbell looks seductive in a film that grows more and more improbable as it goes along.

**Thriller – en Grym Film** (1974, SWE) **C-107m. \*½** D: Alex Fridolinski (=Bo Arne Vibenius). Starring Christina Lindberg, Heinz Hopf, Despina Tomazani, Per-Axel Arosenius, Solveig Andersson, Bo Arne Vibenius. Swedish exploitation movie can be grouped among the female revenge films a la *DAY OF THE WOMAN* (1978). Lindberg is deaf-mute since she was abused as a child, then as a young adult goes out with the wrong man, pimp Hopf. He drugs her and injects her with heroin, thus addicting her. When she refuses to become his prostitute, he cuts out her eye. Then she plots revenge and learns how to drive, shoot and defend herself. Made with no ambition or regard for story-telling, only for the fast buck, as the porno inserts show. Even if Tarantino references it in *KILL BILL*, this is not worth digging up at all. Vibenius

followed this with **BREAKING POINT** (1975). Also known as **HOOKER'S REVENGE**, **THEY CALL HER ONE-EYE**, and **THRILLER: A CRUEL PICTURE**.

**Thrillerzone** (1983, USA) **C-91m**. \*\* D: Glen Takakjian, John Woodward, Jack Garrett, Damian Harris. Starring Joe Spinell, Carol(ine?) Munro, Eric Stoltz. A quartet of horror stories, made by young film-makers: 'The Last Hand' is a quite creepy, surreal story about a poker player's strange visions during a game with his pals. 'Disciples of the Crow' was adapted from a short story by Stephen King, which was filmed as **CHILDREN OF THE CORN** a year later. The pointless story centers around murderous children running amok in a small town. The third and (mild) best episode, 'The Night Waiter', is about a young man working in a hotel who thinks there are ghosts haunting room 321. You would do well to turn off your TV then, unless you want to catch a young Eric Stoltz, who has a small role in the last and completely incomprehensible episode. Aka **STEPHEN KING - THE NIGHT OF THE CROW** (in Germany).

**Thrill Killers, The** (1964, USA) **C/B&W-69m**. \*½ D: Ray Dennis Steckler. Starring Cash Flagg (=Ray Dennis Steckler), Liz Renay, Brick (Joseph) Bardo, Carolyn Brandt, Gary Kent, Titus Moede. Low-budget trash movie about three criminals who escape from prison and go on a rampage. Quite violent and sick for its time but not very interestingly or imaginatively done. It's all slash'n'stalk (when not talk) without substance, so the effect is deadening. Some stylish visuals save this from the BOMB rating. Steckler made this right after his debut hit **THE INCREDIBLY STRANGE CREATURES WHO STOPPED LIVING AND BECAME MIXED-UP ZOMBIES!!?** Also known as **MAD DOG CLICK**, **THE MANIACS ARE LOOSE**, **THE MONSTERS ARE LOOSE**.

**Thumbsucker** (2005, USA) **C-96m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Mike Mills. Starring Lou Taylor Pucci, Tilda Swinton, Vincent D'Onofrio, Keanu Reeves, Benjamin Bratt, Kelli Garner, Vince Vaughn. Slice-of-life from the American lower middle-class. Pucci is a 17-year-old suffering from teen angst, who still sucks his thumb. He is looking for a place in society, while his parents are going through a difficult time as well. Occasionally telling drama has some offbeat casting, but fails to ignite sparks. Based on a novel by Walter Kirn.

**Thunderball** (1965, GBR) **C-129m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Terence Young. Starring Sean Connery, Claudine Auger, Adolfo Celi, Luciana Paluzzi, Rik Van Nutter, Martine Beswick, Bernard Lee, Lois Maxwell, Desmond Llewelyn. Big James Bond production (the fourth) suffers from comparison to its (better) predecessors. Bond investigates the theft of two atom bombs. The responsible crime syndicate, headed by Largo (Celi), demands 100 million British Pounds from the world or else a major city will be destroyed. Less action, less suspense and a less potent villain (although Celi is fine). Still, one of the classic 60s Bond movies that always manage to delight (if only intermittently in this case). Fine, dramatic variations of the Bond theme are a major asset. First and last three minutes and best parts, kudos to editor Peter Hunt.

**Tideland** (2005, GBR/CDN) **C-120m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Terry Gilliam. Starring Jodelle Ferland, Janet McTeer, Brendan Fletcher, Jennifer Tilly, Jeff Bridges, Dylan Taylor. Partly surreal psycho drama about a 10-year-old girl (amazing Ferland), who prepares syringes for her drug addict parents and thinks it's the most normal thing in the world. When her mother dies of an overdose, she moves with her dad Bridges into her dead grandmother's farmhouse in the rural magnificence of Louisiana. She builds up her own fantasy world and 'befriends' her new neighbors, a evil-spirited one-eyed woman and her retarded son. Pretty outrageous adaptation of a novel by Mitch Cullin, this is considered a misfire, but Gilliam fans will find many references to his earlier movies – even if the story here is hard to take at times. Made

on a 6-month break from filming THE BROTHERS GRIMM (2005). Good photography by Nicola Pecorini.

**Tiffany Memorandum** (1967, ITA/FRA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Terence Hathaway (=Sergio Grieco). Starring Ken Clark, Irina Demick, Jacques Berthier, Michel Bardinet, Solvi Stubing. One of the last spy thrillers featuring Clark as a super agent involved in international intrigue. This time he has to find out who murdered a diplomat on the open street and what a precious watch has to do with all this. Muddled, and much too talky, with Clark making a rather dumb impression. Photographed by Stelvio Massi, quite nice score by Riz Ortolani. Also known as IL MISTERO DELL'OMBRA.

**Tightrope** (1984, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Richard Tuggle. Starring Clint Eastwood, Geneviève Bujold, Dan Hedaya, Alison Eastwood, Jenny Beck, Marco St. John, Jamie Rose. Rather unusual thriller set in New Orleans, about police detective Eastwood, a single parent, who is stunned to realize that the serial killer roaming the clubs and brothels at night is murdering the same prostitutes that he frequently visits. Uncomfortable, tense and quite atmospheric, this is a good thriller which might have been great if writer-director Tuggle's storytelling ability had been better. An interesting deviation from Eastwood's usual cop roles, with an appropriately violent finale.

**Time Bandits** (1981, GBR) **C-116m. \*\*½ D:** Terry Gilliam. Starring John Cleese, Sean Connery, Shelley Duvall, Katherine Helmond, Ian Holm, Michael Palin, Ralph Richardson, Peter Vaughan, David Warner, Jack Purvis, Jim Broadbent. More Monty Python lunacy with Gilliam's directorial stamp: A boy joins a group of midgets as they travel through time, fleeing from a God-like being. They meet Napoleon (Holm), Robin Hood (Cleese) and Agamemnon (Connery) along the way. Fantasy adventure has a fail-safe premise but plot turns out to be overindulgent and too whimsical. Film recovers from hurried, episodic introduction in the second half. Nice comic turns by Cleese and Richardson, and the costumes are great. If you enjoyed this, you might also like Gilliam's THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN (1989). The director followed this with BRAZIL in 1985. Plans for a sequel (made around 2000) were thwarted.

**Time of the Apes** (1987, JAP/USA) **C-97m. \*½ D:** Kiyu Sumi Fukazawa, Atsuo Okunaka. Starring Reiko Tokunaga, Kiroko Saito, Masaaki Kaji. Ultra-cheesy ripoff of PLANET OF THE APES (1968) about a woman and her two children, who make a time leap into the future, which is ruled by apes, much like in the films of the 70s. Can they escape? Do you want them to? Not completely without interest, but horrible dubbing, poor make-up effects and not to mention silly plot do this one in. Edited from a 1974 Japanese television series titled SARU NO GUNDAN (ARMY OF THE APES).

**Time Travelers, The** (1964, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\* D:** Ib Melchior. Starring Preston Foster, Philip Carey, Merry Anders, John Hoyt, Dennis Patrick, Forrest J. Ackerman. Very interesting science-fiction adventure stands somewhere in between THE TIME MACHINE (1960) and PLANET OF THE APES (1968): A team of scientists open a time gate to the future and step through (literally). It's the year 2071, and a group of subterranean humans are trying to build a space vessel to bring them to safety, while defending themselves against band of mutants scavenging the Earth. Not so harmless, satiric adventure is recommended to buffs. Some of the effects are stunning. Direction is poor, though. Photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond (assisted by Laszlo Kovacs!). Remade in 1967 as JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF TIME. Alternative titles: DEPTHS OF THE UNKNOWN, THE RETURN OF THE TIME TRAVELERS, THIS TIME TOMORROW, TIME TRAP.

**Time Without Pity** (1956, GBR) **88m. \*\*½ D:** Joseph Losey. Starring Michael Redgrave, Alec McCowen, Ann Todd, Peter Cushing, Leo McKern, Renee Houston, Lois Maxwell, Joan

Plowright. Redgrave is credible as an alcoholic who rushes from Canada to England when he hears that his son is accused of having murdered his girlfriend. He desperately tries to prove the young man's innocence. This adaptation of Emlyn Williams' play unfortunately gives away the identity of the real killer at the beginning but remains watchable thanks to some good performances.

**Tingler, The** (1959, USA) **82m.** \*\*\* D: William Castle. Starring Vincent Price, Judith Evelyn, Darryl Hickman, Philip Coolidge, Patricia Cutts. Funny, self-referential, typical 50s horror with Price a scientist who discovers the 'Tingler', a creature which grows on the human spine when a person experiences extreme fear. Screaming paralyzes it. Well-plotted film also succeeds with the chills. Must have been a scream in theaters (electrical buzzers were installed under the seats!). Watch Price take the LSD-trip!

**Ti Piace Hitchcock?** (2005, ITA) **C-97m.** \*\*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Elio Germano, Chiara Conti, Elisabetta Rocchetti, Cristina Brondo, Iván Morales, Edoardo Gattolero. Germani plays a film student in Torino writing his thesis about German expressionist cinema, when he catches himself spying on beautiful neighbor Rocchetti (a la REAR WINDOW). Several days later her mother is found murdered, just after she got to know mysterious Hitchcock adept Conti. Could it be they were inspired by STRANGERS ON THE TRAIN (1951)? Surprisingly well-plotted thriller made for Italian TV, where Argento references his idols Alfred Hitchcock and Fritz Lang, and even himself. Not very violent, but maintains suspense and comes up with twists like in the good old giallo days. Fun for buffs. Rich score by Pino Donaggio. Coscripted by Argento and Franco Ferrini, executive produced by Dario's brother Claudio Argento. English title: DO YOU LIKE HITCHCOCK?

**Tirez Sur le Pianiste** (1960, FRA) **85m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Francois Truffaut. Starring Charles Aznavour, Marie Dubois, Nicole Berger, Michèle Mercier, Daniel Boulanger. Truffaut's treatment of the American gangster movie (this film is based on David Goodis' novel *Down There*) has become a classic of the Nouvelle Vague. Aznavour plays a once-great piano player, who somehow gets involved in murder. A typically cold French film, masterful for some. Score by Georges Delerue. English title: SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER.

**Tir Groupé** (1982, FRA) **C-78m.** \*\* D: Jean-Claude Missiaen. Starring Gérard Lanvin, Véronique Jannot, Michel Constantin, Mario David, Roland Blanche, Dominique Pinon, Louis Navarre. Ordinary revenge drama chronicles Lanvin's attempts to revenge the murder of his fiancée Jannot. In flashbacks we are told how they met and fell in love, but film is pointless and much too predictable despite being solidly filmed (even nominated for some Césars). Dedicated to the memory of Jean Gabin – for whatever reason.

**Titan A.E.** (2000, USA) **C-94m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Don Bluth, Gary Goldman, Art Vitello. Starring the voices of Drew Barrymore, Matt Damon, Nathan Lane, John Leguizamo, Bill Pullman, Ron Perlman, Janeane Garofalo. Animated science-fiction film set around the year 3000, when the human race has been scattered into space by evil aliens, who have destroyed our Earth. However, the remaining ones of our race are gathering, and all hope lies in a scientist's son, who may have the key to a better future. Well-made, fast-paced (almost hectic), but plot is derivative and adds nothing new to the formula. Features relatively few digital effects.

**Titanic** (1943, GER) **89m.** \*\*\* D: Herbert Selpin, Werner Klingler. Starring Sybille Schmitz, Kirsten Heiberg, Hans Nielsen, Ernst Fritz Fürbringer, Karl Schönböck, Monika Burg (=Paulette von Suchan), Otto Wernicke, Franz Schafheitlin. First feature film version of the 1912 spectacle, made during World War Two and intended as anti-British Nazi propaganda. Highly interesting (not just since James Cameron's mega-success with his own film version) and very-well acted, film focuses on greedy company president Fürbringer and his ambition

to break the world record on his way to New York. Schönböck is also fine as hardened businessman who loves money more than his wife. The love story between a servant girl and a musician is short and the only unconvincing vignette in the film. Film was banned after its premiere in Nazi-occupied Paris. Re-released in Western Germany in 1953.

**Titanic** (1953, USA) **98m.** \*\*\* D: Jean Negulesco. Starring Clifton Webb, Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Wagner, Richard Basehart, Audrey Dalton, Thelma Ritter, Brian Aherne. First Hollywood version of legendary disaster involving 'unsinkable' cruise ship succeeds thanks to fine cast and intelligent scripting which puts the human drama, not the action, in the foreground. A powerful, sublime drama. Oscar-winner for Best Screenplay. British version (A NIGHT TO REMEMBER) of the same story filmed in 1958.

**Titanic** (1997, USA) **C-194m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*\* D: James Cameron. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, Billy Zane, Frances Fisher, Kathy Bates, David Warner, Danny Nucci, Victor Garber, Gloria Stuart, Bernard Hill, Bernard Fox, Jonathan Hyde, Bill Paxton, Suzy Amis. An expedition to the allegedly unsinkable luxus cruise ship *Titanic* that sank to the ocean floor in 1912 after hitting an iceberg, discovers a drawing hidden in a safe somewhere in the ship's vast body. It depicts a beautiful young girl, wearing a legendary diamond around her neck. When an old lady claims that she was the woman in the picture, she is flown to the scientists' vessel, where the 100-year-old woman begins relating the tragic history of the *Titanic* from her personal point of view. As the story unfolds we are told one of the most touching love stories ever put on film, which is dramatically counterbalanced by the tragic events that took place the night of April 14th, 1912. Superb drama (written by Cameron) is exhilarating both as a love story *and* epic spectacle. A must-see. Only flawed by DiCaprio's indifferent performance (he seems to be playing himself) and some overly melodramatic scenes, which are so typical of Hollywood films. Winslet, as the 16-year-old Rose who falls in love with a tramp and discovers that life has so much more to offer than cocktail parties and cocky dinner conversations, makes the romance ring true; she is supported by an excellent cast. Fourth film version of the 1912 disaster following TITANIC (1943, GER, an anti-British Nazi propaganda film), TITANIC (1953, USA) and A NIGHT TO REMEMBER (1958, GBR). Winner of 11 Oscars, including Best Film and Best Director. Only BEN-HUR had copped as many Academy Awards.

**To All a Good Night** (1980, USA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: David A. Hess. Starring Jennifer Runyon, Forrest Swanson, Linda Gentile, William Lauer, Judith Bridges. Typical slasher movie about a group of teenagers, who spend the weekend at school, hoping to party and get laid. Unfortunately, there's a killer in a Santa suit dispatching them one by one. No surprises in this watchable FRIDAY THE 13<sup>TH</sup> variation, adequately acted by all. Directed by the star of such infamous cult films such as LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972) and CASA SPERDUTA NEL PARCO (1980).

**Todesking, Der** (1990, GER) **C-72m.** **BOMB** D: Jörg Buttgerreit. Starring Hermann Kopp, Eva Maria Kurz, Michael Krause. Amateur horror drama is poorly made and depressing. The motto is 'every day is a good day to die'. On 7 days of the week different people kill themselves or kill others. Interspersed is footage of a decomposing corpse. Yuck! From the director of SCHRAMM (1993).

**To Die For** (1995, USA) **C-106m.** \*\*½ D: Gus Van Sant. Starring Nicole Kidman, Matt Dillon, Joaquin Phoenix, Illeana Douglas, Casey Affleck, Alison Folland, Dan Hedaya, Wayne Knight, Kurtwood Smith, Holland Taylor, Susan Traylor, Maria Tucci, David Cronenberg, George Segal. A real-life case, transformed into a black comedy, about pretty girl Kidman, who'll stop at nothing when it comes to her career in television - including murder. Unconventional, uneven narrative has several family members (of both her husband Dillon

and herself) tell the story in retrospect, so you'll soon guess how it all turned out. Well-acted by the entire cast, especially Kidman. Horror director Cronenberg has a poignant cameo at the end of the film. Based on the book by Joyce Maynard.

**Todo Sobre Mi Madre** (1999, SPA/FRA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Pedro Almodóvar. Starring Cecilia Roth, Marisa Paredes, Candela Pena, Antonia San Juan, Penélope Cruz. Oscar-winning feature from renowned Spanish director Almodóvar about a mother, whose son dies in a car accident, which makes her set out to look for his father, a transvestite. Several supporting characters spice up the proceedings. A heartfelt melodrama, like all of Almodóvar's films, and also not for all tastes. The title (ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER in its English translation) is an allusion to the Hollywood classic ALL ABOUT EVE (1950), which is featured briefly at the beginning.

**To Kill a Stranger** (1985, USA/MEX) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Juan López Moctezuma. Starring Angélica María, Dean Stockwell, Donald Pleasence, Aldo Ray, Sergio Aragonés, Juan López Moctezuma. Reporter Stockwell, while filming a documentary on the military regime in a Latin American country, is waiting for his wife María join him. However, the woman has a car accident by night and is taken in by war veteran Pleasence, whose intentions are far from pure. Wildly plotted thriller is energetic enough to make this watchable. Typical B-movie fare with an interesting cast. Mexican titles: MATAR A UN EXTRANO, SECUESTRADA.

**To Kill with Intrigue** (1978, HGK) **C-111m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lo Wei. Starring Jackie Chan, Hsu Feng, Shen Le Lung, Yu Ling Lung, Wang Kuo, Lily Li. Chan finds his nemesis in governor (Feng) who has killed his father and taken his girlfriend. In his quest for revenge he is supported by a mysterious woman who has fallen in love with him. So-so plot backed by exciting action footage and the presence of A TOUCH OF ZEN-star Hsu Feng. Director Wei also photographed and produced the film.

**Toki wo Kakeru Shôjo** (2006, JAP) **C-98m. \*\*\*** D: Mamoru Hosoda. Starring (the voices of) Riisa Naka, Takuya Ishida, Mitsutaka Itakura, Ayami Kakiuchi. Interesting, original (despite being reminiscent of GROUNDHOG DAY) time-travel movie about a teenage girl, who suddenly realizes that she can travel back in time, depending on how far she leaps. She uses this to improve little situations in her life, but when it's love she wants to avoid in one way – and create love in another – she gets herself in a lot of trouble. Clever teen sci-fi becomes heart-rending in second half, all set to a beautiful score. Has cult movie possibilities. Based on a novel by Yasutaka Tsutsui, a sequel or a remake of the 1983 live-action feature TOKI O KAKERU SHOJO (THE GIRL WHO CONQUERED TIME). English title: THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME.

**Tokugawa Onna Keibatsu-Shi** (1968, JAP) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Teruo Ishii. Starring Yuki Kagawa, Asao Koike, Reiko Mikasa, Miki Obana. This first of eight or nine Japanese torture movies dealing with the sadistic tyranny of the Tokugawa dynasty in 17<sup>th</sup> century. Film is divided into three short stories: The first one is about a woman who becomes a whore in order to help her sick brother, the second deals with sinful nuns and monks, and the third story is about a tattoo artist who gets his inspiration in a torture chamber. Exceedingly violent but stories carry little impact. Followed by TOKUGAWA ONNA KEIZU. English titles: PUNISHMENT OF THE TOKUGAWA WOMEN, and THE JOY OF TORTURE.

**Tokyo-Ken** (1995, JAP) **C-87m. \*\*\*½** D: Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Kahori Fujii, Shinya Tsukamoto, Kohji Tsukamoto, Naomasa Musaka. Absolutely stunning achievement, a horrifying urban drama about an insurance salesman, who tries to get rid of his bottled-up aggressions in the gym, taking boxing lessons and cracks mentally (as well as physically) when a former high school friend (and boxer) takes away his girlfriend and pride. An outstanding, shocking masterpiece that manages to take in issues of aggression, frustration,

sex, stress and revenge, to name but a few. All this is presented brilliantly by creative direction, incisive editing and breathtaking photography. Director Tsukamoto (of the TETSUO films) wrote, shot, edited, produced and acted in the movie! An exhausting experience, not easy to take but still a must for film fans of any conversion. Next to RAGING BULL, one of the best films about boxers (*not* boxing). Also known as TOKYO FIST.

**Tôkyô Nagaremono** (1966, JAP) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Seijun Suzuki. Starring Tetsuya Watari, Chieko Matsubara, Hideako Nitani, Ryuji Kita, Tsuyoshi Yoshida. Moody, atmospheric Japanese gangster movie classic about Watari, who finds himself caught between rivaling gangs and becomes a drifter to help his former boss. Action drama is notable for its stylish sets and pop-art design, but story is talky and heavy-going, when not confusing. Some consider this a masterpiece nevertheless. Can be understood as an homage to or parody of American gangster movies (a la film noir). English titles: TOKYO DRIFTER, THE MAN FROM TOKYO.

**Tomb, The** (1986, USA) **C-84m. \*\* D:** Fred Olen Ray. Starring Cameron Mitchell, John Carradine, Sybil Danning, Susan Stokely, Richard Alan Hench, Kitten Natividad. One of trash filmmaker Ray's watchable films, this horror movie deals with two grave robbers, who bring precious artefacts home from Egypt, as well as a seductive but deadly female Pharaoh. Quite amusing in parts, interesting cast, although most of the budget went into casting Mitchell, Carradine and Danning, and the okay effects.

**Tomie: Saishuu-Shô – Kindan no Kajitsu** (2002, JAP) **C-91m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Shun Nakahara. Starring Nozomi Andô, Aoi Miyazaki, Jun Kunimura, Yuka Fujimoto, Tetsu Watanabe. Fourth or fifth TOMIE movie is an odd horror drama about nerdy girl Tomie, who is a complete outsider and often taunted by her school mates. One day she befriends a mysterious girl, who turns out to be the ghost of Tomie's father's first love. She uses her influence to instruct the father to kill his daughter. Terminally odd, slowly paced drama that takes a bizarre twist towards MACABRO (1980) and BASKET CASE (1982), though never retains those movies' atmosphere and goofiness, respectively. Never a good sign if a movie justifies its existence solely by making a bow to RINGU (1998). Based on the comic book by Junji Ito. English title: TOMIE: THE FINAL CHAPTER – FORBIDDEN FRUIT. Still, it was followed by two more movies.

**Tomorrowland** (2015, USA/SPA) **C-130m. \*\*\* D:** Brad Bird. Starring George Clooney, Hugh Laurie, Britt Robertson, Raffey Cassidy, Tim McGraw. Original science-fiction adventure from the creative (Pixar) director of THE INCREDIBLES (2004) and RATATOUILLE (2007). An optimistic young teen (Robertson) who is prepared to fight for her beliefs, receives a strange button which can take her to a wondrous, futuristic place. It turns out a young inventor received the exact same thing from a girl during the World Expo of 1964. How are their fates connected? Excellent special effects combine well with thoughtful script that celebrates the spirit of invention and the importance of scientific advances. Not fully convincing but still a great thrill-ride. Young Cassidy steals almost every scene she's in.

**Tomorrow Never Dies** (1997, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Roger Spottiswoode. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Jonathan Pryce, Michelle Yeoh, Teri Hatcher, Joe Don Baker, Götz Otto, Judi Dench, Desmond Llewellyn. James Bond's 18th adventure pits him against media czar Pryce, who wants to achieve world domination by installing a satellite system that will reach the farthest corners of the globe. Secret agent 007, teaming up with Asian martial arts expert Yeoh, gives him a hard time. Nice premise, OK plot and some exciting chase scenes is what this action film has to offer. An improvement over GOLDENEYE, but still nowhere near the classic originals. And who let Sheryl Crow sing the title tune?

**Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers: Runnin' Down a Dream** (2007, USA) **C-240m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Bogdanovich. Starring Tom Petty, Mike Campbell, Ron Blair, Steve Ferrone, Stan Lynch,

Jeff Lynne, Eddie Vedder, Steve Nicks. Documentary about a rock'n'roll superhero, the humble but charismatic Tom Petty, whose musical history is traced here, from his roots in late 60s Florida, to his hey-day in the late 70s/early 80s, as well as commercial triumphs in the 90s. Director Bogdanovich wisely lets the band tell their own story and interviews some colleagues along the way, this is not only an excellent look at an influential rock band and solo musician, this is also an invaluable document of several rock eras. Recommended to anyone with a passing interest in rock history. Received limited theatrical release in October 2007 and was simultaneously released on DVD.

**Tom Sawyer** (2011, GER) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Hermie Huntgeburth. Starring Louis Hofmann, Leon Seidel, Heike Makatsch, Benno Fürmann, Joachim Król, Peter Lohmeyer. Good children's adventure based on the Mark Twain character. Tom Sawyer witnesses a murder one night with Huckleberry Finn and vows to keep silent about it. However, soon events put his conscience to a test. Fine performances – especially Fürmann's as the Indian – and nice period flavor make this a spirited adventure, but it's too dark and scary for smaller kids.

**Tonari no Totoro** (1988, JAP) **C-86m. \*\*\*½** D: Hayao Miyazaki. Starring (the voices of) Noriko Hidaka, Chika Sakamoto, Shigesato Itoi, Sumi Shimamoto, Tanie Kitabayashi, Hitoshi Katagi. Miyazaki's follow-up to the classic LAPUTA is a marvelous children's story about two kids, who move to the country with their father to be close to the family's mother, who is in hospital. The children are enchanted by the idyllic nature surrounding them and make the acquaintance of a wondrous tree spirit, Totoro. Beautiful tale with many blissful moments, well-scored by Joe Hisaishi. Bogs down towards the end, but still a remarkable animated feature. Children will be spellbound from start to finish. Miyazaki followed this with the even more enchanting MAJO NO TAKKYUBIN (KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE). The kitten bus made a return in a 13m. short Miyazaki filmed in 2002. English title: MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO.

**Tony Rome** (1967, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Gordon Douglas. Starring Frank Sinatra, Jill St. John, Richard Conte, Gena Rowlands, Simon Oakland. Detective thriller starring Frankieboy as the title character, a Miami-based P.I., who returns the drunk daughter of building magnate Oakland one day and gets mixed up in their family affairs. Plot is a bit too complicated, wise-cracking Sinatra is the whole show here. Based on a novel by Marvin H. Albert. Followed by LADY IN CEMENT (1968).

**Toolbox Murders, The** (1978, USA) **C-94m. Ⓜ** D: Dennis Donnelly. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Pamelyn Ferdin, Wesley Eure, Nicolas Beauvy, Evelyn Guerrero. Abysmal slasher movie about a masked maniac who kills women with several tools from his toolbox. Poorly acted, amateurishly directed, not *that* violent, stay away! Film's reputation is obviously built on its title only.

**Tooth Fairy** (2010, USA/CDN) **C-101m. \*\*** D: Michael Lembeck. Starring Dwayne Johnson, Ashley Judd, Stephen Merchant, Ryan Sheckler, Seth McFarlane, Julie Andrews, Billy Crystal. A movie that sounds like an idiotic idea: Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson stars as a hard-hitting but unsuccessful ice hockey player, who destroys a little girl's belief in the Tooth Fairy and is then transformed into one himself. Some laughs, and some surprising star cameos, but otherwise this falls flat and remains far too formulaic.

**Topaz** (1969, USA) **C-127m. \*\*** D: Alfred Hitchcock. Starring Frederick Stafford, Dany Robin, Claude Jade, Michel Subor, Karin Dor, John Vernon, Michel Piccoli, Philippe Noiret, Roscoe Lee Browne, John Forsythe, Alfred Hitchcock. Plodding, talky spy drama from Hitchcock (based on a Leon Uris novel), which he considered a misfire himself. Stafford plays a suave French agent, who is hired by the Secret Service to find out details of Russian KGB officer who managed to escape to the West. It turns out that he knows about the Russian activities

on Cuba (the film is set in 1962). Never fully involving, with only a handful of Hitch's typical directorial touches. Allegedly, Hitchcock shot two different versions (at least two alternative endings are in existence), the longer one running 143m.

**Top Gun** (1986, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tony Scott. Starring Tom Cruise, Kelly McGillis, Val Kilmer, Anthony Edwards, Tom Skerritt, Michael Ironside, John Stockwell, Barry Tubb, Rick Rossovich, Tim Robbins, Meg Ryan, Frank Pesce. Popular but manipulative, contrived action drama about hot-shot pilot Cruise, who makes his way to elite school with his buddy Edwards and falls in love with McGillis, while finding a rival in Kilmer. A crowd-pleaser, film works quite well on the emotional level, but story development is strictly by-the-numbers and predictable. Good photography by Jeffrey Kimball. Produced by Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer.

**Topkapi** (1964, USA) **C-119m. \*\*\* D:** Jules Dassin. Starring Melina Mercouri, Peter Ustinov, Maximilian Schell, Robert Morley, Jess Hahn, Gilles Ségal, Akim Tamiroff. Classic heist film has lost much of its charm over the years. Schell and Mercouri mastermind a plan to steal precious dagger from famous Topkapi museum in Istanbul. Well-cast, performed with gusto (Ustinov won a Best Supporting Actor Oscar), but meanders a little too much until exciting finale. Harmless entertainment. Based on Eric Ambler's novel *The Light of Day*. The inspiration for the "Mission Impossible" TV series.

**Topo, El** (1971, MEX) **C-125m. \*\*\* D:** Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Alejandro Jodorowsky, Brontis Jodorowsky, Jose Legaretta, Alfonso Arau, Jose Luis Fernandez, Alf Junco. "If you're great, EL TOPO is a great picture. If you're limited, EL TOPO is limited." This quotation by the director himself goes to show that this movie (his second feature) is clearly not for all tastes and requires a refined intellect (to say nothing of broad tolerance) to accept and cherish it. EL TOPO is difficult to describe: The title character, a gunslinger clad in black leather, rides through the desert with his little son. When he comes across a bloody massacre, he feels obliged to take revenge on the misfits responsible... in ultra-violent and sadistic fashion. El Topo is a gunslinger who aspires to be God, spurned on by a beautiful and mysterious woman. Jodorowsky presents a kaleidoscope of religions, all wrapped in deeply stirring, challenging, even hypnotizing images. This is not a western (if fact, the director labeled it an eastern!) but a surreal odyssey through a desert world of lechery, violence and debauchery, perhaps Jodorowsky's personal bible. Deeply fascinating, until the final thirty minutes, which bog the film down in the fashion of Jodorowsky's MONTAGNA SACRA. An offbeat, deliberately unconventional 'performance' film, impossible to compare with any other film (at least in my opinion). Is it merely a male machismo fantasy, or a brilliant art film? You be the judge! Filmed in the late 1960s with a low budget; it was originally banned in many countries. The director also scripted and wrote the score. English title: THE MOLE. Followed by a never-released sequel (SONS OF EL TOPO) in 1999.

**Top Sensation** (1969, ITA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Ottavio Alessi. Starring Rosalba Neri, Edwige Fenech, Eva Thulin, Maud Belleruche, Maurizio Benuglia, Ruggero Miti, Salvator Puntillo. Sex melodrama typical of the time about several characters on a yacht in the Mediterranean. Rich, sexually liberated Belleruche has invited Fenech and her friends to party on her boat, hoping to cure her psychotic son, a 20-year-old who behaves like a child. When they are stranded near an island, they meet innocent Thulin and her brutish husband, a goat-herder. Obvious complications ensue. Main attraction is sexy Fenech and her congenial partner Neri, but plot is also quite interesting. A time capsule, nice score by Sante M. Romitelli. Also known as THE SEDUCERS.

**Torturer, The** (2005, USA) **C-94m. \*\* D:** Lamberto Bava. Starring Simone Corrente, Elena Bouryka, Carla Cassola, Emilio De Marchi. Director Bava's return to the cinema after a hiatus

of fourteen years wasn't really worth the wait. A young actress (Bouryka) auditions for a role at director Corrente's studio, but he may be a torturer, abusing and killing women in most sadistic fashions. The success of SAW (2004) probably inspired this, but it is not clever at all and poorly plotted. Nudity and violence galore, so at least horror fans should get their money's worth. Story by Dardano Sacchetti and Michele Massimo Tarantini, coscripted by the director, whose immediate follow-up GHOST SON (2006) was better.

**Total Recall** (1990, USA) **C-113m. \*\*\* D:** Paul Verhoeven. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Rachel Ticotin, Sharon Stone, Ronny Cox, Michael Ironside, Marshall Bell. Imaginative science-fiction thriller set in 2084, based on a short story by Philip K. Dick (BLADE RUNNER). Schwarzenegger plays a construction worker, whose life on Earth leaves him wanting. He harbors a secret desire to travel to Mars and one day decides to have a memory of a Mars holiday implanted in his brain. However, this triggers another memory, one that will make him question his identity altogether. Has he already been on Mars? What was his business there? Well-written, exciting sci-fi is one of Arnie's best vehicles, despite a rough, pretentious start. Dan O'Bannon (ALIEN) was among the writers. Score by Jerry Goldsmith. David Cronenberg was involved with this project before Verhoeven (ROBOCOP) took over.

**To the Wonder** (2012, USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Terrence Malick. Starring Ben Affleck, Olga Kurylenko, Rachel McAdams, Javier Bardem. Outstanding drama from master director Malick. Film examines feelings of displacement in its two main characters, French housewife Kurylenko and Spanish priest Bardem in a stream-of-consciousness narrative that doesn't offer a traditional plot but relies heavily on visually beautiful, perfectly directed sequences with classical music. The inner conflict of the characters is flawlessly translated into film. Affleck, as Kurylenko's U.S. love interest, is not an interesting character, but he is not meant to be. Poor countryside with echoes of suburbia provides an austere, atmospheric setting. Written by the director.

**Totmacher, Der** (1995, GER) **C-114m. \*\*\* D:** Romuald Karmakar. Starring Götz George. Powerful psycho drama about serial killer Fritz Haarmann, who has killed 27 people and is now sitting in for a psychological examination. Film is set in one room only but forceful performances by George (as Haarmann) and his interviewer carry it all the way. Both fascinating and disturbing, film's only flaw may be that Haarmann's motives are not thoroughly fleshed out. Based on a true case that was filmed before in 1973 as DIE ZÄRTLICHKEIT DER WÖLFLE.

**Touch, The** (2002, HGK/CHI/TIW) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Peter Pau. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Ben Chaplin, Richard Roxburgh, Brandon Chang, Margaret Wang, Kenneth Tsang. Action adventure about a jade heart that is the key to a legendary treasure. Circus artist Yeoh reluctantly teams up with a former friend to beat villain Roxburgh in the search for the gold. Despite the talents involved (director Pau is better known as a cinematographer), film is poorly paced and never gets going. Even the special effects seem pointless. Forget the comparisons to Indiana Jones.

**Touchez Pas au Grisbi** (1953, FRA/ITA) **94m. \*\* D:** Jacques Becker. Starring Jean Gabin, René Dary, Dora Doll, Vittorio Sanipoli, Lino Ventura, Jeanne Moreau. Anemic French gangster movie with Gabin playing the head of the Parisian underworld, who may have something to do with recent gold robbery. Gabin adds weight to his role, but this film is certainly no classic. Very sluggish. English titles: GRISBI and HANDS OFF THE LOOT.

**Touch of Evil** (1958, USA) **111m. \*\*\*\* D:** Orson Welles. Starring Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, Orson Welles, Joseph Calleia, Akim Tamiroff, Joanna Cook Moore, Ray Collins, Dennis Weaver, Marlene Dietrich, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Joseph Cotten, Mercedes McCambridge, Keenan Wynn. A fatal accident on the Mexican-American border brings together two local

celebrities: Welles, a weary, overweight but ever-so forceful cop, who's corrupt to the bone, and his antagonist, narcotics inspector Heston, who's out to rid Mexico of drugs. Unsuspecting wife Leigh may be Heston's only weak spot and plays a crucial part in the drama that unfolds. Atmospheric, dense, almost Shakespearean crime drama is a stylistic masterpiece. Cinematography (by Russell Metty) and direction are perfect, making the audience almost *feel* the heat of the moment, yet all of this was shot in black-and-white! Welles' tracking shots, especially the one in the opening scene, are nothing short of stunning. Welles' acting part is every bit as impressive, one of the most seedy villain parts in history. Heston is cast against type but his performance is as strong. Excellent jazzy score by Henry Mancini. One of the best films of the decade and also one of the most impressive black-and-white pictures ever made. Philip H. Lathrop is credited as camera operator. Based on Whit Masterson's novel *Badge of Evil*. Also shown at 95m., 108m. and 111m., the latter version having been restored in 1998 according to Welles' notes.

**Touch of Zen, A** (1969, ROC) **C-180m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: King Hu. Starring Hsu Feng, Shih Chun, Pai Ying, Chang Ping-Yu. A young man's ordinary life is turned upside down when several strangers arrive at his village, with one of whom he falls in love. Extraordinary, meticulously crafted action epic almost single-handedly established the martial arts genre and set the standards for many following films. The breathtaking scenery is only undermined by a plot that may mean more to those familiar with Zen Buddhism. Impressive film should be viewed in a theatre, which is where it really belongs. Original title: HSIA NU.

**Tourist Trap** (1979, USA) **C-90m. \*\*** D: David Schmoeller. Starring Chuck Connors, Jocelyn Jones, Jon Van Ness, Robin Sherwood, Tanya Roberts. Weird horror thriller about some friends on a road trip, who end up in Connors' museum of frighteningly real mannequins, which he controls with telekinetic powers. Less graphic than most genre films of the time (it was even rated PG originally!), but quite unsettling, with an unrelentingly odd atmosphere. It's not exactly enjoyable, though, even annoying at times, especially Connors' hammy performance. Pino Donaggio's score is completely overdone in some scenes and adds to the film's weirdness. Some found this good (Stephen King, for example), judge for yourself. Produced by Albert Band (Full Moon).

**Tout le Monde Il Est Beau, Tout le Monde Il Est Gentil** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-84m. \*\*** D: Jean Yanne. Starring Jean Yanne, Bernard Blier, Michel Serrault, Marina Vlady, Jacques Francois, Paul Préboist, Maurice Risch. After doing some research in a developing country, radio reporter Yanne returns home to France and finds his station considerably changed. It has turned into a Christian channel and Yanne seems superfluous. How can he strike back? Satirical comedy seems like a vanity product for Yanne, who also directed. No narrative thrust, very few laughs. Of curio value at best. First of seven films Yanne directed in his career. Followed by a TV series in the late 1980s. English title: EVERYBODY HE IS NICE, EVERYBODY HE IS BEAUTIFUL.

**Tower Heist** (2011, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brett Ratner. Starring Ben Stiller, Eddie Murphy, Casey Affleck, Alan Alda, Matthew Broderick, Téa Leoni, Michael Pena. Ratner and Stiller from NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM team up again in this moderately funny movie that takes ages to set up its premise. At the New York Tower Hotel, Stiller leads the staff and is shocked to hear that their pension funds have been embezzled by rich guy Alda. Then they learn of \$20 million that are supposed to be hidden in apartment somewhere and they team up for a heist. An okay view for most of the time, picks up a bit in incredible car stunt, but we have seen better things from these people.

**Towering Inferno, The** (1974, USA) **C-165m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Guillermin, Irwin Allen. Starring Steve McQueen, Paul Newman, William Holden, Faye Dunaway, Fred Astaire, Susan

Blakely, Richard Chamberlain, Jennifer Jones, O. J. Simpson, Robert Vaughn, Robert Wagner, Susan Flannery, Gregory Sierra, Dabney Coleman. Probably the biggest disaster epic of the decade, this thriller about a burning skyscraper is a complete dud in terms of plot, simply relying on its stars and special effects. McQueen is fine as world-weary fire fighter, who must find a way of rescuing 300 party guests trapped 50 storeys above the fire. Completely meaningless and pointless, but finally gets going in the final forty minutes (if you make it that far). Stirling Silliphant adapted the novels *The Tower* (by Richard Martin Stern) and *The Glass Inferno* (by Frank M. Robinson and Thomas N. Scortia).

**Town That Dreaded Sundown, The** (1976, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Charles B. Pierce. Starring Ben Johnson, Andrew Prine, Dawn Wells, Jimmy Clem, Jim City, Charles B. Pierce. Based-on-fact thriller chronicling the chase for the serial killer that terrorized Texarkana, Arkansas, in 1946. Some effective stalk scenes don't mix well with documentary-like narration. The trombone murder, however, ranks high in the Most Gruesomely Imaginative Murder Set Pieces in Horror Movie History. Produced by director Pierce and Samuel Z. Arkoff.

**Town That Dreaded Sundown, The** (2014, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alfonso Gomez-Rejon. Starring Addison Timlin, Veronica Cartwright, Anthony Anderson, Travis Tope, Joshua Leonard, Gry Cole, Edward Herrmann, Ed Lauter. Interesting reworking of the Moonlight Murders cold case from the 1940s is actually a 'meta-sequel' to THE TOWN THAT DREADED SUNDOWN (1976). Every year on Halloween in the town of Texarkana they show the 1976 movie, which kind of revived the legend of the Phantom Killer. Now, in 2013, a copycat killer is on the loose and Timlin only narrowly (temporarily?) escapes death. Is it a relative of the original killer that was never arrested? Ambitious, quite unpredictable slasher movie has a unique meta-effect, which makes it fresh and original. Plot is not fully convincing (and doesn't hold up to the very end), but a welcome deviation from the usual by-the-numbers slasher movie format.

**Toxic Avenger, The** (1985, USA) **C-82m. \*\*\*** D: Michael Herz, Samuel Weil (=Lloyd Kaufman). Starring Andree Miranda, Mitchell Cohen, Jennifer Babbitt, Cindy Manion, Marisa Tomei. Funny horror comedy about a nerd who gets transformed into a superhero after falling into toxic waste. Fans of the genre will appreciate the outrageous gore scenes, other may be repelled. A cult classic, followed by three sequels. Also shown at 78m., 87m., and 110m.! This review refers to the 82m. unrated video version.

