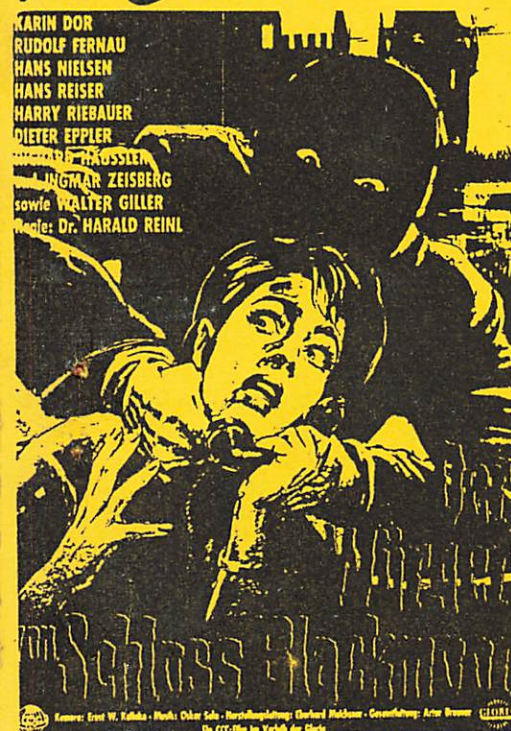


BLOOD TIMES

EDGAR WALLACE... A Career In Crime

*The German Cinema Of
Edgar Wallace: A Filmograph*



Jean Rollin:

an exclusive interview

Asian Splatter Action:

Story Of Ricky

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By Louis Paul

POLICE STORY III: SUPERCOP, ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA I & II,
STORY OF RICKY, HELLRAISER III, QUALCO SO STIRACIA NEL BUIO

ARTERIAL SPLATTER

POLICE STORY III: SUPERCOP

(1992) (Golden Harvest)

A Leonard Ho Presentation

D: Stanley Tong

(Action Sequences directed by Jackie Chan)

S: Jackie Chan, Michelle Khan

The Hong Kong Police send crack detective Chen Chia-Chu (Jackie Chan) to mainland China to break up an international narcotics and weapons smuggling ring. Panther (Yuen Wah), a smuggler and brother of one of the chief members of the smuggling operation, is in a Chinese prison. Inspector Chia-Chu goes undercover as Lin Fu-Sheng to spring Panther and to infiltrate the ring. Panther grows fond of Chia-Chu/Fu-Sheng after the two make a spectacular escape from a mountainside prison and, in no time at all, the Red Chinese Interpol commander, Yang (Michelle Khan), also infiltrates the gang as Chia-Chu/Fu-Sheng's sister and together the duo perform some incredible feats of martial arts that so impress Panther and his brother (Kent Tsang) that the ruthless pair make them (Chan & Khan) their personal bodyguards. The group moves to Thailand (and then Malaysia) where they end up in a violent shootout that quickly escalates into a fiery bloodbath in the hidden jungle fortress of a Red Chinese General (Lo Lieh) who is also a druglord. Back in the mainland city of Kuala Lumpur, Chia-Chu/Fu-Sheng's girlfriend, May (Leslie Chung), sees him with Yang and the two undercover police agents end up in jeopardy.

With May as a hostage, Chia-Chu and Yang are forced to free Tsang's wife (on trial in a smuggling case and sentenced to death) from the Malaysian police. The two police agents have their hands full...they have to rescue May, free Tsang's wife and catch the criminals before they can flee in their helicopter.

Jackie Chan's third entry in the Police Story series is definitely one of the best Chan action vehicles in years. While still displaying his deft acrobatic skills and comic mugging, Chan's charisma has not been lost despite having the film be stolen out from under him by the incredible Michelle Khan. After a self-imposed retirement of a few years (she had been married to Dickson Poon of D & B Films), Khan makes an incredible comeback in this film which showcases her acting and formidable martial arts abilities.

Jackie Chan's fans may be disappointed to see him perform a minimal amount of martial arts throughout most of the film but there are moments where he shines and he springs into high gear during the last half of the picture where he performs some incredible death-defying stunts on a helicopter and a fast moving train. A highly enjoyable action film, HK new wave fans will be impressed with director Stanley Tong's slick directing skills (Tong's previous film was Stoneage Warriors, an Asian rip-off of 90's American female bonding roles and cannibal films). In fact, Police Story III: Supercop with its tight editing and exciting James Bond-like climax could easily play in a dubbed English version and, with decent theatrical distribution, could possibly be the crossover film Chan watchers have been waiting for. (Although I hoped for the same with Armour of God and its superior sequel, Armour of God II: Operation Condor). Despite a cut, the dubbed version of the former has turned up in the UK

and has surfaced in some U.S. video stores while an English language print from Japanese laser disc and the uncut Chinese language prints of the later (available only in Asian video shops) has surfaced although neither film has appeared theatrically stateside.

ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA

(1991/92)

ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA II

(1992)

(Golden Harvest) Producer: Raymond Chow, Tsui Hark, Ng See Yuen

D: Tsui Hark

S: Jet Li, Rosamund Kwan, Yuen Biao, Mok Siu Chung

Basically a two-part saga of the fictionalized accounts of a legendary Chinese figure named Wong Fei Hung (Jet Li), these two films deal with the ex shaolin priest, Hung, coming to terms with the invasion of western influence over Hong Kong and mainland China in the late 1800's. In Part I, Hung and his followers live in a corner of a village in a small temple and his adjoining house. Known throughout the area as a master of the martial arts as well as a skilled medical man (practicing the ancient ways of Chinese medicine), Hung is forever plagued by local villagers (as well as travellers like Fu (Yuen Biao) who wish to become his students in the martial arts. Rival temples (who are racist to all foreigners) prove to be a daily problem when they exert their influence and extort protection money from local shopkeepers. The Americans, British and French forces have their ships docked in the harbor and the Americans plot with Hung's rivals to export poor people and women to the American western frontier to become slave railroad workers and whores, all under the guise of forthcoming wealth and prosperity in the new world. Part One's 130 minute running time is full of complex plot turns that all interweave during the course of the film.

Hung's English educated Aunt Yee (Rosamund Kwan) arrives. A relative with schooling in the west, she is smitten with western values and concerns and is always noticeable and ever present with her western clothing and camera. Aunt Yee is also smitten with Hung but he is such a gentleman that he does not see the love in her eyes. Would-be martial arts student, Fu (Biao), seems romantically inclined towards Aunt Yee but does not receive her affections. After certain circumstances force Fu out of the Hung household, he takes up with a sinister and very powerful travelling martial arts master who has designs to defeat the reportedly powerful Hung in a martial arts match and to be head of the Hung clan.

During all this, the western forces have taken up with the local rivals to keep Hung out of the way of their plans to westernize the mainland area of Hong Kong and to make money off the potential slaves. Torn between a desire to follow Hung and his newfound master (as well as his affection for Aunt Yee), Fu becomes a pawn in a game of wits.

Kidnapping, assassinations and some of the most skillfully choreographed martial arts sequences ever filmed (including an outstanding duel in the rain) make Part One a modern martial arts classic.

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Director, Tsui Hark, often stages the most climactic moments and showdowns much like the conclusion of Sergio Leone's *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* and, much like Leone's best work, Hark displays an almost otherworldly sense of time out of place, an example of epic, sprawling, story telling of breathtaking scope. I've not seen a martial arts film before this one that ever made me think of a Sergio Leone film and I am sure that there probably will not be another one for quite some time.

Part II, also directed by Tsui Hark, continues the story of Wong Fei Hung. As the film opens, Hung is travelling to Canton to deliver a lecture on Chinese acupuncture while accompanied by Aunt Yee and Fu (this time played by Mok Siu Chung, replacing Yuen Biao in the part). While Fu is still smitten with Aunt Yee, her affections still lie with Hung. Arriving in Canton, Hung and company come into conflict with the notorious anti-foreigner White Lotus Sect, a bizarre cult that mixes religion and racism. Also entering into the story is Dr. Sun Yat Sen (a real-life historical figure who helped establish the Republic of China) and his companion Luke (played by former martial arts idol, David Chiang, in a surprising, somber role.) Hung, Aunt Yee, Fu, Dr. Yat Sen and Luke soon become the allies of the British embassy as it is besieged by rampaging mobs of White Lotus Sect members and traitorous members of the manchu Court who had originally been instructed to help guard all foreigners in Canton. When the local militia links forces with the White Lotus Sect, attack the British embassy and all hell breaks loose, it's up to Hung and company to escape with their lives intact on the eve of the beginning of the Boxer Rebellion that sought to remove by force all western influence in China.

Tsui Hark's sequel, while having a shorter running time than Part One, still has the feel of an epic and although star Jet Li has less moments to display his athletic prowess as a martial artist, what is there is impressive (especially during the climatic and exciting second half). A stimulating one-two punch of history filled with epic grandeur, romance and excitement as well as a serious (and grim) study of culture clash and racism, both Part I and Part II are highly recommended.



