

video

-the magazine

VIDEO
ANSWERS
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LANGE:**
how "Kong" did
her wrong!

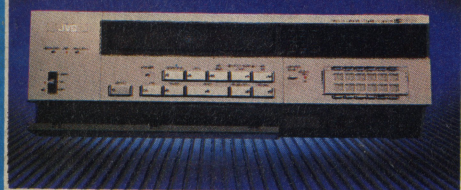
**COMEDY
CREEPIES**



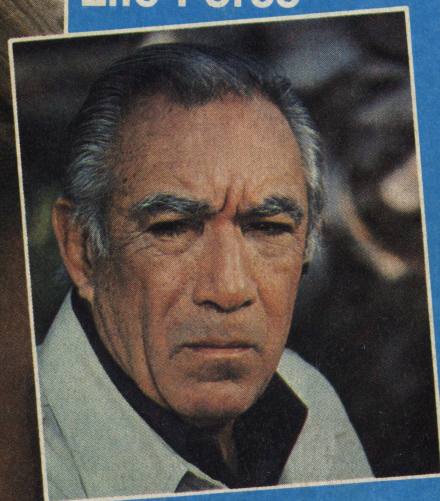
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**PLUS! ALL THE VIDEO RELEASES AND REVIEWS ★ KIDS
VIDS ★ VIDEO GAMES ★ HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
NEWS ★ ADULT MOVIES ★ SHOUTS 'n' WHISPERS ★**

GIGGLE ISSUE: THE COMEDY CREEPIES



CHUCKLES AND CHILLS, SMILES AND SHUDDERS

Nowadays, film-makers have learned that to make the people smile you've got to make them scream. Fear is an easy bedmate with humour, so the trend is towards the comedy creepies . . . videos that will make you laugh into your sickbag!

Chuckles and chills, ghoulish giggles, smiles and shudders — these are the ingredients of a slice of video-rama which is building a following of avid addicts around the living rooms of old England.

They're the comedy creepies — candidates for our Armchair Chamber of Horrors spot — which combines the fright and fear of the horror pics with the smirks and bellylaughs of the comedies.

For a long time, film-makers have known that moviegoers will pay good money to sit in a cinema and be scared half to death. The thrill of watching unspeakable horrors unfold before you, all the while knowing you'll be able to catch the bus home safely afterwards, has long been a box office attraction — and in these days of video home entertainment, horror is a staple diet of pre-recorded entertainment.

Then someone had a bright idea. "Okay, instead of making another horror movie like the last one," said this unknown producer to his studio boss one day, "let's give 'em a fright and a laugh at the same time."

"Great idea, Otto," said Mr Big. "It'll pack 'em in!"

And pack 'em in the comedy creepies do, with the video distributors quickly getting them into the rental shops for sure, steady, money-earners.

So, in this special giggle issue, let's take a look at some of the entertaining comedy creepies specially made to make you laugh yourself to death.

Let's start with a real gruesome guffaw, a movie where a giant snapper runs wild through a city's sewers spreading mayhem and mirth everywhere it goes.

"Alligator" (Intervision) starts with a

fond mum buying a tiny little 'gater for her little daughter as a pet. Dad takes one look at the mini monster and flushes it down the loo. It takes up residence in the city's sewers and, thanks to some amazing ingredients in the effluence it lives on, starts to grow . . . and grow . . . and grow.

It's not content with life underground and, natch, escapes to the daylight above. By this time, however, it's massive — and the city quakes in peril as the giant dentist's nightmare goes on the rampage.

It's a hilarious spoof of dozens of monster movies, done with some skill . . . and a lot of hilarity.

The monsters of mythical Transylvania have long entertained gore gourmets, with takes of vampires and spare-part mutants made up of different bits of murder victims and sparked into life by a mad professor.