**Toxic Avenger, Part II, The** (1989, USA) **C-102m. \*\*** D: Michael Herz, Lloyd Kaufman. Starring Ron Fazio, John Altamura, Phoebe Legere, Rick Collins. Sequel to Troma's surprise hit is a typically silly splatter comedy. Our superhero is almost killed when Tromaville's Home for the Blind is attacked, but he returns with a vengeance. Later he is lured to Japan, where his lost father is supposed to be. Too often plain stupid, but saved by a few funny scenes (the old couple in the car is hilarious). Filmed back to back with Part III. Alternate versions run 95m., 96m. or even longer than 102m.

**Toy Story** (1995, USA) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: John Lasseter. Featuring the voices of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, Don Rickles, Jim Varney, Wallace Shawn, John Ratzenberger, Laurie Metcalfe. Animation milestone, this razzle-dazzle cartoon was the first one made entirely on computers. A young boys' favorite toy (cowboy Woody) gets unexpected competition from the latest birthday present, an action figure named Buzz Lightyear. However, they must help each other when they get lost and the family are about to move. Occasionally mean-spirited, sometimes too loud and aggressive, this film is not for small kids, but has some nice action sequences and a really adventurous storyline. Contains a lot of movie references. Followed by a 1999 sequel.

**Toy Story 2** (1999, USA) **C-92m. \*\*\*** D: John Lasseter, Ash Brannon, Lee Unkrich. Featuring the voices of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, Joan Cusack, Kelsey Grammer, Don Rickles, Jim Varney, Wallace Shawn, John Ratzenberger, Laurie Metcalf. Sequel to the Disney/Pixar hit is arguably better. Cowboy doll Woody is stolen by a toy collector and it's Buzz Lightyear to the rescue! More of an adventure than part one and even comes up with a marvelous toy philosophy but goes overboard in contrived action finale. Some sensational animation!

**Traffic** (2000, USA) **C-147m. \*\*\*** D: Steven Soderbergh. Starring Michael Douglas, Benicio Del Toro, Luis Guzmán, Tomas Milian, Don Cheadle, Miguel Ferrer, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Albert Finney, James Brolin, Amy Irving, Dennis Quaid, Benjamin Bratt, Salma Hayek. Well-made drama, focusing on the lives of several people who are all involved – more or less – in drug trafficking, consumption and prevention. Complex script rings true from start to finish. Soderbergh, who also photographed the picture (pseudonymously), uses an unusual but highly effective color scheme. Good performances all around. Oscar winner for Best Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Supporting Actor (Del Toro) and Best Editing. Based on a 1989 British TV miniseries.

**Trailer Park of Terror** (2008, USA) **C-98m. \*\*** D: Steven Goldmann. Starring Nichole Hiltz, Lew Temple, Jeanette Brox, Myk Watford. Low-brow horror film about group of kids who are forced to seek shelter after their car breaks down. They end up in the title establishment, which is haunted by people that got killed in the film's prologue. Awkwardly plotted, with some good, gory special effects. A mixed bag, judge for yourself.

**Trail of the Pink Panther, The** (1982, USA/GBR) **C-96m. SCOPE \*½** D: Blake Edwards. Starring Peter Sellers, David Niven, Herbert Lom, Richard Mulligan, Joanna Lumley, Capucine, Robert Loggia, Harvey Korman, Burt Kwouk, Graham Stark, André Maranne. Poor excuse to return to the PINK PANTHER films after Sellers' death. Director-producer Edwards uses footage that ended up on the cutting room floor and embeds it into a ludicrous plot: The pink panther diamond is stolen again, Clouseau goes after it again, but after he disappears (his plane mysteriously vanishes), all we get is an annoying lady reporter interviewing some of Clouseau's old colleagues. Not even for die-hard fans. Followed by CURSE OF THE PINK PANTHER (1983).

**Train, Le** (1973, FRA/ITA) **C-101m. \*\*\*½** D: Pierre Granier-Deferre. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Romy Schneider, Maurice Biraud, Paul Amiot, Serge Marquand, Henri Attal. In 1940, Frenchman Trintignant has to flee with his family from the Nazis. On a refugee train he meets and falls in love with German Schneider, but their brief affair is not to last... Adaptation of Georges Simenon's novel is a subtly, sensitively handled drama but also frustratingly low-key sometimes. Worth a look, especially because of the excellent score by Philippe Sarde and the lead actors. English titles: THE TRAIN, THE LAST TRAIN.

**Train Spécial pour SS** (1977, FRA) **C-103m. \*½** D: James Gartner (=Alain Payet). Starring Monica Swinn, Christine Aurel, Sandra Mozarowsky, Yolanda Rios, Erik Muller, Frank Brana. Straight-forward sex film set in WW2 about a cabaret star-turned-prostitute, who resides in a Nazi train with her colleagues, ready to do anybody, anytime. Poorly made, but gets half a star for trying to keep up plot framework. Incredibly long for an exploitation / trash movie. Other titles: HELLTRAIN, LOVE TRAIN FOR SS, SPECIAL TRAIN FOR HITLER.

**Trainspotting** (1996, SCO) **C-94m. \*\*\*** D: Danny Boyle. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner, Jonny Lee Miller, Kevin McKidd, Robert Carlyle, Kelly Macdonald, Peter Mullan, Irvine Welsh, John Hodge. Radical, funny teenage drama about a group of aimless, drug-abusing Scottish youths, one of whom (McGregor) tries to kick the habit, but sees it as a kind of diversion only, until he realizes that he is hooked and his life is going down the drain. Nice

surreal touches by director Boyle, whose breakthrough picture this was. Fresh script by John Hodge, based on the novel by Irvine Welsh. A sleeper hit. Macdonald's theatrical debut.

**Traitement de Choc** (1972, FRA/ITA) **C-87m**. \*\*\* D: Alain Jessua. Starring Annie Girardot, Alain Delon, Michel Duchaussoy, Robert Hirsch, Jean-François Calvé. Girardot plays a stressed businesswoman who spends a few days in a clinic in the country to undergo a rejuvenating cure. After her first injection she feels great, but soon she becomes suspicious about doctor Delon and the methods of the clinic. Thriller maintains interest not by suspenseful situations but by intelligent, ambitious plot which criticizes social hierarchy and the survival of the fittest. Screenplay written by the director, who also contributed to the percussion score. Delon is surprisingly subdued, Girardot earnest in a difficult role. Contains a lot of nudity. English title: SHOCK TREATMENT.

**Trance** (1998, USA) **C-95m**. \*\* D: Michael Almereyda. Starring Rachel O'Rourke, Lois Smith, Alison Elliott, Jared Harris, Sinead Dolan, Raina Feig, Christopher Walken. Mystical thriller about New York family who travel to Ireland to visit relatives in their castle and are confronted with the impending resurrection of a mummified witch lying in uncle Walken's cellar. Deliberately paced, underwritten chiller plays like an homage to Jess Franco and Jean Rollin (even Sam Raimi!). Beautiful, even poetic cinematography makes film watchable, if not in the least credible. A little more surrealism would have done it good. Horror fans should give this one a look, others beware. Written by the director. Released directly to video.

**Trance** (2013, GBR) **C-102m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\*\* D: Danny Boyle. Starring James McAvoy, Vincent Cassel, Rosario Dawson, Danny Sapani. Absolutely outstanding thriller drama about McAvoy, an employee at an auction house, who plans an inside job to get rid of his debt owed to con man Cassel. However, something goes wrong during the heist and he suffers from amnesia and doesn't remember where he put the stolen painting. Enter psychologist Dawson, who is supposed to use hypnosis on him to remember, but she is very clever and soon realizes what this is all about. But this is not the end of the story, as nothing is as it seems. Brilliantly clever script, typically strong, stylish directorial turn by Boyle makes this a searing experience. Excellent score by Rick Smith. Remake of a 2001 British TV movie.

**Trancers** (1985, USA) **C-76m**. \*\*½ D: Charles Band. Starring Tim Thomerson, Helen Hunt, Art La Fleur, Biff Manard, Anne Seymour. **BLADE RUNNER** meets **THE TERMINATOR** in this low-budget science-fiction film. Thomerson plays a futuristic policeman who goes 300 years back in time to the 1980s in order to keep a villain from securing world domination by turning people into Trancers, Zombie-like creatures. Overall a pretentious film but quite appealing and above average of its type. Director Band also produced the film, which was followed by four sequels. Aka **FUTURE COP**.

**Tranquillo Posto di Campagna, Un** (1968, ITA/FRA) **C-105m**. \*\*½ D: Elio Petri. Starring Franco Nero, Vanessa Redgrave, Georges Geret, Gabriella Grimaldi, Madeleine Damien. Strange, bizarre psycho drama about troubled artist Nero, who moves into a secluded country house which may be haunted by the ghost of a dead girl. Fine photography by Luigi Kuveiller (**PROFONDO ROSSO**) and frenzied direction make this oddity worth watching, but it's too vague and too unexciting to score as either drama or thriller. Appropriately deranged score by Ennio Morricone. Winner for Best Cinematography at the Venice Film Festival. English title: A QUIET PLACE IN THE COUNTRY.

**Transsiberian** (2008, GBR/GER/SPA/LIT) **C-111m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Brad Anderson. Starring Woody Harrelson, Emily Mortimer, Ben Kingsley, Kate Mara, Eduardo Noriega, Thomas Kretschmann. Captivating, richly textured thriller drama about photographers Mortimer and Harrelson who take the Transsib back from a stay in China. On the train they meet young

couple Noriega and Mara, who are strangely nervous about police controls. Enter Russian police captain Kingsley, who is looking for the murderer of a drug smuggler. Unpredictable storyline, good characterizations, great settings and an excellent performance by Mortimer, a worthy follow-up to the director's *THE MACHINIST* (2004), although it does falter at the end a bit. Written by Anderson and Will Conroy.

**Tras el Cristal** (1986, SPA) **C-112m.** \*\*\*½ D: Agustín Villaronga. Starring Günter Meisner, David Sust, Marisa Paredes, Gisèle Echevarría, Imma Colomer. Harrowing, controversial film about Nazi doctor Meisner, who abused and killed dozens of young boys during war. After a suicide attempt he is now paralyzed and confined to an iron lung. One day, former victim Sust comes to work for him as a nurse. However, the revenge he has planned for the cripple is dominated by traumatic perversion. Remarkable psycho drama exudes a cold fascination, is sometimes too understated, but well-directed and impressively acted. A thoughtful, well-made film whose subject matter unfortunately prevented wider circulation. See it! Similar to *IL PORTIERE DI NOTTE* (1974) and Roman Polanski's *DEATH AND THE MAIDEN* (1994). Written by first-time director Villaronga. Good score by Javier Navarrete. English title: *IN A GLASS CAGE*.

**Trash** (1970, USA) **C-110m.** ½ D: Paul Morrissey. Starring Joe Dallessandro, Holly Woodlawn, Geri Miller, Andrea Feldman, John Putman, Sissy Spacek. *ANDY WARHOL'S TRASH* is just that, with endless close-ups of bored, wasted people. Dallessandro plays an impotent lover who makes money selling his body to gays. Spacek's scenes were cut from final print; this would have been her film debut. Second part of a trilogy following *FLESH* (1968), and followed by *HEAT* (1972).

**Trash** (2014, GBR/BRA) **C-114m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Stephen Daldry, Christian Duurvoort. Starring Rooney Mara, Martin Sheen, Wagner Moura, Selton Mello, Christiane Amanpour, Andre Ramiro, Rickson Tevez. Rousing thriller drama set in the slums of Brazil, where two young trash collectors find a wallet, which contains information that can incriminate Rio's mayor, who is set for re-election. The boys confide in priest Sheen and his assistant Mara, but soon must run for their lives. Emotional, fast-paced film provides great views of Rio and much like *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE* follows people on the fringe of society fighting for justice. Recommended. Screenplay by Richard Curtis, based on the novel by Andy Mulligan.

**Trauma** (1993, USA/ITA) **C-111m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Dario Argento. Starring Christopher Rydell, Asia Argento, Laura Johnson, James Russo, Brad Dourif, Frederic Forrest, Piper Laurie. Interesting Argento concoction (the film which was supposed to establish him as a Hollywood director) about a serial killer who cuts off and keeps the heads of his victims. Anorexic Asia Argento (the filmmaker's daughter), whose parents are among those murdered, joins forces with journalist Rydell to solve the riddle of the killer's identity. A little slow and uneven but a well-directed and stylish psycho thriller, not just for Dario Argento's fans. Cowritten and produced by the Italian horror maestro. Effects by Tom Savini, score by Pino Donaggio.

**Traversée de Paris, La** (1956, FRA) **84m.** \*\*½ D: Claude Autant-Lara. Starring Jean Gabin, Bourvil, Jeanette Batti, Louis de Funès. In 1942 Paris, as the blackmarket was going strong, an unemployed taxi-driver (Bourvil) is hired by a butcher (de Funès) to transport meat from one end of the city to the other. He is helped by a painter (Gabin). Together they live through a night full of comic misadventures. Film is more a drama than a comedy and as such not consequential enough. Bourvil won an award at the Venice film festival, but Gabin outdoes him as his headstrong partner-in-crime. English title: *FOUR BAGS FULL*.

**Treasure of Matecumbe** (1976, USA) **C-116m.** \*\*½ D: Vincent McEveety. Starring Robert Foxworth, Joan Hackett, Peter Ustinov, Vic Morrow, Dub Taylor, Brion James, Dick Van

Patten. Likable, leisurely paced Disney adventure set in 1869, when two young boys run from villain Morrow to find a treasure buried somewhere in the Everglades. Quack Ustinov and lady Hackett aid them in their quest. Rousing score by Buddy Baker, but generally film is nothing special, the cast being the most interesting thing about it.

**Treasure Planet** (2002, USA) **C-95m**. \*\*½ D: Ron Clements, John Musker. Starring (the voices of) Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Emma Thompson, Michael Wincott, Martin Short, Patrick McGoohan, Roscoe Lee Browne, Laurie Metcalfe, Phil Proctor. Disney adaptation of R.L. Stevenson's classic is set in space(!), where Jim Hawkins sails to distant planets trying to retrieve a pirate's treasure. Fairly exciting adventure for kids with good special effects. One big question remains, however: Why is this set in space? To be able to include crazy, mutated characters? Was the Caribbean setting too boring? The CGI effects also don't blend well with the traditional animation. Score by James Newton Howard.

**Tre Che Sconvolgero il West, I** (1968, ITA/SPA) **C-92m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Antonio Sabàto, John Saxon, Frank Wolff, Agata Flory, Leo Anchoriz, Antonio Vico, Rossella Bergamonti, Tito Garcia. Unfunny spaghetti western comedy with a plot that's familiar by now: Three men, an outlaw (Sabàto), a gambler (Saxon), and a fake priest (Wolff) are after money that has been stolen from a bank. The title ('The three who turned the west upside down') suggests a parody of *IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO*, which this certainly isn't. Saved by above-average direction and nice camera perspectives. Get your laughs elsewhere.

**Trees Lounge** (1996, USA) **C-94m**. \*\*\* D: Steve Buscemi. Starring Steve Buscemi, Chloe Sevigny, Mark Boone Junior, Michael Buscemi, Anthony LaPaglia, Elizabeth Bracco, Danny Baldwin, Carol Kane, Samuel L. Jackson, Seymour Cassel, Mimi Rogers. Original comedy-drama about ne'er-do-well Buscemi, who spends most of his time in a bar called Trees Lounge, where fellow losers drink their problems away. When his uncle Al (Cassel) dies, he takes over his ice cream truck and gets involved with cousin Sevigny. Funny, poignant and well-acted. A small gem, written and directed by supporting actor Buscemi, who had appeared in cult films such as *FARGO*, *RESERVOIR DOGS*, *MYSTERY TRAIN* and *BARTON FINK*.

**13 (Tzamet)** (2005, FRA) **B&W-93m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Géla Babluani. Starring George Babluani, Aurélien Recoing, Pascal Bongard. Unusual drama about an immigrant roof worker, who chances to overhear a conversation about a chance to get a lot of money. He steals an envelope with a train ticket, not knowing what to expect. It turns out he has opted in to compete in a Russian roulette-type death game. Flaccid pace, downbeat atmosphere, though some found this excellent. Brad Pitt purchased the rights for its American remake *13* (2010).

**Tre Volti della Paura, I** (1963, ITA/FRA) **C-88m**. \*\*½ D: Mario Bava. Starring Boris Karloff, Mark Damon, Michèle Mercier, Suzy Andersen, Jacqueline Pierreux, Glauco Onorato, Rika Dialina, Massimo Righi, Milly Monti, Lydia Alfonso. Three-part horror anthology, despite having Mario Bava as a director, only moderately successful. The first story, called 'The Telephone' is mild, as Mercier is threatened by mysterious phone calls (ever wonder where Wes Craven got the idea to the opening scene in *SCREAM*). In the second story, 'Wurdelak', which stars Boris Karloff and is as long as the other two combined, an entire family is terrorized by an evil vampire. Final story, 'The Drop of Water', is the best of the lot. A woman is called to dress the corpse of a dead woman and steals her ring, which leads to chilling results. Apart from this final treat, the other stories are rather weak and carry too little weight. The atmosphere created by director Bava can only compensate as much as making the film watchable. Strangely enough, this was Bava's personal favorite! Based on stories by F.G. Snyder, V.I. Tolstoy and Ivan Chekhov (respectively). The U.S. version, titled

BLACK SABBATH, had Karloff present the stories in a different order, and Les Baxter replaced Roberto Nicolosi's original score. Also known as THREE FACES OF FEAR.

**Tre Volti del Terrore, I** (2004, ITA) **C-89m.** Ⓜ D: Sergio Stivaletti. Starring John Philip Law, Riccardo Serventi Longhi, Elisabetta Rocchetti, Emiliano Reggente, Claudio Simonetti, Lamberto Bava. Sorry attempt at making a horror film: Three passengers on a train meet a mysterious character (Law), who gives them glimpses of former lives. They dream up three stories, in which they star: Plots involve a werewolf, a mad surgeon and a sea monster. Law plays several roles. Ridiculous at best; even Bava playing himself cannot save this mess. It's poorly directed and acted, cheap looking and badly plotted. Not at all like special effects maestro Stivaletti's other feature, MASCHERA DI CERA (1997). English titles: THE THREE FACES OF TERROR.

**Trial Run** (1984, NZL) **C-89m.** \*\*\* D: Melanie Read. Starring Annie Whittle, Judith Gibson, Christopher Broun. Well-made psycho-thriller about long-distance runner Whittle who takes up the job of photographing penguins and moves into a secluded hut with the nearest telephone booth 1500 meters away. And then strange, inexplicable things start to happen. Well-made debut thriller with an eerie score will pack a wallop if you fail to predict the ending.

**Triangle** (2009, AUS/GBR) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Christopher Smith. Starring Melissa George, Joshua McIvor, Jack Taylor, Michael Dorman, Liam Hemsworth. Mystery thriller about young mother George, who goes on a sailing trip with a few friends. After being caught by a sudden storm, their boat capsizes but they get saved by a seemingly abandoned ship. Then the horror starts. Interesting science-fiction elements make this fairly compelling, but film really only deserves its third full star in baffling, almost philosophical finale. Thank God there is an FAQ section on the IMDb. Good score, direction, convincing turn by George. Written by the director.

**Triangolo delle Bermude, II** (1977, ITA/MEX) **C-106m.** Ⓜ D: René Cardona, Jr. Starring John Huston, Claudine Auger, Marina Vlady, Hugo Stiglitz, Andres Garcia. Dreadful adventure about a group of people who want to go deep-sea diving in the Bermuda triangle, completely disregarding the fact that several planes and ships have only recently disappeared there without a trace. Ludicrous plot, very little action. Stelvio Cipriani's score is not bad, though. English title is, probably, THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE.

**Tribulations d'un Chinois en Chine, Les** (1965, FRA/ITA) **C-110m.** \*\*\*½ D: Philippe de Broca. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Ursula Andress, Jean Rochefort, Darry Cowl, Maria Pacôme, Valérie Lagrange, Jess Hahn. Turbulent, fast-paced comedy adventure (one of the best of its time) about unhappy billionaire Belmondo, whose suicide attempts keep failing. When he hires some killers to do him in, he falls in love with beautiful Andress and wants to reverse the deal. Belmondo is ideally suited to this role, exotic locations and lots of stunts make this a joy to watch. A worthy companion piece to the Bond movies of that time. Based on a Jules Verne novel. Score by Georges Delerue. English title: UP TO HIS EARS.

**Trick 'r Treat** (2007, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Michael Dougherty. Starring Anna Paquin, Brian Cox, Dylan Baker, Britt McKillip. Good production values make the difference in this Halloween horror film with comic undertones. Set in a small town during Halloween celebrations, several interwoven stories are told: A group of children go looking for thrills at a school bus accident site, some young women go looking for special one-night stands, a school principal is actually a serial killer, and grumpy old Brian Cox gets an unwanted visitor. Good photography, fine score, appealing performances. Written by the director, produced by Bryan Singer.

**Trigger Effect, The** (1996, USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: David Koepp. Starring Kyle MacLachlan, Elisabeth Shue, Dermot Mulroney, Richard T. Jones, Michael Rooker. Top screenwriter Koepp's directorial debut is an inauspicious thriller drama with sci-fi touches, about husband and wife (MacLachlan and Shue) who are surprised by a major black-out that seems to have affected the whole country. Soon, panic takes over. Premise is not bad, but MacLachlan's self-conscious character makes this more annoying than exciting. Koepp fared much better with his second feature film, *STIR OF ECHOES* (1999).

**Trinita e Sartana Figli di ...** (1972, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Mario Siciliano. Starring Robert Widmark (=Alberto Dell'Acqua), Harry Baird, Beatrice Pella, Stelio Candelli, Daniela Giordano, Lars Bloch. Pretty laughable comedy western, focusing on two characters, who want nothing more than to rob gold transport, but they are not the only ones. Okay fare with colorful characters, if you have a faible for this kind of stuff. Goes on much too long, though. Score by Carlo Savina. English titles: *TRINITY AND SARTANA ARE COMING / SONS OF BITCHES / THOSE DIRTY S.O.B.S.*

**Trio Infernal, Le** (1974, FRA/ITA/GER) **C-89m.** \*\* D: Francis Girod. Starring Michel Piccoli, Romy Schneider, Mascha Gonska, Philippe Brizard, Jean Rigaux, Hubert Deschamps, Andréa Ferréol. Controversial psycho drama about fraudulent, impulsive trio consisting of cunning lawyer Piccoli and his two obedient lovers Schneider and Gonska. They cash in the life insurance of their husbands and lead a carefree life. How long will this last? Heavy-going – and slow – most of the time, film relies too much on the actors to make this interesting. Still, some found this fascinating. Original 109m. version may be an improvement. Based on a novel by Solange Fasquelle. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Trionfo di Ercole, Il** (1964, ITA/FRA) **C-77m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Dan Vadis, Marilù Tolo, Pierre Cressoy, Piero Lulli, Moira Orfei. Slapdash peplum epic about Hercules (Vadis) going against an usurper and protecting an unsuspecting queen, when her father is murdered. The villain (Cressoy) is aided by a witch, who sends several super-strong golden fighters. Naïve, but score by Francesco de Masi is quite good and pace picks up a little towards the end. Director De Martino also coscripted. Original version may run longer. English titles: *THE TRIUMPH OF HERCULES, HERCULES VS. THE GIANT WARRIOR, and HERCULES AND THE TEN AVENGERS.*

**Trip, The** (1967, USA) **C-78m.** \*\*½ D: Roger Corman. Starring Peter Fonda, Susan Strasberg, Bruce Dern, Dennis Hopper, Salli Sachse, Tom Signorelli, Peter Bogdanovich. Colorful time capsule from the 1960s and the beginning of the psychedelic era, about conservative TV director Fonda, who takes an LSD trip and finds his world unhinged. Not much in terms of plot, but watch it for some psychedelic nostalgia and visual experiments. Dated, but still fun as a relic of a bygone time. Written by Jack Nicholson! Hopper also directed some scenes. Originally runs 85m.

**Triple Cross** (1966, GBR/FRA) **C-138m.** \*\*½ D: Terence Young. Starring Christopher Plummer, Romy Schneider, Trevor Howard, Gert Fröbe, Claudine Auger, Yul Brynner, Harry Meyen, Georges Lycan, Jess Hahn, Howard Vernon. Plummer is fine as British safecracker who becomes a spy for the Germans during WW2 but does espionage for both sides. Not the kind of adventure of which James Bond had plenty at that time: entertainment value is low, there's little suspense, and action sequences are rare. Good cast is film's sole virtue. Brynner is especially impressive as a German commander. Gordon Jackson appears unbilled. Shown at 126m. in the U.S.

**Triplettes de Belleville, Les** (2003, FRA) **C-80m.** \*\*\* D: Sylvain Chomet. Starring (the voices of) Béatrice Bonifassi, Lina Boudreau, Michèle Caucheteux, Jean-Claude Donda. Oscar-nominated animated feature seems traditionally drawn but has some CGI elements. Almost

dialogue-free film is a crime mystery set in the 1950s about a young cyclist, driven by his mother, who participates in the Tour de France and is kidnapped by some gangsters from Belleville (standing for New York City) for some evil plans. It's his mother and their pet dog to the rescue! Well-designed, with lots of odd and stylish touches, though the story is almost entirely without dialogue and quite bizarre. Written by the director. English title: THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE.

**Tristan + Isolde** (2006, USA) **C-125m.** \*\*\*½ D: Kevin Reynolds. Starring James Franco, Sophia Myles, Rufus Sewell, David O'Hara, Mark Strong, Henry Cavill. Historical epic based on the love story between the title characters (originally conceived by Richard Wagner for opera), who fall for each other during a difficult time for the English and Irish. As they are from opposing sides, Tristan first abandons Isolde, then realizes that their love is immortal. Pleasant enough, beautifully staged, but lacks spark, especially in convincing us Tristan (Franco) is a passionate character.

**Trog** (1970, GBR) **C-91m.** \*\* D: Freddie Francis. Starring Joan Crawford, Michael Gough, Bernard Kay, Kim Braden, David Griffin, John Hamill, David Warbeck. Prehistoric monster, half-ape, half-man is discovered dwelling in a cave, and scientist Crawford tries to domesticate it, if it weren't for mischievous Gough. Horror drama is watchable but too trivial (and boring) to compare it with the classic FRANKENSTEIN, to which it owes a lot. Crawford's last film appearance. Photographed by Desmond Dickinson. Based on a story by John Gilling and Peter Bryan.

**Trolljegeren** (2010 NOR) **C-103m.** \*\*\*½ D: André Ovredal. Starring Otto Jespersen, Glenn Erland Tosterud, Johanna Morck, Tomas Alf Larsen. Found-footage mockumentary about a film crew, who follow a mysterious hunter, who turns out to be an official troll hunter! They learn about the trolls' ways and soon meet their first specimen. Horror with comic touches has pacing issues, the effects are astoundingly good. Director Ovredal went on to make THE AUTOPSY OF JANE DOE (2016). English title: TROLLHUNTER.

**Troma's War** (1988, USA) **C-87m.** ½ D: Michael Herz, Samuel Weil (=Lloyd Kaufman). Starring Carolyn Beauchamp, Sean Bowen, Michael Ryder (=Rick Washburn), Patrick Weathers, Jessica Dublin. Pretty terrible, tasteless Troma action about several plane crash survivors who end up on a Caribbean island only to get involved with soldiers from an "infiltration trainee camp". No laughs here despite usual Troma lunacy. Director's cut runs 104m. Also known as A 1,000 WAYS TO DIE.

**Tromeo & Juliet** (1996, USA) **C-119m.** \*\* D: Lloyd Kaufman. Starring Jane Jensen, Will Keenan, Valentine Miele, Stephen Blackheart, Maximillian Shaun, Steve Gibbons, Sean Gunn, Lemmy (narrator). Typically tasteless Troma release that perverts the classic Shakespearean tragedy *Romeo & Juliet*. Body piercing artist Tromeo is in love with Juliet, but their families are bitter enemies. Gore, sex, slapstick Troma-style. Some will consider this mildly funny, others stay away. James Gunn co-directed sans credit.

**TRON** (1982, USA/TIW) **C-96m. SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Steven Lisberger. Starring Jeff Bridges, Bruce Boxleitner, David Warner, Cindy Morgan, Barnard Hughes, Dan Shor, Peter Jurasik, Michael Dudikoff. Cult sci-fi movie from Disney about the emerging computer age, with stunning effects that still hold up after all these years. Bridges plays a hacker, who is asked by programmer Boxleitner to hack into his old boss's super-computer, which then proceeds to 'beam' him into a video game. Interesting concept, well-made and acted, perfectly captures the spirit of the time, the advent of video-gaming.

**Tropic Thunder** (2008, USA/GER) **C-122m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Ben Stiller. Starring Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Robert Downey Jr., Jay Baruchel, Brandon T. Jackson, Steve Coogan, Danny McBride, Nick Nolte, Matthew McConaughey, Brandon Soo Hoo, Tom Cruise, Jon Voight, Jennifer

Love Hewitt, Mickey Rooney, Tobey Maguire, Kevin Pollak. A film crew is stuck filming a war drama in the Vietnamese jungles, and big-shot producer Cruise forces director Coogan to apply different methods, so he brings the movie's stars (Stiller, Black, Downey Jr et al) into the real jungle to make it seem more realistic. Soon they have to fend for themselves in hostile environment, with real Viet Cong soldiers everywhere they at first believe to be extras. Loaded with great ideas, but most of them are fired within minutes (for example in the trailers of the beginning), and longer stretches are without laughs entirely. Uneven, most enjoyable for movie buffs. Downey Jr. steals the film as the black(!) method actor. Photographed by John Toll.

**Trottoirs de Bangkok, Les** (1984, FRA) **C-85m.** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Yoko, Françoise Blanchard, Gérard Landry, Olivier Rollin. Horrendous non-movie from a once-stylish director aspires to be a sort-of Fu Manchu type of film but it's just an incomprehensible mess. "Plot" (biological weapon sought after by spies) is interrupted again and again by pointless nude and sex scenes. Ridiculous, amateurish at every turn. English title: SIDEWALKS OF BANGKOK.

**Trou, Le** (1960, FRA/ITA) **121m.** \*\*\* D: Jacques Becker. Starring Michel Constantin, Philippe Leroy, Jean Keraudy, Raymond Meunier, Mark Michel. Captivating, suspenseful thriller details the lengths five inmates go to in order to break out of prison. Remains very much on the surface psychologically, but still qualifies as riveting entertainment. Becker also wrote the screenplay. This was his last film.

**Troy** (2004, USA) **C-163m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Wolfgang Petersen. Starring Brad Pitt, Orlando Bloom, Brian Cox, Brendan Gleeson, Diane Kruger, Julian Glover, Sean Bean, Peter O'Toole, Julie Christie, Saffron Burrows. Big, booming epic based on Homer's famous *Iliad*. Story centers around character of Achilles (Pitt), who becomes a decisive figure in the war that follows the robbery of Helen of Troy, the besiegement of the city and the fates decided in the battle. Expertly made film boasts impressive action sequences and fine performances by all involved (minus Kruger, perhaps). Pitt looks extremely good. Score by James Horner, photography by Roger Pratt. Filmed in Malta.

**True Crime** (1999, USA) **C-127m.** \*\*\* D: Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Isaiah Washington, Denis Leary, James Woods. Harrowing drama about a reporter (Eastwood), who has lost his perspective in life and gets a chance at redemption when he gets to finish some research that was begun by a female colleague, who died in a car accident. He investigates the story of a criminal (Washington) who is to be executed in the prison of San Quentin for having murdered a pregnant teenager. Eastwood's research leads him to believe that the Afro American is innocent - but he has only 12 hours to prove that. Paper-thin, manipulative premise and incidental, unbelievable plot is offset by a superb dramatic pace, which keeps things boiling until the edge-of-your-seat finale. Eastwood's character is not very likable, but his is not the only principal role in the picture. A good, exciting film, but it lacks any deeper message whatsoever. Eastwood also produced.

**True Lies** (1994, USA) **C-144m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: James Cameron. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jamie Lee Curtis, Tom Arnold, Bill Paxton, Tia Carrere, Art Malik, Eliza Dushku, Charlton Heston. Action yarn made on a grand scale, about family father Schwarzenegger, who's also a secret agent ready to bust international terrorists. His family doesn't suspect anything, especially not his wife Curtis, but soon they are in over their heads. Entertaining, exciting action comedy willingly throws credibility overboard to deliver high-octane action entertainment. Plot takes second chair here. Based on the French film LA TOTALE! (1991), directed by Claude Zidi.

**True Romance** (1993, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Tony Scott. Starring Christian Slater, Patricia Arquette, Dennis Hopper, Gary Oldman, Brad Pitt, Christopher Walken, Val Kilmer,

Bronson Pinchot, Michael Rapaport, Saul Rubinek, Chris Penn, Tom Sizemore, Samuel L. Jackson. A great cast is brought together in what may be the best New-Generation picture of the 1990s. Slater falls in love with callgirl Arquette, shoots her pimp and together they take it on the lam with a suitcase full of high-grade cocaine. The mafia and the police are hot on their trails. The story may be pulp fiction but the thrill ride never lets up thanks to dynamic shoot-outs and highly stylized bloodletting. Best scene: Alabama's fight with a bad guy in the motel. Stand-outs in a brilliant cast: Oldman as Arquette's ultra-cool, ultra-violent pimp, Walken as a menacing Mafia kingpin, and Pitt as a constantly stoned hippie. Written by, as you might have guessed, Quentin Tarantino, who presents an updated version of Terrence Malick's 1973 cult film *BADLANDS* (this is especially noticeable in Hans Zimmer's brilliant score). Watch out for edited prints.

**True Story** (2015, USA) **C-99m. \*\*\* D:** Rupert Goold. Starring Jonah Hill, James Franco, Felicity Jones, Maria Dizzia, Ethan Suplee, Robert John Burke. When an incorrect article for the New York Times puts his career in jeopardy, journalist Hill retreats to his Montana home to contemplate his next moves. When he hears about the unbelievable case of a man who killed his family and who is preparing for his murder trial, he decides to contact him, also because the accused used his name before he got caught. A relationship between the men develops, but it's not quite clear where this will all lead. Engrossing, character-driven psycho drama is based on a true story (no pun intended). Releasing this dead-serious film right after the raunchy comedy *THE INTERVIEW* (2014) may seem like a stunt, but stars Hill and Franco pull it off with ease. Respect! Cowritten by director Goold.

**Truman Show, The** (1998, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\* D:** Peter Weir. Starring Jim Carrey, Laura Linney, Ed Harris, Noah Emmerich, Natascha McElhone, Holland Taylor, Brian Delate, Paul Giamatti, Harry Shearer. Truman Burbank (Carrey) seems to have dropped out of a painting by Norman Rockwell. He lives in a picture-perfect town, has a secure job, a beautiful wife ... a seemingly flawless existence. However, he is about to find out that his life is just a huge TV show, which started 30 years ago - when he was born. Sharply directed satire, strongly philosophical in its message, with a brilliant performance by Ed Harris as the initiator/producer of the show. Production design and score lift film well-above the average, though some viewers have criticized a one-dimensionality in the plot and a lack of exploiting the premise to its full potential. The ending certainly is a let-down. Written by the director.

**Trust** (2010, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David Schwimmer. Starring Clive Owen, Catherine Keener, Liana Liberato, Jason Clarke, Viola Davis, Chris Henry Coffey. Exceptional drama about a 14-year-old girl (Liberato), who befriends a boy on the internet and falls in love with him, unbeknownst that a much older man is behind this persona, which she realizes only when they meet. Harrowing, chilling events ensue, which put the well-functioning family to an extreme test. Well-acted, especially by Liberato, with scenes that are likely to put tears in your eyes. This is extremely heartfelt, intelligently scripted, psychologically valid, a must-see, perhaps even eye-opening for parents. Excellent piano score.

**Trust, The** (2016, USA) **C-92m. \*\*½ D:** Alex and Benjamin Brewer. Starring Nicolas Cage, Elijah Wood, Sky Ferreira, Jerry Lewis. Atypical heist movie set in Las Vegas, where run-down cop Cage persuades colleague Wood to break into a warehouse obviously used by drug traffickers. Wood is plagued by doubt whereas Cage is ready to do everything it takes to steal the loot. Veers towards drama towards the end and has relatively little action or suspense, film lives off its unpredictability and the stars' convincing performances. Lewis appears in two scenes as Cage's father.

**Trust the Man** (2005, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Bart Freundlich. Starring David Duchovny, Julianne Moore, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Billy Crudup, Eva Mendes, Ellen Barkin,

James LeGros, Bob Balaban, Bart Freundlich. Amusing slice-of-life comedy-drama about two couples with typical problems. Duchovny is at home caring for two little children, while his wife Moore is a successful actress with no interest in sex. Her brother Crudup is in a (childless) relationship with Gyllenhaal, which has now reached a crossroads. Telling observation of modern relationships, well-acted. Written by the director.

**Truth About Cats & Dogs, The** (1996, USA) **C-97m.** \*\* D: Michael Lehmann. Starring Uma Thurman, Janeane Garofalo, Ben Chaplin, Jamie Foxx, James McCaffrey. Lightweight romantic comedy about radio talk show and veterinarian Garofalo, who asks gorgeous but dumb blonde Thurman to claim she is her when a caller falls in love with her. Story is paper-thin and plot is based on coincidences, but manages to be cute and charming nonetheless. Thurman looks far from her prettiest.

**T2 Trainspotting** (2017, GBR) **C-117m.** \*\*½ D: Danny Boyle. Starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner, Jonny Lee Miller, Robert Carlyle, Anjela Nedyalkova. Sequel to Danny Boyle's breakthrough picture has McGregor return to the place of his youth. We meet his old friends as well as nemeses, as it becomes clear that mid-life crisis has struck them hard and their lives have not become better. Typically stylish, strikingly shot drama has some clever flashbacks and references to the original, but as many sequels go, this fails to ignite much interest. Carlyle comes off best as the angry con-man Franco.

**Tube** (2003, KOR) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Baek Woon-Hak. Starring Seok-Hun Kim, Sang-min Park, Du-na Bae, Oh-jung Kwon. Korean action thriller about a terrorist, who intends to kill an important politician in the subway system and a grudging cop's plan to stop him. Part of the complex story: A street girl who's in love with the cop and a subway worker, who's in love, too. Story set-up is filmed with style and elegance but halfway through film suffers from a lack of ideas and becomes overly melodramatic. No match for THE TAKING OF PELHAM 1 2 3 (1974) or SPEED (1994), but still a fairly good film. Korean title: TYUBEU.

**Tucker and Dale vs. Evil** (2010, CDN/USA/GBR/IND) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Eli Craig. Starring Tyler Labine, Alan Tudyk, Katrina Bowden, Jesse Moss, Philip Granger. Incredibly silly horror comedy about a group of college kids, who go camping in the woods. At the same time, the (harmless) hillbilly title characters movie into their recently purchased cabin in the woods for a vacation. A series of misunderstandings leads to the fact that either group thinks the other wants to kill them. One freak accident follows another. Almost becomes stupid towards the end. Still, some people think highly of it.

**Tue Mani sul Mio Corpo, Le** (1970, ITA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brunello Rondi. Starring Lino Capolicchio, Colette Descombes, Erna Schürer, Daniel Sola, José Quaglio. Bored, aimless, reckless but traumatized Capolicchio is at odds with his rich father and would rather be seduced by his stepmother, sexy Schürer. Then her friend Descombes arrives with her boyfriend and Capolicchio is immediately obsessed with her. His ideas get more and more bizarre, until the inevitable tragedy happens. Typically outré character drama, well-acted by Capolicchio and quite well-directed and edited (by Michele Massimo Tarantini). Real star of the film is Giorgio Gaslini's fine score, which carries it over slow spots. Recommended to people who like this kind of fare, others might be bored. Sergio Martino (whose brother Luciano coscripted and coproduced with Fellini-collaborator Rondi) is credited as production manager (literally *organizzatore generale*). English title: YOUR HANDS ON MY BODY.

**Tugt & Utugt** (2001, DEN) **C-73m.** \*\* D: Ghita Beckendorff, Torben Skjodt Jensen. Just okay documentary about pornography in Scandinavia: Denmark and Sweden were the first countries to legalize it in the 1960s. Archive footage of politicians discussing the phenomenon is shown, old interviews of people in the streets. Little to no time is invested in movies, which is a pity. Also known as MORE SEX PLEASE – WE'RE SCANDINAVIANS.

**Tulpa – Perdizioni Mortali** (2012, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Federico Zampaglione. Starring Claudia Gerini, Michela Cescon, Ian Franek, Giorgia Sinicorni, Michele Placido. Glossy but otherwise dull erotic thriller about businesswoman Gerini, who spends her nights in seedy sex club Tulpa. When her sex partners get killed one by one by a leather-clad psychopath, she becomes a suspect. Quite violent, but barely interesting, rather boring. Director Zampaglione (SHADOWS) also scripted (from a story by Dardano Sacchetti) and contributed to the score. English title: TULPA – DEMON OF DESIRE.

**Tuo Piacere è il Mio, Il** (1973, ITA) **C-84m.** D: Claudio Racca. Starring Ewa Aulin, Barbara Bouchet, Femi Benussi, Sylva Koscina, Erna Schürer, Lionel Stander, Leopoldo Trieste, Umberto Raho. Dreary, completely unfunny sex comedy about wife of impotent Stander, who seeks pleasure elsewhere. Talky scenes go on endlessly... you'll regret it after ten minutes if you popped it into your VCR because of that cast. English title: MY PLEASURE IS YOUR PLEASURE.