成龍

張曼玉

楊紫瓊

領銜主演

SUPER COP

警察故事III

唐季禮 導演·武術

TSUI HARK'S

ONCE UPON A
TIME IN CHINA



THE STORY OF RICKY

(aka RIKI-OH)

(1992)

This Chinese (made in Hong Kong) splatterfest based on the Japanese comic book series (and animated films) titled Riki-Oh, is the most bone-crunching, eye-widening, gory actioner to play American VCR's in some time. While the Cantonese and Mandarin language tapes contain English subtitles, oddly enough much of the gore is cut. The Japanese language tape (sans English subtitles) is completely uncut!

Set in a primal, futuristic police state, an independently run prison houses the dregs of society where most of the muscular villains have established groups, sects and clans. Each stronger group preys on the weaker -- until Ricky comes along. A young man skilled in superhuman martial arts, Ricky is a brooding, sulking presence throughout much of the film. At once a loner as well as a potential avenging angel of the weaker inmates, Ricky slowly sides against the brutal prison owner, his guards and the gangs.

Bye-balls are pierced and gouged, limbs are twisted, broken and, in some cases, snapped apart from their connecting tissue, and several cast members even have their intestines ripped out. One of the film's most incredible, over-the-top sequences of mayhem is when Ricky plunges his fists into the belly of a man ripping his stomach open while his would-be victim then attempts to strangle Ricky with his own bloody intestines. Very, very violent and surreal, this Golden Harvest feature is a must see!

Newcomer, Pan Siu Wang (Stoneage Warriors) is already garnering notices here in the states for his portrayal of Ricky and, oh yeah, I almost forgot, Yukari Oshima makes an appearance as a demonic, cyclone-kicking MAN!

HELLRAISER III: HELL ON EARTH

(1992) D: Anthony Hickox

I don't have a clue what the final theatrical film print will look like but the totally uncut version the latest in the Clive Barker-inspired trilogy is far from disappointing. After starting out with an abortive screenplay that had the Pinhead character create a hellish brothel, and two false starts with two different directors, Hellbound's Tony Randel and Peter Atkins (co-author of this screenplay), the final version as directed by Anthony Hickox is more of that otherworldly sinister weirdness that we've come to expect from the series. After three bombs in a row (Warwork, Sundown-The Vampire In Retreat and Warwork II: Lost In Time), the chances of this director making anything more than just a plain old watchable film were, shall we say, less than possible. However, it's like he suddenly learned how to make a real movie and he's done it right this time.

Left imprisoned as a bizarre piece of sculpture at the end of Hellbound, Pinhead soon regains his physical presence on Earth by imposing his will on a young, sadistic club owner whose taste in women leads to verbal and physical forms of abuse. Lured with the promise of endless pain and pleasure, the club owner reluctantly "feeds" the sculpture more victims until Pinhead is free. Meanwhile, a brassy would-be TV journalist smells a story when a young man turns up in a hospital emergency room and his head explodes. Our heroine soon starts down the path that might lead her over the edge of sanity and to the brink of hell itself. The only assistance that she receives is in the form of Doug Bradley's guilt-ridden soldier who is spending an eternity

on a corpse strewn WWI battlefield. As Pinhead's alterego, he alone can stop him from whatever it is he wants to do. This time out, Pinhead has five or six additional creatures of perverse and weird origins.

Gory as hell, the film's highlights include several graphic skinings by hooks, an exploding head (the best since Scanners) and an incredible bellish scene where hundreds of clubgoers are trapped in a nightclub and are attacked by all manner of perversely evil devices. There are even a few moments when the actual dread creeps into the proceedings that lead to a near apocalyptic finale.

QUALCOSA STRISCIA NEL BUIO (1971)

(Something Moves In The Dark/

Something Strikes In The Dark)

Director/Screenplay: Mario Colucci

Cast: Farley Granger, Luca Bore, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Stan Cooper, Mia Genberg, Dino Pazio and Lorenzana Nuscik

The Story:

It is a violent storm and two cars are following each other until they both reach a collapsed bridge. In one car is Police Inspector, Wright (Dino Pazio), in the other is the homicidal maniac, Spike (Farley Granger), who the police have been chasing. Due to the storm, more cars come upon the police who overtake the killer and subdue him. Since the collapse of the bridge means that there is no way ahead for all the travellers (apparently, no one thinks of backing up and returning the way they came!), all of the occupants in the vehicles end up in a nearby mansion. Now the central cast is complete -- the killer, three policemen, a doctor and his assistant, the rich man, his wife, a professor of the occult, the caretaker of the villa and his girlfriend.

The caretaker tells the group of the strange death years before of the beautiful woman who owned the house. Intrigued, the group allows itself to participate in a seance as the storm rages on outside the walls of the mansion. After the seance, strange things occur.

The killer seems more psychotic than ever, the rich man (Stuart) becomes possessed by the dead woman's spirit (as do the doctor's assistant and rich man's wife). The killer gets loose and even stranger things develop. With a little TEN LITTLE INDIANS, a little OLD DARK HOUSE and enough subjective camera angles to remind you of prime Mario Bava, the movie is something different for Italo fans used to the usual giallo/slasher fare of the period. The director, Colucci, is not an overly familiar name to genre fans but this film is definitely a gem in a sea filled with overly stylish Hitchcock retreads. The cinematography by Giuseppe Aquari carefully takes in all of the action and yet also manages to soak up the atmosphere of the house in which nearly all the film takes place. As the film progresses, what initially seemed like a quite large villa becomes more and more claustrophobic. Even Farley Granger is impressive despite his first startling appearance as an overaged "teddy boy" in leather gone psycho. As the film goes on, he becomes a much more enigmatic and complex character although it is never fully explained just what kind of heinous crimes he may have committed prior to the opening of the picture. Definitely a film worth searching out. It rewards a carefully built first half with an atmospheric middle section and climax. I, for one, would be interested in seeing more of Mario Colucci's directorial work.

EDGAR WALLACE-

A Career In Crime

(The Man, The Novels, The Films) by Louis Paul

EDGAR WALLACE: A CAREER IN CRIME

Edgar Wallace was born, illegitimately, in the London slum of Asbburnham Grove, Greenwich England to his father Richard H. G. Marriott, a minor actor who called himself Richard Edgar and Mary Jane Richards, a dancer on April 1, 1875. When the infant was nine days old he was offered up for adoption and was taken in by Mr. George Freeman (who renamed the child, Richard Horatio Freeman). Although Mr. Freeman, young Edgar's adoptive father, had nine children of his own to support, and Mary Richards paid only five shillings a week for her baby's keep, Mr. Freeman (reportedly) gave his adopted child a better education than he did his own children: about five years in an elementary school. As a young child, Edgar Wallace went to school in Peckham, a modest, middle class area.

Edgar Wallace had a natural attraction to the plays of William Shakespeare and it is thought that this early interest sowed the seed of his later career. At age 11, young Edgar often skipped school to sell newspapers at a popular area of London called Ludgate Circus. He left school the next year and quickly became an apprentice printer. Other positions such as a sweatshop worker in a clothing factory, a milkman and a fisherman for a local tuna factory showed that the young man was very much like other young Englishmen of the period who, despite their many and/or varied interests in their personal life, put everything of importance on hold so that they could secure a decent enough wage to go on to better schooling or to just make ends meet. Remember that if you were not born into a household of wealth in the late 1800s that life for a young man (or woman) was hard going.

At age 18 Edgar Wallace enlisted in the Royal West Kent Regiment of the English army and was stationed in South Africa during The Boer War of 1896. While in South Africa, it has been reported that while performing a freelance job as the South African correspondent for the Reuters wire service as well as The London "Daily Mail" back home in England, Wallace caught the attention of Rudyard Kipling who encouraged the young soldier (now stationed with the Medical Staff Corps) to continue to write when he received his discharge from the army. In fact, Wallace had published a poem in praise of Kipling in the "Cape Times" (in South Africa). Kipling's comments about the poem must have impressed the young Wallace who by many accounts was a omnivorous reader of military and tactical books throughout his younger years and who greatly admired Kipling as a writer.

Upon his discharge from the army in 1899, Edgar Wallace stayed on in South Africa and continued to cover the war for Reuters and The London "Daily Mail". Eventually, he founded the Rand Daily Mail, the first English newspaper to be published in South Africa. It was here that Edgar Wallace started to write adventure and mystery stories in his spare time.

Within two years (1901) his reporting and dispatches were netting him 600 pounds a year, then an enormous sum, and enabled him to marry Ivy Maud Caldercott, the daughter of a South African missionary. He returned to England in 1902 to work at The "Daily Mail" in London. (one wonders whatever happened to his Rand Daily Mail enterprise in South Africa?)

Juggling both a married life and a history of unstable finances was for Edgar Wallace a continuous struggle as a young writer.

Before leaving South Africa, Wallace had lost all the money he had accumulated by gambling on and off the stock market. It is assumed that he returned to England in 1902 because of his financial difficulties.