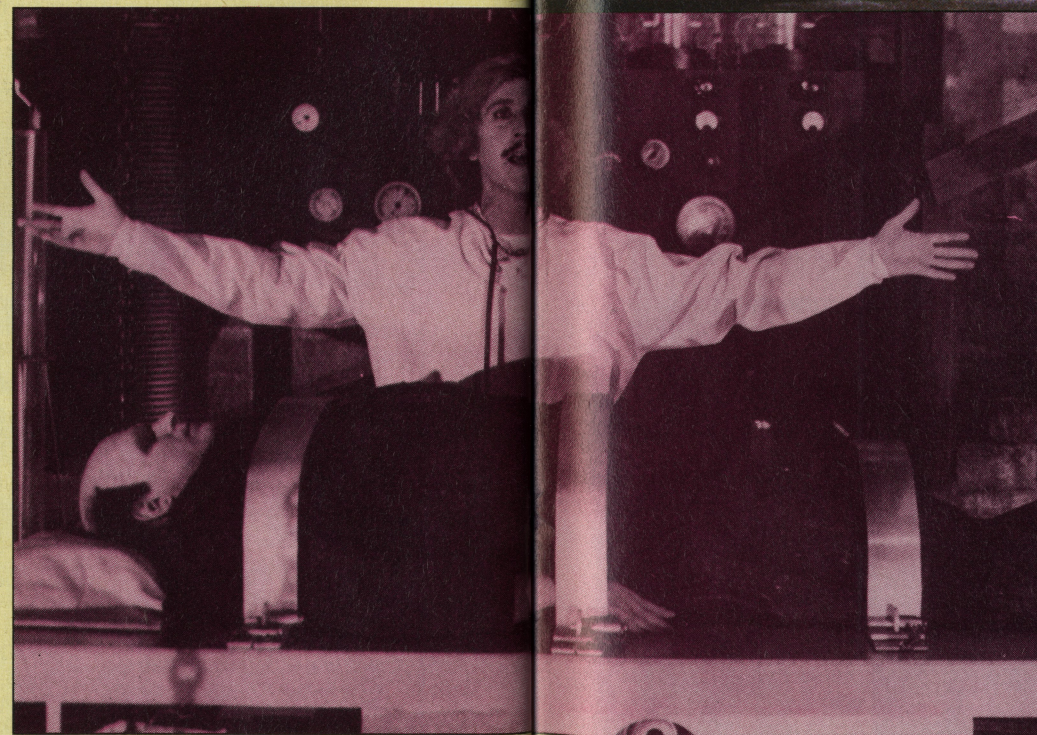
Of course, the film-makers have noticed the success of films like "Dracula," the famous Hammer chiller starring Christopher Lee, and various "Frankenstein" epics.

Mary Shelley and Bram Stoker may not have approved of this approach to their works of master fiction, but the stories have been given the chuckle treatment in recent years.

"Love At First Bite" (Guild Home Video) features the narcissistic George Hamilton in a spoof of the Dracula myth (it's almost a minor industry these days — there are even Dracula holidays in Transylvania).

A truly comic and entertaining movie, it's one of the few roles where Hamilton has excelled and he really takes the opportunity to show what a fine, zany comedian he can be . . . given the right material.

Ace comedy ringmaster Mel Brooks (the



man who brought you "Blazing Saddles" and "High Anxiety") has let his perceptive eye settle on this genre, too, and the result is "Young Frankenstein" (CBS/Fox Video).

We described the film as "inspired lunacy" when it was released on video back in December and that's just what it is.

Marty Feldman (recently deceased and much-missed) teams up with Mel Brooks stalwarts Gene Wilder and Madeline Kahn in a romp which parodies the Frankenstein fiction unmercifully. It's based around a trip to Transylvania by Wilder, the grand-

son of the original evil Baron, who decides to make his own monster.

Much amusing maniacal fun ensues, with all the deft, subtle comic touches you expect from Brooks.

Another film rather in the same vein is also released by the same video company.

"Shock Treatment" (CBS/Fox Video) is a sort of follow-up to the "Rocky Horror Picture Show", a comedy/horror stage show and movie that's almost achieved cult status.

This time it's centred round small-town TV and the ingredients include a bizarre

Above: let's play snap! Scene from "Alligator". Left: and for my next trick . . . ! Gene Wilder in "Young Frankenstein".

doctor and his equally bizarre dreadful practices! It stars Jessica Harper, Cliff de Young and Barry Humphries . . . now how did Edna Everidge get in there, I wonder?

A very different kind of comedy thriller is the far more gentle "Murder By Death" (RCA/Columbia). This is comedy playwright Neil Simon's pastiche of a number of famous detectives — Sam Spade, Charlie Chan et al — gathered together by a maniac murdering millionaire to solve what he thinks is the perfect crime.