**Tuo Vizio è una Stanza Chiusa e Solo Io Ne Ho la Chiave, Il** (1972, ITA) **C-97m. \*\*½** D: Sergio Martino. Starring Luigi Pistilli, Anita Strindberg, Edwige Fenech, Ivan Rassimov, Franco Nebbia, Riccardo Salvina, Daniela Giordano, Carla Mancini, Bruno Boschetti. Martino's fourth giallo is mediocre mystery thriller about troubled writer Pistilli, who lives in a crumbling mansion with his neurotic wife Strindberg, who seems to be haunted by her husband's black cat. Then their black maid is murdered. Did Pistilli do it? Relatively thick plot, based on Edgar Allen Poe's *The Black Cat* leaves hardly any room for suspense. The performances are quite good, as is the score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: YOUR VICE IS A LOCKED ROOM AND ONLY I HAVE THE KEY, GENTLY BEFORE SHE DIES, EYE OF THE BLACK CAT, and EXCITE ME.

**Turbo** (2013, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: David Soren. Starring (the voices of) Ryan Reynolds, Paul Giamatti, Michael Pena, Samuel L. Jackson, Luis Guzman, Bill Hader, Snoop Dogg, Michelle Rodriguez, Mario Andretti. A simple garden snail likes to watch videos of his favourite racing star, dreaming of being part of the Indy 500 himself. One day he is accidentally sucked into an engine and gets a dose of nitro, making him a super-fast turbo-snail. Then he ends up in a run-down Taco diner, and the hapless driver has the idea of his life. Charming, funny feel-good movie with great characters (and characterizations). Disarming underdog story, great animation and exciting racing scenes, too. A winner, by Dreamworks Animation.

**Turbo Kid** (2015, CDN/NZL) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Francois Simard, Anouk Whissell, Yoann-Karl Whissell. Starring Munro Chambers, Laurence Laboeuf, Michael Ironside, Edwin Wright, Aaron Jeffery, Romano Orzari. Outrageous science-fiction splatterpunk movie is an instant cult item. In the post-apocalyptic wasteland, teen Chambers makes an enemy in bad guy Ironside, then dons a superhero costume and tries to survive with blond sidekick Apple (Laboeuf) and an Indy-like cowboy (Wright). Low-budget splatter movie is refreshing and charming, just don't expect it to be a MAD MAX clone, although it does reference a slew of 80s films, especially also with its design and cool synthesizer score. Good fun. All three directors have small roles, Simard and A. Whissell play the kid's parents.

**Turkey Shoot** (1982, AUS) **C-93m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Brian Trenchard-Smith. Starring Steve Railsback, Olivia Hussey, Michael Craig, Carmen Duncan, Noel Ferrier, Linda Stoner, Roger Ward. Science-fiction action exploitation (how about that for a genre) set in the near future, where rich guys have founded a Nazi-like concentration camp where the inmates are brutally tortured and a select few may take part in hunting game where they are the prey. Variation of THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME, has a nice futuristic look apart from generally intriguing premise, but film lacks punch and the characters are a mess. Has a MAD MAX

touch about it, but totally lacks its quality. Executive produced by John Daly and David Hemmings, who is also said to have done some second unit directing. Score by Brian May. Also known as BLOOD CAMP THATCHER, and ESCAPE 2000.

**Turks Fruit** (1973, NED) **C-104m. \*\*\*½ D:** Paul Verhoeven. Starring Rutger Hauer, Monique van de Ven, Wim van den Brink, Tommy Hurdeman, Dolf de Vries. Rebellious artist Hauer falls in love with beautiful van de Ven and marries her soon after, despite her mother's attempts to keep him away from her. Both funny and sad, film is riveting from start to finish and leads to a shattering conclusion. Verhoeven's superb, unpretentious direction shows life as it really is. Film is filled with graphic sex scenes but far from being a sex film, which is how many people wanted to label it upon release. This first-rate adult drama was Paul Verhoeven's second feature. Not to be missed. Hauer's and van de Ven's film debuts. Photographed by Jan de Bont. English title: TURKISH DELIGHT. Original version allegedly runs 107m.

**Turn of the Screw, The** (1992, GBR/FRA) **C-95m. \*½ D:** Rusty Lemorande. Starring Patsy Kensit, Stéphane Audran, Julian Sands, Marianne Faithfull. Poor direction kills this potentially intriguing tale by Henry James about a naïve governess (Kensit) who slowly learns that her two new protégés are not as adorable as they seem. Pointless updating of the turn-of-the-century story to the 1960s, irritating montage, low chill-factor. Read the book or watch the excellent adaptation THE INNOCENTS. Score by Simon Boswell.

**Tusk** (1978, FRA/IND) **C-119m. \*\* D:** Alejandro Jodorowsky. Starring Cyrielle Claire, Anton Diffring, Serge Merlin, Christopher Mitchum, Michel Peyrelon. Misfired fable by shock artist Jodorowsky, about the psychic link between a French girl and an elephant (named Tusk) in India, who were born at the same time. Comments on colonialization are pat, storyline less than engrossing. Some nice images, underscored by interesting music, generally solidly filmed. Jodorowsky completists may have a hard time finding this title; it's not really worth it (especially not the washed-out French-language video bootleg). Based on a novel by Reginald Campbell.

**Tusk** (2014, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Michael Parks, Justin Long, Haley Joel Osment, Genesis Rodriguez, Guy Lapointe (=Johnny Depp). Crazy horror comedy drama about podcaster Long, who makes a trip to Canada, intending to interview a YouTube star who accidentally cut off his own leg. Instead, he ends up in old seafarer Parks' mansion, who has devilish plans for him. Concept almost works, thanks to Parks' great performance and a nice suspense score, but story is too outlandish and not well-dramatized. The characters don't act plausible at all. Depp's supporting role is almost completely pointless (and unfunny). A companion piece, perhaps, to Smith's RED STATE (2011), which also starred Parks and had horror elements.

**Tutti Fratelli nel West... Per Parte di Padre** (1972, ITA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sergio Grieco. Starring Antonio Sabáto, Marisa Mell, Peter Carsten, Lionel Stander, Fernando Sancho, Franco Ressel, Tom Felleghy. Mild western parody about gunman Sabáto, who teams up with brothel owner Mell in finding missing pieces of gold which, when assembled, show a map leading to a gold mine. Leisurely paced, but somehow hard to dislike. Score by Riz Ortolani is quite nice. English titles: ALL THE BROTHERS OF THE WEST SUPPORT THEIR FATHER, MISS DYNAMITE, and WHERE THE BULLETS FLY.

**Tutti i Colori del Buio** (1972, ITA/SPA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Sergio Martino. Starring George Hilton, Edwige Fenech, Ivan Rassimov, Julián Ugarte, George Rigaud, Maria Cumani Quasimodo, Susan Scott (=Nieves Navarro), Marina Malfatti, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi), Tom Felleghy. Okay giallo mystery set in London about beautiful Fenech, who's been having nightmares since she lost her unborn child in an accident. Her boyfriend Hilton doesn't

believe in Fenech's psychoanalysis sessions, but then she meets her new neighbor Scott, who invites her to black magic sessions. Then the stalker from her nightmare turns up in real life. What exactly the mystery behind it all is, remains unclear for a long time. Fenech suffers the entire film convincingly, but the suffering gets to be too much at times. Has a bit of a ROSEMARY'S BABY touch, but director Martino (TORSO) has done better; there's just not enough suspense. Fairly good score by Bruno Nicolai. English titles: ALL THE COLORS OF THE DARK, DAY OF THE MANIAC, DEMONS OF THE DEAD, and THEY'RE COMING TO GET YOU.

**Tutto per Tutto** (1968, ITA/SPA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Umberto Lenzi. Starring Mark Damon, John Ireland, Raf Baldassarre, Fernando Sancho, Mónica Randall, Frank Brana. Typical spaghetti western about two gunslingers (Damon, Ireland), who hear of gold loot and try to get it for themselves. Some rivalry a la IL BUONO, IL BRUTTO, IL CATTIVO and slightly better plotted than others in this genre, but slow pace keeps this from being above-average. Score by Luis Enriquez Bacalov is a good Morricone imitation. Well-photographed by Alejandro Ulloa. English titles: COPPERFACE, ALL OUT, GO FOR BROKE; ONE FOR ALL.

**Twelfth Night** (1996, GBR) **C-134m. \*\*** D: Trevor Nunn. Starring Imogen Stubbs, Helena Bonham Carter, Toby Stephens, Nigel Hawthorne, Ben Kingsley, Richard E. Grant, Mel Smith. Generally lifeless adaptation of Shakespeare's fine comedy about the mistaken identity of twins and the complications (of love) which ensue. Well-produced but badly paced and overlong, film doesn't do justice to Shakespeare's fast-paced farce. Grant comes off best as the idiotic Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

**Twelve Monkeys** (1995, USA) **C-130m. \*\*\*½** D: Terry Gilliam. Starring Bruce Willis, Madeleine Stowe, Brad Pitt, Christopher Plummer, Frank Gorshin, David Morse, Jon Seda, Vernon Campbell, Roger Pratt. Dazzling sci-fi thriller drama, set in bleak future world of around 2030, where human beings are forced to dwell underground ever since a deadly virus has wiped out all life on the earth's surface. Willis plays a prison inmate, who is sent back in time to the 1990s to find out who is responsible for the plague. In the past he is committed to an insane asylum and meets lunatic Pitt, whose father is a recognized virologist. Complex plot, superb acting (especially by Willis and Pitt), appropriate direction by Gilliam, one of the most outstanding science-fiction films of the 1990s. References and allusions to Hitchcock's VERTIGO make this even more interesting to discuss. Based on LA JETEE, a 1962 French short film by Chris Marker.

**12 Years a Slave** (2013, USA/GBR) **C-134m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Steve McQueen. Starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, Benedict Cumberbatch, Michael K. Williams, Michael Fassbender, Brad Pitt, Dwight Henry, Quvenzhané Wallis. Period drama – based on a true story – about a free black family father (Ejiofor) who is abducted in 1841 Sarasota and deported to the South, where he is sold as a slave. The educated man finds it hard to endure the constant humiliations and torture, but ultimately succumbs to his fate. At first barely involving, dramatically flat, with shockingly violent torture scenes (which made some squeamish people label this a horror film), film improves considerably in second half, when psychotic Fassbender becomes the slave's master. Pace is slow, almost to the degree of a Haneke film, but production design and photography are beautiful and Hans Zimmer's score outstanding. Nominated for 9 Oscars.

**28 Days** (2000, USA) **C-104m. \*\*\*½** D: Betty Thomas. Starring Sandra Bullock, Viggo Mortensen, Dominic West, Elizabeth Perkins, Azura Skye, Steve Buscemi, Diane Ladd. Bullock plays an alcoholic whose latest escapade forces her to undergo a 28-day withdrawal treatment at a clinic. Predictable comedy drama is buoyed by Bullock's likable performance, which makes this contrivance actually credible. Still, this may make you long for a more serious treatment of alcoholism (like DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES or THE LOST WEEKEND).

**28 Days Later...** (2002, GBR/USA/NED) **C-113m. \*\*\* D:** Danny Boyle. Starring Cillian Murphy, Naomie Harris, Christopher Eccleston, Brendan Gleeson, Megan Burns, Noah Huntley. After a car accident, hospital patient Murphy awakens from a coma into an eerily deserted London. Stumbling through the city he finally meets someone and learns that a plague or a virus has wiped out civilization, with some infected people, behaving much like zombies, roaming the streets looking for blood. Harrowing, intriguing horror film is quite graphic, but does not forget to explore the characters' emotional development. The result is an intelligent, atmospheric thriller whose only fault is that it is sometimes too reminiscent of the zombie classics *DAWN OF THE DEAD* (1978) and *DAY OF THE DEAD* (1985), copying ideas or even entire scenes. Recommended to horror fans.

**28 Weeks Later** (2007, GBR/SPA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Juan Carlos Fresnadillo. Starring Catherine McCormack, Robert Carlyle, Jeremy Renner, Harold Perrineau, Imogen Poots. Pretty good sequel to Danny Boyle's *28 DAYS LATER...* (2002) takes place when all of Britain has been evacuated and the Rage Virus has been stopped. Now, in an operation controlled by U.S. armed forces, London is about to be repopulated. Carlyle, who barely survived the onslaught with a bad conscience as he left his wife behind, is expecting his son and daughter to join him as some of the first new inhabitants. As it turns out, somebody infected with the Rage Virus has survived... Fairly exciting, effectively edited zombie horror movie shows no mercy towards the children. The plot is only so-so, but horror fans should give it a look. Good score by John Murphy. Executive produced by Alex Garland and Danny Boyle (who is said to have done some 2<sup>nd</sup> unit directing).

**21 Jump Street** (2012, USA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Phil Lord, Chris Miller. Starring Jonah Hill, Channing Tatum, Ice Cube, Johnny Depp. Action comedy loosely based on the 1987 TV series starring Johnny Depp about two losers, who barely make it through police school, then foul up their first assignment (as bike cops!) and are sent back to high school as an undercover narc team. Some laugh-out-loud jokes and Hill's likable persona make it an okay view, although it's overlong and not really funny enough.

**20000 Leagues Under the Sea** (1954, USA) **C-127m. SCOPE \*\*\*½D:** Richard Fleischer. Starring Kirk Douglas, James Mason, Paul Lukas, Peter Lorre, Robert J. Wilke, Charles Grodin. Classic adventure based on the story by Jules Verne. Professor Lukas and his assistant Lorre travel the seas in search of mysterious sea monster that sinks entire ships. Then it turns out that it's actually a submarine navigated by eccentric Captain Nemo (Mason), who is at odds with civilization. When they board his submarine along with sailor Douglas, they are in for the ride of their lives. Rollicking entertainment, produced on a grand scale by Walt Disney. This was the studio's first feature in CinemaScope. Screenplay by Earl Felton. Oscar winner for Best Art Direction and Best Effects. Grodin's first film. Filmed before twice and several times since.

**Twice Upon a Time** (1983, USA) **C-75m. \*\*½ D:** John Korty, Charles Swenson. Starring (the voices of) Lorenzo Music, Marshall Efron, James Cranna, Julie Payne, Hamilton Camp, Paul Frees. Cult cartoon done *SOUTH PARK*-style (but, of course, years before) about a few dim-witted 'heroes' want to stop the world being flooded by nightmares. Not exactly elaborate, and much of this seems indeed improvised, with 'couldn't-care-less' voice performances. Still, its irreverent approach and limited availability have made it a cult film. Not really for children, considering the language used. Produced by none other than George Lucas. A 21-year-old David Fincher is credited with the special effects.

**Twilight** (1998, USA) **C-94m. \*\*\* D** Robert Benton. Starring Paul Newman, Susan Sarandon, Gene Hackman, Reese Witherspoon, Stockard Channing, James Garner, Giancarlo Esposito, Live Schreiber, M. Emmet Walsh, Lewis Arquette. Delightfully old-fashioned private eye yarn

with Newman sort-of reprising his role from director Benton's NOBODY'S FOOL. He plays a tired private eye who gets involved in a blackmail/murder case. Nicely subdued, but also lacking any dramatic edge, film peters out without a climax. For fans of its stars, as well as detective film nostalgics. Fine score by Elmer Bernstein. Witherspoon appears nude.

**Twilight** (2008, USA) **C-122m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Catherine Hardwicke. Starring Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Billy Burke, Ashley Greene, Nikki Reed, Jackson Rathbone, Kellan Lutz, Peter Facinelli. Adaptation of Stephenie Meyer's bestselling vampire novel about newcomer Stewart, who falls for mysterious classmate Pattinson, even though it turns out he is a vampire. Stylish, well-filmed, but not a horror film, maybe best described as a teen romance with the novelty that one of the lovers has fangs (although he doesn't, he's more of a non-traditional vampire). Holds your attention until finale, during which the film peters out without a satisfactory conclusion. Score by Carter Burwell. Followed by three sequels.

**Twilight Zone: The Movie** (1983, USA) **C-102m. \*\*½ D:** John Landis, Steven Spielberg, Joe Dante, George Miller. Starring Dan Aykroyd, Albert Brooks, Vic Morrow, John Larroquette, Scatmna Crothers, Kathleen Quinlan, Kevin McCarthy, John Lithgow, narrated by Burgess Meredith. Big-budgeted nonsense, consisting of four episodes, an homage to the 1960s television series "The Twilight Zone". The first segment, where racist Morrow is taught a lesson, is okay. The second, a gentle fantasy about staying young, is typically Spielbergian (=overblown). The third by Dante is outright annoying and completely nonsensical, as teacher Quinlan (never worse) befriends an unusual boy. The last episode by Miller, about paranoid boeing passenger Lithgow is well-directed and exciting. All in all, an exhausting experience and the proof that money alone can't make a good motion picture, Mr. Spielberg. At least it's quickly paced.

**Twin Dragons** (1992, HGK) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Tsui Hark, Ringo Lam. Starring Jackie Chan, Maggie Cheung, Teddy Robin. Jackie plays two twin brothers who were separated at birth and now meet as grown-ups in modern-day Hong Kong. While one is a street-smart crook, the other has made an international career as a conductor(!). Vintage directors Hark and Lam (who appear in small roles as car mechanics) make us forget that there is no plot derived from this premise, thank God! Powerful, dynamic action scenes make this film a feast for Jackie Chan fans. There *issilly* slapstick, but the action prevails most of the time. Hark also cowrote the screenplay. Score by Lowell Lo. John Woo has a cameo.

**Twinkle, Twinkle Lucky Stars** (1985, HGK) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Samo Hung. Starring Jackie Chan, Sibelle Hu, Samo Hung, Phillip Ko, Rosamund Kwan, Andy Lau, Richard Ng, Richard Norton, James Tien, Eric Tsang, Wu Ma, Michelle Yeoh, Yuen Biao. Sequel to MY LUCKY STARS (1985) is the last of Hung's buddy movies of the mid-80s and considerably more violent than WHEELS ON MEALS (1984). The plot is inexistent, the comedy works sporadically. The action sequences are very well-staged, but as they make up only 10% of the movie, it's hard to find redeeming words. For fans (although Jackie has a small role). Also known as THE TARGET and MY LUCKY STARS 2: TWINKLE, TWINKLE LUCKY STARS. Originally 105m.

**Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me** (1992, USA/FRA) **C-135m. \*\*\*½D:** David Lynch. Starring Sheryl Lee, Kyle MacLachlan, Chris Isaak, Ray Wise, David Bowie, Kiefer Sutherland. Prequel to the popular TV series shows that this kind of stuff really belongs to the big screen. Lee is perfect as Laura Palmer, who lives through an agonizing seven days before her death. The rest of the cast contributes but is ultimately outdone by Lynch's combined use of surrealism and mystery, which makes the film hypnotic and spellbinding, backed by Angelo Badalamenti's brilliant score. Contrary to Lynch's LOST HIGHWAY, Palmer's insanity never

swallows up the picture completely and provides the viewer with a satisfactory denouement. Lynch has a small role as an FBI agent who's hard of hearing.

**Twins** (1988, USA) **C-105m. \*\*\*½ D:** Ivan Reitman. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Danny DeVito, Kelly Preston, Chloe Webb, Bonnie Bartlett, Trey Wilson, David Caruso, Heather Graham. Popular but contrived comedy about adonis Schwarzenegger, who, after spending his entire life on a tropical island, learns that he has a twin brother and goes looking for him in the big city. Funny performance by DeVito, but film is too predictable and does not have enough laughs. Score by Georges Delerue and Randy Edelman. Director Reitman also produced.

**Twins of Evil** (1971, USA) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** John Hough. Starring Peter Cushing, Dennis Price, Mary Collinson, Madeleine Collinson, Damien Thomas, Isobel Black. Rather overlooked Hammer horror made in the vein of the production company's *VAMPIRE LOVERS* (1970) and *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE* (1971). Cushing gives a forceful performance as a self-professed witchhunter, whose orphaned nieces have come to live his house. One of them is prone to falling prey to local satanist count Thomas. Some stylish, atmospheric bits, erotic undertones and a violent finale make this recommendable. The script by Tudor Gates is better than usual (borrowing some characters from Sheridan LeFanu). The Collinsons were the first twins ever to become playmates for *Playboy* (before this movie); they are not bad. Also known as *THE GEMINI TWINS* and *THE TWINS OF DRACULA*.

**Twisted Brain** (1974, USA) **C-73m. \*\* D:** Larry N. Stouffer. Starring Pat Cardi, Austin Stoker, Rosie Holotik, John Niland, Jeff Alexander. High school nerd Cardi makes some experiments in biology, which turn him into a kind of monster (a nerdy avenger?), enabling him to exact revenge on those who humiliated him. Poorly acted, low-budget, but direction is not bad. A minor cult item for some. Original version may run 85m. Also known as *HORROR HIGH*.

**Twister** (1996, USA) **C-113m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jan de Bont. Starring Helen Hunt, Bill Paxton, Cary Elwes, Jami Gertz, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Lois Smith, Alan Ruck, Todd Field, Jake Busey. Exciting, action-packed thriller about a group of tornado experts, who go 'twister hunting', in order to find a better way of predicting them. Meteorologist Paxton, originally intending to get his wife Hunt's signature for the divorce papers, is drawn into the chase and must realize that they still belong together, much to the chagrin of his lover Gertz. Actioner doesn't give you time to say 'Ba'! Plot is indefensible but it doesn't matter in this thrill ride. Written by Michael Crichton and Anne-Marie Martin. Rated PG-13 for 'intense depiction of very bad weather'(!).

**Twixt** (2011, USA) **C-85m. \*½ D:** Francis Ford Coppola. Starring Val Kilmer, Elle Fanning, Bruce Dern. Horror novelist Kilmer makes a book-signing stop in a small town with an unusual past. Sheriff and would-be writer Dern tells him that Edgar Allen Poe once stayed at the local inn, and a mass murder is still haunting the townspeople's conscience. Pretty terrible 'thriller', shot with a digital camera, pretentious and poorly scripted. And you can't help but think that overweight Kilmer is playing himself. Fanning is wasted.

**Two Brothers** (2004, GBR/FRA) **C-109m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Jean-Jacques Annaud. Starring Guy Pearce, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, Freddie Highmore, Oanh Nguyen, Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu. Beautiful tale of two tiger babies, who are trapped early in life and grow up in captivity in what looks like 1950s South East Asia. Hunter Pearce and boy Highmore keep an affection for them up to their adulthood. Good score, impressive photography, from the director of *THE BEAR / L'OURS* (1988). French title: *DEUX FRERES*.

**2 Days in the Valley** (1996, USA) **C-104m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** John Herzfeld. Starring Danny Aiello, James Spader, Eric Stoltz, Greg Cruttwell, Jeff Daniels, Teri Hatcher, Glenna Headley, Peter Horton, Marsha Mason, Paul Mazursky, Charlize Theron, Keith Carradine, Louise

Fletcher, Austin Pendleton, Lawrence Tierney. Amusing, stylish thriller about several characters (cops, killers, crooks, snobs, suicidal film directors and other people like you and me) whose lives intertwine during the course of the film. Credibility factor is low but well-acted by the whole cast and well-shot in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley by Oliver Wood. An entertaining PULP FICTION variation.

**Two Evil Eyes** (1990, USA/ITA) **C-120m. \*\*½ D:** George A. Romero, Dario Argento. Starring Adrienne Barbeau, Romy Zada, Bingo O'Malley, Harve Keitel, Madeleine Potter, John Amos, Sally Kirkland, Kim Hunter, Martin Balsam. Two of the most important horror film directors collaborated in this two-part chiller, whose stories were based on Edgar Allan Poe stories. Romero's episode ('The Fact in the Case of Mr. Valdemar') is about a woman who intends to keep her dying husband alive until his money is hers. To her horror, he stays 'alive' even after his death. Argento remakes the classic 'The Black Cat', casting Keitel as a crime photographer, who becomes obsessed with the title creature and is finally driven to murder. Both adaptations are unfortunately overlong and lack punch, only Argento manages to thrill – intermittently. For the directors' followers. Italian title: DUE OCCHI DIABOLICI.

**Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll, The** (1960, GBR) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Terence Fisher. Starring Paul Massie, Dawn Addams, Christopher Lee, David Kossoff, Francis De Wolff, Oliver Reed. Hammer Film production of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic novella about mad scientist Dr. Jekyll (Massie), who conjures up demon in himself in the form of diabolical Mr. Hyde. Good production values, but lacks an edge. The actors can't be faulted, nor the beautiful design. Only novelty is that Hyde is attractive and Jekyll really ugly.

**Two-Lane Blacktop** (1971, USA) **C-103m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Monte Hellman. Starring James Taylor, Warren Oates, Laurie Bird, Dennis Wilson. Time capsule and cult movie in the closest sense of the term about three car drivers, who agree to make a race across America to Washington D.C. It's a Chevy '55 and a G.T.O. '70 and the road. Existentialist, minimalist movie-making, pure Americana, a document of the hippie generation. Languid pacing contributes to unique atmosphere. A must-see.

**Two Minute Warning** (1976, USA) **C-115m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Larry Peerce. Starring Charlton Heston, John Cassavetes, Martin Balsam, Beau Bridges, Marilyn Hassett, David Janssen, Jack Klugman, Gena Rowlands, Walter Pidgeon, Brock Peters. Little-known addition to the disaster movie canon features an ultra-cool Heston as security chief of a football stadium, who's got his hands full during a major-league game. There is a sniper on the stadium's scoreboard and Heston must avert a panic among the 90,000+ visitors. Good production values, technically fine, with some dynamic scenes, but all that cannot camouflage emptiness of the plot. This one is only perpetuated by its admittedly intriguing premise. Lengthened for TV, with an added subplot about the sniper's motives. Based on a novel by George La Fountaine Sr.

**2046 (Two-Oh-Four-Six)** (2004, HKG/CHI/FRA/GER) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Wong Kar Wai. Starring Tony Leung, Gong Li, Faye Wong, Takuya Kimura, Zhang Ziyi, Carina Lau, Chang Chen, Maggie Cheung. Director Wong's conclusion of his trilogy begun with DAYS OF BEING WILD (1991) and IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE (2000) may well be his masterpiece. A visual poem about thoughtful writer Leung, who lives in late 1960s Hong Kong and finds himself attracted to several women around his hotel room. He is concocting a science-fiction novel titled 2046 (also a room number), which stands for a place of longing, desires and love. No one, he claims, has returned from it once traveled there. Plot is minimal, but direction and cinematography create such a rich atmosphere that you will be hypnotized. Great score by Shigeru Umabayashi includes some excellent classical themes. Photographed by Christopher

Doyle. Praise also goes to William Chang, who edited the film, designed the production and the costumes.

**2001: A Space Odyssey** (1968, GBR) **C-139m. SCOPE \*\*\*\*** D: Stanley Kubrick. Starring Keir Dullea, Gary Lockwood, William Sylvester, Daniel Richter, Leonard Rossiter, voice of HAL: Douglas Rain. Unprecedented - and unmatched - masterpiece of filmmaking, a perfect symbiosis of form and content, brilliantly conceived by directorial genius Stanley Kubrick. Based on Arthur C. Clarke's story *The Sentinel*, this science-fiction film deals with the evolution of mankind four million years ago, juxtaposing it with the highly advanced civilization of the 21st century. The link between the past and the future: A black monolith, perfectly smooth in structure, which, as a symbol of a divine, or extra-terrestrial, power influences the development of mankind. The same object, which appeared as a crucial element to the 'Dawn of Man', signifying enlightenment, is rediscovered under the moon's surface. When an expedition to the Jupiter is initiated in order to find out about the origins of the monolith, an astronaut (Dullea) is presented with a revelation he cannot begin to understand. Brilliant cinematography by Geoffrey Unsworth and John Alcott, outstanding special effects (designed and directed by Kubrick himself) and a haunting classical score (by Johann Strauss) make this an unforgettable experience. Cut from original 156/160m. version by Kubrick after film's premiere. This is one of those films which ought to be watched in a movie theater. Followed by a sequel called 2010. Filmed in Cinerama and Super Panavision.

**2010** (1984, USA) **C-116m. \*\*\*** D: Peter Hyams. Starring Roy Scheider, John Lithgow, Helen Mirren, Bob Balaban, Keir Dullea, Dana Elcar, voices of Douglas Rain, Candice Bergen. Suspenseful follow-up to 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968), a film that would have needed no sequel. Scientist Scheider joins a Russian space crew in a mission to the abandoned Discovery spaceship near Jupiter to find out what went wrong in the original mission with Dullea. Can HAL 9000 be reactivated? Complicating things is a Cold War crisis between Russia and the U.S., which might jeopardize the mission. A satisfying concoction, with superb effects and believable performances, a winner. Written and photographed by director Hyams. Based on Arthur C. Clarke's novel, which was followed by another (unfilmed) sequel, *2061*. Clarke has a cameo on a park bench.

**Two-Way Stretch** (1960, GBR) **78m. \*\*\*½** D: Robert Day. Starring Peter Sellers, David Lodge, Bernard Cribbins, Wilfrid Hyde-White, Maurice Denham, Lionel Jeffries, Robert Day. Quite amusing comedy about Sellers and his two buddies, prisoners in a correctional facility, who – shortly before release – plan to “leave” jail unnoticed to commit a crime. Not completely successful but finale is a treat. For fans of British comedies.

**Überfall, Der** (2000, AUT) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Florian Flicker. Starring Roland Düringer, Josef Hader, Joachim Bissmeier. A frustrated 32-year-old car mechanic (Düringer) sees the only solution to his problems in robbing a supermarket. He chickens out at the cashier's desk and ends up in a tailor's shop across the street. He takes him and customer Hader hostage – just then the supermarket is really robbed and the police cordon off the scene, making it impossible for Düringer to escape. Grotesque crime drama is quite unpredictable – which makes up the film's charm – but Düringer is playing for laughs when there are none, only a few chuckles at best. Has more than its share of plot holes and deliberately abandons logic at times. Hader is good as usual. International title: HOLD-UP.

**Uccello dalle Piume di Cristallo, L'** (1970, ITA/GER) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Dario Argento. Starring Tony Musante, Suzy Kendall, Enrico Maria Salerno, Eva Renzi, Werner Peters, Mario Adorf, Umberto Raho, Renato Romano, Reggie Nalder. Dario Argento's first feature film as a director is a mystery in the giallo-tradition about an American writer (Musante) who starts investigating a murder series in Rome after he witnesses the killer's attempt to murder the

beautiful wife (Renzi) of a gallery owner. Not so much on target and not as unrelentingly sinister as the director's later films, but well-directed, suspenseful and quite appealing if the unmotivated, second-rate script (by Argento himself) is tolerated. Unusual, very good score by Ennio Morricone. Based on the novel *The Screaming Mimi* by Fredric Brown. Alternative titles: THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE, and PHANTOM OF TERROR. The German version, titled DAS GEHEIMNIS DER SCHWARZEN HANDSCHUHE, is cut by seven minutes.

**Uchu Kara no Messeji** (1978, JAP) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Kinji Fukasaku. Starring Vic Morrow, Sonny Chiba, Philip Casnoff, Peggy Lee Brennan, Chris Isaak. Japan's answer to STAR WARS (1977) is often inept sci-fi comedy about an human-like race that has been enslaved by evil aliens threatening to wipe out their planet completely. In a desperate attempt to call for help, 8 walnuts are sent out into space, and a group of space renegades become the chosen redeemers. Complete with a funny little robot and Princess Meia(!), this can't hold a candle to the original and is quite cheap to look at. Some engaging performances help. Otherwise this is pure trash (which doesn't mean it's bad). Filmed in VistaVision with an aspect ratio of 2.00:1. English titles: MESSAGE FROM SPACE, and RETURN TO JELUCIA.

**U-571** (2000, USA) **C-116m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jonathan Mostow. Starring Matthew McConaughey, Bill Paxton, Harvey Keitel, Jon Bon Jovi, David Keith, Thomas Kretschmann, Jake Weber. Well-cast thriller set during World War Two, about a secret mission to steal an important encoding device from a damaged German submarine. Film wastes too much time on characterization, but delivers enough suspense in the final thirty minutes. Good effects.

**Ugly, The** (1997, NZL) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Scott Reynolds. Starring Paolo Rotondo, Rebecca Hobbs, Roy Ward, Vanessa Byrnes, Sam Wallace, Paul Glover, Chris Graham, Jennifer Ward-Lealand. Psychoanalyst Hobbs arrives at an asylum for the criminally insane to interview serial killer Rotondo. In flashbacks we are told his story, from a childhood of abuse to his seemingly unmotivated murders. Psychothriller is not as chilling or scary as it wants to be, with avantgarde editing and surreal scenes that don't work. Still, worth a look, depending on your tolerance for the subject matter. Photography is quite nice. One oddity: The blood spilt in the movie is black until the final frame. Director Reynolds also scripted.

**Ugly Truth, The** (2009, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Robert Luketic. Starring Katherine Heigl, Gerard Butler, Bree Turner, Eric Winter, Nick Searcy, Judy Greer, Cheryl Hines. Contrived romantic comedy about TV producer Heigl, who must contend with her network's latest star, the foul-mouthed, misogynistic comedian Butler. After a while they become friends, especially when he helps her get her too-good-to-be-true dream guy. After a few funny rants, this doesn't ring true anymore and becomes annoyingly contrived. Heigl and Butler have very little chemistry.

**Ulisse** (1955, ITA/USA) **C-100m. \*\*\*** D: Mario Caimano. Starring Kirk Douglas, Silvana Mangano, Anthony Quinn, Rossana Podestà, Sylvie, Piero Lulli. Underrated adventure classic with Douglas a most convincing Ulysses, who gets washed ashore an amnesiac, until he remembers there's his wife Penelope (Mangano) waiting for him ever since the end of the Trojan war. In flashbacks, we are told Ulysses's adventures. Well-produced epic by Dino De Laurentiis and Carlo Ponti, unfortunately not shot in widescreen. Some sources wrongly credit Mario Bava as a co-director; the maestro directed the Polyphemus episode in a 1968 TV version of Homer's *Iliad*. English title: ULYSSES.

**Ulisse Contro Ercole** (1962, ITA/FRA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*½** D: Mario Caiano. Starring Georges Marchal, Mike Lane, Alessandra Panaro, Dominique Boschero, Gabriele Tinti, Raf Baldassarre. Blah peplum epic about Ulysses, who tries to catch Hercules but soon learns that they must join forces in defeating the evil ruler of an underground tribe. Has some

watchable twenty minutes in the first half, the rest is simply boring. English titles: ULYSSES AGAINST HERCULES, and ULYSSES AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES.

**Ultima Senora Anderson, La** (1971, SPA/ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½D:** Eugenio Martín. Starring Carroll Baker, Michael Craig, Miranda Campa, José Luis López Vásquez, Marina Malfatti. Widower Craig, whose three(!) previous wives have all died in accidents is tried for murder but pronounced not guilty. Inspector Vásquez refuses to believe the man to be innocent. Then beautiful Baker moves into the neighborhood and Craig falls in love again. Will she be the next – or last – Mrs Anderson? Rare giallo that only saw a Greek video release in the mid-1980s isn't that special, although plot keeps you interested. Not violent at all. Fine score by Piero Umiliani. Also known as DEATH AT THE DEEP END OF THE SWIMMING POOL, THE FOURTH MRS ANDERSON, and THE FOURTH VICTIM.

**Ultimate Fights from the Movies** (2002, USA) **C-53m. n/r D:** none credited. DVD-compilation of fight scenes from more or less famous movies like John Woo's THE KILLER (1989), De Palma's SCARFACE (1983) or Ridley Scott's GLADIATOR (2000). Some interesting trivia information is given, but fights never are as exciting as in the movies themselves, where they are placed in proper context. Superfluous.

**Ultimate Warrior, The** (1975, USA) **C-94m. \*½ D:** Robert Clouse. Starring Yul Brynner, Max von Sydow, Joanna Miles, William Smith, Stephen McHattie, Lane Bradbury. Low-key, unexciting science-fiction outing set in 2012 New York City, which is almost completely abandoned after natural disasters. Von Sydow hires Brynner to bring his pregnant daughter out to safety. A major disappointment, since such an apocalyptic premise is always intriguing. Written by the director.

**Ultime Grida dalla Savana (La Grande Caccia)** (1974, ITA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Antonio Climati, Mario Morra. Narrated by Alberto Moravia. Italian documentary about the humans' need for and fascination with the hunt, showing countless scenes of humans chasing animals and animals dying. Interestingly, the humans here as portrayed with the same distance as the beasts. Surprisingly well-photographed and effectively edited, this mondo movie is occasionally off-putting, though. Score by Carlo Savina. Co-director Climati was cinematographer for the genre classics MONDO CANE (1962) and AFRICA ADDIO (1966). Original version runs longer. English titles: SAVAGE MAN... SAVAGE BEAST, SAVAGE TEMPTATION, THE GREAT HUNTING, and ZUMBALAH. Followed by SAVANA SANTA (1976) and DOLCE E SELVAGGIO (1983).

**Ultimi Giorni di Pompei, Gli** (1959, ITA/SPA/GER) **C-97m. SCOPE\*\* D:** Mario Bonnard. Starring Steve Reeves, Christine Kaufmann, Barbara Carroll, Anne Marie Baumann, Mimmo Palmara. Weakly plotted costumer about Roman legionary Reeves, who comes to aid of Christian maid Kaufmann. Talky drama is only interesting for the talents involved in the making of the film: Screenplay by Ennio de Concini, Sergio Leone, Sergio Corbucci and Duccio Tessari. Leone also directed the second unit. Color direction by Jorge Grau. E. Bulwer-Lytton novel filmed before in 1935. English title: THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEI.

**Ultimi Zombi, Gli** (1979, ITA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Tisa Farrow, Ian McCulloch, Richard Johnson, Al Cliver, Annetta Gay. First of the Italian Zombie films, made in the wake of George Romero's DAWN OF THE DEAD. In the Caribbean Sea zombies wreak havoc among the population. Farrow is soon under attack as she comes looking for her father on a tiny island. This is perhaps the best Zombie imitation of them all: direction, score, photography all above average. The make-up and splatter effects are excellent. A must for gorehounds; everyone else will probably be repelled. The splinter-in-the-eye scene is now considered a classic. Director Fulci appears as the chief of police. Alternative titles: ZOMBIES

2, ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS, and ZOMBIE, which was the film's U.S. release title. Note: The uncut Pal print runs 87 minutes and 30 seconds.

**Ultimo dei Vikinghi, L'** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Giacomo Gentilomo, Mario Bava. Starring Cameron Mitchell, Edmund Purdom, Isabelle Corey, Hélène Rémy, Aldo Bufi Landi, George Ardisson, Andrea Cecchi, Piero Lulli. Rather tense action film (one of Italy's answers to Richard Fleischer's THE VIKINGS) about Viking Prince Mitchell, who swears for revenge when he returns home and finds that Scandinavian king Purdom has wiped out his father's kingdom. Tedious plotting is occasionally enlivened by invigorating acting and score (by Roberto Nicolosi). Mario Bava did some re-shoots for this film. His involvement is evident in some interesting, romantic lighting. English title: THE LAST OF THE VIKINGS.

**Ultimo Deseo, L'** (1976, SPA) **C-82m. \*\*½ D:** Leon Klimovsky. Starring Nadiuska, Albert Mennen (=Alberto de Mendoza), Tony Kendall, Paul Mackey (=Naschy), Maria Pershing (=Perschy), Teresa Gimpera. During a secret ceremony honoring the Marquis de Sade, a sudden fall-out shocks the prominent guests at a remote villa. It seems there has been a nuclear explosion and everyone who was outside is contaminated and now blind. Apocalyptic horror is too cheap and neglects characterization, although the plotting is appropriately vague and the general idea thrilling. Original version runs 94m. English title: THE PEOPLE WHO OWN THE DARK.

**Ultimo Treno della Notte, L'** (1975, ITA) **C-94m. \*\* D:** Aldo Lado. Starring Flavio Bucci, Macha Méril, Gianfranco de Grassi, Enrico Maria Salerno, Marina Berti, Franco Fabrizi, Irene Miracle, Laura D'Angelo. Infamous exploitation film from Italy obviously copies the tone of Wes Craven's questionable 'classic' LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972) as the literal translation means LAST TRAIN OF THE NIGHT. Two sadistic thugs running from the police board a train and terrorize some passengers, among them two girls on their way home for Christmas. Not that bad, but pretty vile, pseudo-critical like the later FUNNY GAMES. Score by Ennio Morricone! English titles: DON'T RIDE ON LATE NIGHT TRAINS, LAST STOP ON THE NIGHT TRAIN, NIGHT TRAIN MURDERS, TORTURE TRAIN, and even XMAS MASSACRE.

**Ultimo Uomo della Terra, L'** (1964, ITA/USA) **86m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Sidney Salkow, Ubaldo Ragona. Starring Vincent Price, Franca Bettoia, Emma Danieli, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Umberto Rau, Christi Courtland. Adaptation of Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend* stars Vincent Price as the only survivor of a deadly plague which has wiped out human civilization. The only *other* survivors are zombies who Price kills by driving a stake into their hearts. Price is less hammy than usual, struggling with the second-rate script. Occasional atmosphere and the fact that this was obviously an inspiration for George A. Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) make it interesting for horror buffs. But please don't watch the poor Diamond DVD, which makes the film look like an early talkie. Photographed in widescreen by Franco delli Colli. Remade with Charlton Heston in THE OMEGA MAN. Most common English title: THE LAST MAN ON EARTH.

**Umanoide, L'** (1979, ITA) **C-100m. \*\* D:** George B. Lewis (=Aldo Lado). Starring Richard Kiel, Corinne Clery, Leonard Mann, Barbara Bach, Ivan Rassimov, Arthur Kennedy, Massimo Serato, Venantino Venantini. Apart from being a blatant STAR WARS rip-off, this Italian trash movie features Bond-villain Kiel as a TERMINATOR-like humanoid, who is given instructions by mad scientist Kennedy to kill brother of evil Lord Graal, who wants to take over Metropolis (formerly known as Earth). This actually has more plot than STAR WARS but is light-years away from being as entertaining. Some nice sets and location work, as well as a score by Ennio Morricone make it watchable. English title: THE HUMANOID.

**Umi Ga Kikoeru** (1993, JAP) **C-72m. \*\*\* D:** Tomomi Mochizuki. Starring (the voices of) Nobuo Tobita, Toshihiko Seki, Yoko Sakamoto, Yuri Amano, Kae Araki. Another one of Studio

Ghibli's childhood / teen reminiscences, this one plays like a sequel or remake of OMOHIDE PORO PORO aka ONLY YESTERDAY (1991). On his trip to a high school reunion, Tobita remembers the time he spent with his best friend and a young girl that was transferred to their school and turned quite a couple of heads. He had to learn that she was quite a lost soul. Irresistible romantic drama with a wonderful piano and synthesizer score by Shigeru Nagata, this could have been a knock-out with a more satisfying script, but is a winner nonetheless. Made for television. Based on a novel by Saeko Himuro. English titles: I CAN HEAR THE SEA, and OCEAN WAVES.