In 1905, Edgar Wallace published what was to become his first novel, "The Four Just Men" in a serial format in The London "Daily Mail". For this advanced peek at his first novel, Wallace concocted a scheme to promote the serialization of his first important work, which consisted of "a series of mysterious incidents that were to culminate in a 'correct solution'". The author promised 500 pounds to the reader who guessed correctly how the crimes had been committed. When some time had passed and no "official" solution had emerged, lawsuits forced Wallace to publish a solution to disgorge all his assets (to further complicate matters, he had printed a "500" pound prize to any reader who might know the solution). Left financially bankrupt, Wallace had to even sell the copyright to "The Four Just Men".

In an attempt to revive his sagging finances, Wallace quickly wrote "South Of The River" and others novels. There would be upwards of a reported 170 novels, 17 plays and literally hundreds of short stories published by Edgar Wallace between the years 1905 and 1932, the year he died. Edgar Wallace was also very prominent as a writer of plays for the five stage. Among his many works for the theatre were "The Ringer", "The Case Of The Frightened Lady" and "The Green Pack".

Wallace also had four children by the former Ivy Caldercott; (Eleanor (born 1902/died 1903), Patricia (born 1908), Bryan Edgar (born 1904) and Michael (born in 1916). Having a house in the country, a suite in a London hotel in addition to supporting several children and an extravagant lifestyle, Wallace was forced into selling all the fiction and journalism that he could produce, became the author of several different newspaper columns centering on horse racing (a favorite pastime of his), was making amateur movies (documentaries, mostly) and, in WWI, became a war correspondent.

In June of 1919, Edgar Wallace was granted a divorce from his wife of 19 years and was granted custody of the couple's three (living) children. After a brief visit to the United States to find a literary agent to represent him in the U.S., it was said that he was having an affair at the time with one of his female secretaries. He married one in 1921. Miss Ethel Violet King.

Edgar Wallace was a writer of almost supernatural physical ability, he wrote the three act play, "The Ringer" in fourteen hours (over a period of two days). He beat that record when he entered a playwriting race with fellow scribe Samuel Shipman and completed the three act play, "The Ocean Liner" in 1 day, 11 hours and 17 minutes. Wallace once dictated a 36,000 word summation of the first World War in a single day. He usually took nine days to dictate a novel, but one of 80,000 words was dashed off in four days and another was done over a weekend. In the mid-1920s, a publisher commissioned 12 short stories from Wallace and stipulated that the first was to be delivered a month later. He received all 12 ten days later.

It was not until 1921, that his mysteries began to be identified with his name. In fact, his popularity did not really begin until after the failure of one of his plays, "M'Lady" in 1921. By then, Edgar Wallace was already 46 years old.

In 1928, an astounding one-fourth of all the books manufactured in the UK (except for The Bible and school text books, obviously) were new Edgar Wallace stories or reprints by the prolific author. From 1922 to 1932, approx. a quarter of a million copies of his work was sold in the U.S. .

Wallace was known to drink twenty cups of tea and smoke four packs of cigarettes in a day and is reported to say that diet would have been sufficient inspiration for anyone. According to the text of much of the publicity releases of the day, Wallace is said to have never drank alcohol and was known to have never partaken in any kind of exercise. In the last few years before his death, Wallace required two secretaries and kept a torrent of words whirling into a dictaphone. One of his assistants went on duty at 10 pm and Wallace worked long into the night to compose imaginary deeds of criminal masterminds.

One wonders if some opiate or caffeine (cocaine, perhaps), addicting drug was also responsible for the phenomenal amount of work that he was turning out.

In 1926, he attempted to sell the movie rights to all of his work to several different film companies, but, fortunately for his estate, he did not succeed.

In 1927, British Lion, the UK film production facility, made Wallace chairman of its' board of directors (for what was essentially a figurehead president position). Its' contract with him gave British Lion the exclusive rights to whatever he wrote while he was chairman, in return for a substantial amount of stock in the company and an unheard of stipend per every British Lion film ever made from his works plus 10 % of British Lions' annual profits as well as an annual salary as a member of the board. Wallace (besides producing the films under the British Lion banner) had (of course, due to his contract) written the screenplays for most of them and even directed some. Some of these obscure titles even had an appearance by Wallace himself.

In October 1931, Edgar Wallace ran for a seat in Parliament as a Liberal Party candidate for Blackpool, England. He did not win because of his reputation for gambling.

A month later (November 1931), Wallace flew to the U.S. in a bid to gain acceptance into the American film industry and more importantly, Hollywood, itself. A screenwriting deal with RKO Pictures was the result. Wallace delivered two scripts that apparently did not excite the powers that be at RKO but The studio did accept his third original screenplay since his arrival in Hollywood, "The Beast".

"The Beast" is also a film that Wallace had been trying to impress David Selznick with so that he might be allowed to direct it.

Eventually this film was shot and released as KING KONG.

Edgar Wallace died in the United States on February 10, 1932, three months after his arrival in Hollywood. His body was flown back to England for burial.

Many British and American movies were made from his material while he was alive. Among the best of the filmed adaptations of his works was the 1926 serial version of The GREEN ARCHER (directed by Spencer Gordon Bennet, a specialist in serials in

the 1940s) and years later, a serial itself (remade in 1940) that was later turned into a feature-length film; The TERRIBLE PEOPLE; The TERROR (a 1928 talkie); The YELLOW MASK; The CRIMSON CIRCLE; and two British films starring Nigel Bruce: The SQUEALER and The CALENDAR (both filmed in 1931).

During the pre-Hitler years in Germany there were many successful Edgar Wallace and pseudo-Wallace pictures, the best of which were the work of Czechoslovakian director Karel Lamac (Der ZINKER (from the novel The SQUEALER, filmed in 1931), Der HEXER, and Der DOPPELGÄNGER (from the novel The Double, filmed in 1933) all starring Fritz Rasp).

While Edgar Wallace had written an estimated 170 novels (some printed information attributes 175 novels to the author) and 17 plays, his lifestyle was such that at the time of his death, his family was left with very little or no financial funds. Edgar Wallace was said (according to some obituaries at the time of his death in 1932) to have squandered it all at the race track or on some of the race horses that he purchased in apparently, his only vice.

Wallace was also known to have given huge, sprawling parties to the professional and elite entertainment world of many continents. When he died he had assets of only \$68,000 but had debts of nearly \$400,000. Luckily, for his widow and his children (including son, Bryan Edgar Wallace), the publishing estate had kept royalties and other monies from the Wallace household for fear that the author might squander the money and all of the debts were eventually paid when it was found out the royalties from his books, short stories and plays numbered into the millions.

Bryan Edgar Wallace had, before the death of his father, apprenticed as a film editor at the British Lion film studio. He got his first assignment as full-fledged editor while working on a film based on one of his fathers' stories- The CALENDAR in 1931. In 1937 he would write the screenplay for a British Lion remake of The SQUEALER.

Bryan Edgar Wallace would become known to Wallacephiles for the writings that he himself would become known for in the literary world. Becoming a writer (but nowhere near as talented nor as prolific as his father), Bryan Edgar Wallace wrote a series of novels that were "inspired by the writings of Edgar Wallace". In the late 1950s, he relocated to West Germany during a boom of interest in that country in his fathers' work.

In that country, BEW became involved with CCC (Central Cinema Company) and contributed to several screenplays that were based on his (and his fathers' ideas). Oddly enough, Bryan Edgar Wallace can be seen onscreen in some of the West German titles briefly introducing the film before the main title credits even appear. One of his more outstanding contributions to the German film series was his script for SCOTLAND YARD VS. DR. MABUSE, a highly entertaining production that combined the post-Third Reich paranoia of director Fritz Lang's series with his fathers' own unique style of detective thriller.

In 1959, a issue of *Variety*, the trade newspaper of the entertainment industry, had reported that the London-based, Anglo-Amalgamated production company had made a deal with the Edgar Wallace estate for the film rights to more than 250 stories that the writer had turned out during his life.

The then-present aim of the Anglo-Amalgamated studio was to make 12 Wallace-influenced films a year, six at the Beaconsfield studios, six at the Merton Park studios. It was reported that all of the titles would be 60 minute actioners suitable as support features. Intended to be shot as top quality first-run features, the titles (negotiated for sale by Sydney Box Associates who then relinquished the rights to Peter Rogers of Anglo-Amalgamated (the man chiefly responsible for the CARRY ON film series) were offered for sale by Edgar Wallace, Ltd., the private company formed by his children after his death in 1932.