There are a host of stars including David Niven and Peter Falk, with a superbly comic performance by Alec Guinness as a blind butler. Famous writer Truman Capote plays the millionaire, a rare screen appearance.

The old Jekyll and Hyde story (good doctor takes potion and turns into evil alter ego) is given a comical re-working in a film which stars that rumbustious curse of pub landlords Oliver Reed.

"Dr Heckyl and Mr Hype" (Rank Video) turns the story around for laughs; this time the doctor is ugly and the magic potion turns him into a handsome ladykiller — with unpredictable and hilarious results.

It's rare to see Reed in comedy, but he's a versatile chap behind all the bragadoccio and turns in a rib-tickling performance in a film which never takes itself or the story seriously.

Another film which just comes into the comedy creepies category is the recent

Palace Video release directed by 19-year-old Sam Raimi.

"The Evil Dead" is a comedy nasty; it concerns a group of young students who hire an old, lonely house for a fun weekend, but things go wrong and the evil spirits possess them and turn them into the evil dead! Gory giggles galore, though some viewers have taken the movie rather more seriously than we have.

But out-and-out comedy is the aim of the latest creepy to escape and run amok among an unsuspecting public.

"Creepshow" (Intervision) is written by Stephen King (he also appears in one sequence) and directed by George Romero. It takes the form of a filmic horror comic with five bloody horror tales to make you grip your aching sides.

Not strictly fun, but worth including here is "The Monster Club" (Precision Video) which marries mayhem and music. The tale stars Vincent Price, Donald Pleasence and John Carradine, with Barbara Kellerman and Britt Ekland and there's music from B.A. Robertson, the Pretty Things, UB40 and John Williams.

The storyline runs thus: a writer is nipped by a vampire and taken for a visit to the Monster Club to meet a wide variety of weird creatures who initiate the recruit into the ways of monsterdom!

So there we are then, if you fancy spending an evening laughing your way to perdition, there's a pretty good choice.

Any one is worth a look, but make sure the door's locked and there's plenty of garlic sprinkled round the living room before you press the start button . . . ! A.W.



LUSTOMETER YOUR ADULT MOVIE GUIDE LUSTOMETER

WRONG TIME, WRONG PLACE

Film Video Cockney Rebel Special
O

Watching 'Wrong Time, Wrong Place', the adult movie 'for men who only want the best in sex', I began at times to wonder if it had been made as some kind of a bet.

In fact, it had. Dennis Jones, a flamboyant Welshman with a small budget and a great deal of confidence, virtually put the film together single-handedly, so he should at least be praised for trying to overhaul the near monopoly on the soft porn market held by companies like TCX and Electric Video.

Jones didn't start out as a film-maker; he was a cameraman, restaurateur and spare-time night-clubber.

He also ran (and still does) his own video library. The idea for 'Wrong Time, Wrong Place' was spawned by Mrs. Jones when the two of them were watching a sex film from their library. He complained that the film was dull; she challenged him to make a better one. Did he succeed?

"Certainly," Dennis Jones told me from his elaborate studios in Gwent, "the film has been doing great business and is doing better and better. I'm now a well-known figure in the area. There's even a local cocktail named after my company, called a 'Cockney Rebel Special'."

Dennis Jones certainly can't be accused of underselling himself; in fact, nothing about his business is quiet. He insisted in packaging his film in a lurid pink case as an attention-grabber.

"It worked", he said. "People in my store would immediately walk up to it and look at it. And having a pretty-coloured sleeve seemed to attract women. In fact, about 70 per cent of the people renting it are women."

The sleeve may dress loudly but that's more than can be said for the girls in the film. The story (which is contained in the first five minutes) concerns what Jones describes as "four very attractive young guys" (himself included) who rob a security van and seek refuge in a country house where there just happen, of course, to be six beautiful girls modelling coats and fashion wear. These soon come off at the demand of the robbers, and an all-night sex party starts.

From then on it's more or

less the usual stuff, with various sexual activities taking place, although despite being outnumbered by the ladies, one guy (Jones) ends up without a partner and spends the rest of the night spying on the others. It's all fairly harmless, really.

Jones adds a few interesting touches: to break the story up there are erotic advertisements for jungle juice and such like; there is also some interesting trick photography ("very expensive" he said).