**Unaccompanied Minors** (2006, USA) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Paul Feig. Starring Lewis Black, Wilmer Valderrama, Tyler James Williams, Dyllan Christopher. Some laughs in comedy about five kids stranded at Hoover International Airport during a blizzard – and it's Christmas Eve! The general manager hates X-mas and tries to keep the children locked away, but he hasn't reckoned with their cleverness. Standard fare, kids will find this funny. Also known as GROUNDED.

**Una de Zombis** (2003, SPA) **C-99m. \*\*** D: Miguel Angel Lamata. Starring (Miguel Angel) Aijón, Miguel Aparicio, Mayte Navales, Nacho Rubio, Salomé Jiménez. Santiago Segura. Nerd Aijón is thrown out by his parents and he ends up with loser Aparicio. Soon they come up with the idea of making a horror film, but satanists sort of mar the project. Amusing horror comedy entertains for a while, becomes absurd plotwise towards the end. Watch in company, with beer. Also known as UNA DE ZOMBIES.

**Una Sull'Altra** (1969, ITA/FRA/SPA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Jean Sorel, Marisa Mell, Elsa Martinelli, Alberto de Mendoza, John Ireland, Riccardo Cucciolla, Georges Rigaud, Jean Sobieski, Faith Domergue, Lucio Fulci. Sex & Crime, set in San Francisco: Sorel, a successful doctor who owns a clinic, has troubles with his sick wife. When she dies – apparently murdered – the police think he had her killed. In a night club Sorel meets a stripper, who has a stunning likeness to his wife. Is she her twin sister? Intriguing mystery, with lots of period flavor, good direction and camerawork, as well as a rich, bouncy score by Riz Ortolani. Fulci's first giallo is especially interesting for his fans, who can compare this to LUCERTOLA CON LA PELLE DI DONNA (1971), though it's not a rabidly stylish or violent. Also known as PERVERSION STORY, ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER, and UNA HISTORIA PERVERSA.

**Unbearable Lightness of Being, The** (1988, USA) **C-171m. \*\*\*** D: Philip Kaufman. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Juliette Binoche, Lena Olin, Derek de Lint, Erland Josephson. Slow-moving but well-made adaptation of Milan Kundera's bestseller about surgeon (Day-Lewis), who has a very liberal attitude towards love until he meets Binoche, a stubborn woman, who changes his life. Well-acted drama almost seems a misfire (especially to those who haven't read the book), because it treats the characters with super-ficiality and fails to establish an emotional bond between the audience and the protagonists, because too many thoughts remain unspoken. They seem to be taken for granted. Still worth the time. Set in 1968 Prague, at the time of the revolution. Photographed by Sven Nykvist. Produced by Saul Zaentz.

**Unbreakable** (2000, USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Bruce Willis, Samuel L. Jackson, Robin Wright Penn, Spencer Treat Clark, Charlayne Woodard, Eamonn Walker, M. Night Shyamalan. Director Shyamalan's follow-up to his hugely successful THE SIXTH SENSE is equally atmospheric and fascinating fantasy drama about family father Willis, who comes to a turning point in his life when he is the only survivor of a train wreck and realizes that he has never ever been sick. Comic book fanatic Jackson may know why... Well-acted chiller builds slowly but surely to the final twist, which is unfortunately not as powerful as the one in THE SIXTH SENSE. Another remarkable feature from the young director, who also produced and wrote the script.

**Uncle Silas** (1947, GBR) **B&W-103m. \*\*\*** D: Charles Frank. Starring Jean Simmons, Katina Paxinou, Derrick De Marney, Derek Bond, Sophie Stewart, Esmond Knight. First screen-adaptation of the gothic novel classic by Irishman Sheridan Le Fanu (Camilla). Simmons (then 18) plays a girl, whose late father's will places her in the care of evil title character De Marney, who may be after her inheritance. Creatively directed and well-acted, a fine example of a gothic chiller. Same story filmed in Argentina the same year, and Peter O'Toole starred as Uncle Silas in a 1987 made-for-TV remake titled **THE DARK ANGEL**. Photographed by Robert Krasker. Also known as **THE INHERITANCE**.

**Uncovered** (1994, GBR/SPA) **C-106m. \*\*½** D: Jim McBride. Starring Kate Beckinsale, Pauge Behan, John Wood, Art Malik, Sinead Cusack, Michael Gough. A young restaurator (Beckinsale) discovers a hidden inscription in a medieval painting by van Huys and tries to find out its meaning, which is linked to a game of chess the characters in the painting are playing. Soon she 'uncovers' that the chess figures not only have relevance in the medieval characters' lives but also in her own, as people she knows well are murdered, each obviously representing one of the figures. Intriguing premise is unspectacularly executed by director McBride, who shows some style but is let down by script that manages to become more and more *unexciting* towards the end. May hold up if you fail to guess the killer's identity.

**Undead** (2003, AUS) **C-104m. \*\*½** D: The Spierig Brothers. Starring Felicity Mason, Mungo McKay, Rob Jenkins, Lisa Cunningham, Dirk Hunter, Emma Randall. Well-directed splatter movie should please fans: A sudden attack from the sky (by aliens?) turns people into hungry zombies, and a group of survivors, led by eccentric fisherman McKay must try to escape. Plot never escapes certain strangeness, but zombie scenes work well, and (padded-out) ending gives it a cult touch. Competent score by Cliff Bradley. Written by Michael and Peter Spierig, whose first film this was.

**Under the Bed** (2012, USA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Steven C. Miller. Starring Jonny Weston, Gattlin Griffith, Peter Holden, Musetta Vander. Horror film about troubled teen Weston, who returns to his childhood home after spending two years in rehab. It turns out the reason for his absence was an extreme fear of what was lurking under his bed. His younger brother is also stricken with this anxiety. What kind of monster is hiding there? Starts interesting, with a vague hint towards things to come, but when the monster materializes the movie goes overboard and tries to make us believe the brothers will fight it instead of running away, with some needlessly stupid supporting characters like the father.

**Under the Shadow** (2016, GBR/QAT/JOR/IRN) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Babak Anvari. Starring Narges Rashidi, Avin Manshadi, Bobby Naderi. Quite good horror chiller set in Iran of the 1980s with the civil war and the threat of bombs looming over every-day life of aspiring doctor Rashidi and her family. When her husband goes away on business, leaving his wife and their little child behind, something sinister awakens in the apartment house and starts haunting them. Interesting to watch, with some effective scenes, but falters at the metaphorical ending. Give it a try, might have been influenced by **THE BABADOOK** (2014). Filmed in Jordan.

**Under the Skin** (2013, USA/GBR/SUI) **C-108m. \*\*\*** D: Jonathan Glazer. Starring Scarlett Johansson. Fascinating, hypnotic film marks director Glazer's first film since **BIRTH** (2004). Johansson plays a woman mysteriously travelling by car through Scotland, picking up men and obviously seducing them. From the beginning we realize something is wrong with her, is she even human? Dead-slow parts are offset by stylish bits. Subject matter and presentation may be a matter of taste, but there is ample time for personal rumination and discovering the subtext. Brilliant score by Mica Levi. Male characters all played by amateurs. Based on the novel by Michel Faber.

**Under the Tuscan Sun** (2003, USA/ITA) **C-113m.** \*\*½ D: Audrey Wells. Starring Diane Lane, Sandra Oh, Lindsay Duncan, Raoul Bova, Vincent Riotta, Mario Monicelli. Pleasant drama about Lane, who is shocked by a sudden divorce and takes up the chance to get away from it all on a trip to Tuscany, Italy. The beautiful scenery inspires her to buy a run-down villa, and guess what, life and love seems to return to her. Harmless, clichéd, enhanced by beautiful Italian scenery and architecture.

**Underworld** (1985, GBR) **C-103m.** \*½ D: George Pavlou. Starring Denholm Elliott, Steven Berkoff, Larry Lamb, Nicola Cowper, Irina Brook, Art Malik, Ingrid Pitt, Miranda Richardson. One of those supposedly stylish, neon-light movies of the mid-1980s: Lamb is assigned to bring back prostitute kidnapped by so-called 'Underworlders', disfigured freaks hoping to get a life-saving drug in return. Very strange horror film moves at a disastrous pace. Only notable in so far as it was Clive Barker's feature debut (as cowriter of the script, from his story). Also known as TRANSMUTATIONS.

**Unearthing, The** (1994, USA) **C-82m.** ½ D: Wrye Martin, Barry Poltermann. Starring Norman Moses, Tina Ona Paukstelis, John Kishline, Flora Coker. Endless splatter movie about pregnant Paukstelis, who sells her unborn child to Moses and his family, unaware that they are harboring a Polynesian demon, which feeds on unborn children. Technically okay, but disturbing and much too slowly paced. For splatter freaks only. Alternative title: ASWANG.

**Unfinished Life, An** (2005, USA/GER) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\* D: Lasse Hallström.** Starring Robert Redford, Jennifer Lopez, Morgan Freeman, Josh Lucas, Damian Lewis, Camryn Manheim. Satisfying film about aged cowboy Redford, who can't deal with sudden appearance of his daughter-in-law Lopez and her child at his farm. Lopez is running from her second husband, who abuses her. Quiet but well-paced, well-made drama benefits from unbeatable Redford performance and nice locations.

**Unhook the Stars** (1996, FRA/USA) **C-105m.** \*\*\* D: Nick Cassavetes. Starring Gena Rowlands, Marisa Tomei, Gérard Depardieu, Moira Kelly, Jake Lloyd, David Thornton, David Sherrill, Clint Howard. Bittersweet, heartrending drama about elderly woman (Rowlands) whose husband has died and whose children are grown-ups who live their own life independently from her. One day she befriends a troubled neighbor (Tomei), who asks her to look after her little boy. She becomes his nanny, and slowly a close bond grows between them. Sensitive drama, buoyed by Rowland's wonderful performance. Depardieu also coproduced the film. Director Cassavetes is Rowlands' and John Cassavetes' son.

**Unkindness of Ravens, The** (2016, GBR) **C-85m. BOMB D: Lawrie Brester.** Starring Michael Brewster, Ross Campbell. Stay away from this amateurish mess of a movie about a war veteran who is sent to a remote cabin by his psychiatrist, where he is supposed to come to terms with his aversion of ravens... yeah, right. Completely unappealing, unpleasant and poorly directed.

**Unman, Wittering and Zigo** (1971, GBR) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: John Mackenzie. Starring David Hemmings, Douglas Wilmer, Anthony Haygarth, Carolyn Seymour, Hamilton Dyce, Barbara Lott, Michael Howe, Colin Barrie. Hemmings plays a school teacher who takes over a job in an English boarding school in mid-term and can't believe his ears when his students tell him that they killed his predecessor. A psycho battle ensues, where there is more at stake than just Hemmings' job. Highly interesting, perhaps unique mystery drama examines student rebellion in a similar way to Lindsay Anderson's IF... (1968), although it is not as artistically accomplished. Its unavailability for many decades has added to its cult movie reputation. Based on the play by Giles Cooper, filmed before in 1965 (for television). Photographed by Geoffrey Unsworth. Trivia note: Leonard Maltin's review, which states that the killer's identity is revealed after the closing credits, is a mystery itself – it's not true.

**Untitled Star Wars Mockumentary, The** (2003, USA) **C-42m. n/r** D: Damon Packard. Starring Daryl Haney, Damon Packard. Pretty fierce attack against George Lucas, Tony Curtis et al. takes a STAR WARS making of and intercuts scenes with Packard, who thus pretends to be part of the creative team that made the blockbuster ATTACK OF THE CLONES (2002). Packard also inserts footage from THE EXORCIST (1973) and other horror movies, which results in at least a few chuckles. The rampant cynicism, however, makes you wonder whether Packard isn't actually envying Lucas' success. Give it a try if you hate the STAR WARS franchise.

**Untouchables, The** (1987, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Brian De Palma. Starring Kevin Costner, Sean Connery, Charles Martin Smith, Andy Garcia, Robert De Niro, Richard Bradford, Jack Kehoe, Brad Sullivan, Billy Drago. The story of Elliott Ness and his battle against crime kingpin Al Capone is vividly brought to the screen by director De Palma and writer David Mamet. First-rate cast keeps things bubbling, Connery won his only Oscar as a street-smart cop who joins forces with Ness. Might have used some more fleshing out of the key characters, but film remains grand entertainment, one of De Palma's best. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Uomo dagli Occhi Ghiaccio, L'** (1971, ITA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Alberto De Martino. Starring Antonio Sabato, Barbara Bouchet, Victor Buono, Keenan Wynn, Faith Domergue, Joe Pollini. Pretty good Italian murder mystery, set in New Mexico, about pulp writer Sabato, who will just not believe a Mexican delinquent has killed an American Senator. Is there a conspiracy worth uncovering? What do nightclub dancer Bouchet and a mysterious astrologer/psychic have to do with it? Well-paced giallo seems a bit like Lucio Fulci's UNA SULL'ALTRA (1969). No classic but well-worth watching, especially for fans. Buono lends credible support. Hip period soundtrack by Peppino De Luca. English title: THE MAN WITH ICY EYES.

**Uomo Più Velenoso del Cobra, L'** (1971, ITA/SPA) **C-87m. SCOPE\*½** D: Albert J. Walker (=Bitto Albertini). Starring George Ardisson, Erika Blanc, Alberto de Mendoza. Janine Reynaud, Luciano Pigozzi. Weak crime movie about Ardisson, who goes to New York to find out who killed his brother. Later, his investigations with Blanc also take him to Kenya, Africa. The setting is the only interesting thing about this uneven misfire. For giallo completists, although the first half of this looks more like an actioner, with Stelvio Cipriani's pulsating score. Cowritten by Ernesto Gastaldi. Also known as COBRAS HUMANAS, HUMAN COBRAS, and TARGET: MURDER.

**Up!** (1976, USA) **C-80m. \*\*** D: Russ Meyer. Starring Edward Schaaf, Robert McLane, Elaine Collins, Janet Wood, Raven De La Croix, Monty Bane, Bob Schott, Kitten Natividad, Russ Meyer. Pretty outrageous, satirical sex-and-crime movie from the genre's godfather. The murder of an Adolf Hitler-like Nazi coincides with the arrival of busty chick De La Croix. She is hired as a waitress to attract customers. Meanwhile, the only policeman in town is searching for the killer, if he can keep his libido under control. Director, co-writer, DP and editor Meyer even throws in some horror this time, but plot and character setup (from a script cowritten by Roger Ebert!) is a mess. It does boast a Greek chorus, however, in the form of naked Natividad. For the dedicated Russ Meyer fan. Also known as OVER, UNDER and UP!, and UP! SMOKEY.

**Up** (2009, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Pete Docter. Starring (the voices of) Edward Asner, Christopher Plummer, Jordan Nagai, Bob Peterson, Delroy Lindo, John Ratzenberger, Pete Docter. Another Pixar mega-hit, but this time with a bit more soul. An aged pensioner, who is still mourning the death of his beloved wife, decides to live their big dream and takes off with his house (literally!) to South America's Paradise Falls. Unfortunately, a chubby boy scout is on his front porch the moment his house lifts off, so they embark on the odyssey

together. Lovingly animated, bitter-sweet comedy drama with some truly hilarious scenes (love the dog collar!). Plot doesn't hold up, but a definite improvement over RATATOUILLE (2007) and WALL-E (2008).

**Up at the Villa** (2000, USA) **C-115m. \*\* D:** Philip Haas. Starring Kristin Scott Thomas, Sean Penn, Anne Bancroft, James Fox, Jeremy Davies, Derek Jacobi. Soapish triviality set in WW2 Italy about English lady Thomas, who choice of Austrian fugitive Davies for a one-night-stand brings about all kinds of complications. Slowly paced, nothing extraordinary here, despite being based on W. Somerset Maugham's book. Thomas, Penn and Davies have no chemistry at all.

**Up in Smoke** (1978, USA) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Lou Adler. Starring Cheech Marin, Tommy Chong, Stacy Keach, Tom Skerritt, Edie Adams, Strother Martin. Legendary first film of the duo Cheech & Chong is a delightfully lame-brained comedy about two dudes looking for Marihuana, which eventually leads them to drive a van made(!) of grass across the border into the U.S. Keach equally hilarious as hysterical chief of the drug squad. Not consistently funny but if you are in the right mood, you'll love this film.

**Upside Down** (2012, CDN/FRA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Juan Solanas. Starring Kirsten Dunst, Jim Sturgess, Timothy Spall, Agnieszka Wnorowska, Neil Napier, Blu Mankuma. Old-fashioned love story embedded in a dystopian, Orwellian future, set on two planets with opposing gravity. The people 'up top' are rich, the people 'down below' live in poverty. Adam and Eden, two teenagers, fall in love one day, but their love is not to last. Ten years after seeing each other for the last time, Adam has become an inventor down below, hoping to make it into the big corporation Transworld, which relies on poor workers. Eden, who also works for them, has no memory of him, however. Filled with interesting ideas and fascinating settings on alternative Earths. Lovely Dunst was made to play such roles, her partner Sturgess is also cute. Maybe not a full-fledged sci-fi movie, with some weaknesses in pace and plotting, but it's a romance after all. Writer-director Solanas creates an impressive world around it.

**Upside of Anger, The** (2005, USA/GBR/GER) **C-118m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Mike Binder. Starring Joan Allen, Kevin Costner, Erika Christensen, Keri Russell, Alicia Witt, Evan Rachel Wood, Mike Binder. Allen plays a 40-ish wife and mother of four daughters, whose husband leaves her and his family because of a Swedish mistress. While alcohol becomes her only friend, similarly boozing ex-baseball pro Costner steals himself into her life. Drama sometimes tries to come across as a family saga, and is well-acted (especially by Allen), but final twist negates the entire film. Boost the rating by half a star if you are a woman. Writer-director Binder plays the radio show producer.

**Urban Legend** (1998, USA) **C-100m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Jamie Blanks. Starring Jared Leto, Alicia Witt, Rebecca Gayheart, Joshua Jackson, Natasha Gregson Wagner, Loretta Devine, Tara Reid, Robert Englund, Brad Dourif. Stupid horror film set on a university campus, where a mad killer bases his murders on urban legends. Leto teams up with Witt to find him and discover that a 1973 murder spree and professor Englund may have something to do with the killings. Tries to be exciting, but plot is very weak and climax is nothing but ridiculous. For a good horror film on an urban legend watch CANDYMAN.

**Urban Legends: Final Cut** (2000, USA/CDN) **C-98m. SCOPE ½ D:** John Ottman. Starring Jennifer Morrison, Matthew Davis, Hart Bochner, Loretta Devine, Eva Mendes, Joey Lawrence, Rebecca Gayheart, Alicia Witt. Absolutely terrible sequel to the original URBAN LEGEND, which was bad already. Film students are killed by a maniac for a reason specified later. Dreadful, idiotic plot kills this movie. Stay away.

**Urotsukidôji: Legend of the Overfiend** (1989, JAP) **C-108m.** \*\*\*½ D: Hideki Takayama. Infamous Japanese animation about the coming of a super-monster, the Overfiend, who visits the Earth every 3,000 years and brings mayhem and destruction. Some teenagers are faced with this threat and recruited by the good side to battle the creature. Engaging, audacious subject matter, with lots of violence and sex scenes, it's the plot that unfortunately doesn't know where to go. Edited from three (even more explicit) OVAs, each 40-60 minutes long. Followed by several sequels.

**Ursus** (1961, ITA/FRA) **C-95m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Carlo Campogalliani. Starring Ed Fury, Moira Orfei, María Luisa Merlo, Cristina Gaioni, Luis Prendes. Standard peplum movie about title hero, who tries to rescue his kidnapped spouse with the help of a blind girl. Doldrums set in midway. Scripted by Giuliano Carnimeo, Giuseppe Mangioni and Sergio Sollima. Coedited by Franco Fraticelli, an Argento regular. First of the URSUS films, followed by six sequels.

**Ursus nella Terra di Fuoco** (1963, ITA) **C-87m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Giorgio Simonelli. Starring Ed Fury, Claudia Mori, Adriano Micantoni, Luciana Gilli, Tom Felleghy. A tad better than the usual strongman actioner, this costumer has Ursus seemingly killed by evil usurper Micantoni (performing convincingly), who then goes on to kill the king and woo his daughter. However, Ursus returns and enters the arena as a gladiator. Some good scenes, but plot is still a drag. Edited by Franco Fraticelli, competent score by Carlo Savina. English title: SON OF HERCULES IN THE LAND OF FIRE, and URSUS IN THE LAND OF FIRE (meaning volcanoes).

**Ursus nella Valle die Leoni** (1961, ITA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*½** D: Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia. Starring Ed Fury, Moira Orfei, Alberto Lupo, Mary Marlon. Very naive spectacle chronicles strongman Ursus' ubringing among lions and his subsequent revenge exacted on evil ruler who killed his father. Standard production values, only for the dedicated. Score by Riz Ortolani. English title: URSUS IN THE VALLEY OF LIONS.

**U.S. Marshals** (1998, USA) **C-131m.** \*\*\*½ D: Stuart Baird. Starring Tommy Lee Jones, Wesley Snipes, Robert Downey, Jr., Joe Pantoliano, Kate Nelligan, Irène Jacob. Sequel to THE FUGITIVE reworks theme of innocent man on the run with Jones reprising his role from the 1993 film as a U.S. Marshal who chases escaped convict Snipes across the country. Plot is not something to be proud of, but some exciting action scenes and a good cast make this thriller watchable. French actress Jacob is not credible as Snipes' lover.

**U-Turn** (1997, USA) **C-124m.** \*\* D: Oliver Stone. Starring Sean Penn, Nick Nolte, Jennifer Lopez, Powers Boothe, Claire Danes, Joaquin Phoenix, Billy Bob Thornton, Jon Voight, Abraham Benrubi, Julie Hagerty, Bo Hopkins, Laurie Metcalfe, Liv Tyler. Bizarre thriller about low-life Penn, who is on his way to Las Vegas (to deliver \$13,000 in cash) but has to stop in the small town of Superior when his car breaks down. He soon gets involved with Nolte and his wife Lopez, who would rather see each other dead. And that's just the beginning. John Ridley's adaptation of his own book *Stray Dogs* is episodic, overlong and ultimately pointless. Stone's typically creative direction almost makes it work. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**Uzumaki** (2000, JAP) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Higuchinsky. Starring Eriko Hatsune, Fhi Fan, Hinako Saeki, Eun-Kyung Shin, Keiko Takahashi. Japanese horror chiller about a teenage girl who witnesses strange occurrences in her home town. People seem to be fascinated to the point of obsession by spirals of all kinds. The first deaths are soon to follow. Some interesting distortion of visuals, but film is all style and no substance, and not as creepy as it would like to be. Based on a Manga comic. English titles: SPIRAL, VORTEX.

**Vado... l'Ammatto e Torno** (1967, ITA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Enzo G. Castellari. Starring Edd Byrnes, George Hilton, Gilbert Roland, Stefania Careddu, José Torres, Ivano Stacciali, Sal

Borgese. Slightly above-average spaghetti western, director Castellari's second film. Hilton plays a bounty hunter, who may have the last word in hunt for hidden loot. Some funny directorial touches may make it fun for fans, but plot is a drag. English titles: ANY GUN CAN PLAY, BLOOD RIVER, FOR A FEW BULLETS MORE, GO KILL AND COME BACK.

**Vacancy** (2007, USA) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Nimród Antal. Starring Kate Beckinsale, Luke Wilson, Frank Whaley, Ethan Embry. Edgy little horror thriller about a couple on a road trip who are at odds with each other. When their car breaks down in the middle of the night, they are forced to spend the night in a seedy motel. Then they discover snuff video tapes that were shot in their bedroom! Cleverly hesitant homage to PSYCHO (1960), updated to the 2000s, from the stylish titles to the pulse-pounding score. Stretches logic at times, but compensates this easily with tense, highly suspenseful situations. Recommended. Followed by VACANCY 2: THE FIRST CUT (2008).

**Valentine** (2001, USA) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jamie Blanks. Starring David Boreanaz, Marley Shelton, Denise Richards, Katherine Heigl, Jessica Capshaw, Daniel Cosgrove, Hedy Burress. Typical slasher movie about a madman, who stalks four friends after sending them macabre valentine cards. A possible suspect is the boy they rejected in Junior High School. Well-photographed, suspenseful thriller is poorly plotted, like director Blanks' URBAN LEGEND (1998). Watchable for slash'n'stalk enthusiasts, but story makes very little sense.

**Valerie a Týden Divu** (1970, CZE) **C-77m. \*\*\*** D: Jaromil Jires. Starring Jaroslava Schalleróva, Helena Anýzová, Petr Kopriva, Jirí Prymek, Jan Klusák. Curio from Czechoslovakia about a 13-year-old girl, who experiences a kind of sexual awakening when her grandmother fails to protect her from lecherous adults (vampires?) and she gets lost in the search for her parents. Mysterious, grotesque surreal and experimental, much in the vein of an Alejandro Jodorowsky, the film consists of a series of stark, oddly touching images. Difficult to access, perhaps, but interesting as a time capsule nevertheless. Based on a novel by Vitezslav Nezval. English title: VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS.

**Vallée, La** (1972, FRA) **C-106m. \*\*½** D: Barbet Schroeder. Starring Monique Giraudy, Michael Gothard, Jena-Pierre Kalfon, Valérie Lagrange, Bulle Ogier. In the jungles of Papua-Newguinea, art dealer Giraudy joins a group of hippies who intend to travel to a mystic valley that has never been explored. Ultimately they join a tribe in their festivities. Initially interesting drama about self-finding loses interest before it's half-way over. Reportedly has a soundtrack by Pink Floyd, but there's barely any score. Written by director Schroeder, whose MORE (1969) was better. English title: THE VALLEY (OBSCURED BY CLOUDS).

**Vampire at Midnight** (1988, USA) **C-93m. \*\*** D: Gregory McKlatchy. Starring Jason Williams, Gustav Vintas, Lesley Milne, Esther Elise. Quite interesting vampire/cop thriller about investigator Williams, who refuses to believe that recent killings (with victims drained of their blood) were made by a vampire. The viewer is informed right away that hypnotist Vintas is responsible... is he a bloodsucker? 80s horror is stylish, but you keep waiting for it to cut loose, which it never does.

**Vampire Circus** (1972, GBR) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Robert Young. Starring Adrienne Corri, Thorley Walters, Anthony Corlan (=Higgins), John Moulder-Brown, Laurence Payne, Richard Owens, Lynne Frederick, David Prowse. More vampires from Hammer, as a vampiric count is killed by villagers but swears bloody revenge. Fifteen years later a travelling circus arrives in town, and people start to die. Fairly good, violent horror movie should please Hammer fans and vampire addicts, although plot is a little unfocused. Frederick's innocent beauty is an asset.

**Vampire in Brooklyn** (1995, USA) **C-102m. \*\*** D: Wes Craven. Starring Eddie Murphy, Angela Bassett, Allen Payne, Kadeem Hardison, John Witherspoon, Zakes Mokae, Joanna Cassidy. Vampire Murphy arrives in Brooklyn from the Caribbean and tries to find a woman (Bassett)

who is half-human, half-vampire. He wants to seduce her and make her one of his kind. Solidly filmed and acted, this horror comedy is fairly entertaining, considering such a ludicrous premise. Might have worked better, had director Craven gone for more serious horror - or made a spoof out of it. Wendy Robie, star of the director's *THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS* has a brief bit at the police station.

**Vampire Lovers, The** (1970, GBR) **C-91m.** \*\*½ D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring Ingrid Pitt, George Cole, Kate O'Mara, Peter Cushing, Ferdy Mayne, Douglas Wilmer, Madeline Smith, Jon Finch. Erotic Hammer chiller about a female vampire (Pitt) who resides at a castle and is attacking innocent girls by night. Much too talky and even confusing at the beginning (though prologue is nice), film improves in the final third. Well-directed, moody but uneven horror movie was followed by two sequels, *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE* and *TWINS OF EVIL* (both 1971). Based on Sheridan Le Fanu's famous *Carmilla*.

**Vampire Nue, La** (1969, FRA) **C-84m.** \*\* D: Jean Rollin. Starring Olivier Martin, Maurice Lemaitre, Caroline Cartier, Ly Lestrong, Bernard Musson, Michel Delahaye. Bizarre vampire/sex fantasy about rich brat Martin, who stumbles upon secret bourgeois-like society, which conducts secret perverse ceremonies in a mansion rented by his father. It turns out the members are protecting a female vampire from extra-terrestrial mutants! Rollin's second feature (following *LE VIOL DE VAMPIRE*) has occasional flashes of style but drags on and on and on, bordering on pretence due to low budget. Aka *THE NUDE VAMPIRE* or *THE NAKED VAMPIRE*.

**Vampiri, I** (1956, ITA/FRA) **78m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Riccardo Freda, Mario Bava. Starring Gianna Maria Canale, Carlo D'Angelo, Dario Michaelis. Classic, almost legendary chiller, regarded as the first Italian gothic chiller. A reporter and the police of Paris are after a mysterious serial killer, who drains his victims' blood. Is it a vampire? Marvellous atmosphere, stylish cinematography (by Mario Bava, who completed the film) and a brilliant score make this a treat for cineastes. American video release, titled *THE DEVIL'S COMMANDMENT*, runs 72m., features several unrelated scenes and ends rather abruptly. Original version has been released on DVD.

**Vampiros Lesbos** (1971, SPA/GER) **C-89m.** \*\* D: (Jesus) Franco Manera (=Jess Franco). Starring Ewa Strömberg, Susann Korda (=Soledad Miranda), Victor Feldman (=Andrés Morales), Dennis Price, Paul Muller, Jess Franco. Dreamy vampire movie, a loose lesbian adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, which director Franco had filmed before as *EL CONDE DRACULA* (1970). Blonde Strömberg (in the Jonathan Harker role) has frightening dreams of a female vampire, then is called to a Turkish island, where lady Korda has just inherited a castle from a certain Count Dracula. Pretty trashy, tiresome after a while, but has some atmospheric scenes and the inimitable early 70s period flavor. Exotic, bizarre soundtrack adds to film's mood. Alternative titles. *VAMPYROS LESBOS*, *LESBIAN VAMPIRES: THE HEIRESS OF DRACULA*, *THE HERITAGE OF DRACULA*, *THE SIGN OF THE VAMPIRE*, *THE STRANGE ADVENTURE OF JONATHAN HARKER*, and *THE VAMPIRE WOMEN*.

**Vampyr** (1932, FRA/GER/DAN) **73m.** \*\*\* D: Carl Theodor Dreyer. Starring Julian West (=Baron Nicolas de Gunzburg), Sybille Schmitz, Maurice Schutz, Henriette Gerard. Remarkable early horror melodrama about young man, who's fascinated by the occult and wanders into a strange castle one day where a vampire is stalking the corridors. Ground-breaking mise-en-scene uses creative techniques to chill the audience. Plot is confusing, to be honest, but cineastes will find this film a treat. Based on the novel *In a Glass Darkly* by J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Made in English, French and German language versions. The German original, which premiered in May 1932 is lost. A 73m.-long version was restored in 1998.

**Vampyres** (1974, GBR) **C-88m.** \*\* D: José Larraz. Starring Marianne Morris, Anulka (Dziubinska), Murray Brown, Brian Deacon, Sally Faulkner, Michael Byrne, Bessie Love. Not-bad vampire movie about two lesbian vampires who lure car drivers to their castle and suck their blood there. A couple camping nearby becomes aware of their activity. Nice setting, but this is more soft-core sex than horror and the plot is minimal. The girls are appealing.

**Vanilla Sky** (2001, USA) **C-135m.** \*\* D: Cameron Crowe. Starring Tom Cruise, Penélope Cruz, Cameron Diaz, Kurt Russell, Jason Lee, Noah Taylor, Timothy Spall, Tilda Swinton, Alicia Witt, Steven Spielberg. Rich hot-shot Cruise (can he play any other guys?) has an affair with Diaz, who's really in love with him. When he obviously abandons her for Spanish beauty Cruz, Diaz freaks out and kills herself in a car accident, which leaves him disfigured. In the frame narrative, Cruise is telling his story to psychologist Russell, who is hearing him for a murder Cruise has obviously committed... but which? Mystery drama grows increasingly annoying, as dream and reality merge. At its worst, film finally takes a bizarre twist, which explains most of the going-ons but comes far too late to reconcile the viewer with the overlong film. Director Crowe based his script on the 1997 film *ABRE LOS OJOS* by Spanish wunderkind Alejandro Amenabar (TESIS). Photographed by John Toll.

**Vanishing Act** (1986, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*\* D: David Greene. Starring Mike Farrell, Elliott Gould, Fred Gwynne, Graham Jarvis, Margot Kidder, Wally MacSween, Heather Ward Siegel. Above-average murder mystery, based on Robert Thomas' play "Trap for a Lonely Man". Farrell's wife disappears while on honeymoon in the Rocky Mountains and he asks detective Gould of the local police for help. Soon a woman turns up, claiming to be his wife, but Farrell insists he has never seen her before. Rather implausible at times, but humorous and well-cast. This one lives off its twisted ending. Made for television.

**Vanishing on 7<sup>th</sup> Street** (2011, USA) **C-92m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Brad Anderson. Starring Hayden Christensen, John Leguizamo, Thandie Newton, Jacob Latimore, Taylor Groothuis. Creepy horror chiller by the maker of *SESSION 9* and *THE MACHINIST*. During a sudden blackout people simply disappear, leaving behind only their clothes. A small group of survivors hole up in a bar that has electricity thanks to a generator in the basement. It seems the darkness is increasing and shadows want to claim them. Well-made, atmospheric apocalyptic horror film that plays a bit like a zombie film without zombies... instead, the darkness is the enemy. Nice ecological subtext. Good score by Lucas Vidal.

**Vanishing Point** (1971, USA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Richard C. Sarafian. Starring Barry Newman, Cleavon Little, Dean Jagger, Victoria Medlin, Paul Koslo, John Amos, Rita Coolidge. Straight-forward cult movie about former race car driver Newman, who accepts a crazy bet to drive a 1970 Dodge from Colorado to San Francisco. Slowly, after more and more police cars are after him, his motivations become clear. Well-photographed action drama with good chases and soundtrack is a cult film for its outlaw attitude. Remade for TV in 1997.

**Vanity Fair** (2004, GBR/USA) **C-141m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Mira Nair. Starring Reese Witherspoon, Gabriel Byrne, Rhys Ifans, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers, Bob Hoskins, Eileen Atkins, James Purefoy, Jim Broadbent, Barbara Leigh-Hunt, Romola Garai. Tenth adaptation of William Thackeray's 1847 novel about Witherspoon, who comes from a poor family and tries to find her position in pre-Victorian England. Intrigues, affairs, fulfilled and unfulfilled dreams are spotlighted. Lacking any dramatic punch whatsoever, film lives off fine production values and some good performances. Well-photographed by Declan Quinn.

**Vargtimmen** (1968, SWE) **B&W-92m.** \*\*\* D: Ingmar Bergman. Starring Max von Sydow, Liv Ullmann, Gertrud Fridh, Ingrid Thulin, Erland Josephson. Complex psycho drama, dubbed by some as master director Bergman's only horror film, but this description doesn't do it justice at all. Ullmann's husband von Sydow, a painter, is obviously losing his mind on their isolated

island. She reads his journal and starts to worry about his sanity. Some local people invite them over for dinner to their castle, and he seems to be drawn into their decadent, superficial attitudes. Violence ensues. Despair, uncertainty, depression, an artist's dilemma, childhood traumata ... all adds up to a harrowing psycho study in bleak black-and-white. English title: HOUR OF THE WOLF.

**Vault of Horror, The** (1973, GBR/USA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Roy Ward Baker. Starring Terry-Thomas, Curd Jürgens, Denholm Elliott, Michael Craig, Glynis Johns. Lackluster horror anthology from Amicus comprised of five macabre tales framed by protagonists telling their worst nightmares to each other. Not bad but dated, below average despite good director. Sequel to TALES FROM THE CRYPT (1972).

**Veinards, Les** (1962, FRA) **98m.** \*\*½ D: Jean Girault, Philippe de Broca, Jack Pinoteau. Starring France Anglade, Francis Blanche, Blanchette Brunoy, Daniel Ceccaldi, Yvonne Clech, Geneviève Cluny, Claudine Coster, Darry Cowl, Mireille Darc, Louis de Funès, Pierre Doris, Jacques Hilling, Jean Lefebvre, Jacqueline Maillan, Pierre Mondy, Jacqueline Monsigny, Philippe Nicaud, François Périer, Noël Roquevert, France Rumilly, Guy Tregan. Five comic episodes about people winning in a prize-draw and the chaotic events that ensue, which leave them unhappier than before. The first two episodes are by Jean Girault (who also coscripted), the third by Philippe de Broca (he cowrote with Daniel Boulanger), the fourth again by Girault, and the last one (featuring the unique comic talents of Louis de Funès) is by Jack Pinoteau. Vignettes are quite funny and easy to take, but only the second (and shortest) one about a *gourmand* who has won a fancy dinner in a restaurant is really good.

**Vela para el Diablo, Una** (1973, SPA) **C-68m.** \*\* D: Eugenio Martín. Starring Judy Geeson, Lone Fleming, Blanca Estrada, Charley Pineiro, Victor Alcázar. Two shrewd, sexually starved sisters run a small pension in a tourist village. When young Geeson comes looking for her missing sister, it turns out that the two landladies dispose of what they think are indecent, immoral people. Rather poorly plotted thriller becomes watchable only towards the end. Longer version reportedly in existence, but it's doubtful whether it's an improvement. English titles: A CANDLE FOR THE DEVIL, NIGHTMARE HOTEL, and IT HAPPENED AT NIGHTMARE INN.

**Vendetta di Ercole, La** (1960, ITA/FRA) **C-88m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Vittorio Cottafavi. Starring Mark Forest, Broderick Crawford, Leonora Ruffo, Gaby André, Wandisa Guida, Sandro Moretti, Federica Ranchi. Hercules (Forest) must do battle with tyrant Crawford, as well as some (cardboard) monsters in the underworld in this colorful muscleman epic. More serious and better-scripted than later films in the ERCOLE series, this is one of the best. The effects are very hokey, though. English title: GOLIATH AND THE DRAGON (no dragon appears, though).

**Vendetta di Ursus, La** (1961, ITA) **C-88m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Luigi Capuano. Starring Samson Burke, Wandisa Guida, Livio Lorenzon, Ugo Sasso, Gina Rovere. Okay peplum movie about strongman Ursus, who uses his superpowers to overcome intrigue against his favorite princess. Okay production values, slightly better camerawork and score than usual, but mostly still just a naïve, boring actioner. English titles: THE MIGHTY WARRIOR, THE REVENGE OF URSUS and VENGEANCE OF URSUS.

**Venditore di Morte, Il** (1971, ITA) **C-96m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Lorenzo Gicca Palli. Starring John (Gianni) Garko, Klaus Kinski, Alan Collins (=Luciano Pigozzi), Gely Genka, Giancarlo Prete. Quite unusual, but still standard spaghetti western about gunman Garko, who tries to help Genka to convince authorities that Kinski did not kill some people in a saloon fight. Tries to be a kind-of whodunit, but there is no suspense. Hardly convincing, really only for fans. English titles: LAST GUNFIGHT, THE PRICE OF DEATH.

**Venere di Ille, La** (1979, ITA) **C-60m**. \*\*\* D: Mario Bava, Lamberto Bava. Starring Daria Nicolodi, Marc Porel, Fausto Di Bella, Adriana Innocenti, Fabrizio Bava. Elegant, intelligent fantasy drama set in 19th century Italy, where a rich landowner unearths a bronze statue on his property. The ancient Greek statue then seems to influence the events around his son's wedding to beautiful Nicolodi. Antique expert Porel becomes witness to the weird going-ons. Barely seen - never released outside Italy, where it was only shown on TV - but appropriate swan song for Mario Bava, whose last film also marked one of his son Lamberto's first. Beautifully poetic rendition of a novel by Prosper Mérimée is also surprisingly cinematic, including an excellent score by Ubaldo Continiello. A must for Bava fans. Previously filmed in 1922 (DIE VENUS), in 1962 for theaters and 1980 for French TV (both versions titled LA VENUS D'ILLE). English title: VENUS OF ILLE.

**Venetian Affair, The** (1966, USA) **C-89m**. **SCOPE \*\*** D: Jerry Thorpe. Starring Robert Vaughn, Elke Sommer, Felicia Farr, Karlheinz Böhm, Luciana Paluzzi, Boris Karloff, Roger C. Carmel, Edward Asner, Joe De Santis. Nice cast saddled with incredibly muddled script about former CIA agent Vaughn, who is sent to Venice to investigate mysterious bombing at an international conference. Despite some atmospheric locations and a good score by Lalo Schifrin, film fails to catch fire. Based on a novel by Helen MacInnes.

**Venom** (1982, GBR) **C-93m**. \*\*\*½ D: Piers Haggard. Starring Klaus Kinski, Oliver Reed, Nicol Williamson, Sarah Miles, Sterling Hayden, Cornelia Sharpe, Lance Holcomb, Susan George, Michael Gough. Kinski and Reed's kidnapping plan goes seriously awry when they find themselves trapped in their victims' house, with not only the police waiting outside, but also a deadly mamba on the prowl upstairs. Not-bad thriller, quite well-directed by veteran Haggard, but also none too clever, with standard plotting and characterizations. Based on the novel by Alan Scholefield. Score by Michael Kamen.

**28 Minuti per 3 Milioni di Dollari** (1967, ITA) **C-90m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Maurizio Pradeaux. Starring Richard Harrison, Franca Polsello, Claudio Biava, Ferruccio Viotti, Erna Schürer. Typical caper movie from the time. Harrison leads a group of unlikely criminals, who decide to steal a large diamond. Fairly entertaining, with nice location work. Plot begins to drag slightly in second half, but it's a likable film and Piero Umiliani's score keeps it afloat. English title: 28 MINUTES FOR 3 MILLION DOLLARS.