Between the years 1960 and 1964, there were a total of thirty-nine films based on Edgar Wallace stories and all of these films were shot at the historic Merton Park studios in London. These titles were originally released to UK theaters as bottom-of-the-bill double features and were apparently generally disliked by the viewing public. Towards the end of the series, the image of a bust of Mr. Wallace was always shown beneath the main titles. A complete list of all the films made for and by Anglo-Amalgamated follows:

1960: The CLUE OF THE TWISTED CANDLE, MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE, The MALPAS MYSTERY. 1961: The MAN WHO WAS NOBODY, The CLUE OF THE NEW PIN, The FOURTH SQUARE, PARTNERS IN CRIME, The CLUE OF THE SILVER KEY, ATTEMPT TO KILL, The MAN IN THE CARLTON TOWER, NEVER BACK LOSERS. 1962: The SINISTER MAN, MAN DETAINED, CANDIDATE FOR MURDER, BACKFIRE, FLAT TWO, The SHARE OUT, TIME TO REMEMBER, NUMBER SIX, SOLO FOR SPARROW, DEATH TRAP. 1963: PLAYBACK, LOCKER 69, The SET UP, INCIDENT AT MIDNIGHT, RETURN TO SENDER, RICOCHET, The 20,000 KISS, ON THE RUN, The DOUBLE, The PARTNER, TO HAVE AND HOLD. 1964: The RIVALS, FIVE TO ONE, ACCIDENTAL DEATH, DOWNFALL, The VERDICT, WE SHALL SEE, FACE OF A STRANGER.

In the 1950s, an interesting occurrence began to take place in Europe. Crime thrillers were suddenly in vogue amongst all levels of the population (especially in Italy and West Germany). Members of Parliament and the baker down in a little section of town were all passing the time reading good old-fashioned thrillers. Just as the Italian reading audience had embraced the mystery genre with their bright, colorful yellow covers (this gave birth to the phrase "Gialli", which literally means the word "yellow" in Italian and which eventually mutated into the word "Giallo" when the term was applied to the movies that were either inspired, influenced, or were imbued with the feeling of these mystery thrillers), the West German reading audience called their Wallace films- Krimis (an abbreviated form of the word Taschenkrimis which in some sort of translated form into English means the "pocket-sized crime novels" in which the Edgar Wallace thrillers were reprinted, or something to that effect).

In May 1959, the German film distribution facility, Constantine-Film hired the actor Fritz Rasp and director Harald Reinl to make *Der FROSCH MIT DER MASKE* (The MASKED FROG) for the Rialto Film production company.

It has been estimated that Rialto Film has produced an 32 Edgar Wallace titles, more if you include similar films either influenced or scripted by Bryan Edgar Wallace or other UK, US, or even Eastern European authors who were inspired by the senior Wallace's literary style.

In 1959, Harald Reinl was a then-51 year old workaholic director whose bulk of his previous films were sentimental drawbacks to life in the early days of pre-Hitler Germany and family films not unlike the Heidi series or even some European westerns (he was instrumental in spearheading the Old Shatterhand series then featuring Lex Barker and Stewart Granger).

Der FROSCH MIT DER MASKE was scripted by Trygve Larsen and J. Joachim Bartsch from Wallace's *The Fellowship Of The Frog*, which told of a gang of bandits that terrorized London and left a frog's foot at every scene of a crime. Scotland Yard, with the help of an American detective, finally bring the gang to justice, but not before putting suspicion upon many people the likes of corporate presidents, government officials, etc...

Scriptwriter Larsen and Wolfgang Menge collaborated on director Jürgen Roland's *Der ROLFE KREIS* (a film that was adapted from Wallace's *The Crimson Circle*). Originally, a Wallace-written retread of his own *The Green Archer*, *Der ROLFE KREIS/Crimson Circle* had secretary-archery enthusiast, Thalia (played by Renate Ewert in the film version), suspected of some very strange arrow-murders. The film's climax features the villain made-up to resemble the title character from Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse* film. The movie was shot in London (as many of the German-made Edgar Wallace films were) and was filmed in the style of an old US silent serial.

The archery device was used again for the 1961 title *Der GRUENE BOGENSCHLITZE* (The GREEN ARCHER) (also scripted by the writer, Wolfgang Menge). In this feature, a mysterious archer shoots down the usual bunch of suspects in London which a Chicago gangster (Gert Frobe) and Karin Dor (the wife of Harald Reinl and sister of fellow actress, Senta Berger) as the prospective final victim of the archer.

Karin Dor appeared in many of these thrillers either in the role as a bedeviled secretary or as the suspect/love interest of the local Scotland Yard inspector usually assigned to the case at hand.

Alfred Vohrer, who came from an early career as a businessman and as a person who dabbled in the exploitation end of the film business entered into the Edgar Wallace series as director with the 1960 remake of the 1939 Bela Lugosi chestnut *The HUMAN MONSTER* aka *DARK EYES OF LONDON*.

As in the original British film, there is a blind spe-like, barely human suspect (Adi Berber, who also appears in *The DOOR WITH SEVEN LOCKS* in a similar role) but the film is most notable for the presence of a young Klaus Kinski as a fey gangster involved in the sadistic plot to murder aged bachelors for their life savings. Kinski, who would eventually go on to appear in nearly 70 % of the German Edgar Wallace features

got his start in *Der RÄCHER* (aka *The EXECUTIONER* aka *AVENGER* in U.S. prints) (60) another Wallace adaptation featuring an human/ape-like killer who lurks around London in a jungle beast mask but this time he has to share screen time with a master criminal who decapitates his victims- all seedy members of a society of sleazy types involved in the filming of a Hollywood-style thriller project.

Of the estimated 32 Rialto Film productions that were made, it is said that Alfred Vohrer directed at the least, 14 of them.

The West German society took these Edgar Wallace films very seriously. In the 1962 *EAST GERMAN FILM YEARBOOK* (DEFA), the Wallace pictures were among the very few non-Communist productions discussed in that volume. Reportedly, their boxoffice success had been quite extraordinary, especially in the hindsight view of the growth of the German TV industry of the late 1950s/early 1960s.

The Constantine-Rialto films (hereon referred to as just Rialto), had a dispute in 1960 with Kurt Ullrich productions. It seems that Ullrich's film of *The AVENGER* was illegally called an Edgar Wallace film when, two years previous, Rialto had officially bought the rights to the Wallace publications to be made into feature films in West Germany.

Upon release of *The AVENGER* in 1960, Rialto threatened Ullrich with a lawsuit which resulted in an out-of-court settlement that saw many of Ullrich's stable of performers signed to Rialto and a (more beneficial) contract for many years to come. One of the actors that benefitted greatly from the work (and exposure) was a familiar face in many Rialto (and rival CCC productions)- Klaus Kinski.

CCC (The Central Cinema Company) knew of the tremendous impact of the EW films and by 1962 (three short years after the start of the West German "Wallace" boom) immediately signed, the renowned authors' son- Bryan Edgar Wallace to an exclusive contract.

Still living in 1962, few titles were made from BEW's stories, but he relocated to Germany and made a brief "splash" by writing "original screenplays" for CCC production chief, Artur Brauner.

In summation, the German Edgar Wallace productions were an unusual piece of film history. At the time (and some think, to this day), there were (are?) no other films that look like these movies. Often, they presented a foreboding sense of mystery and danger. Almost every title in the filmography (especially, the black and white productions) were shrouded in fog during the outdoor scenes (rumours exist that there was some considerable location work shot in England).

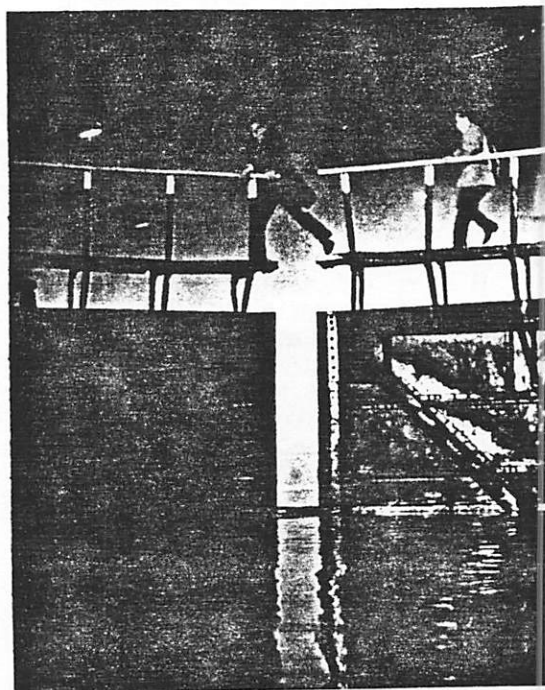
Femme fatales, gamblers, and other denizens of the underworld like stooges, squealers, informers and the like shared screen time with heirs and heiresses, insane relatives, mad scientists, psychos, criminal masterminds and other worse elements of horror in the blurred borders of a corrupt society where the streets of London are not far from the dark, dank slums of Soho. The stoic, heroic, self-righteously rigid figureheads of Scotland Yard were the only constant hint of morality and stability in an ever-changing mysterious fabric that became imbued chillers.

Many of the Edgar Wallace (and related) titles in the following filmography should be of interest to both the casual and devoted fans of the genre. While we may have missed some titles, many of the films listed here come from Eastern European and West German film production guides, books, annuals and the like.

Much of the information presented in this filmography has been laboriously researched. All films are listed alphabetically by their original German title, the translated (or UK or U.S. theatrical or television) English language title follows in parentheses. The year listed with the film title is the year of release in West Germany and not the year of worldwide distribution. While most of these titles were dubbed in English in their native West Germany (some were dubbed in England), there are titles that have never been released outside of West Germany and may appear here in print in the English language for the first time.