To cap it all, one of the girls is sent downstairs to "get something to eat" while the fun was going on. She spends a great deal of time rubbing herself down with sausages, in the most unerotic way imaginable!

Still, it raised a laugh, if nothing else! M.B.

STAR BIRTHDAYS

STAR BIRTHDAYS FOR JUNE:

- 1st: **Edward Woodward**, "Callan", 53; **Robert Powell**, "Mahler", 39; **Gemma Craven**, singer, 33; **Bob Monkhouse**, spare-time art historian, 54.
- 2nd: **Johnny Weissmuller**, the screen's most frequent "Tarzan", 79; **Johnny Speight**, writer, 63; **Leonard Parkin**, newsreader, 54.
- 3rd: **Tony Curtis**, hair stylist, 58; **Patrick Cargill**, pleasant actor, 65; **Anita Harris**, cabaret artiste, 41.
- 4th: **Bruce Dern**, waiting for stardom, 47; **Geoffrey Palmer**, "dentist", 56; **Dennis Weaver**, paranoid motorist, 59; **David Yip**, "The Chinese Detective", 32.
- 5th: **Mark Baddeley**, editorial assistant, "VIDEO — THE MAGAZINE", 21 (for
- 6th: **Björn Borg**, greatest tennis player ever, 27.
- 7th: **Dean Martin**, romantic crooner, 66.
- 8th: **Steve Martin**, comedian, 37; **Robert Preston**, sturdy singer, 70.
- 10th: **Lionel Jeffries**, bald but talented, 57.
- 11th: **Gene Wilder**, comic actor, 48; **Jacques-Yves Cousteau**, oceanographer, 73.
- 12th: **Basil Wright**, inventor of documentaries, 76.
- 13th: **Mary Whitehouse**, keeper of our morals, 73; **Malcolm McDowell**, gang-leader, 40; **Richard Thomas**, once John-Boy Walton, 32.
- 14th: **Mike Yarwood**, impersonator, 42.
- 15th: **Richard Baker**, broadcaster, 58.
- 16th: **Erich Segal**, never having to say he's sorry, 46.

- 17th: **Beryl Reid**, lovable fool, 63; **Ken Loach**, insightful TV director, 47; **Barry Manilow**, no comment, 37.
- 18th: **Paul McCartney**, Britain's richest self-made man, 41; **Paul Eddington**, Minister of Comedy, 56; **Sammy Cahn**, lyricist, 70; **Ian Carmichael**, actor, 63.
- 19th: **Paul Shane**, "Hi-De-Hi" comic, 43; **Louis Jourdan**, Frenchman, 64; **Gena Rowlands**, "Gloria", 47; **Paul Coia**, first voice on Channel Four, 28; **Charlie Drake**, comedian, 58.
- 20th: **Wendy Craig**, mother and "Nanny", 49; **Johnny Morris**, animal magician, 67.
- 21st: **Prince William of Wales**, 1; **Jane Russell**, sex symbol, 62; **Anne Kirkbride**, alias lovesick Deirdre, 29; **Maureen**

- Stapleton**, actress, 58.
- 22nd: **Prunella Scales**, hotelier, 51; **Lindsay Wagner**, the bionic, 34; **Kris Kristofferson**, the bearded, 47; **Esther Rantzen**, the toothy (but "That's Life"), 43; **Jim Bacon**, meteorologist, 33.
- 23rd: **Bob Fosse**, choreographer, 56.
- 24th: **Claude Chabrol**, le directeur nouveau, 53.
- 25th: **Sidney Lumet**, courtroom dramatist, 59; **Cyril Fletcher**, weeding out odd odes, 70.
- 27th: **Shirley Ann Field**, ingenue, 45.
- 28th: **Mel Brooks**, inspired lunatic, 57; **John Inman**, confirmed bachelor, 47; **"The Duke"**, dog on the Dulux ads, 8.
- 29th: **Slim Pickens**, rodeo star, 64.
- 30th: **Tony Musante**, good-looker, 47.

LAST WORD LAST WORD LAST V

THE VIDEO CODE IS HERE

The code of practice adopted by the British Videogram Association to stamp out video nasties — a voluntary measure by the video industry to stave off the necessity of government controls — should be welcomed by everyone.