**Venus a la Fournure, La** (2013, FRA/POL) **C-96m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Roman Polanski. Starring Emmanuelle Seigner, Mathieu Amalric. Director Polanski follows his stagey CARNAGE (2011) with an even stagier adaptation of a David Ives play based on Leopold Sacher-Masoch's famous novel *Venus im Pelz*. Amalric plays a stage director who has just spent a day casting actresses for the main role in his latest play, when Seigner bursts in and demands to be auditioned. She tests the director's masochistic tendencies, and the boundaries between reality and play are blurred. Basically a filmed play, film derives its fascination from the performances (Amalric is a stand-out), but its appeal to a wider audience is questionable. The novel was previously filmed as LE MALIZIE DI VENERE. Score by Alexandre Desplat. English title: VENUS IN FUR.

**Verano para Matar, Un** (1972, SPA/FRA/ITA) **C-99m**. \*\* D: Antonio Isasi-Isasmendi. Starring Christopher Mitchum, Karl Malden, Olivia Hussey, Claudine Auger, Gérard Barry, Raf Vallone, Gérard Tichy, Umberto Raho. Rather poor Euro-thriller about baby-faced Mitchum (much too harmless), who witnessed his father's murder when he was a child, now returns to Spain to kill his killers. Included in his revenge plot: The kidnapping of Hussey, daughter of a crime boss. Some action, little suspense. Overall a disappointment despite having a cult reputation – probably because of its English title SUMMERTIME KILLER.

**Vergina di Nuremberga, La** (1963, ITA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Anthony Dawson (=Antonio Margheriti). Starring Rossana Podestá, George Riviere, Christopher Lee. Who is the hooded killer that's been abducting unsuspecting women to his torture chamber? As in most European and particularly Italian horror films of the period, this gothic tale of terror creates fine atmosphere and offers good direction and photography. However, it also has a strictly second-rate plot, which keeps the film from being a success. Horror fans won't be disappointed. Aka: HORROR CASTLE.

**Vergine in Famiglia, Una** (1975, ITA) **C-93m. \*\* D:** Luca degli Azzeri (=Marco Siciliani). Starring Franca Gonella, Gianni Dei, Femi Benussi, Filippo Torrieri, Carla Calò, Riccardo Garrone, Ezio Marano. Undistinguished, but quite cute sex comedy, set in a small Italian village, where there's secret beauty pageants, prostitution and an invading, sex-hungry army. Not at all bad! Nice score by Carlo Savina, who did the music for Mario Bava's LISA AND THE DEVIL.

**Verità Secondo Satana, La** (1972, ITA) **C-87m. \*\*\* D:** Renato Polselli. Starring Rita Calderoni, Isarco Ravaioli, Marie Paule Bastin. Insane but artsy psycho horror film about suicidal Ravaioli, whose ex-lover Calderoni agrees to pay him one more visit, during which he stages his own murder so that she can be blamed for it. Enter a crazy neighbor who has seen it all. A mind game between the two begins. Sleaze classic with gore and nudity from a controversial but little-known director. His editing makes this surreal and effective, a joy for cult movie enthusiasts. Sweeping score by Gianfranco Di Stefano. Review is based on 48m. fragment, which presents the core of the plot. 'Complete' version reportedly only adds hippie characters and a sex orgy (with some hard-core elements). English title: THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO SATAN.

**Vérités et Mensonges** (1974, FRA/IRN/GER) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Orson Welles. Featuring Orson Welles, Oja Kodar, Elmyr De Hory, Clifford Irving, Francois Reichenbach, Joseph Cotten. Partly fascinating documentary narrated on-screen by Welles, who toys with the notion of fakery and examines two personalities: Art forger de Hory, who could copy Picassos, Matisse and Modiglianis in no time and even fooled art galleries, as well as pseudo-biographer Irving, who became famous for a fake Howard Hughes biography and went on to write about de Hory. Very metaphysical curio also focuses on Welles' then-wife Kodar. An experiment, interestingly Welles' last feature film. Score by Michel Legrand. English title: FOR FAKE.

**Versus** (2000, JAP) **C-119m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Riuhei Kitamura. Starring Tak Sakaguchi, Hideo Sakaki, Chieko Masaka, Kenji Matsuda, Yurichiro Arai. Japanese splatter movie about two escaped convicts, who can't seem to get out of the woods because there's a portal to hell and countless zombies attacking them. Peopled with unlikable, meaningless characters, film is totally pointless, unless watching graphic gore is your cup of tea. Totally ineffective due to lack of plot. If one didn't know it better, one might think it's a video game adaptation. Some stylish directorial touches save it from total disaster. A sequel to the 45m. DOWN TO HELL (1997), this is also known as DOWN TO HELL 2, and THE ULTIMATE VERSUS.

**Vertical Limit** (2000, USA) **C-124m. \*\*\*½ D:** Martin Campbell. Starring Chris O'Donnell, Robin Tunney, Scott Glenn, Izabella Scorupco, Bill Paxton, Nicholas Lea. Ice and snow adventure about a group of mountaineers who fall into a crevasse on their way up to K2. A rescue team led by O'Donnell heads off quickly, because one of the climbers is his estranged sister. Fast paced but predictable, an okay view. Some audacious, rather painful stunts make it worthwhile. Filmed in New Zealand.

**Vertigo** (1958, USA) **C-128m. \*\*\*½ D:** Alfred Hitchcock. Starring James Stewart, Kim Novak, Barbara Bel Geddes, Tom Helmore, Henry Jones, Ellen Corby, Raymond Bailey, Lee Patrick.

Hitchcock classic about naïve ex-cop-turned-private-eye Stewart, whose first job concerns seductive blonde Novak, who might be cheating on her husband – or is she slowly going insane? Stewart's fear of heights complicates the case... Memorable set-pieces, haunting Bernard Herrmann score, an extravagant mystery, one of Hitch's best (and most fervently discussed). A must-see. Based on the novel *D'Entre les Morts* by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac. Rereleased in 1997 after a forty-year absence from theaters because of Hitchcock's disappointment with the film's initial reception. Filmed in VistaVision.

**Very Bad Things** (1998, USA) **C-100m**. \*\*½ D: Peter Berg. Starring Christian Slater, Cameron Diaz, Jon Favreau, Leland Orser, Jeremy Piven, Daniel Stern, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Lawrence Pressman. Outrageous - and completely incredible - black comedy about five buddies who go to Las Vegas for a few days to say good-bye to their friend Favreau, who's going to be married to Diaz soon. However, during a particularly rough night, they have murder at their hands and must deal with a situation never before experienced. Fast-paced, amusing, violent, and completely illogical, Berg's first film is a matter of taste.

**V for Vendetta** (2005, GBR/GER) **C-132m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: James McTeigue. Starring Natalie Portman, Hugo Weaving, Stephen Rea, Stephen Fry, John Hurt, Tim Pigott-Smith, Rupert Graves, Roger Allam, Ben Miles, Sinéad Cusack, Natasha Wightman. Comic-book adaptation with style about masked crusader V, who sees himself as society's saviour after a totalitarian government is in control of England in the near future. Lost soul Portman becomes his companion, but it's difficult for her to find access to the witty but embittered avenger, who likes to be thought of as a 21<sup>st</sup> century Guy Fawkes. Story doesn't ring true, but plot is surprisingly intelligent, and film is extremely well-made, from stylish direction to dynamic editing. Also features a fine score by Dario Marianelli. Based on the comic book series by David Lloyd, adapted by the Wachowski Brothers.

**V/H/S** (2012, USA) **C-116m**. \*½ D: 10 directors. Starring Calvin Reeder, Lane Hughes, Adam Wingard. It had to come one day: A horror anthology of found footage films. In the frame narrative a group of misfits break into a house to steal a videotape. They find the owner dead, sitting in a room full of videos and TVs. The stories are then related one after the other. If you can make it past the terrible opening (which makes you wonder why this was released on HD BluRay), you will be bored by weak episodes by different directors like Ti West, Justin Martinez and David Bruckner. Followed by a sequel.

**V/H/S/2** (2013, USA/CDN/INES) **C-96m**. \*\*½ D: Eduardo Sanchez, Adam Wingard, four others. Starring Lawrence Michael Levine, Kelsy Abbott, Adam Wingard. Unexpectedly effective sequel about two private investigators, who search for a missing teenager and find his house full of TVs and VCRs. The four stories that follow are: A man with an eye implant sees dead people (mediocre), a biker becomes a zombie (gory), a documentary crew visit a suicide cult (quite terrifying!), and some kids are attacked by aliens (pretty good). All of the episodes are well-directed, even scary in parts... if it wasn't for the shaky, grainy camerawork, this could be called good. A definite improvement over the original.

**V/H/S: Viral** (2014, USA) **C-82m**. \*½ D: Justin Benson, Gregg Bishop, Aaron Moorhead, Marcel Samiento, Nacho Vigalondo. Third V/H/S movie follows some teenagers through a crazy night, interspersing found-footage horror films. The first is about a wanna-be magician with a magical cape, the second one explores a parallel dimension in a scientist's house, and the last one follows some skaters to Mexico, where they encounter a zombie cult. Pointless and not exciting or suspenseful.

**Vicky Cristina Barcelona** (2008, USA/SPA) **C-96m**. \*\*½ D: Woody Allen. Starring Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Penelope Cruz, Kevin Dunn. Light-weight, flaky comedy drama about two young American women, who spend a summer in Barcelona. They

are both infatuated with painter Bardem, who just broke up with Cruz, a very passionate, jealous artist herself. A love triangle with interesting complications is the result. Good storytelling involves you with just the right amount of erotic innuendo, though film's ending is rather unsatisfactory and undermines the entire movie. Otherwise, this is writer-director Allen in fine form.

**Victim, The** (1978, HGK) **C-92m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Samo Hung. Starring Samo Hung, Leung Kar Yan. Complex but terribly uneven eastern concerning young fighter who finds out that his new master is fleeing from the wrath of his brother. Goes for awkward humor but cannot be called a comedy because there is so much serious drama and tragic happenings in the plot! The action and the (meandering) plot in this movie will keep you posted until the final fight, which will knock you out of your socks.

**Victor Frankenstein** (1977, EIR/SWE) **C-91m. \*\*\* D:** Calvin Floyd. Starring Leon Vitali, Per Oscarsson, Nicholas Clay, Stacy Dornig, Jan Ohlsson. Atmospheric, faithful, little seen film version of Mary Shelley's classic gothic novel *Frankenstein*. Thoughtful treatment bears less emphasis on horror but on the actual theme of Shelley's novel, that of the limits of science. Excellent score by Gerard Victory offsets dramatic flaws, low-key treatment. Director Floyd also produced and scripted with his wife Yvonne. Commonly known as TERROR OF FRANKENSTEIN.

**Victory** (1995, GBR/FRA/GER) **C-99m. \*\*\* D:** Mark Peploe. Starring Willem Dafoe, Sam Neill, Irène Jacob, Rufus Sewell, Jean Yanne, Ho Yi, Bill Paterson, Irm Hermann, Simon Callow. Beautifully filmed drama from Joseph Conrad's last novel, set in Southeast Asia on the eve of World War One. Merchant-turned-hermite Dafoe returns to civilization to claim some furniture left to him by his father and meets young Frenchwoman Jacob, who is about to be sold to hotel owner Yanne. He saves her by taking her along to his island, but when a month later seedy 'Governor' Neill arrives at Yanne's hotel, the seeds of revenge are sown. Deliberately paced but well-filmed and rewarding for patient viewers. Written by the director.

**Videodrome** (1982, CDN/USA) **C-89m. \*\*\* D:** David Cronenberg. Starring James Woods, Sonja Smits, Deborah Harry, Peter Dvorsky, Leslie Carson, Jack Creley. Another bizarre horror shocker by Cronenberg: Woods plays a TV producer specializing on sex and hard core, who catches a pirate transmission of a snuff movie and becomes obsessed with it, leading to hallucinations and other weird stuff. What is the "Videodrome" programme doing to his mind? Surreal, no-holds-barred horror, with (can you believe it?) subtle allusions to the not-so-small influence media have over people. Vague and difficult to decipher, which is exactly why this is so fascinating. Beware: This is indeed a matter of taste! Excellent score by Howard Shore. Good effects by Rick Baker. Writer-director Cronenberg reworked the subject matter in a computer setting with EXISTENZ (1999).

**Vidocq** (2001, FRA) **C-98m. \*\*\* D:** Pitof. Starring Gérard Depardieu, Guillaume Canet, Inés Sastre, André Dussollier, Edith Scob, Dominique Zardi. French mystery horror set in 1830 about detective Vidocq (Depardieu), who is killed before catching an elusive serial killer that is said to steal the souls of young virgins. In the frame story, a reporter (Canet) tries to complete the detective's biography by finding the 'monster'. Uniquely designed chiller is well-directed and has an interesting narrative structure, which outshines the rather conventional story. Marc Caro (DELICATESSEN) is credited as character designer. Shot on digital video.

**Vie Amoureuse de l'Homme Invisible, La** (1971, FRA/SPA) **C-89m. \*\*½ D:** Pierre Chevalier. Starring Howard Vernon, Brigitte Carva, Fernando Sancho, Paco Valladares, Isabel de Río, Evane Hanska. Interesting, quite bizarre gothic horror about a doctor (Valladares),

who is called to the castle of the mysterious, much-feared professor Orloff (Vernon). It turns out the mad scientist has created an invisible man, who is his servant. And yes, the daughter has come back from her grave, too. Incredibly cheesy at times, but Euro-horror/sleaze fans shouldn't be disappointed. Good, elaborate score by Camille and Claude Sauvage. English titles: THE INVISIBLE DEAD, DR. ORLOFF'S INVISIBLE MONSTER, ORLOFF AGAINST THE INVISIBLE MAN, ORLOFF AND THE INVISIBLE MAN, and LOVE LIFE OF THE INVISIBLE MAN (the literal translation).

**Vieille Qui Marchait dans la Mer, La** (1992, FRA) **C-94m.** \*\*½ D: Laurent Heynemann. Starring Jeanne Moreau, Michel Serrault, Luc Thuillier, Géraldine Danon. Unusual, odd comedy drama about a fraudulent old couple (Moreau and Serrault) whose relationship is disturbed when the woman decides to take an apprentice in young hot-shot Thuillier. Film wavers uneasily between comedy and drama, with a rather one-note plot, but Moreau's chilling performance as the aging Lady M. makes it worth watching. Try comparing this with Truffaut's JULES ET JIM. Based on a novel by San Antonio (=Frédéric Dard).

**Vierde Man, De** (1983, NED) **C-104m.** \*\*\*½ D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Jeroen Krabbé, Renée Soutendijk, Thom Hoffman, Dolf de Vries, Geert de Jong. Allegorical mystery drama about bisexual writer Krabbé, whose new lover Soutendijk (as a classic *femme fatale*) gives him a few questions to answer, especially when he finds out that she was married three times and he may be „the fourth man“. Dazzling, well-acted surreal parable in the guise of a thriller about a man who cannot come to terms with his own sexuality. Based on a novel by Gérard Reve, which is incidentally the name of the character Krabbé is playing. Stylish photography by Jan de Bont. English title: THE FOURTH MAN.

**Vierges et Vampires** (1971, FRA) **C-87m.** \*\* D: Jean Rollin. Starring Marie-Pierre Castel, Mireille Dargent, Philippe Gasté. Another one of Rollin's vampire sex movies, about two escaped convicts and lesbians, who stumble into a strange castle where vampires reside. Medium Rollin; amateurishly directed, but nicely atmospheric, for Rollin's fans. Written and coproduced by the director. Alternative titles: REQUIEM FOR A VAMPIRE, CAGED VAMPIRES and VIRGINS AND VAMPIRES (to name a few).

**Vieux Fusil, Le** (1975, FRA/GER) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: Robert Enrico. Starring Philippe Noiret, Romy Schneider, Jean Bouise, Joachim Hansen, Robert Hoffmann, Karl Michael Vogler. Harrowing thriller drama set towards the end of WW2: Doctor Noiret sends his wife Schneider and their daughter to his country estate, hoping to keep them away from the German troops in his occupied village. When he goes to visit them, he must realize that his beloved ones have already fallen prey to them. Embittered he goes on a rampage to kill all German soldiers. Unusual revenge drama combines touching flashbacks detailing Noiret's infatuation with Schneider with shocking bursts of violence. An interesting, little-known parable on the end of innocence and a telling comment on the end of WW2 that also boasts charismatic star performances. Watch this one! Winner of 3 César Awards for Best Picture, Best Actor (Noiret) and Best Score (a melancholy one by Francois de Roubaix). Claire Denis was assistant director. English titles: THE OLD GUN, VENGEANCE ONE BY ONE.

**View to a Kill, A** (1985, GBR) **C-131m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: John Glen. Starring Roger Moore, Christopher Walken, Tanya Roberts, Grace Jones, Patrick Macnee, Alison Doody, Desmond Llewelyn, Lois Maxwell, Dolph Lundgren, Maud Adams. With this film, the Bond franchise lapsed into a crisis (critically speaking). Moore's last film as 007 pits him against villain Walken, who intends to flood Silicon Valley and thereby control the micro chip market all by himself. Pointless vignettes, unmotivated sex scenes and a rather tired special agent. Some good action sequences keep it afloat. Timothy Dalton took over from Moore to star in two 80s Bonds and was himself replaced by Pierce Brosnan in 1995's GOLDENEYE (the first

Bond film in six years). From A VIEW TO A KILL onwards, no Bond movie really lived up to its predecessors. Dolph Lundgren's first film role.

**Vigilante** (1982, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: William Lustig. Starring Robert Forster, Fred Williamson, Richard Bright, Rutanya Alda, Don Blakely, Woody Strode, Joe Spinell, Carol Lynley, Frank Pesce. Typical DEATH WISH clone about family father Forster, who loses all his trust in the law, when his wife is injured and his son is killed in a thug attack, and their leader is sentenced to two years on probation only! He then joins Williamson's violent vigilante force in the streets of New York. Badly paced, one-dimensionally plotted but technically okay. Actioner is nothing special. From the director of MANIAC (1980), who was apprentice editor for DEATH WISH (1974).. Also known as STREET GANG.

**Vigilante Force** (1976, USA) **C-89m. \*\*** D: George Armitage. Starring Kris Kristofferson, Jan-Michael Vincent, Victoria Principal, Bernadette Peters, Brad Dexter, Judson Pratt, Andrew Stevens, Paul Gleason. Rather poor but watchable actioner with Kristofferson in an unusually unsubtle role. He plays a newly appointed town sheriff, who fights crime but then takes over control himself. Hardly anything of interest. Written by the director.

**Vile** (2011, USA) **C-91m. SCOPE \*½** D: Taylor Sheridan. Starring Eric Jay Beck, April Matson, Akeem Smith, Greg Cipes, Rob Kirkland. A group of young campers are gassed by a hitchhiker and end up in a derelict place, where a woman in a video explains their situation. They must fill vials attached to their brains with chemicals that are released only in extreme pain, so they proceed to torture one another. Sounds like SAW, but goes absolutely nowhere, with annoying characters. Only redeeming aspect is some photographic style, but this is drowned in dark, unappealing scenes. Also known as PAIN.

**Village, The** (2004, USA) **C-108m. \*\*\*** D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Bryce Dallas Howard, Joaquin Phoenix, Adrien Brody, William Hurt, Sigourney Weaver, Brenda Gleeson, Cherry Jones, M. Night Shyamalan. A 19<sup>th</sup> century village situated in a secluded valley is threatened by mysterious creatures living in the woods surrounding them. Now it seems their mutual truce has been violated... how long will it take until the villagers are attacked? Low-key but effective chiller, a little construed, with a somewhat disappointing revelation, but intelligently handled and extremely well-acted (especially by the remarkable Howard). Another Shyamalan film worth watching, though not the horror film advertised and expected by some. Gloomy cinematography by Roger Deakins, fine score by James Newton Howard.

**Village of the Damned** (1960, GBR) **B&W-77m. \*\*\*** D: Wolf Rilla. Starring George Sanders, Barbara Shelley, Michael Gwynn, Laurence Naismith, John Phillips, Richard Vernon. After an inexplicable black-out in the little village of Midwich, where people fell unconscious, all the women are found to be pregnant. Did some extra-terrestrial power impregnate them? Will the children be monsters? Right on-target, well-directed chiller benefits from tight script by Stirling Silliphant and Wolf Rilla, adapting the novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* by John Wyndham. A small British horror classic, remade by John Carpenter in 1995. Followed by CHILDREN OF THE DAMNED.

**Village of the Damned** (1995, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: John Carpenter. Starring Christopher Reeve, Kirstie Alley, Linda Kozlowski, Michael Paré, Mark Hamill, Meredith Salenger. After an inexplicable black-out in small coastal town of Midwich, ten women discover they are suddenly pregnant. Nine months later they give birth to strange blond boys and girls who possess the power to control minds. Pointless, pretentious remake of the 1960 classic. Major liability: Why doesn't anyone do anything against these brats? A realistic setting calls for realistic, logical action. Beautiful photography by Gary B. Kibbe only asset. Based on the novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* by John Wyndham.

**Vingt-Cinquième Heure, La** (1967, FRA/YUG/ITA) **C-130m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Anthony Quinn, Virna Lisi, Grégoire Aslan, Jacques Marin, Jean Desailly, Michael Redgrave, Serge Reggiani, Wolfgang Völz. Superficial and yet engrossing war drama about a Romanian farmer (Quinn), who is separated from his family when WW2 breaks out and must go on an odyssey through Europe. The meaningful encounters and adventures stand in contrast to the naïve man's simple nature. Not gripping throughout, but well-acted, beautifully produced (by Carlo Ponti) and endowed with a chilling ending. Excellent score by Georges Delerue (assisted by Maurice Jarre). Based on a novel by C. Virgil Gheorghiu. English title: THE 25<sup>TH</sup> HOUR.

**Vinyan** (2008, GBR/BEL/FRA/AUS) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Fabrice Du Welz. Starring Emanuelle Béart, Rufus Sewell, Petch Osathanugrah, Julie Dreyfus. Harrowing, existentialist drama about French-British couple Béart and Sewell, whose son disappeared during the Indonesian tsunami. Six months later they are still in the region, mourning their loss. When they spot what seems to be their son in a documentary video about Burma, they think he is still alive and embark on a dark and dangerous journey into the jungles. Difficult to watch, but brilliantly acted by Béart as a woman who comes undone. Fine direction by Du Welz (CALVAIRE) makes this a surreal nightmare by the end, a kind-of paraphrase of APOCALYPSE NOW (1978).

**Viol Du Vampire, Le** (1967, FRA) **95m. \*\*\*** D: Jean Rollin. Starring Solange Pradel, Bernard Letrou, Pauly Ursule, Catherine Devil. A psychoanalyst and his wife go to a château in the country, which is inhabited by four vampire sisters. Rollin's first feature is distinguished by good photography and score, which manage to overcome the bizarreness of the plot and the deliberate pacing. An atmospheric horror classic, but decidedly not for all tastes.

**Violent Tradition** (1996, CDN/HGK) **C-101m. \*\*½** D: John Woo. Starring Sandrine Holt, Ivan Sergei, Nicholas Lea, Robert Ho, Michael Wong, Alan Scarfe, Jennifer Dale. Two professional thieves (Sergei and Holt), passionately in love, turn their backs on their 'family', trying to rid them of a large sum of money, but one of them (Sergei) is caught. Later, the two meet again in Vancouver, both turned secret agents of the police. Along with the woman's new lover (Lea) they are assigned to wipe out a crime syndicate, which happens to be the same one as back in Hong Kong. Action thriller is far from being as intense or uncompromisingly violent as the director's earlier efforts but above-average plot is smoothly directed by Woo, who also produced this pilot for a television series.

**Violenza in un Carcere Femminile** (1982, ITA) **C-98m. 7** D: Vincent Dawn (=Bruno Mattei). Starring Laura Gemser, Gabriele Tinti, Maria Romano, Ursula Flores, Francoise Perrot, Lorraine De Selle. Bland sexploitation about Gemser, who must get by in inhumane prison, where there's sex and violence galore. Has all the clichés of the W.I.P. films, but it is poorly made and boring. A later example of this subgenre, which flourished in the 1970s, and one of the worst. The fifth movie in the EMANUELLE NERA series, following EMANUELLE E GLI ULTIMI CANNIBALI (1977). Followed by one more entry: EMANUELLE FUGA DALL'INFERNO. English titles: CAGED WOMEN, CHICKS IN CHAINS, EMANUELLE REPORTS FROM A WOMEN'S PRISON, EMMANUELLE IN HELL, VIOLENCE IN A WOMEN'S (WOMAN'S) PRISON.

**Violet & Daisy** (2011, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*½** D: Geoffrey Fletcher. Starring Saoirse Ronan, Alexis Bledel, James Gandolfini, Danny Trejo. Two teenage girls make a living as hitmen – or hitwomen. Their latest assignment is Gandolfini, who does not mind being killed. This throws them off-balance and they become interested in his character. Not the worst premise, but plot by director Fletcher (Oscar-winning screenwriter for PRECIOUS) is stupid. Tries hard to be a cult movie, but is merely annoying.

**Violette Nozière** (1978, FRA/CDN) **C-124m. \*\*½ D:** Claude Chabrol. Starring Isabelle Huppert, Stéphane Audran, Jean Carmet, Jean-François Garreud, Bernadette Lafont, Henri Attal, Dominique Zardi. Paris in the early 1930s: Fourteen-year-old girl Violette has relationships with various men and is disenchanted with her parents, who show no compassion for the girl's problems. How can they be solved? Not one of director Chabrol's strongest works, film is buoyed by exceptional camerawork (Jean Rabier) and an appropriately melancholy performance by Huppert as the young girl. Interesting mainly for Chabrol enthusiasts, others beware of the complicated narrative structure. Most reviews reveal too much of the plot! From a novel by Jean-Marie Fitère, which is based on a true case. Released in the U.S. as VIOLETTE.

**Virgin among the Living Dead, A** (1971, FRA/ITA) **C-88m. \*\* D:** Jess Franco. Starring Christine von Blanc, Howard Vernon, Jess Franco. Pretty von Blanc moves into her uncle's castle after her father's death and is soon plagued by nightmares and other weird goings-ons. Rather inept, repetitive and sometimes incomprehensible, this horror film at the same time manages to be oddly atmospheric and even enigmatic! The American video release, titled ZOMBIE 6, is cut and features some footage inserted by the producer (and shot by Jean Rollin) years later. The original version is available in Europe.

**Virus** (1980, ITA/SPA) **C-100m. ½ D:** Vincent Dawn (=Bruno Mattei). Starring Frank Garfield, Roger O'Neil. One of the worst and most unashamed horror rip-offs to emerge in the years following the release of George Romero's DAWN OF THE DEAD. Trash production follows the 'adventures' of several survivors of a virus catastrophe that turned most people into zombies. *Goblin* are credited with the music score, but in fact, film just uses their original score from the 1978 DAWN! Several plot elements (read: gory killings) are utterly reminiscent of the Romero classic. It's no coincidence director Mattei chose 'Dawn' as a pseudonym! The running time is simply preposterous, even more so for such an incoherent and dumb movie. Alternate titles: VERUS - INFERNO DEI MORTI VIVENTI, and APOCALIPSIS CANIBAL. U.S. title: NIGHT OF THE ZOMBIES.

**Virus** (1999, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE ½ D:** John Bruno. Starring Jamie Lee Curtis, William Baldwin, Donald Sutherland, Joanna Pacula, Marshall Bell, Sherman Augustus, Cliff Curtis, Julio Oscar Mechoso. Greedy sea captain Sutherland considers his latest discovery, a deserted Russian mega-ship, his chance at getting rich, but it turns out it has been infested by a virus from outer space that is turning the machinery on board into uncontrollable monsters designed to wipe out humanity. After 20 minutes film abandons the plot and rips off countless better films like ALIEN, TERMINATOR or SPHERE. Ludicrous, and a waste of time. Based on a comic book series, and it shows in the plotting, and unfortunately not in the design.

**Visions** (2015, USA) **C-82m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Kevin Greutert. Starring Isla Fisher, Anson Mount, Gillian Jacobs, Joanna Cassidy, Eva Longoria. Hitchcockian thriller puts pregnant Fisher in danger in her new home as she suffers from terrifying visions that she cannot explain. Film treads familiar paths and almost becomes uninteresting. Explanation for it all boosts the rating by half a star. Solidly made all in all, with an especially atmospheric score. From the director of JESSABELLE (2014).

**Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography** (1992, USA/JAP) **C-92m. \*\*\* D:** Arnold Glassman, Todd McCarthy, Stuart Samuels. Interesting documentary looks at 20<sup>th</sup> century cinematographers and the tricks of their trade. Almost 100 films are dealt with (brief sequences are discussed by the interviewees). Most enlightening and amusing anecdotes concern Richard Brooks' IN COLD BLOOD (shot by Conrad Hall) and Polanski's ROSEMARY'S BABY, respectively. Worth watching, although only a handful European films are discussed.

What about the great Mario Bava? Among those interviewed: Sven Nykvist, Conrad Hall, Michael Chapman, Néstor Almendros, Vilmos Zsigmond, Robert Wise, Laszlo Kovacs, Haskell Wexler, Gordon Willis and Vittorio Storaro.

**Visit, The** (2015, USA) **C-94m.** \*\* D: M. Night Shyamalan. Starring Olivia DeJonge, Ex Oxenbould, Deanna Dunagan, Peter McRobbie, Kathryn Hahn. Writer-director Shyamalan tries his hands at found-footage horror, or is it a satire? Older kids DeJonge and Oxenbould spend a week at the farm of their grandparents, whom they have never seen before, as their mother has been estranged from them for a long time. Everything seems nice at the beginning, but then the siblings (who film everything with their cams) realize that something may be fundamentally wrong with the elders, as they behave oddly at night and have some weird secrets to keep. Watchable but close to a complete dud. The epilogue is a disaster.

**Visitor, The** (1979, ITA/USA) **C-101m.** \*\* D: Michael J. Paradise (=Giulio Paradisi). Starring Mel Ferrer, Glenn Ford, Lance Henriksen, John Huston, Joanne Nail, Sam Peckinpah, Shelley Winters, Paige Conner, Franco Nero. Science-fiction horror film made by Italian hands. In present-day America, Huston is on trail of a child with mysterious powers, which she might use against mankind. Apocalyptic recycling of *THE OMEN* (1976) is unfortunately pretentious, despite (or because?) presence of stars. For the curious. Cowritten and coproduced by Ovidio G. Assonitis. Original version might run longer. Italian title: *STRIDULUM*.

**Visit to a Small Planet** (1960, USA) **B&W-85m.** \*\*½ D: Norman Taurog. Starring Jerry Lewis, Joan Blackman, Earl Holliman, Fred Clark, John Williams, Milton Frome, Ellen Corby, Joe Turkel. Rare Jerry Lewis movie, an adaptation of Gore Vidal's play. Jerry plays an extra-terrestrial who travels to Planet Earth to study it and its inhabitants. This leads to more or less amusing complications in alien-disbeliever Clark's household. Some candid moments for a 1960 movie, as well as interesting Beatnik references. Likable Lewis gives it his best, but plot isn't very funny.

**Vita è Bella, La** (1998, ITA) **C-124m.** \*\*\* D: Roberto Benigni. Starring Roberto Benigni, Nicoletta Braschi, Horst Buchholz. Bittersweet comedy set in the late 1930s about a Jewish waiter (Benigni), who falls in love with a woman who is supposed to marry someone else. He wins her over with his innocent humor. The rise of Fascism threatens to destroy their relationship, but the man keeps up his joyful temper, especially towards his little son. Benigni's tragic story won him three Oscars for Best Actor, Best Screenplay, and Best Foreign Film. A long, heartbreaking journey into the terrible days of World War Two, with beautiful photography by Tonino delli Colli and a fine score.

**Vital** (2004, JAP) **C-86m.** \*\*\* D: Shinya Tsukamoto. Starring Tadanobu Asano, Nami Tsukamoto, Kiki, Kazuyoshi Kushida, Lily, Jun Kunimura. Low-key but telling examination of love and mourning about medical student Asano, who suffers from amnesia after an accident which killed his girlfriend. Then, as he takes up his studies again, he realizes it's her body he's studying in the university's anatomy course! Not a horror film, nor a mystery, this psycho drama is not for all tastes but it's strikingly directed and shot (by the director of the *TETSUO* films and the incredible *TOKYO FIST*).

**Vittima Designata, La** (1971, ITA/FRA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Maurizio Lucidi. Starring Tomas Milian, Pierre Clémenti, Marisa Bartoli, Bruno Boschetti, Sandra Cardini. Fairly interesting crime drama lifts its central idea off Hitchcock's *STRANGERS ON A TRAIN* (1951), itself an adaptation of a Patricia Highsmith novel. Unhappily married businessman Milian is baffled when stranger Clémenti offers to murder his wife in exchange for the assassination of his own brother. At first Milian is put off by the decadent, bored count, then circumstances force him to act accordingly. Medium giallo idles along, with main interest coming from

melancholy classical score by Luis Enríquez Bacalov. Not bad, well-worth a look. Screenplay cowritten by Augusto Caminito, Aldo Lado and director Lucidi. English titles: THE DESIGNATED VICTIM and SLAM OUT.

**Viva América!** (1969, SPA/ITA) **C-90m.** \*\* D: Saverio (Javier) Setó. Starring Jeffrey Hunter, Margaret Lee, Guglielmo Spoletini, Gogó Rojo, Pier Angeli. Gangster chronicle about Italian immigrant Hunter, who becomes his brother's partner in 1920s Chicago and introduces a new order in the underworld. Relatively ambitious, with Hunter (in his last film appearance) acting hard against trite script. English titles: MAFIA MOB, CRY CHICAGO, and THE TRUE STORY OF FRANK MANNATA.

**Viva la Muerte** (1970, FRA) **C-90m.** \*\*\*½ D: Fernando Arrabal. Starring Fernando Arrabal, Mahdi Chaouch, Mohamed Bellasoued, Núria Espert. Experimental art film, a reaction to and an attempt to exorcise the demons of General Franco's despotic rule of Spain from WW2 to the 1970s. Plot outline deals with a little boy, whose father is in prison and who suffers traumata under the wing of his mother, a religious fanatic. Disturbing surreal images abound in this highly symbolical but hard to decipher art film. Off-putting and fascinating in turns. Judge for yourself. Writer-director Arrabal's first of five (some sources state seven) feature films. This one is based on his novel *Baal Babylone*. Along with Alejandro Jodorowsky (FANDO Y LIS) and Roland Topor (THE TENANT), Arrabal was the co-founder of the Panic Movement, a radical surrealist group.

**Vivement Dimanche!** (1983, FRA) **111m.** \*\*\* D: François Truffaut. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Fanny Ardant, Philippe Laudenbach, Caroline Sihol, Philippe Morier-Genoud, Xavier Saint Marcay. Real estate agent Trintignant is wrongly accused of a murder and hides from the police while his secretary Ardant is investigating the case on his behalf. Suspenseful whodunit, well-photographed (by Nestor Almendros), well-scored (by Georges Delerue), and not without a sense of humor. Truffaut's last film was based on the novel *The Long Saturday Night* by Charles Williams. English title: CONFIDENTIALLY YOURS.

**Vixen!** (1968, USA) **C-71m.** \*\*\*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Erica Gavin, Garth Pillsbury, Harrison Page, Jon Evans, Vincene Wallace, Russ Meyer. Typical Meyer potboiler, a sex-and-crime pulp melodrama about a voluptuous woman (Gavin) whose husband flies tourists into British Columbia. The arrival of two holidaymakers ignites her lust, and there is racial tension, too. Not particularly meaningful, but an okay view, especially at this running time. Its easy-going score makes it a time capsule.

**Viy** (1967, RUS) **C-72m.** \*\*\* D: Georgi Kropachyov, Konstantin Yershov. Starring Leonid Kuravlyov, Natalya Varley, Aleksei Glazyrin, Vadim Zakharchenko. A young seminarian on leave spends the night in a house of an old recluse and realizes that she is actually a witch. The witch ultimately changes into a beautiful young woman, exactly the one to whose deathbed the seminarian is called on the next day. Will he be brave enough to spend three nights saying prayers for her? Interesting, well-directed chiller was the first Soviet horror film, with atmosphere and design reminiscent of the Russian fairy tales of the 1950s and 1960s. A must for horror film fans! Adapted from a short story by Nikolai Gogol, which was also the basis for Mario Bava's classic LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO (1960). Some sources credit cowriter and special effects supervisor Aleksandr Ptushko with the direction as well. English title: THE VIY OR SPIRIT OF EVIL.

**Vizi Morbosi di una Governante, I** (1977, ITA) **C-83m.** \*\* D: Filippo Walter Ratti. Starring Corrado Gaipa, Roberto Zattini, Isabelle Marchall, Annie Carol Edel, Gaetano Russo. Post-giallo sleaze mixing sex and violence about Marchall, who returns to her grandfather's with a few friends in tow. They plan to party and relax, but soon they are stalked by a

maniac. Sounds like it cannot fail, but does so, with poor pacing and gratuitous nudity. Even giallo fans should avoid this one. English title: CRAZY DESIRES OF A MURDERER.

**Voci dal Profondo** (1990, ITA) **C-84m**. \*½ D: Lucio Fulci. Starring Duilio Del Prete, Karina Huff, Paolo Paoloni, Pascal Persiano, Lucio Fulci. Latter-day Fulci about a businessman who suddenly dies (was he killed?). His spirit remains alive and tries to find the person responsible. Starts okay, loses its way pretty soon, when family relations become more than confusing. Some trademark gore, but otherwise nothing special here. From a story by Fulci (he also cowrote the screenplay). Not-bad score by Stelvio Cipriani. English title: VOICES FROM THE DEEP.

**Voices, The** (2014, USA/GER) **C-103m**. **SCOPE** \*½ D: Marjane Satrapi. Starring Ryan Reynolds, Gemma Arterton, Anna Kendrick, Jackie Weaver, Ella Smith. Pretty sick combination of psycho drama, satire/comedy and horror film about psychopathic factory worker Reynolds, who accidentally(?) kills his date, then tries to cover it up. We also learn he was deeply traumatized in his childhood. Mostly unfunny jokes, film is also unpleasant, its point is not exactly clear, and it completely goes overboard in the finale.

**Voici le Temps des Assassins** (1956, FRA) **113m**. \*\*\* D: Julien Duvivier. Starring Jean Gabin, Danièle Delorme, Lucienne Bogaert, Gérard Blain, Germaine Kerjean, Gabrielle Fontan, Robert Manuel. Vividly directed, potent crime drama about respected restaurant chef Gabin, who is visited by a girl one day, who claims to be the daughter of his recently deceased ex-wife. He puts her up in his house, without knowing her true intentions. Young student Blain, another one of Gabin's protégés, is infatuated, but she seems to have fallen in love with the elderly man. Slight overlength, unprecise character definitions are film's only flaws. Fascinating, if typically cold-blooded French drama. English title: DEADLIER THAN THE MALE.

**Void, The** (2016, CDN) **C-91m**. **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Jeremy Gillespie, Steven Kostanski. Starring Aaron Poole, Kenneth Welsh, Daniel Fathers, Kathleen Munroe, Ellen Wong. On a night shift cop Poole transports an obvious crime victim to a hospital, then finds the place under siege by mysterious hooded figures, and some of the patients start behaving strangely and/or transforming. Is it an alien invasion? Atmospheric B-movie horror has some shoddy performances, but the special prosthetic effects are great and the hooded figure concept quite eerie. Good score. Written by the directors.

**Voleur, Le** (1967, FRA/ITA) **C-120m**. \*\* D: Louis Malle. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Geneviève Bujold, Marie Dubois, Julien Guiomar, Françoise Fabian, Marlène Jobert, Bernadette Lafont. Good production design in otherwise bland drama set in turn-of-the-century France, where orphan Belmondo becomes a thief and starts robbing wealthy households and having affairs with different women. Belmondo sleepwalks through his role and plot has no dramatic effect on the viewer. Based on the novel by Georges Darien. English title: THE THIEF OF PARIS.

**Von Sex bis Simmel** (2005, GER) **C-67m**. \*\* D: Hans Günther Pflaum, Peter H. Schröder. German documentary focusing on several German sex films from the 1970s (the 13-part SCHULMÄDCHENREPORT series) and some hesitantly erotic (but equally trashy) Johannes Mario Simmel adaptations. Producer Wolf C. Hartwig explains his motivations and why he thinks the films grossed six times as much as those of acclaimed German directors Fassbender, Wenders or Herzog. Leaves out many other sex films (and possible interviewees) and is generally not very enlightening. Like the films, of marginal interest only. Among the other interviewees: Margarethe von Trotta, Volker Schlöndorff, Hanna Schygulla.

**Voyou** (1970, FRA/ITA) **C-120m. \*\*\*** D: Claude Lelouch. Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Charles Denner, Danièle Delorme, Christine Lelouch, Yves Robert, Sacha Distel. Amusing crime comedy with Trintignant playing a charismatic, resourceful thief. Plot is episodic but coherent, Lelouch's cinema-tography and direction good. Fine score by Francis Lai. Jacques Herlin appears unbilled as the prison warden. Claude Pinoteau cowrote the screenplay with director Lelouch. English title: THE CROOK.

**Vredens Dag** (1943, DEN) **B&W-110m. \*\*\*** D: Carl Theodor Dreyer. Starring Thorkild Roose, Lisbeth Movin, Preben Lerdorff Rye, Anna Svierkier, Sigrid Neiiendam. Heavy-going drama set in the 17<sup>th</sup> century about the repercussions of a curse uttered by a woman wrongly accused of witchcraft. Priest Roose, who once saved a woman from being burned because he wanted to marry her daughter, feels pangs of conscience and is soon confronted with his much younger wife's infatuation with his own son. Stagy, but excellent photography by Karl Andersson recalls the works of 1920s expressionism. English titles: DAY OF ANGER, DAY OF WRATH.

**Wake Wood** (2011, EIR/GBR) **C-90m. \*\*½** D: David Keating. Starring Aidan Gillen, Eva Birthistle, Timothy Spall, Brian Gleeson. Rather outlandish horror drama about a married couple who retreat to remote town of Wakewood after their 9-year-old daughter died in a dog attack. The local people led by Spall practice weird resurrection rituals, and soon they offer their service to the mourning couple. Macabre, quite gory film plays like a crossbreed of THE WICKER MAN (1973) and PET SEMATARY (1989). Deserves credit for tackling a taboo topic, but enjoyable it ain't.