The first section of the following filmography is concerned solely with the films that were officially licensed as "Edgar Wallace" titles.

Those productions that are "Bryan Edgar Wallace" (or BEW) follow. Lastly, productions that resemble those "official" EW or BEW films from Rialto and CCC round out the filmography.



DER FLUCH DER GELBEN SCHLANGE.
Regie Franz Josef Gottlieb, 1962.



EDGAR WALLACE

The German Cinema Of Edgar Wallace:

A Filmography

By Louis Paul

FILMOGRAPHY

Der Frosch Mit Der Maske (1959) b/w

(The Frog With The Mask)

(aka The Face Of The Frog)

"The Frog" is up against Scotland Yard and an American amateur detective. The Yard at first believes that Harry Lime (the character from "The Third Man") has returned, and is leaving frogs at the scene of several unusual crimes.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Trygve Larsen and J. Joachim Bartsch, based on the novel, "The Fellowship Of The Frog", by Edgar Wallace

Prod: Constantin/Rialto

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Fritz Rasp, Eddi Arent

Der Rote Kreis (1959) b/w

(The Red Circle)

Detective story about a mysterious murderer on the loose in London, who leaves round, circle-like marks on the necks of the victims.

D:Jurgen Roland

SP:Trygve Larsen, Wolfgang Menge, from the novel, "The Crimson Circle" (1922) by Edgar Wallace

Prod: Constantin/Rialto Film

S:Karl Sachisch, Renate Bwert, Eddi Arent, Fritz Rasp

Die Bande Des Schreckens (1960) b/w

(The Terrible People)

(The Terror Band)

Detective story. The "ghost" of an executed counterfeiter tracks down his enemies as part of an elaborate revenge plan.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:J. Joachim Bartsch, Wolfgang Schnitzler, from the novel, "The Terrible People" (1926) by Edgar Wallace

P:Rialto Film

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, Fritz Rasp

Der Grune Bogenschutze (1960) b/w

(The Green Archer)

A mysterious avenging figure seeks retribution for past crimes with the aid of an bow and arrow.

D:Jurgen Roland

SP:Wolfgang Menge, Wolfgang Schnitzler, from the novel, "The Green Archer" (1923) by Edgar Wallace

P:Rialto Film

S:Gert Proebe, Karin Dor, Klausjürgen Wussow

Der Racher (1960) b/w

(The Executioner)

(The Avenger)

Detective story where two separate stories converge. One, about a private citizen who chases down criminals and deals them, his own brand of justice; the other, about an ape-like creature who is also on the scene abducting people. Both villains may or may not be the chief bad person in this story who is stalking the elite society of London and a film studio-beheading people.

D:Karl Anton

SP:Gustav Kampendonk, Rudolf Cartier, from the novels "The Hairy Arm" (1925) and "The Avenger" (1925)

by Edgar Wallace

P:Kurt Ullrich

S:Heinz Drache, Ingrid Van Bergen, Ina Duschka, Klaus Kinski

Der Fälscher Von London (1961) b/w

(The Forger Of London)

(The London Counterfeiter) (1961)

Scotland Yard investigates as a young man believes that he is criminally insane and falls prey to a ring of counterfeiters.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Johannes Kai, from the novel, "The Forger" (1928)

by Edgar Wallace

P:Rialto Film

S:Robert Graf, Karin Dor, Eddi Arent

Der Geheimnis Der Gelben Narzissen (1961) b/w

(The Devil's Daffodil)

Airport security police, aided by Scotland Yard and a Hong Kong detective on vacation, battle a narcotics gang.

D:Akos Rátóty

SP:Basil Dawson, from the novel, "The Devil's Daffodil" (1920) by Edgar Wallace

P:Omnia (Rialto Film)

a English-German co-production

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Sabina Sesselman, Klaus Kinski,

Christopher Lee, Marisa Mell

Der Ratsel Der Roten Orchideen (1961) b/w

(The Puzzle Of The Red Orchid)

Two rival American gangsters families show up in London and try to blackmail wealthy Englishmen. Scotland Yard and the F.B.I are called in when the U.S. gangsters clash with U.K.-based mobsters.

D:Helmuth Ashley

SP:Trygve Larsen, from the novel, "When The Gangs Came To London" (1932) by Edgar Wallace

P:Rialto Film

S:Adrian Hoven, Marisa Mell, Klaus Kinski, Christopher Lee

Die Seltsame Gräfin (1961) b/w

(The Strange Countess)

An heiress is being stalked. It is up to a Scotland Yard detective to save her.

D:Josef Von Baky

SP:R.A. Stemmle, based on the novel, "The Sins Of The Mother" (1925) by Edgar Wallace

P:Rialto Film

S:Lil Dagover, Joachim Fuchsberger, Brigitte Grothum, Klaus Kinski

Die Toten Augen Von London (1961) b/w

(The Dead Eyes Of London)

Detective story. Murderers who are also insurance swindlers, are sought after by Scotland Yard and are found to be involved with a secret organization working out of a charitable and kindly reverends' residence for homeless blind men- a cover for an elaborate scheme involving murder and (faked) suicides.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Trygve Larsen, from the novel, "Dark Eyes Of London" (1926) by Edgar Wallace (previously filmed in 1940 as The Human Monster starring Bela Lugosi)

P:Rialto Film

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Baal, Klaus Kinski, Adi Berber

Der Fluch Der Gelben Schlange (1962) b/w
(The Curse Of The Yellow Snake)

Detective story centered around the violent rivalry of two half-brothers living in the orient one of whom, may be the secret head of an organization of master criminals.

D: Franz Josef Gottlieb

SP: Gottlieb, Janne Furch from the novel, "The Yellow Snake" (1926) by Edgar Wallace

P: CCC (Cinema City Company)

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Eddi Arent, Werner Peters

Das Gasthaus Am Der Thames (1962) b/w
(The Inn At The Thames)

(aka Inn On The River)

Detective story in which the police finally catch a dangerous murderer and diamond smuggler at a deceased mans' creepy, country estate.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Trygve Larsen, Harald G. Petersson, from the novel, "The India Rubber" (1930) by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Brigitte Grothum, Klaus Kinski

Mit Tur Mit Den Sieben Schlossern (1962) b/w
(The Door With Seven Locks)

Detective story about a murder and the seven heirs to a family fortune who become suspects.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Harald G. Petersen, Johannes Kai, from the novel, "The Door With Seven Locks" (1926) by Edgar Wallace {previously filmed in 1940 as Chamber Of Horrors}

P: Rialto Film

S: Heinz Drache, Sabina Sesselmann, Eddi Arent, Klaus Kinski

Das Indische Tuch (1963) b/w
(The Indian Scarf)

The will of a deceased statesman, requires his heirs to spend six days and nights in his country home, where, one by one they are strangled.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Edgar Wallace, based on his original screenplay, play and novel, "The Frightened Lady"

Prod: Rialto Film

S: Heinz Drache, Klaus Kinski, Gisela Khan

Der Schwarze Abt (1963) b/w
(The Black Abbott)

An insane lord and a criminal join forces to go after treasure secreted away in a monastery.

D: Franz Josef Gottlieb

SP: Gottlieb, Johannes Kai, from the novel, "The Black Abbott" (1926) by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Dieter Borsche

Zimmer 13 (1963) b/w
(Room 13)

Detective story about an ill-fated mail-train robbery and a series of murders that befalls all the participants.

D: Harald Reinl

SP: Quentin Phillips, from the novel, "Room 13" by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, Eddi Arent

Der Zinker (1963) b/w
(The Ringer)

(aka The Coronetist)

(aka The Squeaker)

(aka The Squealer)

Detective story about mysterious snake venom murders near a veterinary clinic in London, the work of a sadistic avenger. A sub-plot involving a jewel heist is also worked in.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Harald G. Petersen, from the novel, "The Squealer" (1927) by Edgar Wallace {previously filmed in 1930, 1931 and 1937}

P: Rialto Film

S: Heinz Drache, Barbara Rütting, Klaus Kinski

Die Gruft Mit Dem Ratselschloss (1964) b/w
(The Curse Of The Hidden Vault)

(The Crypt With The Puzzle Lock)

The owner of a gambling casino forces a loser to commit suicide, takes over his remaining fortune, then makes the dead mans' daughter his own heir. The story becomes full of intrigue and the very brutal struggle for the possession of a treasure kept in a very sophisticated safe.

D: Franz Josef Gottlieb

SP: Gottlieb, R.A. Stemmle, from a novel by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Harald Leipnitz, Judith Dornys, Werner Peters

Der Hexer (1964) b/w
(The Ringer)

(aka The Mysterious Magician)

When the body of the sister of a deceased loony, who used to call himself "Der Hexer" (or, "The Wizard") is found floating in the Thames river, Scotland Yard becomes involved in a wave of murders as a gangster boss kills two of his accomplices, then is murdered himself by the "hexer", to avenge the death of the latter's sister.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Herbert Reinecker, Harald G. Petersson, from a novel by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Eddie Arent, Margot Trooger

*Sequel to Der Zinker ?