These films go far beyond what is acceptable entertainment to be offered for open sale or rental.

Many people enjoy horror movies — we feature them regularly in this magazine — and there's nothing wrong with escapist horror. But the nasties go far beyond the limits, with their concentration on mindless violence, mutilation and sado-masochism.

The new code means that a panel of examiners will view films and issue a classification to appear on the cassette and its box. It will follow the cinema's U (universal), PG (parental guidance), 15 (15 years and over) and 18 (18 years and over) symbols.

Any dealer offering films without the classification will be liable to be barred from receiving video film stocks from members of the BVA, which represents more than 50 producers and distributors of pre-recorded tapes and discs.

In theory, this should be enough to force dealers to drop the nasties if — and it's a big if — their penalties are strictly

enforced and not fudged because a dealer is a "good customer" or promises "not to do it again."

One possible development is that some shops will start to specialise in nasties, operating outside the new controls from the BVA. In this case, one hopes they will be given regulatory visits by the police and the local councils.

If adults wish to view nasties — and some obviously are sick enough to want to — that's one thing. But they should never be accessible to young people. This is the biggest danger from such offensive material.

ALAN WALSH

LAST POST LAST POST LAST PO

ATARI SWAP CLUB PLANNED

I am thinking of trying to organise a swap club for owners of Atari VCS system cartridges and am trying to contact anyone who might be interested.

The idea basically will be to try and get all members listed with their wants and swaps so that others can see what's on offer.

In the first instance I'd like

everyone interested to send me two stamped addressed envelopes and when enough people have written an attempt to get the club started will be made. A small membership fee will be charged to cover the cost of producing address lists and the like.

Those interested will find my name and address as below. Please note, no phone calls or personal callers meantime.

Charles Trager, 7 Grantley Street, Glasgow G41 3PT,

Scotland.

● Nice idea, Charles, and best of luck with the club. So get your SAEs off now, but give him some time to get the details off to you!

WHAT A JOY!

I must first say what a joy your magazine is to read, especially as your main concern is entertainment and not the mechanical side.

Also, being the proud owner of all your editions, I wonder if a

complete index of articles to date is planned?

Robert Harris, Hove, Sussex.

● I'm afraid we're not planning such an index, but, as you have all the copies, you might like to keep them in one of our special binders, which hold 12 copies, and are available at £3.50 each (inclusive of postage and packing) from Modern Bookbinders Ltd., Chadwick Street, Blackburn, Lancashire. Allow three weeks for delivery.

SWAPS SWAPS SWAPS SWAPS

WANTED

VHS tapes of Alan Ladd films "Boy On A Dolphin"/"Blue Dahlia" etc. — Pat Mulcahy, "Oakview", 34 South Lodge, Douglas, Cork, Ireland.

"Buffalo Bill and the Indians"/"Eaten Alive"/"Tarzan the Ape Man" (all VHS) — Raymond West, 12 Lovedale Road, Balerno, Mid-Lothian EH14 7DW, Scotland.

"Earthquake"/"A Fire in the Sky" (VHS) — Mr. J. Temperley, 11 Bathurst Street, London W2.

Uncut versions of "Dawn of the Dead"/"The Beyond"/"Living Dead at

Manchester Morgue" or any Marx Brothers films — Mr. David McWhinnie, 36 Drimnin Road, Cardowan, Stepps, Glasgow G33 6AT, Scotland.

Four kung fu films, must be in good condition, must be well-known titles — A. Subman, 113 Nechells Parkway, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4NN.

EXCHANGE

"Porridge" for "Assault on Precinct 13" (VHS) — Andrew John Crowson, 39 Waterlees Road, Wisbech.

"Alien" (V2000) for any good V2000

film — C. James, 188 Warwick Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1HU.

Have Beta copy of "Erotic Inferno" (Hokushin) mystery/thriller. Would like to swap for any good offer — Charles Trager, 7 Grantley Street, Glasgow G41 3PT, Scotland.

Phillips 1700, many video films including "Escort Girls"/"Horror Express"/"Black Decameron"/"Groupies"/"The Deathhead Virgin"/"Bloodsuckers"/"Laserblast"/"The Happy Hooker"/"Alpha-Beta"/"Johnny Cash — The Man, his World and his Music".

Exchange video films, any format — T. Lynn, P.O. Box 81, London N7.