**Waking Life** (2001, USA) **C-100m. \*\*** D: Richard Linklater. Starring Wiley Wiggins, Bill Wise, Ethan Hawke, Julie Delpy, Steven Soderbergh, Richard Linklater. Experimental animated drama with a stream-of-consciousness narrative about a young man who drifts through life. In episodes we get chunks of conversation about the meaning of life etc. Linklater uses an interesting artistic approach – he bases the animation on live-action performances – but the result is episodic, even boring. Watch only if you are in the mood for something philosophical. Linklater returned to this style of filmmaking with Philip K. Dick's A SCANNER DARKLY (2006). In fact, a Dick essay is discussed in the film.

**Waking Ned** (1998, GBR) **C-91m. \*\*\*** D: Kirk Jones. Starring Ian Bannen, David Kelly, Fionulla Flanagan, Susan Lynch, James Nesbitt, Maura O'Malley, Robert Hickey, Paddy Ward, James Ryland. Amusing black comedy about two elderly friends (Bannen and Kelly) who learn that one of their neighbors in a small Irish town (population: 52!) has won a large sum in the lottery. When they discover that he has died the moment he realized his luck, they decide to rip off the lottery company by having one of them pose as the deceased man. Macabre, if not entirely logical, but great fun, thanks to an engaging cast led by the wonderful Bannen and Kelly. Nice photography captures the Irish countryside in poetic images.

**Walking Dead, The** (1936, USA) **66m. \*\*½** D: Michael Curtiz. Starring Boris Karloff, Edmund Gwenn. After being electrocuted for a murder he didn't commit, Karloff is resurrected by a doctor and exacts revenge on the real murderers. Unexciting plot makes horror thriller seem longer than it actually is, but Curtiz' direction which emphasizes the characters' mimicry (like in a silent movie; to increase the effect Karloff plays a pianist) makes it worth watching.

**Walking Tall** (1973, USA) **C-124m. \*\*** D: Phil Karlson. Starring Joe Don Baker, Elizabeth Hartman, Gene Evan, Noah Beery Jr., Brenda Benet, John Brascia, Bruce Glover. Second-rate action drama based on the life of Buford Pusser (played by Baker), who returns to his hometown trying to live in peace with his family and finds it a pool of crime and corruption. Armed with a wooden club the giant sorts things out violently. Might have become an

American classic if it wasn't overlong, manipulative and not very engrossing. Followed by two sequels and a TV series. Remade for TV in 1978 and for cinemas in 2004.

**Walking Thunder** (1995, USA) **C-95m.** \*\* D: Craig Clyde. Starring John Denver, James Read, Irene Miracle, narrated by Brian Keith. Unexceptional wilderness adventure about a 19th century family who has to contend with nature and evil trappers. A little imagination might have helped; kids may like it anyway. Probably made for TV.

**Walk in the Clouds, A** (1995, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*\* D: Alfonso Arau. Starring Keanu Reeves, Aitana Sanchez-Gijon, Anthony Quinn, Giancarlo Giannini, Angelica Aragon. Chocolate salesman Reeves returns from WW2, and meets a pregnant young Mexican woman (Sanchez-Gijon). He offers her to pose as her husband, since she is afraid to return to her father's estate without the father of her unborn child. Needless to say, they fall in love. Pure kitsch, with not-to-be-believed scenes, but the acting is sincere and the photography one of the most tantalizing in recent memory. Fine score by Maurice Jarre. A remake of QUATTRO POASSI FRA LE NUVOLE (1942). The kitsch may have worked better in that version.

**Walk the Line** (2005, USA) **C-136m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: James Mangold. Starring Joaquin Phoenix, Reese Witherspoon, Ginnifer Goodwin, Robert Patrick, Dallas Roberts, Dan John Miller, Lary Bagby, James Keach. Sincere bio-pic of the life of music legend Johnny Cash (played with conviction by Phoenix). Cash's difficult childhood, his coming-of-age, his stardom and his alcohol and pill-addiction are elaborated. Film is well-acted (Witherspoon won an Oscar as June Carter) and provides an engrossing two hours plus. Incredibly, the stars did their own singing.

**Wallace & Gromit's Cracking Contraptions** (2002, GBR) **C-20m.** **n/rD:** Loyd Price, Christopher Sadler. Starring (the voice of) Peter Sallis. Series of some ten vignettes about the bumbling inventor Wallace and his dog Gromit, some very funny, all about some truly grotesque inventions and how most of them go wrong. Originally broadcast on the BBC website to test audience-response in preparation of the 2005 feature film.

**Wallace & Gromit in A Close Shave** (1995, GBR) **C-30m.** **n/r** D: Nick Park. Starring (the voices of) Peter Sallis, Anne Reid. Oscar-winning third Wallace and Gromit movie is mad-cap action adventure about the inventor, who has established a window-cleaning service. His dog Gromit gets involved with the mysterious disappearance of sheep. Provides a hilarious succession of gags. Many of the brilliant ideas here were expanded into the (equally Oscar-winning) feature WALLACE & GROMIT IN THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT (2005).

**Wallace & Gromit in The Curse of the Were-Rabbit** (2005, GBR) **C-85m.** \*\*\*½ D: Steve Box, Nick Park. Starring (the voices of) Peter Sallis, Ralph Fiennes, Helena Bonham Carter, Peter Kay, Nicholas Smith, Liz Smith. Often hilarious, exceptionally designed first feature-length adventure of clay characters Wallace & Gromit (following several short episodes between 1989 and 2002), who run their Anti-Pesto company, protecting the town from vermin of all sorts. This time they are busy catching an enormously big rabbit (a were-rabbit), before it ruins the annual Giant Vegetable Competition. The characters' faces and expressions alone are good for dozens of laughs, the script is filled with great ideas. A treat for young and old. Oscar winner for Best Animated Feature, though CORPSE BRIDE (2005) was even better.

**Wallace & Gromit in The Wrong Trousers** (1993, GBR) **C-30m.** **n/rD:** Nick Park. Starring (the voice of) Peter Sallis. Possibly the best of the Wallace & Gromit shorts, this also works perfectly as a homage to heist movies and thrillers in general. Wallace realizes that he needs more cash to keep up their "modern lifestyle" and takes in a tenant, who, as it turns out to be, not only tries to poke Gromit out of the house but also has sinister plans with Wallace's latest invention, some programmable trousers. Hilarious, action-packed cartoon will make

you gag with excitement. Love that suspense score! Winner of Best Animated Short Film at the Oscars.

**WALL-E** (2008, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Andrew Stanton. Starring (the voices of) Ben Burtt, Elissa Knight, Jeff Garlin, Fred Willard, John Ratzenberger, Sigourney Weaver. Some seven hundred years into the future the Earth is a wasteland, with garbage robot WALL-E on a lonely mission to rid the planet of trash. He collects material he considers interesting in his trailer and watches old movies. Then one day a female search robot arrives on the planet, with a mission he at first cannot understand. Animation-wise this is what you'd expect from Pixar, flawlessly animated, filled with good ideas, but plot is built up on coincidences, logical loopholes and doesn't fully exploit its apocalyptic premise. But most importantly, the laughs are limited. John Lasseter executive produced.

**Wanda, the Sadistic Hypnotist** (1969, USA) **C-69m.** D: Greg Corarito. Starring Katherine Shubek, Dick Dangerfield (=Richard Compton), Janine Sweet, Patty Roberts. Absolutely terrible non-movie is just a series of scenes showing naked women. Its purported plot is about the title character who rarely appears and a man who doesn't want to have sex with all the horny women around. Looks like someone's home movies at times. Don't be fooled by the title suggesting a cult flick.

**Wanted** (1999, AUT) **C-87m. \*\*** D: Harald Sicheritz. Starring Alfred Dorfer, Michael Niavarani, Roland Düringer, Erwin Steinhauer, Franz Buchrieser, Bibiane Zeller, Reinhard Nowak, John Phillip Law. Surgeon Dorfer escapes his stressful life by imagining he's the Lone Ranger, and his parents ask priest Niavarani to visit him in psychiatric care and try to bring him back to reality. Instead, Dorfer drags him into the Wild West with him. This potentially interesting story suffers terribly from an underdeveloped, uneven script (by Dorfer), but even so manages to get more involving in the final third, when the drama takes over from the comedy. Comic scenes feature Düringer in laugh-out-loud situations (non-Austrians may disagree). A misfire, but worth a look, if only to imagine what this could have been with a better script. Law has two brief appearances as one of the headhunters chasing Dorfer.

**War and Peace** (1956, USA/ITA) **C-205m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: King Vidor. Starring Audrey Hepburn, Henry Fonda, Mel Ferrer, Vittorio Gassman, Herbert Lom, Oskar Homolka, Anita Ekberg, May Britt, John Mills, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart. You need not have read Leo Tolstoy's classic novel to tell that this adaptation has its flaws. Of course, a 1000+ pages novel is always difficult to bring on-screen adequately, but this version remains surprisingly watchable. Good cast struggles with material and finally manages to breathe life into the characters. Fonda, Hepburn and Lom come off very well and epic war scenes are filmed with gusto. Good score by Nino Rota, photography by Jack Cardiff. Produced by Dino De Laurentiis.

**Ward, The** (2010, USA) **C-85m. \*\*** D: John Carpenter. Starring Amber Heard, Mamie Gummer, Jared Harris. In 1966 a young woman is interred into an asylum when she sets a farmhouse on fire, but soon realizes that the people in her ward are afraid of something, a creature that also soon comes to haunt her. Barely interesting chiller from horror expert Carpenter, his first theatrical film since *GHOSTS OF MARS* (2001).

**War Dogs** (2016, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Todd Phillips. Starring Jonah Hill, Miles Teller, Ana de Armas, Kevin Pollak. Teller reunites with his childhood friend Hill and gets drawn into his semi-legal weapons business, where they act as middlemen until an Iraqi deal requires their presence - in the war zone! With director Phillips and star Hill you'd expect a comedy, but there are only a handful of laughs. Watchable, not more.

**Warlords of Atlantis** (1978, GBR) **C-96m. \*\*½** D: Kevin Connor. Starring Doug McClure, Peter Gilmore, Shane Rimmer, Lea Brodie, John Ratzenberger, Ashley Knight, Cyd Charisse.

Engaging fantasy adventure from veteran director Connor (MOTEL HELL) about an underwater expedition headed by Gilmore, which ends up in Atlantis. Occasionally cheap and pretentious, but abundance of monsters compensates. Fun for kids. Photographed by Alan Hume. Also known as WARLORDS OF THE DEEP.

**Warm Bodies** (2013, USA) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Jonathan Levine. Starring Nicholas Hoult, Teresa Palmer, Analeigh Tipton, Rob Corddry, Dave Franco, John Malkovich. The zombie sequel George Romero would have done if he were female: The main character is a zombie, who narrates(!) his story of how he fell in love with a living girl, whose father happens to be the leader of the remaining humans. Plot is interestingly novel at first, then becomes unnecessarily stupid. Hoult's human zombie is a paper-thin contrivance... admittedly difficult to play, but all too obviously fake. Maybe you should see it as a romantic comedy, it is a paraphrase of Romeo & Juliet after all. Not recommended to horror fans (unless you loved TWILIGHT).

**War for the Planet of the Apes** (2017, USA) **C-140m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Matt Reeves. Starring Andy Serkis, Woody Harrelson, Steve Zahn, Karin Konoval, Amiah Miller. Third film in the rebooted APES series is the most saga-like and soft-spoken so far, despite its title. Caesar (Serkis) is trying to find a peaceful place for his tribe, but humans led by colonel Harrelson are trying to wipe them out completely. When Caesar's wife and son are killed in an ambush, he swears revenge and sets out to find the human settlement. Well-made, with still astonishing effects work on the monkeys, this works as an adventure and a drama, even though it's quite long (but never boring). Still, mainly for fans of the series. The 3D and 4DX technology is quite pointless here, however.

**War of the Worlds** (2005, USA) **C-116m. \*\*\*** D: Steven Spielberg. Starring Tom Cruise, Dakota Fanning, Miranda Otto, Justin Chatwin, Tim Robbins, Rick Gonzalez, Ann Robinson, Gene Barry, narrated by Morgan Freeman. Spielberg's spectacular remake of the 1953 classic puts divorced Cruise and his two children in danger, as alien spaceships appear out of the blue and start destroying and killing. Can Cruise reach his ex-wife in time before everybody and everything is wiped out? Shouldn't be seen as serious sci-fi, it's a popcorn movie with stunning effects and excellent direction. Spielberg keeps the camera moving, uses effective editing and a dramatic score (by John Williams). It's his shortest feature in over twenty years. Based on the novel by H.G. Wells.

**War of the Worlds: The Resurrection** (1988, USA) **C-95m. \*½** D: Colin Chilvers. Jared Martin, Lynda Mason Green, Philip Akin, Richard Chaves, Rachel Blanchard, Adrian Paul, Frank Pellegrino, John Vernon. 35 years after the events in the classic WAR OF THE WORLDS (1953) the aliens, who were in suspended hibernation, are revived and continue their attempt to overthrow the human race. Science-fiction pilot for the series (1988-1990) is talky and offers very little entertainment in addition to its already thin premise. It's rather violent, though.

**Warriors of the Apocalypse** (1985, USA) **C-96m. \*½** D: Bobby A. Suarez. Starring Michael James, Deborah Moore, Kristine Erlandson. Laughable science-fiction trash set 50 years after the destruction of the planet about group of sleazeballs who are in search of a mysterious mountain that is said to hold the secret of eternal life. In the jungle they encounter a sect whose guru runs on nuclear power! Not *that* bad, even (unintentionally) funny, but Suarez' claustrophobic direction kills it.

**Watch, The** (2012, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Akiva Schaffer. Starring Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn, Jonah Hill, Richard Ayode, Rosemarie DeWitt, Will Forte. Outrageous horror comedy about over-ambitious department store manager Stiller, who is faced with a murder in his mall and founds a neighborhood watch with bumbling volunteers Vaughn, Hill and Ayode. Then it turns out that there's an alien invasion and they are up against a deadly

enemy. Raucously funny comedy has probably too many sexual references (director Schaffer himself is credited in a bit part as 'occasional wanker!'), but there are more than enough belly laughs. Stiller and his team are great fun.

**Watcher, The** (2000, USA) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Joe Charbanic, Jeff Jensen. Starring James Spader, Marisa Tomei, Keanu Reeves, Ernie Hudson, Chris Ellis. Occasionally intense psycho thriller about worn-out cop Spader, who has been chasing serial killer Reeves for the last few years and is about to finally nail him in Chicago. Film details their unusual relationship, but is more a thriller than a drama. Unusual fare, well-photographed by acclaimed cinematographer Michael Chapman (RAGING BULL, THE FUGITIVE). Reeves signed up for the film years before its production and only acted in it because he wanted to avert a law suit. His performance doesn't suffer, however.

**Watchmen** (2009, USA) **C-162m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Zack Snyder. Starring Malin Akerman, Billy Crudup, Matthew Goode, Jackie Earle Haley, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Patrick Wilson, Carla Gugino, Matt Frewer, Stephen McHattie, Laura Mennell. Director Snyder's super-stylish follow-up to 300 (2006) is a comic-book adaptation set in an alternate 1985, where America has won the Vietnam War and Nixon is serving his fifth term as president. However, the Cold War is culminating in nuclear threats from both sides and amid that doomsday scenario, a group of former superheroes is trying to figure out why one of them has been killed. Sizzling special effects, action done slam-bang style, but plot lacks verve and is needlessly stretched out. Watch it for the style and effects. Director's Cut and Ultimate Cut run even longer (186m. and 215m., respectively).

**Water** (1985, GBR) **C-97m. \*\*½ D:** Dick Clement. Starring Michael Caine, Valerie Perrine, Brenda Vaccaro, Leonard Rossiter, Billy Connolly, Dennis Dugan, Fred Gwynne, Maureen Lipman, Alfred Molina, Ruby Wax. Wacky satire of British and American stereotypes, set on an unimportant (fictitious) Caribbean island, which suddenly becomes center of attention when a mineral water spring is discovered. Disgruntled British governor Caine and several other characters soon find the island sinking in chaos. Comedy is rather inept, but benefits from interesting cast and Caribbean setting. Photographed by Douglas Slocombe. Produced by 'Beatle' George Harrison, who briefly appears making music with pals Eric Clapton and Ringo Starr.

**Waterboy, The** (1998, USA) **C-88m. \*\*½ D:** Frank Coraci. Starring Adam Sandler, Kathy Bates, Fairuza Balk, Henry Winkler, Jerry Reed, Larry Gilliard, Jr., Rob Schneider. Truly wacked-out comedy about retarded waterboy Sandler and his overbearing mother Bates, who is shocked when her "little boy" (at 31!) is discovered to be a masterful tackler and starts playing football for a team who haven't won a match for a long, long time. Typically American, good-natured comedy is rather silly but offers enough laughs. Bates and especially Winkler score the most points. Unmotivated use of (good) songs on the soundtrack.

**Water for Elephants** (2011, USA) **C-120m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Francis Lawrence. Starring Robert Pattinson, Reese Witherspoon, Christoph Waltz, Paul Schneider, Jim Norton, Hal Hollbrook, Ken Foree. An aged man tells his life story to a circus owner, and his narrative takes us back to the early 1930s, where he (played by Robert Pattinson) joins the circus of the Benzini Brothers, run by despot Christoph Waltz. He finds himself attracted to Waltz' wife Reese Witherspoon and predictable complications ensue. Pretty much by-the-numbers romantic drama, certainly well-produced, but Waltz seems to be reprising his role from Tarantino's BASTERDS - and Pattinson is not an actor, he's just a pretty face. An okay view, nothing more.

**Water Horse: Legend of the Deep, The** (2007, GBR/USA) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Jay Russell. Starring Alex Etel, Ben Chaplin, Emily Watson, Eddie Campbell, Geraldine Brophy, David

Morrissey, Brian Cox. Fantasy movie uses the legend of Loch Ness and weaves a story around it, about a little Scottish boy whose father is at war (WW2) and who finds a magical egg on the beach one day. Inside is a kind of serpent or dragon, a water horse that grows at an incredible speed. Some beautiful photography (by Oliver Stapleton) but scripting remains standard. Rousing score by James Newton Howard. Based on the novel by Dick King-Smith.

**Waterland** (1992, GBR) **C-94m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Stephen Gyllenhaal. Starring Jeremy Irons, Sinead Cusack, Ethan Hawke, John Heard, Pete Postlethwaite. Irons is brilliant as troubled history teacher who manages to explain the importance of the subject to his students by relating his own dark history, which serves as a key to the understanding of his past. Engrossing drama with some impressive settings. Well-adapted from Graham Swift's novel, film offers an unusual but intriguing narrative. Carter Burwell's dramatic music score is a plus, though it is reminiscent of his work for the Coen brothers.

**Wat Zien Ik?** (1971, NED) **C-90m. \*\*** D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Ronnie Bierman, Sylvia de Leur, Bernard Droog, Jules Hamel, Albert Mol. Rarely seen first feature by Paul Verhoeven is occasionally funny sex comedy about the exploits of a prostitute, who is sometimes faced with highly unusual wishes of her clients. Begins nicely, has some well-directed scenes, but ultimately becomes redundant. Verhoeven followed this with the similar but much better **TURKS FRUIT** (1973). Based on a novel by Albert Mol. Aka **BUSINESS IS BUSINESS**, **DIARY OF A HOOKER**, **ANY SPECIAL WAY**.

**Wave, The** (1981, USA) **C-46m. n/r** D: Alexander Grasshoff. Starring Bruce Davison, Lori Lethin, John Putch, Johnny Doran, Jamie Rose, Michael Pasternak. Made-for-TV adaptation of the educational book by Morton Rhue about a high school history teacher who finds it difficult to explain the Nazi phenomenon to his students and proceeds to make an experiment. The students learn 'Strength through discipline' and become followers of 'The Wave', a symbol much like Hitler's swastika. Well-acted, especially by Davison, but still seems slightly pretentious. The score overdoes it at times. Worth a watch for those who read the book. It was remade in Germany in 2008 as **DIE WELLE**.

**Way of the Dragon, The** (1973, HKG) **C-96m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Bruce Lee. Starring Bruce Lee, Chuck Norris, Nora Miao, Miao Ker-Xie, Bob Wall. Lee's only film as a director is mediocre eastern about the master coming to help some friends in Rome, who are threatened by a ruthless crime syndicate. Plot is a yawn and film is poorly paced (first fight scenes only after 30 minutes) but Lee is fine as usual; all his talents are displayed here. The climactic showdown in the Roman Colosseum, which pits Bruce against Chuck Norris, is the best part of the film. Lee also receives story credit. Raymond Chow produced the picture. German TV version (91m.45sec.) is obviously cut but not as much as 91m. U.S. version, titled **RETURN OF THE DRAGON**. It was filmed before but released after the star's big success with **ENTER THE DRAGON**.

**Way of the Gun, The** (2000, USA) **C-119m. Ⓜ** D: Christopher McQuarrie. Starring Ryan Phillippe, Benicio del Toro, James Caan, Juliette Lewis, Scott Wilson, Geoffrey Lewis. Awful mess of a movie about two petty criminals, who decide to kidnap a pregnant surrogate mother and find themselves knee-deep in problems when the father, a millionaire, hires Caan to retrieve the baby – with or without the mother. Ultra-slow pacing kills this one, since texture isn't as rich as writer-director McQuarrie (Oscar winner for **THE USUAL SUSPECTS**) would have it. This one isn't engrossing but very, very strange (and slow).

**Way Way Back, The** (2013, USA) **C-103m. \*\*½** D: Nat Faxon, Jim Rash. Starring Liam James, Steve Carell, Toni Collette, Allison Janney, AnnaSophia Robb, Sam Rockwell, Rob Corddry, Amanda Peet. True-to-life drama about a puberty-stricken teen (James), who joins his mother and her new partner in going to his beach house. The self-conscious boy feels

completely superfluous, but then makes a friend in water park manager Rockwell, who gives him a job. Seems real and not contrived, but just as self-conscious as the main character. There are attempts at comedy, but it's mild at best. Rockwell shines in his role. The writer-directors have minor roles as water park personnel.

**Way... Way Out** (1966, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Gordon Douglas. Starring Jerry Lewis, Connie Stevens, Robert Morley, Dennis Weaver, Howard Morris, Brian Keith, Dick Shawn, Anita Ekberg, Milton Frome, Linda Harrison, James Brolin. Misfire about astronaut Lewis, who becomes a candidate for a year-long stay at a moon station, but he needs a wife within three days. Stevens finally agrees to go, and up on the moon they meet Russian couple Shawn and Ekberg. Some nice set decoration, 60s flavor, but this has very few laughs, and it takes forever till Jerry appears. Subpar for the comedian, some even consider this a bomb. Score by Lalo Schifrin. Title song by Jerry's son Gary and his band The Playboys.

**W Django!** (1971, ITA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Edward G. Muller (=Edoardo Mulargia). Starring Anthony Steffen, Stelio Candelli, Glauco Onorato, Donato Castellonato, Claudia Ornato. Standard Euro western with Steffen appropriately cold-blooded as a gunslinger who is out to avenge the death of his wife. Some style, nice score by Piero Umiliano, but not really enough to please anyone except genre fans.

**We Are Still Here** (2015, USA) **C-83m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Ted Geoghegan. Starring Barbara Crampton, Andrew Sensenig, Lisa Marie, Larry Fessenden, Monte Markham. After their son dies in a car accident, Crampton and Sensenig move to a country house to forget. Little do they know that the house harbours a terrible secret, which the townspeople are in on. Fairly creepy haunted house horror almost fails because the characters' actions don't make sense. Some potent splatter effects in second half and references to Fulci (QUELLA VILLA ACCANTO AL CIMITERO) make it worthwhile for buffs. Fessenden gives a nice Jack Nicholson horror turn.

**Weather Man, The** (2005, USA) **C-102m. \*\*\*** D: Gore Verbinski. Starring Nicolas Cage, Michael Caine, Hope Davis, Gemmenne de la Pena, Nicholas Hoult, Michael Rispoli, Gil Bellows. Cage plays the title character, a Chicago TV celebrity, whose life is anything but a success. He is separated from his family, his kids get into trouble without him realizing it, his father, a highly successful novelist, is about to die, and people keep throwing things at him from their cars. Slightly downbeat but telling, keenly observed character study buoyed by Cage's terrific performance and Hans Zimmer's excellent score. Screenplay by Steve Conrad contains some bitter truths. Recommended viewing.

**Web of Death, The** (1976, HGK) **C-91m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Chor Yuen. Starring Yueh Hua, Lo Lieh, Lily Li, Ching Li, Ku Feng, Chan Shen. Interesting Shaw Brothers eastern about several clans who are after a powerful spider that can win them the title in upcoming boxer tournament. Gimmicky plot can be confusing at times with its many characters, but romantic, atmospheric settings and that fantasy/horror touch make it fun for fans. Original title: WU DU TIAN LUO.

**Wedding Crashers** (2005, USA) **C-119m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: David Dobkin. Starring Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn, Christopher Walken, Rachel McAdams, Isla Fisher, Jane Seymour, Henry Gibson, Dwight Yoakam, Rebecca De Mornay, Chao-Li Chi. Superficial but amusing comedy about Wilson and Vaughn, two wedding crashers, who like enjoying themselves at weddings they are not invited to, aiming mainly at one-night-stands. Things get complicated when Wilson falls in love with the daughter of Treasury Secretary Walken, and Vaughn must pretend he's in love with her sister. Another totally artificial Hollywood comedy, never rings true one second, but the laughs are there, resulting in a movie that's phony but funny.

**Wedding Singer, The** (1998, USA) **C-96m. \*\*\*** D: Frank Curaci. Starring Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore, Angela Featherstone, Allen Covert, Matthew Glave, Christine Taylor, Jon Lovitz, Billy Idol. He's a wedding singer who was left by his bride on their wedding day. She's a waitress who is about to marry the wrong guy. Guess what happens next. Romance is predictably plotted but immensely appealing nevertheless, with Barrymore ideally cast in the lead role. She is so charming, you've *got* to fall in love with her! In the finale, however, the concept goes overboard. And what exactly was the point of setting this one in 1985? Steve Buscemi has a funny cameo.

**Week-end à Zuydcoote** (1964, FRA) **C-123m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Henri Verneuil. Starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, Catherine Spaak, Georges Géret, Jean-Pierre Marielle, Pierre Mondy, Marie Dubois, Francois Périer, Albert Rémy, Paul Préboist, Dominique Zardi. Based on Robert Merle's novel, this war film is set in 1940 near the coastal town of Dunkirk (Zuydcoote), which was strategically important in WW2. A group of French soldiers find themselves in the midst of turmoil, as the Germans attack relentlessly. Misfired drama puts main character Belmondo in pointlessly trivial situations – with even more trivial dialogue. Big-budget but empty. Real star here is Henri Decae's impressive cinematography. Score by Maurice Jarre. English title: WEEKEND AT DUNKIRK.

**Welcome to Collinwood** (2002, USA/GER) **C-86m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Anthony and Joe Russo. Starring William H. Macy, Isaiah Washington, Sam Rockwell, Michael Jeter, Luis Guzmán, John Buck Jr., Andrew Davoli, George Clooney, Jennifer Esposito. Funny remake of the 1958 Italian heist comedy classic I SOLITI IGNOTI (BIG DEAL ON MADONNA STREET). Five losers learn of an opportunity to strike it rich. It's impossible to explain what happens next, but everything goes wrong, as it possibly can. Obviously not very original, but performed with gusto. Clooney is especially cool as a guy who teaches them the art of safecracking. He also produced, with Steven Soderbergh (their OCEAN'S ELEVEN comes to mind). The directors also scripted.

**Welcome to the Dollhouse** (1996, USA) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Todd Solondz. Starring Heather Matarazzo, Brendan Sexton, Jr., Daria Kalinina. Life is hell for eleven year-old Matarazzo: she looks ugly, wears the most ridiculous clothes and is thus an outsider at her Junior High School. Her family treats her with contempt, paying only attention to her little sister, an 'adorable' young beauty. What to do in such a situation? This topic might have been dealt with seriously, but writer-director Solondz decided to make a satirical comedy. What's there is some laughs, some down-beat scenes, and no point to it at all, as will become clear at the end. The girl's problems are no laughing matter. Still, some found this excellent.

**Welp** (2014, BEL/FRA) **C-84m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Jonas Govaerts. Starring Stef Aerts, Evelien Bosmans, Titus De Voogdt, Maurice Luiten. Slasher thriller about a group of Belgian scouts in France, who make camp in a forest, not knowing that it is reportedly roamed by a demon child. Fairly suspenseful film suffers from stupid characters and their implausible decisions. Too little time is invested in the main character, scout Luiten and his back story. References range from DELIVERANCE (1972) and TCM (1974) to SUSPIRIA (1977) and even THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS (1991), so cult film buffs should get their money's worth. Also known as CUB and CAMP EVIL.

**Wendy Wu: Homecoming Warrior** (2006, USA) **C-91m. \*\*** D: John Laing. Starring Brenda Song, Shin Koyamada, Susan Chuang, Justin Chon, Michael David Cheng, Anna Hutchison. Made-for-TV variation of KARATE KID (1984), with Song playing a high school student hoping to become homecoming queen. Enter monk Koyamada, who tells her her life is in danger and she must learn the art of kung fu. Innocuous Disney fare is standard TV fodder. Mostly for girls. Followed by a sequel(!) in 2009.

**We're Going to Eat You!** (1980, HGK) **C-90m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Tsui Hark. Starring Norman Tsui Sui-Keung (=Norman Chu), Feng Feng, Choi Hon Kwok, Melvin Wong. Legendary Hong Kong producer Tsui Hark's second directorial effort (after THE BUTTERFLY MURDERS) is quite funny cannibal comedy about several people coming to an island whose inhabitants live off human flesh. Some gory effects, but spiced with slapstick action throughout. Well-directed and photographed, film loses some of its initial appeal towards the end. Even (ineptly) references parts of the SUSPIRIA score! Also known as HELL HAS NO GATES, KUNG FU CANNIBALS, and NO DOOR TO HELL.

**Wer War Edgar Allan?** (1984, AUT/GER) **C-87m. \*\*\*½** D: Michael Haneke. Starring Paulus Manker, Rolf Hoppe, Guido Wieland, Otello Fava, Renzo Martini, Walter Corradi. Hesitant psycho drama, based on the novel by Peter Rosei, about arts student Manker, who lives in Venice spending his father's inheritance on alcohol and drugs. One day he meets a German-born American (Hoppe) who goes by the name of Edgar Allan. Very cryptic drama is unfortunately also very slow and obviously without a point. Director Haneke shows talent, the score by an uncredited Ennio Morricone is perfect for this kind of film. Worth a look, but not to everyone's taste. Made for television and filmed on location in Venice.

**Werwölfe, Die** (1973, GER) **C-78m. \*\*** D: Werner Klett. Starring Wolfgang Ziffer, Klaus Jepsen, H. Ebeling, Günter Meisner. At the end of WW2, a group of eleven teenage soldiers of the Hitlerjugend barricade themselves against the enemy. When allied forces search the area after Hitler's death, they meet fierce opposition from the youngsters. German war drama – a variation of William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies* – uses music by Franz Liszt quite powerfully, but overall remains dramatically flat. English title would be THE WEREWOLVES, but it's doubtful whether this was released abroad.

**West Ti Va Stretto, Amico... è Arrivato Alleluja, Il** (1972, ITA/FRA/GER) **C-100m. SCOPE \*½** D: Anthony Ascot (=Giuliano Carnimeo). Starring George Hilton, Lincoln Tate, Agata Flori, Raymond Bussières, Garrone, Umberto D'Orsi, Maurice Poli. Silly western comedy starring Hilton in his trademark role as a clever gunslinger, who's always a step ahead of his competition. This time he has to find a valuable Mexican statuette that some Scottish scoundrels, a gang of Mexican rebels and a fat businessman are after. Has a fistful of funny ideas, and Carnimeo's direction is not bad (as usual), but script is poor and incoherent. Even Stelvio Cipriani's score is not good this time. A sequel to TESTA L'AMMAZZO, CROCE... SEI MORTO... MI CHIAMANO ALLELUJA (1972). English titles: RETURN OF HALLELUJA, THE WEST IS TOUGH, AMIGO... ALLELUJA'S HERE, and THE WEST IS VERY CLOSE, AMIGO.

**Westworld** (1973, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Michael Crichton. Starring Yul Brynner, Richard Benjamin, James Brolin, Norman Bartold, Alan Oppenheimer, Dick van Patten, Victoria Shaw. In a futuristic holiday resort tourists can choose between three 'worlds', Roman world, Medieval World and Westworld. The people living there are robots who are programmed to please the tourists. Benjamin and Franklin, visitors of Westworld, are confronted by an android gunslinger (Brynner) who runs amok. Soon it seems that the whole amusement park is getting out of control. Exciting thriller (written by the director) might have had to say more about the danger of technical progress but packs a wallop nevertheless.

**Wetherby** (1985, GBR) **C-102m. \*\*\*½** D: David Hare. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Ian Holm, Judi Dench, Marjorie Yates, Tom Wilkinson, Penny Downie, Joely Richardson. Psycho drama about a group of friends, who have dinner together with a man no one really knows. When he returns on the next day to Redgrave's house, he kills himself. This is the premise to an often ponderous, heavy-going mystery about repressed feelings. At times reminiscent of

Chabrol's bourgeoisie dramas, film is too low-key and quite depressing. Might work if it catches you in the right mood. Most notable for its cast.

**What Dreams May Come** (1998, USA) **C-114m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Vincent Ward. Starring Robin Williams, Annabella Sciorra, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Max von Sydow, Jessica Brooks Grant, Josh Paddock, Rosalind Chao, Werner Herzog. Williams plays a doctor, whose children have died in a car accident. When he himself is killed, his wife Sciorra is mourning his death, thinking about suicide. Meanwhile, Williams learns to get around in heaven. Will they be reunited, even if she kills herself? Overinflated romantic fantasy relies a lot on Williams' likability - and almost works. Beautiful color choreography (kudos to Italian production designer and French cinematographer) distracts from story, which at times seems like one big happy ending. It's all very metaphysical, with very little substance, but also quite endearing. Based on the novel by Richard Matheson.

**What Happens in Vegas** (2008, USA) **C-99m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Tom Vaughan. Starring Cameron Diaz, Ashton Kutcher, Rob Corddry, Lake Bell, Treat Williams, Queen Latifah, Dennis Farina. It doesn't get any more contrived than this: Two singles meet during a trip to Las Vegas, and marry for the heck of it. When on the next morning they find out that they don't really fit together, a \$3 million win forces them to live their marriage for 6 months - including going to marriage counselling sessions! Sounds improbable but is good for a few laughs. Harmless entertainment.

**What Lies Beneath** (2000, USA) **C-129m. SCOPE \*\* D:** Robert Zemeckis. Starring Harrison Ford, Michelle Pfeiffer, Diana Scarwid, Joe Morton, James Remar, Miranda Otto, Amber Valetta. When their daughter goes away to college, and husband Ford does extensive work, Pfeiffer is left alone in their country house. Soon she starts hearing voices, and a photograph keeps falling off a table. Is a ghost roaming their house? Mystery chiller is quite good for an hour, delivering some nice scares, but then goes overboard with some needless red herrings and a dull digital-effects finale. Filmed when director Zemeckis had to make a break during the shooting of *CAST AWAY* and it shows. They should have taken more time writing the script. An okay timekiller, nothing more. Familiar score by Alan Silvestri reveals this as a mere patchwork of ideas Alfred Hitchcock had decades before.

**What Price Survival** (1994, HGK) **C-97m. \*\*\* D:** Daniel Lee. Starring David Chiang, Norman Chu, Jack Kao, Damian Lau. Stylishly directed martial arts epic, loosely based on the 1967 Chang Cheh/Wang Yu classic *ONE-ARMED SWORDSMAN*. A boy is kidnapped, then raised by his father's nemesis to become his killer. Breathtaking cinematography, good action choreography and a passionate story make this a fine eastern. Also known as *ONE ARMED SWORDSMAN '94*. Lee's first film as a director; he followed this with the explosive *BLACK MASK* (1996).

**What's Love Got to Do With It** (1993, USA) **C-119m. \*\*\* D:** Brian Gibson. Starring Angela Bassett, Laurence Fishburne, Vanessa Bell Calloway, Jenifer Lewis. Consistently interesting bio of famed singer Tina Turner, from her early days as a teenager to the end of her cooperation with her brutish husband Ike. Predictable perhaps, but dramatic nevertheless, buoyed by two terrific performances by Bassett and the charismatic Fishburne. Based on Tina Turner and Kurt Loder's book *I, Tina*.

**What's New Pussycat** (1965, USA/FRA) **C-108m. \*\*\* D:** Clive Donner. Starring Peter Sellers, Peter O'Toole, Romy Schneider, Capucine, Paula Prentiss, Woody Allen, Ursula Andress, Edra Gale, Jess Hahn, Howard Vernon, Richard Burton, Louise Lasser. Classic 60s comedy with Sellers and Capucine fresh from their *PINK PANTHER* success, and film strikes the same vein, as womanizer O'Toole is afraid of marrying his true love Schneider and tells psychiatrist Sellers, who has the hots for Capucine. A bit too episodic but great fun, especially in mad-

cap finale. Allen's breakthrough script is full of his trademark humor. Oscar-nominated score by Burt Bacharach with the title song by Tom Jones.

**What's the Matter with Helen?** (1971, USA) **C-101m.** \*\*\*½ D: Curtis Harrington. Starring Debbie Reynolds, Shelley Winters, Dennis Weaver, Micheál MacLiammóir, Agnes Moorehead. When their sons are convicted of murder, mothers Reynolds and Winters move their dance school to Hollywood, as they receive threatening phone calls. While Reynolds finds success and love in Weaver, Winters slowly disintegrates mentally and becomes paranoid, which leads to murder. Interesting psycho drama set in the 1930s, well-acted by the leading ladies, but quite unpleasant, with little dramatic impact. Director Harrington reteamed with Winters for *WHOEVER SLEW AUNTIE ROO?* (1972). Also known as *THE BEST OF FRIENDS*.

**What We Do in the Shadows** (2014, NZL) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Jemaine Clement, Taika Waititi. Starring Jemaine Clement, Taika Waititi, Jonathan Brugh. Vampire spoof about three vampires whose every-day life is documented by a film crew. Focuses on the more mundane moments of their lives, generates some laughs but gets repetitive soon. The concept is funny, but lack of plot brings it down. A cult hit nevertheless.

**What Women Want** (2000, USA) **C-126m.** \*\*\* D: Nancy Meyers. Starring Mel Gibson, Helen Hunt, Marisa Tomei, Alan Alda, Ashley Johnson, Mark Feuerstein, Lauren Holly, Bette Midler. Entertaining, spirited fantasy comedy about womanizer Gibson, whose new boss Hunt wants him to think like a woman for the new products they are advertising. After he has an accident at home, he really can, hearing exactly what all the women around him are thinking. First he considers it a curse, but then he takes advantage of the new situation. If you can accept this gimmick, this is a wonderful comedy with one of Gibson's best performances (the dancing routine is sensational). Goes on little too long, bringing all those plot threads to a close. Fine set decoration and choice of sets.

**Wheels on Meals** (1984, HKG/SPA) **C-100m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Sammo Hung. Starring Jackie Chan, Sammo Hung, Yuen Biao, Benny Urquidez, Lola Forner, Richard Ng, Wu Ma. Second of four buddy movies directed by Sammo Hung (aka Sammo Hung Kam-Bo) and starring himself, Jackie Chan and Yuen Biao. Plot concerns private eye Sammo's investigation of beautiful pickpocket Forner in Barcelona, Spain. He is assisted by expatriates Chan and Yuen, who work as fast-food chefs. Pretty much what you'd expect from a Hong Kong action comedy with these stars. It's slightly overlong, but the showdown hits home. Also known as *MILLION DOLLAR HEIRESS*, *SPARTAN X* and *WEAPON X*. Followed by *MY LUCKY STARS* and *TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LUCKY STARS*.

**When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth** (1970, GBR) **C-96m.** \*\*\*½ D: Val Guest. Starring Victoria Vetri, Robin Hawdon, Patrick Allen, Drewe Henley, Imogen Hassall, Magda Konopka, Patrick Holt. Prehistoric fantasy about blonde cave girl Vetri, who flees from her tribe because they want to sacrifice her and stumbles upon a different tribe who admire her never-before-seen blonde hair. Juvenile and naive (apart from the sexy women), film's only words in English are spoken in the introductory voice-over. The rest of the dialogues is unintelligible and plot suffers. The prehistoric monsters are well-animated, however. If this is a cult film, then because of Vetri's physique. Story by J.G. Ballard, a renowned sci-fi writer.

**When Night is Falling** (1995, CDN) **C-94m.** \*\*\* D: Patricia Rozema. Starring Pascale Bussières, Rachael Crawford, Henry Czerny, Don McKellar, Tracy Wright. Sensual erotic drama about a teacher at a Calvinist college (Bussières) who meets a circus performer one day, falls in love and begins a lesbian relationship with her, despite being engaged with a colleague (Czerny). Her newly discovered desire also threatens to undermine her work as a

theologist. A modern and highly aesthetic paraphrase of the Cupid and Psyche myth. One wonders if a male director would have fared this well. Fine score by Lesley Barber.

**When the Wind Blows** (1986, GBR) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: Jimmy T. Murakami. Starring (the voices of) Sir John Mills, Peggy Ashcroft, Robin Houston. Remarkable animated anti-war treatise about two elderly people, the only characters in this story, who in their rural cottage somewhere in England are faced with the threat of a possible nuclear war. The man, old enough to have seen WW2, starts preparing for the bomb. Husband and wife seem to live in their own world and often appear foolish, but what follows is dead serious. Chilling, sad, with simple animation, but story will leave you breathless. From a novel by Raymond Briggs. Title song by David Bowie.

**When Time Ran Out ...** (1980, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*** D: James Goldstone. Starring Paul Newman, Jacqueline Bisset, William Holden, James Franciscus, Edward Albert, Ernest Borgnine, Burgess Meredith, Barbara Carrera. Clichéd disaster movie about volcanic eruption on Hawaii wastes a lot of stars but is just dramatic enough (especially in the finally) to please on a trashy level. Ran 121m. in U.S. theatres, and 141m. on video. Shorter European version is possibly an improvement.