Das Verrätertor (1964) b/w
(Traitor's Gate)

Detective story. Theft of the Crown Jewels out of the Tower of London.

S: Freddie Francis

SP: John Sanson, from the novel, "Traitor's Gate" (1927)

by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film/Summit

a German-English co-production

S: Albert Lieven, Margot Trooger, Klaus Kinski, Eddi Arent

Neues Vom Hexer (1965) b/w
(Again, The Ringer)

(aka Latest Episodes Of The Ringer)

Scotland Yard searches for a murderer who is attempting to wipe out the family of a London lord.

D: Alfred Vohrer

SP: Herbert Reinecker, from the short story, "Again, The Ringer" (1929) by Edgar Wallace

P: Rialto Film

S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Eddi Arent, Heinz Drache, Sophie Hardy

*Sequel To Der Hexer (The Ringer) (1965)

Das Rätsel Des Silbernen Dreiecks (1965) color
(The Puzzle Of The Silver Triangle)
(aka Circus Of Fear)

A diabolical killer stalks members of a travelling circus troupe and at the same time, an intricate story about a robbery all take place under the big top.

D:Werner Jacobs, John L. Moxey

SP: ?, based on the novel, 'Again, The Four Just Men' (1928), by Edgar Wallace

F:Circus/Warner Pathe'

a German-English co-production

S:Heinz Drache, Eddie Arent, Christopher Lee, Klaus Kinski

Der Unheimliche Monch (1965) b/w
(aka The Sinister Monk)

(aka The Mysterious Monk)

Scotland Yard searches for a murderer disguised as a monk.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:J. Joachim Bartch, Fred Denger, from a novel

by Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film

S:Harald Leipnitz, Karin Dor

Der Bucklige Von Soho (1966) color
(The Hunchback Of Soho)

Scotland Yard hunts for an insane murderer who now threatens a millionaire.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Herbert Reinecker, loosely based on Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film

S:Eddi Arent, Gunter Stoll, Pinkas Braun

Die Blaue Hand (1967) color
(The Blue Hand)

(aka The Creature With The Blue Hand)

Scotland Yard tries to solve the mystery of twin brothers (one an escaped lunatic, from an insane asylum) and a series of murders committed upon heirs to a fortune.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Alex Berg, from the novel, 'Blue Hand' (1923)

by Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film

S:Klaus Kinski, Harald Leipnitz

Der Hund Von Blackwood Castle (1967) color
(The Hound Of Blackwood Castle)

The owner of a castle, supposed dead, murders all of his former accomplices in a jewel theft.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Alex Berg, from a novel by Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film

S:Heinz Drache, Karin Baal

Im Banne Des Unheimlichen (1967) color
(In Thrall Of The Sinister One)

(aka Hand Of Power)

(aka The Zombie Walks)

Scotland Yard discovers mysterious happenings near the Scottish Moors in this odd entry in the series which mixes voodoo, witchcraft and the living dead into the standard Edgar Wallace mystery plot.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:?, based on the novel, 'Hand Of Power' (1930) Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film- shot at the CCC studios!!!

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Wolfgang Kieling

Der Monch Mit Der Peitsche (1967) color
(The Monk With The Whip)

(aka The College Girl Murders)

Detective story about mysterious murders in a girl's boarding school.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Alex Berg, suggested by the play, 'The Terror'

by Edgar Wallace

{previously filmed in 1928, 1934, 1938, and 1965}

F:Rialto Film

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Uschi Glass

*Sequel to Unheimliche Monch (The Sinister Monk) (1965)

Der Gorilla Von Soho (1968) color
(The Gorilla Of Soho)

(aka The Ape Creature)

(aka The Gorilla Gang)

The directors of a charity institute murder the donors, in order to get the money for themselves. An elaborate murder scheme involving a ape-like creature results to cover up the crimes.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Preddy Gregor, from the novel, 'Dark Eyes Of London' (1926) by Edgar Wallace {previously filmed in 1940 as 'The Human Monster' and 1961 as 'Dark Eyes of London'}

F:Rialto Film

S:Horst Tappert, Uschi Glass, Uwe Friedrichsen

Der Mann Mit Dem Glausage (1968) color
(The Man With The Glass Eye)

Scotland Yard uncovers a heroin smuggler and a white slavery ring.

D:Alfred Vohrer

SP:Paul Hengge, from a novel by Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film

S:Horst Tappert, Karin Hubner

Das Gesicht Im Dunkeln (1969) color
(Face In The Dark)

(aka Double Face)

A married woman (who is also a lesbian {it figures in the story}), is murdered, and the identity of the murderer is what keeps this film a guesser right until the end.

D:Riccardo Freda

SP:Freda, Paul Hengge, from the novel, 'Face In The Night' (1926) by Edgar Wallace

F:Rialto Film/Colt/Menga

an Italian-German co-production

S:Klaus Kinski, Christiane Juger, Gunther Stoll

Das Geheimnis des Gelben Grabes (1971) color
(The Secret Of The Yellow Grave)

aka The Etruscan Kills Again

aka The Dead Are Alive

aka Over Time)

When an Etruscan grave is discovered, a series of mysterious murders begin; the victims are always killed during the act of lovemaking.

D:Armando Crispino

SP:Lucio Gattistrada, Armando Crispino, from a novel by Edgar Wallace

F:CCC/Inex/Mondial

a Italian-Yugoslavian-German co-production

S:Alex Cord, Samantha Eggar, John Marley

Der Teufel Kam Aus Akasawa (1970) color
 (The Devil Came From Akasawa)
 Agents from the U.S. Secret Service and from Scotland Yard search for a stolen gem, from the rays of which one can make gold.
 D: Jess Franco
 SP: Ladislav Podor, Paul Andre, from a novel by Edgar Wallace
 P: CCC/Fenix Films
 a Spanish-German co-production
 S: Fred Williams, Horst Tappert, Susanne Korda

Das Geheimnis Der Grünen Stiehnadel (1971) color
 (The Secret Of The Black Pin)
 (aka What Have They Done To Solange?)
 (aka What Have You Done To Solange?)
 Detective story. Girls are mysteriously murdered at a London college.
 D: Massimo Dallamano
 SP: Peter M. Thonet, Bruno Di Genonimo, Massimo Dallamano, based on the novel, "The Clue Of The New Pin" (1923) by Edgar Wallace (previously filmed in 1929 and 1961)
 P: Rialto/Clodio/International
 a Italian-German co-production
 S: Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Baal, Fabio Testi, Camille Keaton

Die Tote Aus Der Themse (1971) color
 (The Dead Woman From The Thames)
 Detective story about a police doctor who murders drug dealers and who then sells their drugs to others.
 D: Harald Phillip
 SP: Phillip, H.O. Gregor, from a novel by Edgar Wallace
 P: Rialto Film
 S: Utschi Glass, Hansjorg Felmy, Werner Peters

*The following titles are films made from either novels, short stories or Original screenplays written by Edgar Wallace's son, Bryan Edgar Wallace.

BEW

Das Geheimnis Der Schwarzen Koffer (1961) b/w
 (The Secret Of The Black Suitcase)
 (aka The Secret Of The Black Trunk) (1961)
 Detective story about drug smuggling and a black-cloaked murderer (who kills with a throwing knife).
 D: Werner Klinger
 SP: Percy Allan, from the story, "Death Packs A Suitcase" (1962), by Bryan Edgar Wallace, inspired by his father's works.
 P: CCC
 S: Joachim Hansen, Senta Berger

Der Henker Von London (1963) b/w
 (The Hangman Of London)
 (aka The Mad Executioners)
 A Scotland Yard inspector carries out his own personal death sentence on criminals that he has caught.
 D: Edwin Zbonek
 SP: R.A. Stemmle, from the novel, "The White Carpet" by Bryan Edgar Wallace, inspired by his father's works.
 P: CCC
 S: Hansjorg Felmy, Maria Perschy, Wolfgang Preiss

Das Phantom Von Soho (1963) b/w
 (The Phantom Of Soho)
 (aka Murder By Proxy)
 A formerly abused woman (who is a writer of pulp crime fiction) gets revenge on her abusers by disguising herself as a ghost and murdering them.
 D: Franz Josef Gottlieb
 SP: Ladislav Podor, from the novel, "Murder By Proxy", by Bryan Edgar Wallace, inspired by his father's works.
 P: CCC
 S: Dieter Borsche, Barbara Rutting