**When Worlds Collide** (1951, USA) **C-81m. \*\*\*** D: Rudolph Maté. Starring Richard Derr, Barbara Rush, Peter Hanson, Larry Keating, John Hoyt. Enjoyable, dramatic science-fiction film about astronomers discovering a star which is on collision course with the Earth. A rescue operation almost fails due to the unbelief of the population. Film is rather dated, but Oscar-winning special effects are still good to look at. Based on a novel by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie. Produced by George Pal.

**Where Angels Fear to Tread** (1991, GBR) **C-113m. \*\*\*** D: Charles Sturridge. Starring Rupert Graves, Helena Bonham-Carter, Helen Mirren, Judy Davis. Sublime adaptation of E.M. Forster's first novel about Philip Herrington (Graves), who travels to Italy to prevent his widowed sister-in-law Lilia (Mirren) from marrying a young Italian dentist. When he arrives there, he learns that they have already married. Disappointed he returns to his British upper-class family, who are highly disconcerted about the affair. When Lilia dies upon giving birth to a son, he and his sister Harriet (Davis), a frustrated, conservative snob, travel there to take the boy home to England where his education will be assured. However, he meets resistance from the boy's father, who loves his son and intends to keep him in Italy. Forster deals with class issues across Europe and the difficulty of unifying different cultures, as he would later explore in *A PASSAGE TO INDIA*. Well-acted, smoothly directed, with a fine sense for details and a very good score. Perhaps a little slow-going but fans of literary adaptations will be more than pleased.

**Where Eagles Dare** (1968, GBR) **C-158m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Brian G. Hutton. Starring Richard Burton, Clint Eastwood, Mary Ure, Patrick Wymark, Michael Hordern, Donald Houston, Anton Diffring, Ferdy Mayne, Ingrid Pitt. World War Two adventure, written by Alistair MacLean from his story. Burton leads commando of several British and American officers into German Nazi fortress, supposedly attempting to rescue a British spy. Good stunt work, effective score by Ron Goodwin, but film is long and not always on-target. The bad guys die much too easily. Still, some found this riveting. Filmed in Austria. Director Hutton followed this with the similar *KELLY'S HEROES* (1970).

**Where's Poppa?** (1970, USA) **C-82m. \*\*½** D: Carl Reiner. Starring George Segal, Ruth Gordon, Trish Van Devere, Ron Leibman, Rae Allen, Vincent Gardenia, Joe Keyes, Tom Atkins, Rob Reiner, Paul Sorvino. Wacky satirical comedy with (a mild) cult status. Segal lives under the thrall of his senile mother who makes his life hell and keeps referring to long-dead 'Poppa'. He falls in love with nurse Van Devere, but there are complications ahead. Segal's

performance is great, but film has too few laughs and is ultimately too slight. Written by Robert Klane, based on his novel.

**Where the Heart Is** (1990, USA) **C-107m. \*\*½** D: John Boorman. Starring Dabney Coleman, Uma Thurman, Joanna Cassidy, Crispin Glover, Suzy Amis, Christopher Plummer, David Hewlitt, Robbie Coltrane. Typically eccentric Boorman comedy about real-estate mogul Coleman, who one day kicks his three children out of the house, thereby forcing them to live in one of the derelict buildings he usually has destroyed. Off-beat story works as a mild satire on social classes. Not terribly engaging but worthwhile. Those body paintings (by Timna Woolard) are brilliant, however. Kind of a sequel, or update, to Boorman's social parable *LEO THE LAST* (1970).

**Where the Truth Lies** (2005, CDN/USA) **C-106m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Atom Egoyan. Starring Kevin Bacon, Colin Firth, Alison Lohman, David Hayman, Rachel Blanchard, Maury Chaykin, Sonja Bennett, Kristin Adams, Don McKellar. Engrossing mystery drama about journalist Lohman, who in 1972 wants to write a biography of two entertainer greats of the 1950s, Bacon and Firth, in order to find out the truth behind mysterious discovery of a dead girl in their apartment. Film intriguingly shifts between the late 1950s and the early 1970s (with great period flavor) and is very well-acted, especially by Bacon. Glossy cinematography by Paul Sarossy, good score by Mychael Danna. Egoyan adapted a novel by Rupert Holmes.

**Where the Wild Things Are** (2009, USA) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Spike Jonze. Starring Max Records, Pepita Emmerichs, Catherine Keener, Mark Ruffalo, voices of James Gandolfini, Paul Dano, Catherine O'Hara, Forest Whitaker, Chris Cooper, Lauren Ambrose. Another off-beat, original drama from director Jonze (*BEING JOHN MALKOVICH*, *ADAPTATION*), based on an acclaimed book by Maurice Sendak. A 10-year-old boy cannot come to terms with the anger rising in him against his dysfunctional(?) family and runs away to a fantasy world, which is populated by big, furry monsters, who accept him as their king. There's tension among the group, and their interactions mirror those in the boy's real life. Touching fantasy drama is not really for kids, who will not be able to read between the lines. For adults, it's a delight. Slightly downbeat, but richly textured, heartfelt and with a wonderful, melancholy score by Carter Burwell. Co-produced by Tom Hanks and Maurice Sendak.

**Whiplash** (2014, USA) **C-107m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Damien Chazelle. Starring Miles Teller, J.K. Simmons, Paul Reiser, Melissa Benoist, Austin Stowell. Outstanding drama about music student Teller, who has enrolled at a renowned academy and dreams of greatness. He is even willing to sacrifice his private life, although his teacher, ultra-authoritarian Simmons is giving him a hard time – to say the least. Almost as visceral and tense like a psycho thriller, film is extremely well-edited and has a fresh approach. Simmons won an Oscar for his electrifying work. Written by director Chazelle, who expanded his own short.

**Whirlpool** (1970, GBR/DEN) **C-90m. \*\*** D: José Ramón Larraz. Starring Karl Lanchbury, Vivian Neves, Pia Andersson, Johanna Hegger. Sexploitation drama with crime touches about fashion model Neves, who joins weird photographer Lanchbury and his aunt Andersson at their country estate, not knowing that they are into kinky sex. Watchable 'thriller' for adepts. Score by Stelvio Cipriani. Also known as *PERVERSION FLASH* and *SHE DIED WITH HER BOOTS ON*.

**Whisperers, The** (1967, GBR) **B&W-106m. \*\*½** D: Bryan Forbes. Starring Edith Evans, Nanette Newman, Harry Baird, Jack Austin, Gerald Sim. An aging woman, living alone in a derelict apartment building, starts imagining things. Unpleasant psycho drama lives off Evans' brilliant performance, but watching it becomes quite a chore. Depressing, although some loved this. It's not a thriller, though. Judge for yourself. Score by John Barry. Based on the novel by Robert Nicolson.

**Whispers** (1989, USA) **C-100m.** \*\*½ D: Gordon Jackson. Starring Victoria Tennant, Jean LeClerc, Chris Sarandon, Peter MacNeill, Linda Sorenson, Eric Christmas. Writer Tennant finds herself being stalked by acquaintance LeClerc ... even after killing him during one of his attacks! Is he a zombie or a vampire? Low-key, poorly written and directed, but story underneath (by Dean R. Koontz) is chilling and interesting. Too bad they made it so unconvincing. Worth a look for horror fans.

**White Dog** (1982, USA) **C-89m.** \*\*½ D: Sam Fuller. Starring Kristy McNichol, Paul Winfield, Burl Ives, Sam Fuller, Paul Bartel. A bit contrived drama preaches against racism. Naive actress McNichol takes in abandoned white German shepherd dog, not knowing that it has been trained to kill black people. When he kills for the first time, she becomes aware of the problem and takes it to a trainer (Winfield), who refuses to give up on the dog. Message apart from the racism issue is not clear, film undermines itself with weird ending. Some found this good. Best thing about it is typical Ennio Morricone score, but even that does not fully gel. Dedicated to novelist Romain Gary, whose story this is based on.

**White House Down** (2013, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Roland Emmerich. Starring Channing Tatum, Jamie Foxx, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jason Clarke, Richard Jenkins, Joey King, James Woods, Matt Craven. Action thriller in the best tradition of AIR FORCE ONE (1997). Tatum has just been rejected in a job interview for the Secret Service at the White House, when the building is infiltrated and the president (Foxx) is taken hostage. Tatum, who has taken his daughter along with him on a tour, gets a chance to prove that he is worth working for the president. Required complete suspension of disbelief, but if you buy into it, it's a slam-bang thrillride. Foxx is especially good.

**White Noise** (2005, USA/GBR/CAN) **C-101m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Geoffrey Sax. Starring Michael Keaton, Chandra West, Deborah Kara Unger, Ian McNeice, Sarah Strange, Nicholas Elia. Supernatural thriller about Keaton, whose pregnant wife dies in a car accident, and who is contacted by a stranger one day claiming that his wife is trying to contact him. Keaton then becomes obsessed with E.V.P., the Electronic Voice Phenomenon, and tries to decipher his wife's messages. Thriller is slickly made, with good photography by Chris Seager, but remains unlikely, improbable all the way, despite some scares.

**White of the Eye** (1987, GBR) **C-111m. \*\*\*** D: Donald Cammell. Starring David Keith, Cathy Moriarty, Art Evans, Alan Rosenberg, China Cammell (Kong). Disturbing psycho drama about sound expert Keith, who's the prime suspect in the hunt for a serial killer. His frequent headaches and black-outs frighten his wife Moriarty, and there's a daughter to protect, too. Largely unconventional, strikingly directed character study from the director of PERFORMANCE (1970) and the brilliant DEMON SEED (1977). Difficult to watch, but strong performances, unusual technique will keep you posted. If it wasn't for the oppressiveness of the picture, this would be a stand-out film of the mid-80s. Cammell wrote the screenplay with his wife China.

**White Squall** (1996, USA) **C-128m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Ridley Scott. Starring Jeff Bridges, Caroline Goodall, John Savage, Scott Wolf, Jeremy Sisto, Ryan Phillippe, David Lascher, David Selby, Balthazar Getty, Zeljko Ivanek. Good coming-of-age drama set in 1960, about a group of teenage misfits who spend their last year in college aboard a ship. Captain-teacher Bridges tries to teach them to take responsibility in every situation, in order to prepare them for their later life. Interesting, well-acted and even exciting in the climactic storm sequence. Based on a real-life incident.

**Who?** (1973, GBR) **C-93m. \*\*½** D: Jack Gold. Starring Elliott Gould, Trevor Howard, Joseph Bova, Edward Grover, Ivan Desny. A car crash near the iron curtain leaves an important American scientist disfigured. Several months later, the Russians return the man to the FBI

– but he is irrecognizable, most of his body (including face) being steel-plated. Gould plays the sceptical FBI agent, who tries to figure out who “the man with the steel mask” (alternative title) really is. Interesting science-fiction drama has some good ideas, but is too talky, never exciting. Adapted from a novel by Algis Budrys. Produced by Barry Levinson. Also known as ROBO MAN.

**Whoever Slew Auntie Roo?** (1971, GBR/USA) **C-90m.** **\*\*½ D:** Curtis Harrington. Starring Shelley Winters, Mark Lester, Chloe Franks, Ralph Richardson, Lionel Jeffries, Hugh Griffith. Intriguing psycho thriller about landlady Winters, who’s holding séances in order to contact her late daughter. At Christmas time she also invites some children from the nearby orphanage. A boy and his sister get to know the lady better than they would have liked. Nice direction and good photography (by Desmond Dickinson) are undermined by a weak conclusion. Script by Robert Bleas and Jimmy Sangster, who must have had Grimm’s *Hänsel und Gretel* in mind. U.S. title: WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO? The same year Harrington made WHAT’S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?, which also starred Winters.

**Who Killed JonBenét?** (2016, USA) **C-84m.** **\*\*\* D:** Jason Lapeyre. Starring Eion Bailey, Julia Campbell, Kendall Cross, Graeme Duffy. Chilling true-crime documentary (with re-enactments) about the murder of a six-year-old beauty pageant queen in 1996 and the continuing attempts to find the killer. Quasi-narrated by the child herself, film questions the family’s integrity in the case. Leaves you wanting a bit, but so is the entire case. Made for television.

**Whole Nine Yards, The** (2000, USA) **C-99m.** **\*\*½ D:** Jonathan Lynn. Starring Bruce Willis, Matthew Perry, Rosanna Arquette, Michael Clarke Duncan, Amanda Peet, Natasha Henstridge, Kevin Pollak. Outrageous black comedy about suicidal dentist Perry, who realizes that his new neighbor Willis is actually a professional hitman that is much sought after by his former employees. And this is just the beginning of a meandering, none-too-logical story that offers a hilarious performance by Perry but is so wildly unbelievable that the stretches between the jokes are hard to take. Peet and Henstridge look gorgeous. Followed by THE WHOLE TEN YARDS (2004).

**Whole Ten Yards, The** (2004, USA) **C-98m.** **\*\*½ D:** Howard Deutch. Starring Bruce Willis, Matthew Perry, Amanda Peet, Kevin Pollak, Natasha Henstridge, Frank Collison, Johnny Messner, Frank Pesce. Funny continuation of THE WHOLE NINE YARDS (2000) has dentist Perry seeking out retired hitman Willis in Mexico, because a Hungarian mafia boss (Pollak, in a riotous performance) has been released from prison. As good as it gets with a script like that, the stars are fun to watch.

**Who’s Minding the Mint?** (1967, USA) **C-97m.** **\*\*½ D:** Howard Morris. Starring James Hutton, Dorothy Provine, Milton Berle, Joey Bishop, Bob Denver, Walter Brennan, Victor Buono, Jack Gilford. Agreeable crime comedy about independent clerk Hutton, who accidentally shreds \$50,000, then enlists the help of several bumbling characters to break into the money printing company (the mint) he works for to print it. Often too silly, with childish humor, it’s good for a few laughs. Nice cast.

**Wicked Within, A** (2015, USA) **C-91m.** **\*½ D:** Jay Alaimo. Starring Sonja Kinski, Sienna Guillero, Gianni Capaldi, Enzo Cilenti, Michele Hicks. Eric Roberts. Poor horror film with obvious budgetary limitations about a family reunion about a year after the death of a three-year-old child. When mysterious things start to happen, a medium and a priest are called in to help with an obvious demonic possession. Boring and not at all convincing. Only reason to tune in is the ravishingly beautiful Sonja Kinski, granddaughter of Klaus. Also known as THE WICKED WITHIN.

**Wicker Man, The** (1973, GBR) **C-93m. \*\*\* D:** Robin Hardy. Starring Edward Woodward, Christopher Lee, Britt Ekland, Diane Cilento, Ingrid Pitt, Lindsay Kemp. Strange, highly unusual thriller drama about Scottish police sergeant (Woodward) who comes to a small rural community to investigate the disappearance of a child and soon finds himself involved in bizarre pagan rituals of a religious sect led by Lee. Oddly atmospheric and completely unconventional, has become a cult classic. Lee regards this as one of his best films. Several alternate versions (running between 87m. and 103m.) are in existence. Screenplay by Anthony Shaffer. Remade in 2006.

**Wicker Man, The** (2006, USA/GER) **C-102m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Neil LaBute. Starring Nicolas Cage, Ellen Burstyn, Kate Beahan, Frances Conroy, Molly Parker, Leelee Sobieski, Diane Delano, Aaron Eckhart, James Franco. Not-bad remake of the British cult classic about policeman Cage, who is asked by former lover Beahan to investigate disappearance of her child in a remote island community. His welcome there is not a warm one. Can't hold a candle to the original, but as a mystery this is still quite engrossing, with a good performance by Cage and a fine score by Angelo Badalamenti.

**Wickie und die Starken Männer** (2009, GER) **C-85m. SCOPE \*\*\* D:** Michael Bully Herbig. Starring Jonas Hämmerle, Waldemar Kobus, Nic Romm, Christian Koch, Olaf Krätke, Mike Maas, Günther Kaufmann, Herbert Feuerstein, Michael Herbig, Christoph Maria Herbst, Jürgen Vogel. Surprisingly good remake of the children's TV series from the 1970s that was inspired by Runer Jonsson's book. A smart Viking boy helps his father's pillaging gang to find the kidnapped children of their village. It turns out one of them might lead evil Sven Kaufmann to a legendary treasure. Engaging kids movie is fast-paced, well-edited, and not as low-brow as Herbig's earlier spoofs. Recommended family fare, with an appealing, wide-eyed lead performance by Hämmerle.

**Wild, The** (2006, USA) **C-82m. \*\* D:** Steve 'Spaz' Williams. Starring (the voices of) Kiefer Sutherland, James Belushi, Eddie Izzard, Janeane Garofalo, William Shatner, Richard Kind, Jason Connery. Sorry excuse for a Disney (!) movie: Central Park zoo lion's son is accidentally transported off in a truck, and it's dad to the rescue with some inane animal friends. They eventually end up in ... (you guessed it). Did anyone say FINDING NEMO? Or MADAGASCAR? Some good, life-like animation cannot compensate for lack of originality, and it's needlessly violent, too. The product placement is as shameless as anything else in this movie. Kids might enjoy it anyhow.

**Wild at Heart** (1990, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** David Lynch. Starring Nicolas Cage, Laura Dern, Willem Dafoe, J.E. Freeman, Crispin Glover, Diane Ladd, Calvin Lockhart, Isabella Rossellini, Harry Dean Stanton, Grace Zabriskie, Sherilyn Fenn, John Lurie, Jack Nance, Pruitt Taylor Vince, Sheryl Lee. Powerful, red-hot continuation of Lynch's American Nightmare of BLUE VELVET (1986). Aggressive Cage clubs someone to death with his bare hands and after his release from prison takes it on the lam with his lover Dern. Her furious mother Ladd sends out a handful of hitmen, all assigned to kill. Road movie thriller kicks ass like none before, with typically odd, surreal touches by Lynch, who puts his own version of THE WIZARD OF OZ on the screen here. Plot is really indefensible, but this violent, loud, intense film is the prototypical cult movie and also a major influence on the work of writer-director Quentin Tarantino. Based on the novel by Barry Gifford, who also wrote a novel about Rossellini's character, which was filmed in 1997 as PERDITA DURANGO. Good soundtrack by Angelo Badalamenti. Winner of the Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

**Wilden Kerle, Die** (2003, GER) **C-94m. \*\*\* D:** Joachim Masannek. Starring Jimi Blue Ochseneck, Raban Bieling, Sarah Kim Gries, Cinstantin Gastmann, Wilson Gonzalez Ochseneck, Marlon Wessel, Jonathan Beck, Rufus Beck, Cornelia Froboess, Uwe

Ochsenknecht. Some football-crazy kids find their summer holidays threatened by a rival gang, who have conquered the local football ground. Now they have ten days to prepare for a decisive soccer-battle. Engaging comedy based on a popular series of children's books, well-played by the young cast. Often reminiscent of THE BAD NEWS BEARS (1976), but fun. Followed by several sequels. English title: THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH.

**Wild Gals of the Naked West** (1962, USA) **C-61m.** \*½ D: Russ Meyer. Starring Sammy Gilbert, Frank(lin) Bolger, Julie Williams, Donna Scott, Teri Taylor, Jack Moran, Russ Meyer. Russ Meyer's third feature is an inept sex comedy about an old cowboy who tells stories of decadent times in the West and how a gunslinger changed everything. Nudity can be considered daring for that time, but slapstick scenes are unfunny and repetitive. Meyer tries to evoke the spirit of silent films, but the result is laughable. The director also photographed, edited and produced this non-movie. Of interest to his fans only.

**Wild Rebels** (1967, USA) **C-90m.** □ D: William Grefé. Starring Steve Alaimo, Willie Pastrano, John Vella, Bobby Byers. Worthless action "drama" about race car driver Alaimo, who is so frustrated after an accident that he quits his job and starts singing songs in bars, later becomes the driver of a gang of criminal motorcyclists. Don't be fooled, this is as low-budget, uninteresting, stale as it gets.

**Wild Rovers** (1971, USA) **C-131m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Blake Edwards. Starring William Holden, Ryan O'Neal, Karl Malden, Lynn Carlin, Tom Skerritt, Joe Don Baker, Rachel Roberts, Moses Gunn, Victor French. Holden and O'Neal play two cowboys working for ranch owner Malden, who one day decide to rob the local bank. On their flight they are pursued by the authorities - and Malden's sons. Plot lacks momentum, but everything else about his western is fine; direction and score (by Jerry Goldsmith) are good, the photography by Philip Lathrop (POINT BLANK) is superb. Beware 109m. version.

**Wild Things** (1998, USA) **C-108m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: John McNaughton. Starring Kevin Bacon, Matt Dillon, Neve Campbell, Theresa Russell, Denise Richards, Daphne Rubin-Vega, Robert Wagner, Bill Murray. Dillon plays a good-looking high-school teacher who one day is accused of rape by one of his students (Richards) in South Florida. The situation seems hopeless when another girl (Campbell) makes similar accusations. The trial, however, ends with a surprise. And that's not the end of this serpentine story. Who will get the last laugh on whom? Lots of twists, and a dark sense of humor make this stylish thriller fun to watch. It's not very credible, but entertaining and suspenseful nevertheless.

**Wild Wild West** (1999, USA) **C-107m. \*\*½** D: Barry Sonnenfeld. Starring Will Smith, Kevin Kline, Kenneth Branagh, Salma Hayek, M. Emmet Walsh, Ted Levine, Bai Ling. Pretty crazy western action comedy, based on a television series from the late 1960s. Smith and Kline, two of the cleverest gunslingers in the west team up to bring down mad inventor Branagh, who wants to President to resign so that he can take his place. Some overblown visual effects, an annoyingly over-the-top performance by Branagh, but also a few laughs. This is well-paced and quite entertaining. Photographed by Michael Ballhaus, scored by Elmer Bernstein.

**Willow Creek** (2013, USA) **C-80m.** \*½ D: Bobcat Goldthwait. Starring Alexie Gilmore, Bryce Johnson. Found-footage horror film about a young couple who are filming a documentary about the bigfoot monster, trying to retrace the steps of the expedition that led to the infamous 1967 footage (long since disproved). When they finally get near, it's like endless scenes of huddling in a tent and listening to noises outside. As unnerving as it gets, and totally unrewarding. All you ever get to see is a 60-year-old naked woman – there, I ruined it for you – or saved you 80m. of your life.

**Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory** (1971, USA) **C-100m**. \*\*\* D: Mel Stuart. Starring Gene Wilder, Jack Albertson, Peter Ostrum, Roy Kinnear, Julie Dawn Cole. Wilder stars as mysterious chocolate maker Willy Wonka, who invites five children to visit his wondrous factory, where they are all taught a lesson. Good family entertainment, with a great Wilder performance. Adapted by Roald Dahl, from his own book (some re-writing was done by David Seltzer). Filmed in Germany. Remade as CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY (2005) by Tim Burton.

**Wind in the Willows, The** (1995, GBR) **C-73m**. \*\*½ D: Dave Unwin. Starring Vanessa Redgrave and (the voices of) Alan Bennett, Michael Palin, Michael Gambon, Rik Mayall. Approximately tenth adaptation of the classic children's book by Kenneth Grahame about the (mis)adventures of Mole (Bennett) and his friends Rat, Toad, and Badger on a beautiful spring day. Frame story features (a real) Vanessa Redgrave, who tells the story to some children on a boat. Cute animation, close to source material, but dramatically pat. Made for television. Followed by THE WILLOWS IN WINTER.

**Winners and Sinners** (1984, HGK) **C-106m**. \*\*½ D: Samo Hung. Starring Samo Hung, Jackie Chan, Richard Ng, Charlie Ching, Ching Shung-Lin, Yuen Biao. First of several action comedies directed by Hung and starring Jackie Chan: Five men get to know each other in prison and become the best of friends. Upon release they swear to lead an honest life, but soon they get involved with a syndicate which prints false money. Jackie plays a policeman who helps them out. Some genuinely funny moments, but not enough. Best one: The invisibility scene involving Richard Ng. Films made in the same vein: WHEELS ON MEALS, MY LUCKY STARS, and TWINKLE, TWINKLE LUCKY STARS.

**Winnetou und Shatterhand im Tal der Toten** (1968, GER/ITA/YUG) **C-89m**. **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Harald Reinl. Starring Pierre Brice, Lex Barker, Karin Dor, Rik Battaglia, Ralf Wolter, Eddi Arent. The final of more than a dozen Karl May adaptations produced in Germany during the 1960s. Winnetou (Brice) and Old Shatterhand (Barker) team up one last time to find and protect gold treasure hidden somewhere in the 'valley of death'. Standard plot enhanced by beautiful Yugoslavian scenery. Sufficient action scenes for fans. Also known as WINNETOU AND SHATTERHAND IN THE VALLEY OF DEATH.

**Wired to Kill** (1986, USA) **C-96m**. \*\*½ D: Franky (=Francis) Schaeffer. Starring Emily Longstreth, Devin Hoelscher, Merritt Butrick, Frank Collison, Tom 'Tiny' Lister Jr. The world of the future looks familiar. Violent street gangs rule the neighborhood of hi-tech whizz kid Hoelscher, who exacts revenge on those that killed his grandmother and sent his mother to hospital. He uses a self-made robot to punish the villains. Surprisingly stylish visuals, ambitious direction keep this afloat, although plot is neither exciting nor inventive. Longstreth is a cute heroine. Also known as BOOBY TRAP.

**Wisdom of Crocodiles, The** (1998, USA) **C-98m**. \*\*\* D: Chei Po-Chih Leong. Starring Jude Law, Elina Löwensohn, Timothy Spall, Jack Davenport, Colin Salmon. Unusual, interesting psycho drama about psychotic twen Law, who despite a successful job life, indulges in some bizarre rites, among them sucking blood from women he picks up. Off-beat examination of a life off-balance, creatively directed.

**Wishmaster** (1997, USA) **C-90m**. \*\*½ D: Robert Kurtzman. Starring Tammy Lauren, Andrew Divoff, Chris Lemmon, Wendy Benson, Tony Crane, Jenny O'Hara, Kane Hodder, Robert Englund, Tony Todd, Ted Raimi, Danny Hicks, Buck Flowers, Reggie Banister, narrated by Angus Scrimm. Full-blooded horror film about the title creature, a demon which grants wishes when released from a gem stone. If he gets someone to make three wishes, he can open the gate to another dimension where other demons lie waiting. Plot isn't exactly brilliant, as you might have guessed, but well-done, effective scenes of serious horror put

this movie above average of its type. Lead actress Lauren is the only one in the cast who doesn't give a good performance, and film suffers a great deal. Pierre David was one of the producers. Wes Craven executive produced the picture (but don't expect any comic relief). Followed by a sequel.

**Wishmaster 2: Evil Never Dies** (1999, USA) **C-98m**. \*½ D: Jack Sholder. Starring Andrew Divoff, Paul Johnsson, Holly Fields, Bokeem Woodbine, Vyto Ruginis, Maria Gennaro, Scott Klace. Sequel to WISHMASTER is standard horror fare, as the demon is resurrected and goes after the souls of everyone in sight, in order to be free again (see above). Fields plays a young woman who is plagued by strange nightmares – until the visions enter her real life. One potent gore scene, and that's it. A disappointment from director Sholder (THE HIDDEN), who also wrote the script. Released directly to video.

**Witch, The** (2015, GBR/USA/CDN/BRA) **C-92m**. \*\* D: Robert Eggers. Starring Anya Taylor-Joy, Ralph Ineson, Kate Dickie, Harvey Scrimshaw. Horror drama set in 17th century New England, where a family of six are fending for themselves in the wilderness after having left the community. When an infant suddenly disappears, everything points towards witchcraft. And indeed, there seems to be an evil power coming from the forest. Film seems authentic, but the dialogue is barely intelligible and the abundant strife and suffering completely drains any mystery element. Some found this good nevertheless. The unnerving score provides the only chills. Also known as THE WITCH: A NEW-ENGLAND FOLKTALE.

**Witchery** (1988, ITA/USA) **C-96m**. ½ D: Martin Newlin (=Fabrizio Laurenti). Starring David Hasselhoff, Linda Blair, Catherine Hickland, Annie Ross, Hildegard Knef, Leslie Cumming. Several people, including Hasselhoff (pre-Baywatch) and Blair, visit a mysterious mansion on a deserted island that turns out to be haunted by witch Knef. Completely unconvincing horror trash with some of the most demented casting ever. Pretty gory, but repellently so. Joe D'Amato produced this follow-up to Umberto Lenzi's LA CASA 3 – GHOSTHOUSE (1988), which was an Italian continuation of the HOUSE movies. Followed by LA CASA 5 (1990). Also known as GHOSTHOUSE 2, and WITCHCRAFT.

**Witches, The** (1966, GBR) **C-91m**. \*\*½ D: Cyril Frankel. Starring Joan Fontaine, Kay Walsh, Alec McCowen, Ann Forrest Bell, Ingrid Brett (=Boulting). Hammer production suffers from second-rate script. School teacher Fontaine, after suffering a breakdown in a mission in Africa, starts a job in rural England and realizes that there may be a witches coven preparing a human sacrifice. Quite bizarre horror drama never really gets going, even slows down with a plot detour in the mid-section. Ending is outlandish. Judge for yourself. Some found this good. Screen legend Fontaine's last theatrical feature, she only appeared in TV productions from then on. Also known as THE DEVIL'S OWN (which was the novel's title, on which this was based).

**Witchfinder General** (1968, GBR/USA) **C-86m**. \*\*½ D: Michael Reeves. Starring Vincent Price, Ian Ogilvy, Hilary Dwyer, Rupert Davies, Robert Russell, Patrick Wymark, Wilfred Brambell. Thriller set in 17th century England, a country torn by Civil War and cruel witch hunts which sought to kill people at random in order to make quick money. Price is serene (more than usual) as the title figure, a merciless inquisitor who roams the countryside accusing women and men of witchcraft. However, in Ogilvy, a young soldier serving Cromwell, he meets fierce opposition. Most of the violence is only implied in this thriller, but some scenes are gruesome enough to make you wince. Low production values add a strange feel to the film. Ultimately, it leaves the viewer wanting, because the script is superficial and basically 'pulp' (mostly in its characterizations) - without being terribly exciting or entertaining. The direction isn't seamless either. Paul Ferris' sensitive score, however, is ideally suited to the outdoor locations. A rare example of a thriller which

presents a defeatist view of a historical era. Not for every taste, to be sure. British version runs two minutes longer. Based on a novel by Ronald Bassett. U.S. title: THE CONQUEROR WORM.

**Without Warning** (1980, USA) **C-94m.** \*½ D: Greydon Clark. Starring Tarah Nutter, Christopher S. Nelson, Jack Palance, Martin Landau, Sue Ane Langdon, Neville Brand, Cameron Mitchell, David Caruso, Ralph Meeker. Good cast (including Caruso in his starring debut) wasted in this ludicrous sci-fi horror film about an alien creature dwelling in the woods somewhere, which sends out lethal disks. A group of teenagers and veterans Landau and Palance try to stop it. Boring. Aka THE WARNING, ALIEN WARNING, IT CAME WITHOUT WARNING.

**Witness** (1985, USA) **C-112m.** \*\*\* D: Peter Weir. Starring Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis, Josef Sommer, Lukas Haas, Alexander Godunov, Danny Glover, Viggo Mortensen. Unusual, almost meditative crime drama about cop Ford, who is trying to solve a homicide, of which only a little Amish boy (Haas) has seen the killer. When he finds out that someone in the police force may be behind it, he hides out at the house of the boy's mother (McGillis). Good cast, good direction by Weir, who went on to make THE MOSQUITO COAST.

**Witness for the Prosecution** (1957, USA) **114m.** \*\*\*\* D: Billy Wilder. Starring Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Power, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, John Williams, Henry Daniell, Una O'Connor, Ian Wolfe. Brilliant adaptation of an Agatha Christie play, featuring Laughton and especially Dietrich in unforgettable roles. After suffering a heart-attack, lawyer Laughton is advised to handle harmless cases only, but seemingly innocent Power's plight arouses his interest and intellect. He is accused of having murdered a lonely widow, and the only witness for the defense, Power's wife Dietrich, proves to be a notorious liar. Dietrich's dramatic entry and the finale are especially dazzling. Funny, suspenseful, absolutely stunning, one of the greatest films of the 1950s.

**Wolf** (1994, USA) **C-122m.** \*\* D: Mike Nichols. Starring Jack Nicholson, Michelle Pfeiffer, James Spader, Kate Nelligan, Christopher Plummer. Poor modernization of the werewolf legend with Nicholson (who else?) as the unsuspecting man who is bitten by a wolf and starts to undergo some frightening changes. No surprises in this contrived 'horror' film, designed for utterly conservative people. Nichols has made a well-crafted film, if only he had remembered to add a few thrills! This is about as creative as its title. Score by Ennio Morricone.

**WolfCop** (2014, CDN) **C-79m.** \*\* D: Lowell Dean. Starring Leo Fafard, Amy Matysio, Sarah Lind, Corinne Conley, Jesse Moss. Deliberately trashy horror comedy about alcoholic cop Fafard, who by a ritual turns into the title creature, a superstrong, law-enforcing werewolf. Fairly well-made, except perhaps for erratic finale, but humor doesn't work most of the time. Watch if you are into tacky B-movies.

**Wolfen** (1981, USA) **C-114m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Michael Wadleigh. Starring Albert Finney, Diane Venora, Edward James Olmos, Gregory Hines, Tom Noonan, Dick O'Neill, Michael Wadleigh. Absolutely terrific horror film, an artistic and intellectual triumph for the director of WOODSTOCK: Reinstated police captain Finney, investigating a multiple murder in the slums of New York City, encounters mysterious creatures called the 'Wolfen'. Script cleverly toys with the explanation of their existence, and the result is an extremely suspenseful film. Score (by James Horner), sound and visual effects are stunning, as is Wadleigh's stylish direction. Violent and bloody, film is not for the faint at heart. Thoughtful script by Wadleigh and David Eyre, based on the novel by Whitley Streiber. Not your conventional werewolf movie, and yet one of the best of its kind. A must-see for anyone interested in intelligent horror films.

**Wolf Lake** (1978, USA) **C-84m.** \*\*½ D: Burt Kennedy. Starring Rod Steiger, David Huffman, Robin Mattson, Jerry Hardin, Richard Herd, Paul Mantee. Four vietnam vets led by Steiger travel to a cabin in the Canadian wilderness, where they meet deserter Huffman and his girlfriend. Steiger, who lost his son in the war, soon unleashes his anger at the couple. Thriller is a bit too simplistic and formulaic, but Steiger is intimidatingly good and writer-director Kennedy gives the movie some interesting touches. Re-released in 1980 as THE HONOR GUARD with a different ending. Worth a look, though doesn't compare to either DELIVERANCE or STRAW DOGS.

**Wolverine, The** (2013, USA/GBR) **C-138m. SCOPE** \*\*½ D: James Mangold. Starring Hugh Jackman, Will Yun Lee, Tao Okamoto, Rila Fukushima, Hiroyuki Sanada. Sixth X-MEN movie, the second with a focus on the Wolverine character. Jackman is summoned to Japan by an old acquaintance, with whom he survived the Nagasaki atomic bomb. It turns out the dying man wants to become immortal like Wolverine and do the weary mutant a favour by finding a way to kill him. So-what storyline, with some explosive action sequences.

**Woman in White, The** (1948, USA) **B&W109m.** \*\*\* D: Peter Godfrey. Starring Alexis Smith, Eleanor Parker, Sydney Greenstreet, Gig Young, Agnes Moorehead. Loosely based on Wilkie Collins' classic mystery novel (first published in 1860), this gothic melodrama is about mysterious going-ons in Victorian household, where marvelous Machiavellian villain Greenstreet pulls the strings. Interesting throughout. Filmed several times before, most notably as CRIMES AT THE DARK HOUSE (1940).

**Woman Wanted** (1999, USA) **C-110m.** \*½ D: Kiefer Sutherland. Starring Kiefer Sutherland, Michael Moriarty, Holly Hunter. Sutherland's attempt at being a serious filmmaker is ridiculous, uninteresting drama about house maid Hunter, who comes to work and live at Moriarty and Sutherland's house and brings their emotions in turmoil. Father and son are at odds with each other and suffer both from terrible psychoses brought about by Sutherland's late mother. Joanna McClelland Glass adapted her own novel and renders the going-ons meaningless for those who have not read her book. Understandably premiered on TV.

**Womb** (2010, GER/HUN/FRA) **C-111m. SCOPE** \*\*\*½ D: Benedek Fliegauf. Starring Eva Green, Matt Smith, Lesley Manville, Peter Wight. Excellent drama with science-fiction elements, set in the near future where cloning is possible. After meeting her soul-mate as a child, Green returns to his home years later and rekindles the love affair they couldn't have when they were kids. However, fate strikes and separates them – but only temporarily. Stunningly beautiful widescreen cinematography lends incredible depth to ambitious philosophical story. Green is perfect in the lead. Loses some of its credibility in the final third, but it's still a powerful arthouse drama. Written by director Fliegauf. Also known as CLONE.

**Women Unchained** (1974, USA) **C-82m.** \*½ D: Kent Osborne. Starring Carolyn Judd, Teri Guzman, Darlene Mattingly, Angel Colbert. Five women escape from prison and spend most of the movie on the run. Sloppy action film, poorly put together, and talky worst of all. Not at all interesting, not even for WIP fans. Also known as FIVE ANGRY WOMEN, ESCAPE FROM CELL BLOCK 3.

**Wonder Boys** (2000, USA/GBR/JAP/GER) **C-112m. SCOPE** \*\* D: Curtis Hanson. Starring Michael Douglas, Tobey Maguire, Frances McDormand, Robert Downey Jr., Katie Holmes, Rip Torn, Richard Knox, Richard Thomas. Strange comedy about a marijuana-smoking college professor, who meets all kinds of odd characters and gets into the most ridiculous situations after one of his students (Maguire) kills his lover's dog and steals her husband's(!) most prized possession, a vest worn by Marilyn Monroe on her wedding day. Adaptation of

Michael Chambon's novel seems like a misfire (it's *very* strange), generating few laughs, but movie has its defenders. Oscar-winner for Best Song (Bob Dylan).

**Wonderful Days** (2003, KOR) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Kim Moon-saeng. In a dystopian future, where nature has been destroyed, and people work in factory settings, a resistance movement stirs, with the protagonist trying to show the people how beautiful the world once was. Downbeat, pessimistic, with an odd mixture of high-definition computer fx and hand-drawn 80s style animation, all moving at a deadly pace. Some stylish bits save it. Aka SKY BLUE.

**Wonderful Ice Cream Suit, The** (1998, USA) **C-77m.** \*\*½ D: Stuart Gordon. Starring Joe Mantegna, Esai Morales, Edward James Olmos, Clifton Collins Jr., Gregory Sierra, Liz Torres, Sid Caesar. Five Latinos put their money together to buy marvelous white suit. On the first evening, everyone gets the chance to wear it for one hour – and what an hour it will be! Quite amusing little comedy takes a while to get going but has funny performances. A big surprise from horror director Gordon (RE-ANIMATOR), who also produced. Based on the short story by Ray Bradbury.

**Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm, The** (1962, USA) **C-135m.SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Henry Levin, George Pal. Starring Laurence Harvey, Karlheinz Böhm, Claire Bloom, Walter Slezak, Barbara Eden, Oskar Homolka, Arnold Stang, Walter Rilla, Yvette Mimieux, Russ Tamblyn, Jim Backus, Terry-Thomas, Buddy Hackett. Fictionalized bio-pic of famed German writers the Grimm brothers. Film charts their attempts to write the biography of a Duke when they would rather tell fairy tales. In three separate stories their fantasy worlds come to life. Uneven epic runs hot and cold, with some interesting special effects, but generally remains colorful and entertaining enough to be worthwhile. The first film shot in 3-camera Cinerama, which produced an aspect ratio of 2.59:1, with two faint vertical lines separating the 3 screens. Some prints are minus the prologue, intermission and exit music, others are reported to run even longer. Oscar winner for Best Costume Design. Filmed in Germany.

**Wonder Seven** (1994, HKG) **C-87m.** \*\*½ D: Ching Siu-Tung. Starring Michelle Yeoh, Li Ning, Andy Hui, Cheng Kent. Nice actioner about seven friends who join forces to battle crime syndicate. So much for plot cleverness. This action film, obviously inspired by THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN (1960), is more entertaining than comparable flicks. Ching's expert direction and Yeoh's charismatic performance make the film seem better than it actually is. Also known as PHANTOM SEVEN. Original title: 7 JIN GONG.

**Wonderwall: The Movie** (1969, GBR) **C-92m.** \*½ D: Joe Massot. Starring Jack MacGowran, Jane Birkin, Irene Handl, Richard Wattis, Iain Quarrier. Time capsule from the late 60s about chemistry professor MacGowran, who discovers a hole in his wall and can't get his eyes off his neighbor, fashion model Birkin. Not exactly a mind-expanding experience, despite music by George Harrison, photography by Harry Waxman (THE WICKER MAN) and story by Gérard Brach. Watch only if on an LSD-trip.

**Workaholic** (1996, GER/AUT) **C-94m.** \*\* D: Sharon von Wietersheim. Starring Tobias Moretti, Christiane Paul, Ralf Bauer, Juraj Kukura. Harmless comedy about an overworked businessman (Moretti), whose phone is always ringing, much to the chagrin of his lover (Paul). She dumps him and fools around with Bauer, only to make him jealous. Predictable to the very end, but quite entertaining and well-acted by Paul.

**World According to Garp, The** (1982, USA) **C-136m.** \*\*\*\* D: George Roy Hill. Starring Robin Williams, Mary Beth Hurt, Glenn Close, John Lithgow, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Amanda Plummer. Superb comedy drama (adapted from John Irving's acclaimed novel) about the life of Garp, a kid, and later man, whose life is influenced a great deal by his dominant, feminist mother. Funny and sad at the same time, film unfolds beautifully as we accompany Garp and his family through life. Highly philosophical, true-to-life drama is a must, although

it tries to incorporate too much detail of the novel and sometimes seems superficial. Very fine acting by the whole cast makes this a memorable movie.

**World Gone Wild** (1988, USA) **C-95m**. **D**: Lee H. Katzin. Starring Bruce Dern, Michael Paré, Catherine Mary Stewart, Adam Ant, Rick Podell, Anthony James. Stupid sci-fi actioner with Dern leading a group of Desperados to defend desert town in post-apocalyptic America. Poorly directed, poorly acted (Dern seems very relaxed), absolutely undramatic script. May be called a remake of THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, if it wasn't so bad. MAD MAX would have done the job single-handedly.

**World Is Not Enough, The** (1999, GBR/USA) **C-128m**. **SCOPE \*\*** **D**: Michael Apted. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Sophie Marceau, Robert Carlyle, Denise Richards, Robbie Coltrane, Judi Dench, Desmond Llewelyn, John Cleese, Maria Grazia Cucinotta, Samantha Bond. Her Majesty's secret agent is at it again, this time investigating the kidnapping of an oil magnate's daughter (Marceau) by a terrorist (Carlyle) who is insensible to pain. Bond soon finds himself trying to avoid the theft of an atom bomb by the villain. The opening speed boat sequence is so over-the-top that the film's return to realism later deprives it of any credibility. A certain lack of flair and exotic locales (unless you count the Caspian Sea) will make you wonder if you *are* watching a James Bond film. This entry is among the weakest of the series. The script is not enough.

**World's End, The** (2013, GBR) **C-109m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** **D**: Edgar Wright. Starring Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Martin Freeman, Paddy Considine, Eddie Marsan, David Bradley, Rosamund Pike, Pierce Brosnan, voice of Bill Nighy. Insane conclusion of director Wright's trilogy begun with SHAUN OF THE DEAD (2004) and HOT FUZZ (2007). Loser Pegg is on a mission to finally complete the 'Golden Mile', a tour of 12 pubs in his old hometown, something he couldn't complete twenty years ago. He convinces his old friends (all serious in good jobs) to go on this tour with him, then they run into aliens in the second stop. Fast-paced, hilarious, a beer cult movie if there ever was one. BODY SNATCHERS story is only so-so, but great, creative ideas, funny performances make the difference.

**World's Fastest Indian, The** (1999, USA/NZL/JAP/SUI) **C-127m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** **D**: Roger Donaldson. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Iain Rea, Tessa Mitchell, Aaron Murphy, Tim Shadbolt, Annie Whittle. Biographical drama about one Burt Munro from New Zealand, who in the 1960s travelled to the salt flats in Utah to try out his motorbike, a super-fast Indian and break a world-record. The aged, ailing man is trying to make his dream come true. Crowd-pleaser, with the perfect man in the lead, although the plot is terribly episodic.

**World War Z** (2013, USA) **C-116m**. **SCOPE \*\*\*** **D**: Marc Forster. Starring Brad Pitt, Mireille Enos, Daniella Kertesz, David Morse. A zombie plague is engulfing the world and after a close escape from Philadelphia, U.N. employee Pitt and his family find refuge on a Navy ship. Pitt is then hired to trace the origin of the virus and goes on a globe-spanning mission, always in danger of being bitten. Horror movie is a bit bleak and episodic, but pulse-pounding suspense compensates, especially towards the end. Not too gruesome. Based on the novel by Max Brooks.

**World Without End** (1956, USA) **C-80m**. **SCOPE \*\*½** **D**: Edward Bernds. Starring Hugh Marlowe, Nancy Gates, Nelson Leigh, Rod Taylor. Science-fiction adventure about a spaceship crew of four, who intend to return from the orbit of Mars, but then accelerate their ship too much and end up on a deserted Earth-like planet that is populated by one-eyed savages. Plays like an episode of *Star Trek*, film is quite interesting when it doesn't slow down for talky sequences. Some of the effects are also rather poor. Still, as a *Star Trek* and PLANET OF THE APES predecessor, buffs should check out this CinemaScope production. Alternative title: FLIGHT TO THE FUTURE.

**Would You Rather** (2012, USA) **C-93m.** \*\* D: David Guy Levy. Starring Brittany Snow, Jeffrey Combs, Jonny Coyne, Lawrence Gilliard Jr., John Heard. Pretty tasteless and sadistic horror thriller about young Snow, who cares for her sick brother and takes up offer of mysterious stranger Combs to take part in a game that could get her enough money to stop her worries. It turns out the 'game' is played during a dinner party with strangers and is called *Would You Rather*, revolving around sick choices of hurting, wounding or killing each other. Starts quite interesting, but goes nowhere, with unimaginative directing and writing (except the deaths, perhaps). Combs has fun, but even his character is off-putting.

**W Starym Dworku Czyli Niepodleglosc Trojkatow** (1984, POL) **C-99m.** \*½ D: Andrzej Kotkowski. Starring Beata Tyszkiewicz, Grazyna Szapolowska, Gustaw Holoubek. Static morality tale based on a play about a bourgeois family in turn-of-the-century Poland. Soon after the patriarch kills his second wife for having an affair with her stepson, she comes back from the dead as if she had never died and exposes the family's immorality. Much too indifferently acted and technically on TV standard. Not a horror film. English title: *IN AN OLD MANOR HOUSE*.

**Wuthering Heights** (1999, GBR) **C-115m.** \*\* D: N.N. Starring N.N. Made-for-TV remake of the classic 1847 novel by Emily Bronte. Unlike acclaimed 1939 version directed by William Wyler, film covers the book from beginning to end but unfortunately omits the frame narrative. The story around orphan Heathcliff and his love Catherine Earnshaw is indifferently presented. The director obviously failed to grasp the essence of the book, because passionate scenes are rare. Acting is hardly auspicious. Will probably insult all those who have read the novel. A hit in Great Britain nevertheless.

**Wyrmswood – Road of the Dead** (2014, AUS) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Kiah Roache-Turner. Starring Jay Gallagher, Bianca Bradey, Leon Burchill, Luke McKenzie. Crisp Australian zombie movie: Gallagher is among a few survivors of a zombie plague, trying to reconnect with his sister Bradey, who falls prey to a doctor experimenting on the undead. Violent action horror movie has an aimless plot, often seems improvised, but it's all done with style. Has aptly been described as *MAD MAX* meets *DAWN OF THE DEAD*.

**X312 – Flug zur Hölle** (1971, GER/SPA) **C-86m.** \*\* D: Jess Franco. Starring Thomas Hunter, Gila von Weitershausen, Hans Hass Jr., Fernando Sancho, Esperanza Roy, Howard Vernon, Paul Müller, Jess Franco. A plane crashes into the South American jungle, and the survivors have to withstand all kinds of troubles, be it mercenaries or the fat, ugly Captain, who wants the jewels that one of the passengers has with him. Typically sordid, sloppily made Franco movie. Surprisingly ambitious, though, and not without attractions (beautiful Roy, for example). Good James Bond imitation score by Bruno Nicolai and Wolf Hartmayer. International title: *X312 – FLIGHT TO HELL*.

**X-Files, The** (1998, USA) **C-122m.** **SCOPE** \*\*½ D: Rob Bowman. Starring David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson, John Neville, William B. Davis, Martin Landau, Blythe Danner, Terry O'Quinn, Armin Müller-Stahl, Glenna Headley. The cult series transfer to the big screen is a surprisingly well-produced sci-fi horror film, replete with conspiracy theories and special effects as FBI special agents Duchovny and Anderson investigate importance and danger of alien virus. Plot occasionally steals elements from science-fiction classics like *ALIEN* or *ALIENS* but remains entertaining and even thrilling, despite overlength. Recommended to *X-Files* fans (they might be even more critical, however).

**X: The Unknown** (1956, GBR) **B&W-76m.** \*\* D: Leslie Norman. Starring Dean Jagger, Edward Chapman, Leo McKern, Anthony Newley, Jameson Clark, William Lucas, Peter Hammond, Ian MacNaughton, Michael Ripper. One of the famous Hammer Studios' first horror films: At a military base an unknown force (monster?) from underneath the earth's surface is

causing havoc. Can it be stopped? Well-acted, but unfortunately too talky. Jimmy Sangster's first feature script. Trivia note: Joseph Losey started the movie, but was replaced by Norman. He is now only credited for casting the movie.

**xXx** (2002, USA) **C-124m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Rob Cohen. Starring Vin Diesel, Asia Argento, Marton Csokas, Samuel L. Jackson, Tom Everett, Danny Trejo. Hot stunt expert, thrill-seeker Diesel passes several tests to become a sort-of secret super agent for the government (represented by Jackson). The standard plot involves a crime organization, which Diesel tries to infiltrate, and beautiful sidekick Argento. Action thriller tries to establish Diesel as a kind of hyperkinetic James Bond and features well-filmed, explosive action scenes, but plot never becomes involving. There is also a distinct lack of suspense. For fans of Diesel (who looks dull, though).

**xXx: Return of Xander Cage** (2017, USA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: D.J. Caruso. Starring Vin Diesel, Donnie Yen, Deepika Padukone, Kris Wu, Ruby Rose, Nina Dobrev, Toni Collette, Samuel L. Jackson, Ice Cube, Neymar Jr. Third Triple-X movie puts the presumed dead secret agent against a villainous group which has stolen a device that can hijack and crash satellites onto any target on Earth. Filled with stunts and special effects, it's too bad the plot is second-rate. Will give fans their money's worth, however, especially in 3D and 4DX (with moving and vibrating seats).

**Yakuza, The** (1975, USA/JAP) **C-112m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Sydney Pollack. Starring Robert Mitchum, Ken Takakura, Brian Keith, Herb Edelman, Richard Jordan, Keiko Kishi. Solid action drama about Mitchum's return to Japan and his involvement with businessman Keith, who asks his help in Yakuza (=mafia) matters. Not terribly exciting but an interesting, serious treatment of Japanese Yakuza morals. Robert Towne scripted with Paul and Leonard Schrader, whose first screenplay this was. Fast cuts are not entirely successful during the action sequences. One wonders if they should not have let another director with the initials S.P. direct. Usually shown in cut versions, the uncut running time is 123m.

**Yami no Teiô Kyûketsuki Dorakyura** (1980, JAP) **C-89m. \*\*** D: Akinori Nagaoka, Minoru Okazaki. Starring (the voices of) Stan Jones, Ted Layman (English version). Corny animated vampire horror about Dracula, who arrives in Boston and is mistaken for the Devil by a group of devil-worshippers. Some complications follow, but they are barely interesting. Animation is quite stylish but too static, it seems they saved a lot of time and money by just filming the stills most of the times (it was made for TV). Worth a look, but generally a bore. Also known as DRACULA: SOVEREIGN OF THE DAMNED, and TOMB OF DRACULA.

**Yellowbeard** (1983, GBR) **C-96m. \*\*** D: Mel Damski. Starring Graham Chapman, Peter Boyle, Cheech Marin, Thomas Chong, Peter Cook, Marty Feldman, Martin Hewitt, Michael Hordern, Eric Idle, Madeline Kahn, James Mason, John Cleese, Kenneth Mars, Spike Milligan, Susannah York, Beryl Reid, Ferdy Mayne, David Bowie. Incredible cast in comedy that attempts for some Monty Python lunacy. Chapman plays brutish Captain Yellowbeard, who learns he has a son and breaks out of prison to defend his buried gold loot. The map is tattooed on his son's head! Some funny lines, but this is no LIFE OF BRIAN (1979). Feldman's last film; he died during production.

**Yellow Hair and the Fortress of Gold** (1984, USA/SPA) **C-93m. SCOPE \*½** D: Matt Cimber. Starring Laurene Landon, Ken Roberson, John Gaffari, Luis Lorenzo, Claudia Gravy. Aldo Sambrell. Obnoxious INDIANA JONES-ripoff, with blonde Landon and adventurer Roberson not the only ones going after the gold of mysterious Inka-like tribe. Poorly scripted, loosely acted, not recommended. Filmed in Spain. Alternative title: YELLOW HAIR AND THE PECOS KID.

**Yeogo Goedam** (1998, KOR) **C-105m**. \*\* D: Park Ki-hyeong. Starring Choi Se-yeon (=Choi Kang-hie), Kim Gyu-ri, Kim Min-jung, Kim Roe-ha. Korean ghost story about the spirit of a girl who is said to haunt the premises. Former student Choi, who has now become a teacher, is fascinated by this legend, until a colleague commits suicide. Poor pace takes all the potential out of this chiller. It's still remarkable for kick-starting the horror craze in Korea, much like RINGU (1998) did for Japan. Some style to be found in death scenes. Followed by several sequels. Also known as WHISPERING CORRIDORS.

**Yeogo Goedam II** (1999, KOR) **C-99m**. \*\*½ D: Kim Tae-Yong, Min Kyu-Dong. Starring Kim Min-sun, Park Yeh-jin, Lee Young-jin. In-name-only sequel to WHISPERING CORRIDORS about a female student who finds a diary telling of the love affair between two other students at her school. After one of them commits suicide, the girl suddenly starts feeling possessed by her spirit. Starts quite well, with an excellent score, but gets lost in standard plot. A 186m.(!) version has been released on DVD in Korea. Followed by YEOGO GOEDAM III (WISHING STAIRS).

**Yeogo Goedam 3: Yeowoo Gyedan** (2003, KOR) **C-97m**. \*\*½ D: Yun Jae-yeon. Starring Song Ji-hyo, Park Han-byeol, Jo An, Park Ji-Yeon. Third film in the Korean ghost school tetralogy, sometimes referred to as the WHISPERING CORRIDORS films. A group of high school students hear about a legend that when you walk up the 28 steps of stone stairs near the school, a 29th step will appear and you will be granted a wish. Needless to say, this phenomenon is more curse than blessing. Aimed at teenage girls with (unnecessary) inclusion of ballet dancing scenes, but direction and especially photography are stylish, making this the best of the tetralogy. Followed by one more sequel, THE VOICE, also known as GHOST VOICE.

**Yeux Sans Visage, Les** (1959, FRA/ITA) **B&W-90m**. \*\*½ D: Georges Franju. Starring Pierre Brasseur, Alida Valli, Edith Scob, Claude Brasseur. Scientist Brasseur has his secretary Valli lure beautiful young women into his house, so that he can find a donor for his daughter's disfigured face! Ice-cold horror drama does not have the emotional impact one would like it to have. Slowly-paced, undramatic and rather predictable. Still, highly regarded by many. Based on the novel by Pierre Boileau, Jean Redon and Thomas Narcejac. Screenplay cowritten by Claude Sautet, who was also assistant director. Score by Maurice Jarre. English titles: EYES WITHOUT A FACE and THE HORROR CHAMBER OF DR. FAUSTUS.

**Yoga Hosers** (2016, USA) **C-88m**. \*½ D: Kevin Smith. Starring Lily-Rose Depp, Harley Quinn Smith, Adam Brody, Justin Long, Haley Joel Osment, Vanessa Paradis, Johnny Depp. Abysmal, unfunny comedy, a follow-up to TUSK (2014), with partly the same characters (except the two main ones). Depp and Smith (Johnny and Kevin's daughters) play convenience store clerks who accidentally thaw a hibernated Canadian nazi and his army of miniature bratwurst soldiers. Yes, you heard right. Stay away unless you are *very* curious.

**Yôjû Toshi** (1987, JAP) **C-82m**. \*\*\* D: Yoshiaki Kawajiri. Starring (the voices of) Yûsaku Yara, Toshiko Fujita, Ichirô Nagai, Mari Yokô. Extremely violent and sexual anime noir-style about a 'black guard', who protects the Earth from creatures from another dimension. His latest job is to make sure the Peace Treaty between the two worlds is renewed. However, evil forces are trying to prevent that. Original video animation (OVA) has much in common with the LUPIN serial. It features kinetic action and even erotica and gore. A good example of an anime for adults. English title: WICKED CITY. Based on a novel by Hideyuki Kikuchi, remade in 1992 as a live-action version.

**Yongseoneun Eupda** (2010, KOR) **C-125m**. SCOPE \*\*½ D: Kim Hyeong-Joon. Starring Sol Kyung-gu, Ryu Seong-beom, Han Hye-jin, Frank M. Ahearn. Korean psycho thriller about a female detective, who is working on a gruesome murder case, and a pathologist, who is

blackmailed by the prime suspect. Remains interesting throughout, but more than once steps over the line of credibility and makes most characters appear foolish. It's also rather downbeat. English title: NO MERCY.

**Yo Soy El Que Tu Busca** (1988, SPA) **C-87m. \*\*½** D: Jaime Chavarri. Starring Patricia Adriani, Angel Alcazar, Ricard Borrás, Toni Canto, Miriam de Maeztu. Disturbing psycho drama about a woman who has been raped and now sets out to find her perpetrator. Off-putting at first, but film becomes more and more fascinating as her motives become transparent. Subtle, interesting film with a flawed plot was made for Spanish television. Cowritten by the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature Gabriel Garcia Marquez. English title: I'M THE ONE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

**You Better Watch Out** (1980, USA) **C-95m. \*\*½** D: Lewis Jackson. Starring Brandon Maggart, Jeffrey DeMunn, Dianne Hull, Andy Fenwick, Brian Neville, Joel Jamrog. Serious, disturbing horror thriller about Maggart, who, suffering from a childhood trauma, starts killing people in a Santa suit around Christmas time. Unrelenting, dark, difficult to watch and quite slow. Film could have used a more stylish approach. Inspired, perhaps, by Martin Scorsese's TAXI DRIVER. Written by the director. Also known as CHRISTMAS EVIL and TERROR IN TOYLAND.

**You, Me and Dupree** (2006, USA) **C-109m. \*\*½** D: Anthony and Joe Russo. Starring Owen Wilson, Kate Hudson, Matt Dillon, Michael Douglas, Seth Rogen, Ralph Ting, Keo Knight. Engagingly silly comedy about newly-weds Hudson and Dillon, whose young marriage is put to a test when his buddy Wilson moves in "for a couple of days". Predictably, this turns into chaos and sets their relationship at risk. Despite rather dumb premise, this is quite funny, mostly kudos to Wilson, who's at his chaotic, comic best. Hudson is charming as ever.

**Young and Prodigious T.S. Spivet, The** (2013, CDN/FRA) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*½** D: Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Starring Kyle Catlett, Helena Bonham Carter, Judy Davis, Callum Keith Rennie, Niamh Wilson, Jakob Davies, Rock Mercer, Dominique Pinon, Julian Richings. Irresistible comedy drama about 10-year-old wunderkind Catlett, who grows up on a farm in Montana, with his beetle-studying mother Carter and his cowboy-father Rennie. The bright little boy is a brilliant inventor, and when he is mistaken for an adult and invited to the Smithsonian institute across the country to collect a prize, he sets out by himself to make the journey hobo-style, being sure that no one will miss him, since he is sure to have caused the (accidental) death of his twin brother. Marvellous, visually amazing drama with a touch of fantasy. Perhaps not as brilliant as Jeunet's earlier efforts, but touching and superbly made, with a wonderful performance by young Catlett.

**Young Frankenstein** (1974, USA) **B&W-105m. \*\*\*** D: Mel Brooks. Starring Gene Wilder, Peter Boyle, Marty Feldman, Teri Garr, Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman, Kenneth Mars, Richard Haydn, Gene Hackman. Typical Mel Brooks spoof movie, about Victor Frankenstein's grandson Frederick (Wilder), who refuses to have anything to do with the myth but gets the spirit, when he travels to his grandpa's Transsylvanian castle one day. Mad, incredibly funny, a cult film. Try to see it in the original version.

**Young Master, The** (1979, HGK) **C-90m. SCOPE \*½** D: Jackie Chan. Starring Jackie Chan, Wai Pei, Yuen Biao, Lily Li, Shih Tien, Wong In-Sik. Another one of Jackie Chan's Do-It-Yourself projects. Eastern starts well, then gets absolutely dreadful: Orphan Chan leaves the martial arts school of his foster father, meets Yuen Biao on the way and shows off his well-known acrobatic skill. Perhaps martial arts comedies *are* a matter of taste. Apart from choreographing, Jackie even sings the title song this time (to be heard at the end)! Curiously enough, this was edited by Frank Urioste (BASIC INSTINCT).

**Young Poisoner's Handbook, The** (1995, GBR/FRA/GER) **C-99m. \*\*\*** D: Benjamin Ross. Starring Hugh O'Connor, Antony Sher, Ruth Sheen. Delicious black comedy about wide-eyed

young O'Connor, who develops a fascination for chemistry and subsequently begins to experiment with poison .... much to the chagrin of his family. O'Connor is perfect in the lead. A very 'flavorful' film with a twisted perspective. Based on a true story!

**Young Tiger, The** (1973, HGK) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Wu Ma. Starring Meng Fei, Maggie Lee, Liu Chia Yung, Dean Shek, Mars. Barely okay contemporary eastern about young fighter Meng, who is wrongfully accused of murder and exacts revenge on real killers. Precious little action for a long time, the fight scenes are just okay. One wonders why such films are given deluxe releases on DVD (in Germany). Some sources wrongly list Jackie Chan as a cast member.

**You're Never Too Young** (1955, USA) **C-103m. \*\*\*** D: Norman Taurog. Starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Diana Lynn, Nina Foch, Raymond Burr, Mitzi McCall, Milton Frome. Likable Martin/Lewis comedy, a remake of the Billy Wilder film *THE MAJOR AND THE MINOR* (1942). Lewis pretends to be a 12-year-old boy to afford a train ticket and ends up in a girls school where Martin works as a teacher. He is pursued by criminal Burr, whose stolen diamond has somehow ended up in Lewis' pocket. Great comic routines by Jerry, nice songs by Martin, it's a carefree, colourful movie from the 50s.

**Yours, Mine and Ours** (2005, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Raja Gosnell. Starring Dennis Quaid, Rene Russo, Sean Faris, Katija Pevec, Dean Collins, Tyler Patrick Jones, Rip Torn, Linda Hunt, Jerry O'Connell. Remake of a 1968 comedy starring Henry Fonda and Lucille Ball makes for fair entertainment, as widowed father of ten(!) Quaid hooks up with his high-school sweetheart Russo, who has eight kids. They move into a huge old house, but the kids just don't seem to get along. Good for a few laughs, but script is weak, too one-dimensional, and the jokes clichéd and old-fashioned.

**You've Got M@il** (1998, USA) **C-119m. \*\*½** D: Nora Ephron. Starring Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan, Greg Kinnear, Parker Posey, Heather Burns, Steve Zahn, Jean Stapleton, David Chappelle, Dabney Coleman. Sequel-cum-remake of *SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE* has Hanks and Ryan start romancing each other via e-mail without knowing each other personally. One day her existence as a bookshop owner is threatened by Hanks' Superstore across the street, and they become rivals à la Katherine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. Enjoyable romantic comedy works thanks to Ryan's radiant performance, until some odd, incredible twists pave the way for a happy-end. Predictable, extremely calculated (product-placement) and with an excessive use of oldies on the soundtrack.

**Yume to Kyôki no Ôkoku** (2013, JAP) **C-118m. \*\*\*** D: Mami Sunada. Featuring Hayao Miyazaki, Sankichi, Toshio Suzuki, Hideaki Anno, Goro Miyazaki, Joe Hisaishi, Isao Takahata. Interesting documentary, a kind-of career snapshot of Hayao Miyazaki, who is seen working on his latest (and reportedly last) film *THE WIND RISES (KAZE NO TACHINU)*. We meet Miyasan and his collaborators in his Studio Ghibli and learn about his daily routine, his beliefs, his humor and what he thinks of the world around him. Reveals him to be hard-working (not surprisingly) and often down-to-earth but not without a tongue-in-cheek attitude. Albeit not a great documentary (it lacks structure), it is a unique look at a fascinating director. Also mentions Isao Takahata's *KAGUYAHIME NO MONOGATARI* (2013). English title: *KINGDOM OF DREAMS AND MADNESS*.

**Yûrei Yashiki no Kyôfu: Chi wo Sû Ningyô** (1970, JAP) **C-71m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Michio Yamamoto. Starring Kayo Matsuo, Akira Nakao, Atsuo Nakamura. Visually impressive ghost story filmed in colorful Tohoscope owes a bit in structure to *PSYCHO* (1960). When her brother goes missing after visiting his girlfriend in her mother's country estate, Matsuo travels there to search for him. It turns out the young woman has died but keeps appearing

as a ghost. Dialogue-heavy and too slowly paced, but quite creepy and has a great set. English titles: THE VAMPIRE DOLL and FEAR OF THE GHOST HOUSE: BLOODSUCKING DOLL. **Z** (1969, FRA/ALG) **C-126m. \*\*\* D:** Constantin Costa-Gavras. Starring Yves Montand, Irene Papas, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Jacques Perrin, Francois Perrier, Charles Denner, Julien Guiomar. Difficult political parable, set in a fictitious state which is shaken by riots and violence. Aspiring, controversial politician Montand falls prey to conspiracy of his political adversaries and it's up to attorney Trintignant to make a judgement. Highly authentic, well-acted drama is not easy to watch but ultimately shocking. Excellent, Oscar-winning editing by Francoise Bonnot. Film also won the Best Foreign Film Academy Award. Based on the book by Vassili Vassilikos, who was responding to the political crisis in early 1960s Greece. Cowritten by director Costa-Gavras.

**Zabriskie Point** (1970, USA) **C-110m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** Michelangelo Antonioni. Starring Mark Frechette, Daria Halprin, Paul Fix, G.D. Spradlin, Rod Taylor, Harrison Ford. Artistically outstanding cult film about the counter-culture and protesting students in the U.S.A., focusing on an afternoon in the life of Frechette and Halprin, who meet, make love and rebel. Antonioni's striking direction makes this time capsule (originally a treatise on and criticism of the Western culture) a joy to watch. Memorable finale, brilliant cinematography by Alfio Cantini. Antonioni also edited the picture sans credit. Music by Pink Floyd. Produced by Carlo Ponti.

**Zack and Miri Make a Porno** (2008, USA) **C-101m. \*\* D:** Kevin Smith. Starring Elizabeth Banks, Seth Rogen, Craig Robinson, Gerry Bednob, Jason Mewes, Jennifer Schwalbach, Brandon Routh, Justin Long, Tom Savini, Traci Lords, Tisha Campbell. Banks and Rogen have been friends since high school and are faced with a total lack of money. So they decide to make an adult film together. Will this change their platonic relationship? Pretty lame-brained comedy has some Smithian laughs to offer but proceedings are ludicrous. Banks is wasted in many ways. Only for Smith (and Mewes) fans, others beware.

**Zanna Bianca** (1973, ITA/SPA/FRA) **C-104m. \*\* D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Franco Nero, Virna Lisi, Fernando Rey, John Steiner, Missaele, Raimund Harmstorf, Carole André, Rik Battaglia, Harry Carey Jr., Maurice Poli. Labored attempt at bringing Jack London's famous story *White Fang* to the big screen. Film follows a little boy's friendship with a wolf-dog during the goldrush in turn-of-the-century Alaska. Talky, poorly scripted, not much of an adventure. Setting and cast are assets, though. For patient (and older) kids only. Score by Carlo Rustichelli. Followed by five(!) sequels until 1978, starting with RITORNO DI ZANNA BIANCA (1974). English title: WHITE FANG.

**Zardoz** (1974, GBR) **C-105m. SCOPE \*\*\*½ D:** John Boorman. Starring Sean Connery, Charlotte Rampling, John Alderton, Sara Kestelman, Sally Anne Newton, Niall Buggy. In the late 23rd century a warrior (Connery) sets out to find the God of his tribe. He encounters a secret society of immortal intellectuals and upsets their life with his appearance. Ambitious social-fiction, written and produced by director Boorman, is hampered by uneven storyline and general lack of focus. Ultimately weird film has developed a cult reputation, however. Well-photographed by Geoffrey Unsworth (2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY).

**Zarte Haut in Schwarzer Seide** (1961, GER/FRA) **83m. \*\* D:** Max Pécas. Starring Elke Sommer, Ivan Desny, Helmut Schmid, Eddy Mitchell. Sommer plays a mannequin in Rome, who falls prey to the evil schemes of her boss Desny (and in love with reporter Schmid). Low-grade, harmless crime drama offers some good black-and-white camerawork (by André Germain). Based on a novel by Walter Ebert, jazzy music by Charles Aznavour. English titles: DANIELLA BY NIGHT and DANIELA, CRIMINAL STRIP-TEASE.

**Zärtlichkeit der Wölfe, Die** (1973, GER) **C-82m.** \*\*\*½ D: Ulli Lommel. Starring Kurt Raab, Jeff Roden, Margit Carstensen, Brigitte Mira, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Jürgen Prochnow. Rainer Werner Fassbinder produced this drama about real-life serial killer Fritz Haarmann, played very well by Kurt Raab. The homosexual, vampirish human 'monster' killed some thirty to forty young men before he was executed in 1925. Film looks at his everyday life and his neighbors and friends, who never suspected anything for a long time. Stylistically faultless but very slowly paced and not as compelling as the 1995 film *DER TOTMÄCHER*, which is also about the mass murderer. Original version may also run 95m.

**Zathura: A Space Adventure** (2005, USA) **C-102m.** \*\*\*½ D: Jon Favreau. Starring Jonah Bobo, Josh Hutcherson, Dax Shepard, Kristen Stewart, Tim Robbins, voice of Frank Oz. After *JUMANJI* (1995), another adaptation of the children's books by Chris Van Allsburg. Two boys discover an old board game in the basement and start playing it. Suddenly they find themselves (and their house) in outer space, where aliens are awaiting them. Sci-fi adventure is basically one big orgy of destruction, though it also comments on the brothers' rivalry. 10-year-olds will probably love this. Photographed by Guillermo Navarro.

**Zatôichi** (2003, JAP) **C-116m.** \*\*\*½ D: Takeshi Kitano. Starring Beat Takeshi (Kitano), Tadanobu Asano, Michiyo Ookusu, Gadarukanaru Taka. Beat Takeshi pays homage to a beloved sword-wielding hero in Japanese (cinema) history with this uneven drama about a blind master of sword-fighting who travels through the country working as a masseur and dice gambler. Dramatically weak, but with enough (digital) blood-letting to keep you awake. Some people loved this; it won multiple awards, including four at the Venice Film Festival. Filmed before in 1962, 1963 and 1988, although the Zatoichi character appears in around 30 titles in total. Also known as *ZATOICHI: THE BLIND SWORDSMAN*.

**Zazie dans le Métro** (1960, FRA/ITA) **C-98m.** \*\*\* D: Louis Malle. Starring Cathérine Demongeot, Philippe Noiret, Vittorio Caprioli, Hubert Deschamps, Carla Marlier. Mad comedy about 12 year-old Zazie, who comes to Paris to visit her uncle, while her mother is meeting her new lover. The girl runs away and spends a wild day in the French capital. Outrageous, creative film by director Malle may be a little slight plotwise but keeps your attention thanks to an inventive direction, which breaks all conventions. Great fun, especially the finale.

**Zeder** (1983, ITA) **C-99m.** \*\*\* D: Pupi Avati. Starring Gabriele Lavia, Anne Canovas, Paola Tanziani, Cesare Barbetti, Bob Tonelli, Ferdinando Orlandi, Aldo Sassi. Supernatural mystery about writer Lavia, who gets a used typewriter from his wife Canovas. When he finds a secret message hidden inside, he is out to investigate and discovers that the previous owner, a priest, believed that if people were buried in special places (so-called K-Zones) they would return from the dead. Good mystery plot, some creepy, scary scenes, though Avati's direction is second-rate and doesn't make the most of the intriguing story. Still, an engrossing movie, not your run-of-the-mill zombie flick. Written by Maurizio Constanzo, Antonio and Pupi Avati. Photographed by Franco delli Colli, scored by Riz Ortolani. Shown in various cut versions, though film is not violent at all. Similarity to Stephen King's novel *Pet Sematary* is obvious; the book was also published in 1983 (which rules out plagiarism). Also known as *REVENGE OF THE DEAD, VOICES FROM THE BEYOND*.

**Zerkalo** (1975, RUS) **C/B&W-106m.** \*\*\*\* D: Andrei Tarkovsky. Starring Margarita Terekhova, Ignat Daniltsev, Larisa Tarkovskaya, Alla Demidova. Anatoli Solonitsyn, Tamara Ogorodnikova, Yuri Nazarov, Nikolai Grinko, narrated by Arseni Tarkovsky. Hauntingly beautiful art film stands firmly in the center of filmmaker Tarkovsky's oeuvre. He combines historical footage, recited poetry and brilliantly stark images to illustrate a dying man's reminiscence of his childhood, the World War Two days and, most importantly, his mother.

Not easily accessible but emotionally powerful. Overwhelming imagery complemented by Tarkovsky's brilliant direction. Multiple viewing is indispensable. Banned in the Soviet Union for many years. This film, more than any other by the director, reflects his influence on the work of Lars von Trier. Shot in an aspect ratio of 1.37:1. English title: THE MIRROR.

**Zero Dark Thirty** (2012, USA) **C-157m. \*\*\*** D: Kathryn Bigelow. Starring Jessica Chastain, Joel Edgerton, Chris Pratt, Kyle Chandler. Dramatization of the decade-long search for terrorist leader Osama Bin Laden, told in semi-documentarian style with Chastain playing the role of a key CIA agent, who becomes obsessed with finding the Al-Qaeda boss. Climactic raid is breathtaking and compensates for somewhat longish, frustrating plot detours – even if the 10-year-search was exactly that. Portrayal of Muslims was also rather one-dimensional. Written by Mark Boal.

**Zero Theorem, The** (2013, GBR/USA/FRA/ROM) **C-107m. \*\*** D: Terry Gilliam. Starring Christoph Waltz, Mélanie Thierry, David Thewlis, Lucas Hedges, Matt Damon, Ben Whishaw, Tilda Swinton, Peter Stormare. Almost 30 years after BRAZIL, director Gilliam updates his dystopian view of a future society in this weird fable about computer worker Waltz, who speaks of himself in plural and wants to contact Management (Damon) to be able to start working from home. Gilliam's view of the future is only intermittently successful or believable, the movie is a colourful mix of weird ideas but gets lost in its own philosophical conundrum. Some of the dialogue is simply annoying. Bald Waltz seems like Uncle Fester looking for his ADDAMS FAMILY. A very mixed bag. Best thing about it is George Fenton's score.

**Z for Zachariah** (2015, ICE/SUI/NZL) **C-98m. SCOPE \*\*½** D: Craig Zobel. Starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, Margot Robbie, Chris Pine. Apocalyptic drama loosely based on a novel by Robert C. O'Brien. Robbie, as one of the last humans after a global catastrophe, survives by farming her own land in a place spared by radiation. The religious woman is soon joined by two men, scientist Ejiofor and worker Pine, and a love triangle develops. Pensive plot is carried mostly by Ejiofor's commanding performance, the low-key story peters out without a satisfying conclusion. Some nice photography. Very unusual international coproduction: Iceland – Switzerland – New Zealand (where it was shot).

**Zinker, Der** (1963, GER/FRA) **89m. SCOPE \*\*** D: Alfred Vohrer. Starring Heinz Drache, Günther Pfitzmann, Eddi Arent, Klaus Kinski. Considered to be one of the best Edgar Wallace adaptations, this thriller about a criminal who uses the venom of snakes as murder weapon is not bad but hardly exciting.

**Zizanie, La** (1977, FRA) **C-97m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: Claude Zidi. Starring Louis de Funès, Annie Girardot. Businessman de Funès sells his latest invention to Japanese magnates and has to produce 3000 devices in just three months. His factory isn't big enough, so he has the workers move into his house, which leads to chaos and trouble with wife Girardot. Poignant satire is no classic, given de Funès' standard, but still very enjoyable. English title: THE SPAT.

**Zodiac** (2007, USA) **C-158m. SCOPE \*\*\*** D: David Fincher. Starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Mark Ruffalo, Anthony Edwards, Robert Downey Jr., Brian Cox, John Carroll Lynch, Chloe Sevigny, John Getz, Elias Koteas, Dermot Mulroney, Donal Logue, Philip Baker Hall, Adam Goldberg, James LeGros, Clea DuVall, Lone Skye. Meticulous recreation of the search for the Zodiac killer, who started killing in the San Francisco Bay Area in the late 1960s and wrote taunting letters to newspapers and the police. The main characters in this drama: Policeman Ruffalo, reporter Downey Jr, and cartoon artist Gyllenhaal, whose obsession with the crimes lasted throughout the 1970s and beyond. Good performances, fine production design, this chronological examination lacks suspense at times, but it's well written and never boring despite its length. Screenplay by James Vanderbilt. The Zodiac killer was subject of the first

DIRTY HARRY movie, as well as another 1971 movie titled THE ZODIAC KILLER. Also filmed in 2005 and 2007.

**Zombieland** (2009, USA) **C-88m. SCOPE \*\*½ D:** Ruben Fleischer. Starring Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson, Emma Stone, Abigail Breslin, Bill Murray. Quite enjoyable no-brainer brings a slacker-view to the zombie apocalypse. In a deserted America, nerdish Eisenberg teams up with quasi-redneck Harrelson to track across the undead-ridden country. They meet Stone and Breslin along the way, but the girls can't be trusted. Good splatter effects, rock soundtrack, a delicious turn by Harrelson (NBK, anyone?), but film has no aim and becomes stupid towards the end. Fleischer's directorial debut, he would later team up with Eisenberg for 30 MINUTES OR LESS (2011).

**Zombie Massacre** (2013, USA/GER/ITA/CDN) **C-87m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Luca Boni, Marco Ristori. Starring Christian Boeving, Mike Mitchell, Tara Cardinal, Daniel Vivian. Pretty stupid action horror movie about a group of mercenaries that are sent into a Romanian power plant infested by flesh-eating zombies. Amateur actors in pretentious situations, the only thing professional is the make-up effects, the CGI is shoddy, too. Producer Uwe Boll has a cameo as the U.S. president, showing what a ridiculous guy he is. Alternative title: APOCALPYSE Z.

**Zombi Holocaust** (1980, ITA) **C-82m. \*½ D:** Frank Martin (=Marino Girolami). Starring Ian McCulloch, Alexandra Cole (=delli Colli), Sherry Buchanan, Peter O'Neal, Donald O'Brien. Gruesome exploitation movie mixes elements of zombie and cannibal movies. A hospital staff is baffled to find someone is mutilating their corpses. When several incidents like this happen, clues lead to a tropical island, where a research team tries to locate a primitive tribe. It turns out a mad scientist has created gut-munching zombies. Stomach-churning effects are main attraction of this inept, poorly made movie. The unnerving score of the U.S. version contributes to an oppressive atmosphere. For extreme movie lovers only. Also known as ZOMBIE HOLOCAUST, LA REGINA DEI CANNIBALI, QUEEN OF THE CANNIBALS, ZOMBIE 3, ISLAND OF THE LAST ZOMBIES, DR. (DOCTOR) BUTCHER, M.D. (MEDICAL DEVIATE).

**Zombi 3** (1988, ITA) **C-89m. BOMB D:** Lucio Fulci. Starring Deran Sarafian, Alex McBride. Fulci returned to the zombie sub-genre one more time and delivered this incoherent mess of a movie. Bio-chemical gas is released, and virtually everyone who comes in touch with it becomes one of the living dead. The director has come a long way from his stylish horror pics of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

**Zookeeper** (2011, USA) **C-102m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Frank Coraci. Starring Kevin James, Rosario Dawson, Leslie Bibb, Donnie Wahlberg, Nick Turturro, Thomas Gottschalk. Sorry attempt to write a comedy for Kevin James along the lines of NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM. Here, the funnyman plays the title character, who is dumped by his girlfriend and tries to win her back - or shouldn't he? Hardly any laughs at all. It's not James' fault, it's just the lines and the plot that don't deliver. Oh, and did I mention that there were talking animals in the movie?

**Zoolander** (2001, USA) **C-89m. SCOPE \*½ D:** Ben Stiller. Starring Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Christine Taylor, Will Ferrell, Milla Jovovich, Jerry Stiller, David Duchovny, Jon Voight. Derek Zoolander (Stiller) is a super model that's just lost out to newcomer Wilson in a model award show. Frustrated, he intends to leave the business, only to make a comeback when a top fashion designer asks him to work for his company. Little does Derek know that he is going to be brainwashed into killing the President of Malaysia (really!). Loud, numbing, outrageously stupid comedy with Stiller obviously rivalling Adam Sandler in who's making the sillier pictures. This one is worse than Sandler's LITTLE NICKY. Some stylish montage saves this from total disaster. Lots of celebrities appear as themselves: David Bowie, Christian Slater, Winona Ryder, Lenny Kravitz, Billy Zane, Claudia Schiffer, to name but a few.

**Z.P.G.** (1972, GBR) **C-95m.** \*\*½ D: Michael Campus. Starring Oliver Reed, Geraldine Chaplin, Don Gordon, Diane Cilento. Largely unknown sci-fi drama set in the near future, where smog and pollution prevents people from going outside. Due to population explosion the Big Brother-like government instigates a law that makes it illegal for couples to get children – for the next 20 years. Reed and Chaplin procreate nevertheless and must hide their infant. Unspectacular, slow-moving drama still has some appeal thanks to the stars and some interesting sets. Cowritten by Frank De Felitta. Also known as ZERO POPULATION GROWTH.

**Zwartboek** (2006, NED/GER/BEL) **C-145m.** **SCOPE** \*\*\* D: Paul Verhoeven. Starring Carice Van Houten, Sebastian Koch, Thom Hoffman, Halina Reijn, Waldemar Kobus, Derek de Lint, Christian Berkel. In his first film since HOLLOW MAN (2000) and returning to his native The Netherlands, Paul Verhoeven proves he's still as powerful in filmmaking as ever with this WW2 tale of a young Jewish woman, who lives through a dangerous time in 1944 Germany. She becomes Nazi general Koch's lover to help the resistance movement, but then she discovers her affection for the man, who turns out less demonical and more human than his collaborators. Well-photographed, well-acted, well-paced, although it's still a bit overlong. Cowritten by Verhoeven. English title: BLACK BOOK.

**Zwei Girls vom Roten Stern** (1966, GER/FRA/AUT) **C-92m.** \*\*½ D: Sammy Drechsel. Starring Curd Jürgens, Lilli Palmer, Pascale Petit, Anthony Steel, Dieter Hildebrandt. Interesting Cold War satire about Jürgens, representative of the Americans and his Russian counterpart, who embark on a battle of wits, when U.S. scientists introduce new super-weapon that the Russians would like to have. No action, no big deal, but stars are fun to watch. English title: AN AFFAIR OF STATES.