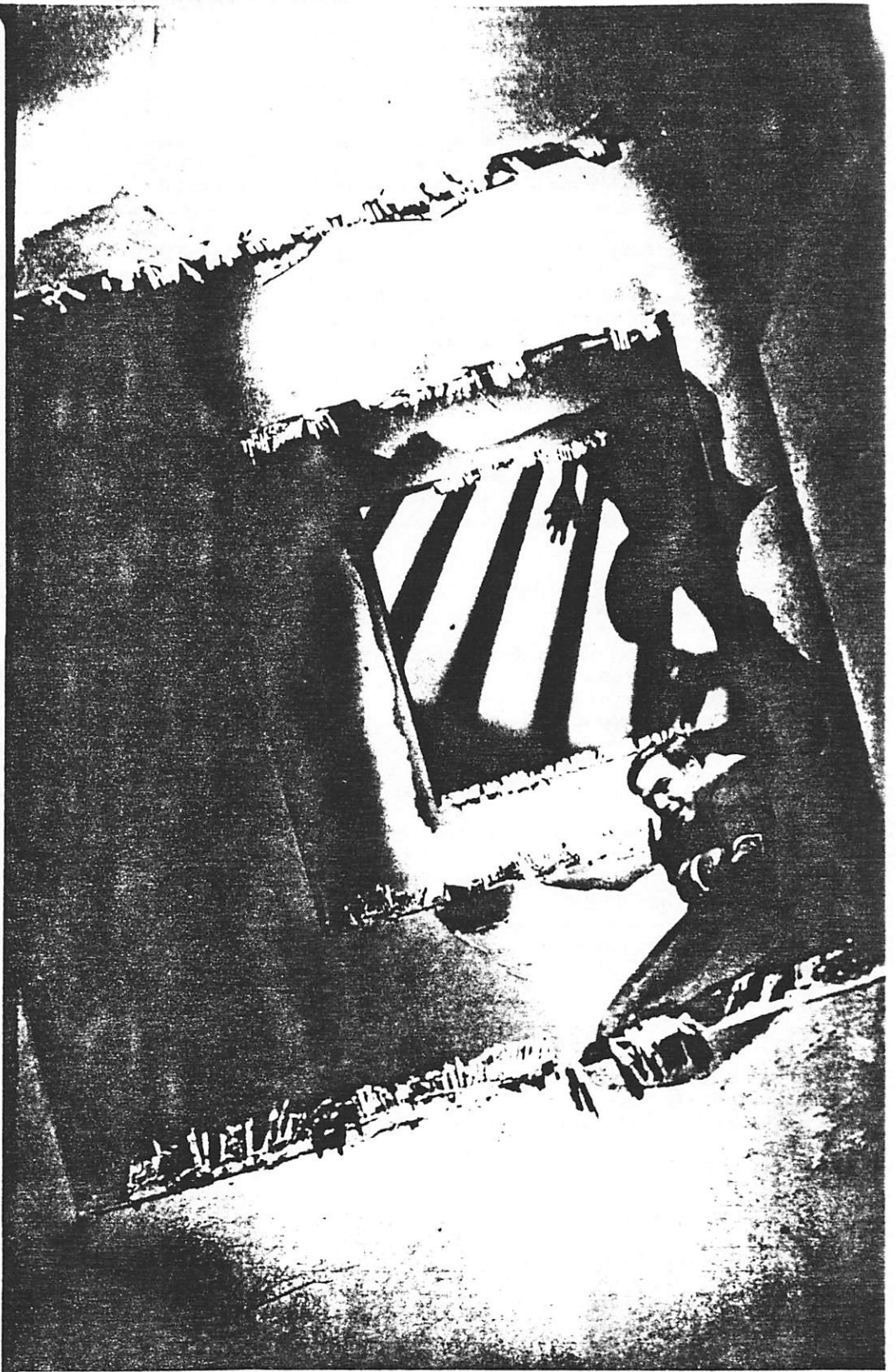
Scotland Yard Jagt Dr. Mabuse (1963)
 (Scotland Yard Vs. Dr. Mabuse)
 This time, the criminally insane mastermind tries to hypnotize all of England in another plan to dominate that continent, and then the entire world.
 D: Paul May
 SP: Ladislav Podor, from an original screenplay by Bryan Edgar Wallace
 P: CCC
 S: Peter Van Eyck, Sabine Bethmann, Klaus Kinski

Der Würger Von Schloss Blackmoor (1963) b/w
 (The Strangler Of Blackmoor Castle)
 Detective/horror story about a mysterious strangler who roams the darkened halls of a castle and who murders wealthy people.
 D: Harald Reinl
 SP: Gustav Kampendonk, Ladislav Podor, from an original screenplay by Bryan Edgar Wallace
 P: CCC
 S: Karin Dor, Ingmar Zeisberg

Das Siebente Opfer (1964) b/w
 (The Seventh Victim)
 (aka Legacy Of Horror)
 Detective story in which six members of a noble English family are murdered before a horse race...and the seventh intended victim is next.
 D: Franz Josef Gottlieb
 SP: Gottlieb, from the novel, "Murder Is Not Enough" by Bryan Edgar Wallace, inspired by his father's works.
 P: CCC
 S: Hansjorg Felmy, Ann Smyrner, Hans Nielsen, Walter Rilla

Das Ungeheuer Von London City (1964) b/w
 (The Monster Of London City)
 A series of murders of prostitutes is connected to a theatrical production of "Jack The Ripper", is it the slightly weird actor playing the lead role, is it a reincarnation of the famous stalker, or is it someone else who is trying to cover up some even more dastardly scheme.
 D: Edwin Zbonek
 SP: Robert A. Stemmle, from an original screenplay by Bryan Edgar Wallace
 P: CCC
 S: Hansjorg Felmy, Marianne Koch, Dietmar Schönherr

Das Geheimnis Der Schwarzen Handschuhe (1969) color
 (The Secret Of The Black Gloves)
 (aka The Bird With The Crystal Plumage)
 Detective story about a series of murders on women committed by a killer dressed in black hat, gloves and cloak and the man who cannot rest until he's solved the murders.
 D: Dario Argento SP: Argento, from a novel, "Screaming Mimi", by Frederic Brown
 P: CCC/Seda Spettacoli
 S: Tony Musante, Sazy Kendall, Eva Renzi



Joachim Fuchsberger in DIE BANDE DES SCHRECKENS. Regie Harald Reinl, 1960.



*Some European distributors actually marketed this film as being based on a BUIW story and actually being co-authored by him! **If anything, this film was probably influenced by his father, IWW.

Die Neuschwanze Katze (1970) color
(Cat O'Nine Tails)

A journalist (with the aid of a blind man, also a former journalist) investigates a mysterious break-in, which sets off a series of murders which have startling implications in this whodunit and whodunit.

D:Dario Argento

SP:Dario Argento, Michael Haller

P:Terra/Seda Spettacoli/Mondial/Labrador

S:Karl Malden, James Franciscus

*Some European distributors actually marketed this film as being based on a BUIW story and actually being co-authored by him! **If anything, this film was probably influenced by his father, IWW.

Der Todesrache Von Soho (1971) color
(The Death Avenger Of Soho)

D:Jess Franco

SP:Franco, Art Bernd, from the story, "Death Packs A Suitcase" (1962) by Bryan Edgar Wallace

P:Telecine/Penix Films

S:Fred Williams, Horst Tappert, Barbara Rutting

***The following titles are films that have been inspired by the writings of Edgar Wallace (and to a degree, Bryan Edgar Wallace), and influenced by the boxoffice success of the "official" and "legalized" "Wallace" productions.

Original screenplays here mix with adaptations from works of other mystery/suspense writers like Patricia Highsmith and popular European pulp fiction hacks like Karl May.

MISC

Phantom Des Grossen Zeltes (1954) b/w
(Phantom Of The Big Top)

A mysterious murder causes suspicion and unrest among circus people.

D:Paul May SP:?

P:ALGEFA

S:Rene Deltgen, Ilse Steppat

Schwarze Nylon-Hot-Nachte (1957) b/w
(Black Nylons-Hot Nights)

a gang of pimps and drug dealers are intercepted due to the involvement of a female Interpol agent and a reporter.

D:Artur Braun SP: ?

P:Film Aufbau/Cinclair

S:Peter Van Eyck, Susanne Cramer

Der Ratsel Der Grunen Spinne (1960) b/w
(The Mystery Of The Green Spider)

Detective story. Three murders take place in a night club, and the murderer has the perfect alibi.

D/SP:Franz Marischka

P:Tele

S:Adrian Hoven, Renate Ewert

Das Schwarze Schaf (1960) b/w
(The Black Sheep)

The detective adventures of a clergyman who simultaneously becomes involved in two separate murder cases.

D:Helmuth Ashley

SP:Istvan Beckffy, Hans Jacoby, from a story by G. K. Chesterton

P:Bavaria

S:Heinz Ruhman, Siegfried Lowitz

Die Tausend Augen Des Dr. Mabuse (1960) b/w
(The Thousand Eyes Of Dr. Mabuse)

A criminal mastermind, striving to rule the world, Dr. Mabuse controls a luxury hotel under his all-reaching evil power and his all-seeing eyes of evil: a video wall full of tens of television monitors that see all in the hotel.

D:Fritz Lang

SP:Lang, Heinz Oskar Wuttig

P:CCC/C.E.I. Incom/Criterion

a Italian-French-German co-production

S:Peter Van Eyck, Dawn Addams, Wolfgang Preis, Howard Vernon

Im Stahlnetz Des Dr. Mabuse (1961) b/w
(In The Trap Of Dr. Mabuse)

(aka The Return of Dr. Mabuse)

The criminal mastermind striving for eventual World domination, carries out his terrible deeds with the aid of an army of robot-controlled "zombie-men".

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Ladislav Podor, Marc Behm

P:CCC/Criterion/SPA

S:Gert Froebe, Lex Barker, Daliah Lavi

Mordenspiel (1961) b/w
(Murderer's Game)

Detective story about a super-intelligent criminal who, during a game at a party, "removes" the unsuspecting witness of one of his crimes.

D:Helmuth Ashley

SP:Thomas Keck, Helmuth Ashley, from a story by Max Pierre

P:Ullermann/Gibe

S:Harry Meyen, Gotz George, Robert Graf

Die Unsichtbaren Krallen Des Dr. Mabuse (1961) b/w
(The Invisible Claws Of Dr. Mabuse)

An insane scientist invents a machine which makes matter invisible. Dr. Mabuse, the criminal mastermind seeks control of the machine so that he can render himself and his criminal army invisible.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Ladislav Podor

P:CCC

S:Lex Barker, Karin Dor, Walter Rilla, Wolfgang Preis

Heiser Hafen Hongkong (1962) b/w
(Hong Kong Harbor)

A German journalist is exposed to many a danger because of the secret information that he possesses while on an assignment in the orient.

D:Jurgen Roland

SP:Gerd Christoph

P:Rapid/Associate

a Italian-German co-production

S:Marianne Koch, Klausjürgen Wussow, Horst Frank

Der Morder (1962) b/w

(The Murderer)

A murder, a suicide, and two suspects figure in this thriller.

D:Claude Autant-Lara

SP:Jean Aurenche, Pierre Bost, from a novel

by Patricia Highsmith

P:Corona/Sancro/International

a French-Italian-German co-production

S:Robert Hossein, Gert Froebe, Marina Vlady

Ninety Minuten Nach Mitternacht (1962) b/w

(Ninety Minutes After Midnight)

Detective story about a 17-year-old blackmail victim.

D:Jurgen Goslar

SP:Wolfgang Schnitzler, from a novel by Joseph Hayes

P:Romy

S:Christine Kaufmann, Martin Held

Der Schwarze Panther Von Ratana (1962) b/w?

(The Black Panther Of Ratana)

Detective story set in exotic Thailand.

D:Jurgen Roland

SP:Johannes Kai

P:?

S:Heinz Drache, Horst Frank, Marianne Koch

Der Teppich Des Grauens (1962) b/w

(The Carpet Of Terror)

A mysterious murderer kills wealthy people with small balls containing a poison gas, it up to Scotland Yard to track down the killer.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Felix Lutzendorf, Giuseppe Mangione, from a novel by Louis Weinert-Wilton

P:Intercontinental Germania/Epoca/Domiziana

a Spanish-Italian-German co-production

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, Eleonora Rossi-Drago

Das Testament Des Dr. Mabuse (1962) b/w

(The Testament Of Dr. Mabuse)

Remake of Fritz Lang's classic silent thriller (as well as a sequel to his 1960 comeback film, 1000 Eyes Of Dr. Mabuse), about a mentally disturbed criminal mastermind who attempts to take control of all of the criminal organizations in the world as a first step to world domination.

D:Werner Klinger

SP:Ladislav Fodor, Robert A. Stemmle

P:CCC

S:Gert Froebe, Senta Berger, Walter Rilla, Wolfgang Preiss

Der Nur Tote Zeugen Schweigen (1962) b/w

(The Only Dead Witnesses Are Silent)

Detective story about the murder of a variety-show hypnotist.

D:Eugenio Martino

SP:Gerhard Schmidt, Francis Niewel

P:International Germania/Procura/Domiziana Internazionale

a French-Italian-German co-production

S:Gotz George, Heinz Drache, Jean Sorel

Der Rote Rausch (1962) b/w

(The Red Rage)

A mentally disturbed murderer, chased by all, returns to the insane asylum to seek refuge.

D:Wolfgang Schleif

SP:Hellmut Aandick, from a novel by Hans Ulrich Horster

P:Rex

S:Klaus Kinski, Brigitte Grothum

Der Chef Wünscht Keine Zeugen (1963) b/w

(The Boss Wants No Witnesses)

A mysterious secret organization works towards destroying the earth.

D:Hans Albin, Peter Bernels SP:Bernels

P:Hans Albin

S:Marie Perschy, Uwe Frederichsen

Der Fluch Der Grunen Augen (1963) b/w

(The Curse Of The Green Eyes)

(aka Cave Of The Living Dead)

A detective is set on the trail of mysterious murders in a small isolated village. The murders are said to be the work of vampires who may or may not be under the influence of a mad scientist.

D:Alros Von Ratony

SP:C.V. Rock

P:Objectiv/Trislov

a French-Yugoslavian-German co-production

S:Adrian Hoven, Wolfgang Preiss, Erika Remberg

Das Geheimnis Der Schwarzen Witwe (1963) b/w

(The Secret Of The Black Widow)

A mysterious series of murders takes place in which all the victims possessed the same piece of information which made them targets for murder.

D:Franz Josef Gottlieb

SP:Gottlieb, Rolf And Alexandra Becker, from a novel by Louis Weinert-Wilton

P:CCC/Seda Spettacoli

a Spanish-German co-production

S:O.W. Fischer, Karin Dor, Werner Peters

Die Nytonschlinge (1963) b/w

(The Nylon Noose)

An unscrupulous businessman who has a scheme to rob the wealthy, has the habit of choking everyone who gets in his way with a nylon rope.

D:Rudolf Zehetgruber

SP:Fred Ignor, Thomas Engel

P:Monarchia/Urania

S:Dietmar Schonerr, Helga Sommerfeld

Der Unsichtbare (1963) b/w

(The Invisible Man)

A scientist's invention which makes people invisible, is misused by a psychotic murderer.

D:Raphael Nussbaum

SP:Vladimir Semitjov

P:Acro

S:Hans Von Borsody, Christiane Nielsen

Die Weiss Spinne (1963) b/w

(The White Spider)

Detective story about a one-man murder syndicate, run by a quick-change artist.

D:Harald Reinl

SP:Albert Tanner, from a novel by Louis Weinert-Wilton

P:Arca/Oppenheimer

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, Horst Frank

Frühstück Mit Dem Tod (1964) b/w

(Death At Breakfast)

Detective story about an attorney general who is accused of having an innocent bank robber sentenced to death and who seeks to clear his name.

D:Franz Antel

SP:Albert Thomas, Thomas Adler

P:Team/Wiener Stadthalle

a Austrian-German co-production

S:Sonja Ziemann, Wolfgang Preis

Das Geheimnis Der Chinesischen Nelke (1964) b/w

(The Secret Of The Chinese Carnation)

Scotland Yard investigates as three different interest groups chase after a microfilm with a formula for a new fuel.

D:Rudolf Zehetgruber

SP:Zehetgruber, from a novel by Louis Weinert-Wilton

P:Rapid/Jacques Leticie/Imperi/Melheus

a French-Italian-German co-production

S:Paul Dahlke, Olly Schobertova

Der Fall X 701 (1964) b/w

(Case No. X 701)

Detective story. A doctor working on treatments for exposure is suspected of murdering his wife.

D:Bernard Knowles

P:ALFA/Croole

S:Marc Stevens, Marianne Koch

Im Nest Der Gelben Viper (1964) b/w

(In The Nest Of The Green Viper)

Two FBI agents destroy a band of gangsters who kill their victims with snake poison.

D:Wolfgang Schleif (aka Alfredo Medori)

SP:J. Joachim Bartsch, Alfredo Medori

P:Imperial/Castello

S:Hellmut Lange, Peer Schmid

Nebelmorder (1964) b/w

(The Foggy Night Murderer)

Detective story in which a police commissioner forces a young murderer to confess to a heinous crime.

D:Eugene York (?)

SP:Walter Forster, Per Schwenzen

P:Waldemar Schweitzer

S:Hansjorg Felmy, Ingmar Zisberg, Ralph Person

Piccadilly, Null Uhr Zwölf (1964) b/w

(no translated title)

When a Sir Cunningham gets involved with several strange types in the Soho district, a young Edgar Wallace (played by Richter), helps solve the crimes.

D:Rudolf Zehetgruber

SP:Zehetgruber, based on Francis Durbridge's novel,

"12 Past 12"

P:?

S:Ilja Richter, Klaus Kinski, Pinkus Braun

Ein Sarg Aus Hongkong (1964) b/w

(A Coffin From Hong Kong)

A private detective, who is investigating the death of the son of a wealthy English couple, discovers there are drug smugglers involved in the crime.

D:Manfred R. Kohler

SP:Kohler, from a novel by James Hadley Chase

P:Urania/Rapid/Leticie/Imperial

a French-German co-production

S:Heinz Drache, Elga Andersen, Sabina Sessmann

Der Todesstrahlen Des Dr. Mabuse (1964) b/w

(The Death Rays Of Dr. Mabuse)

The adventures of a security man hired to protect an inventor and his super-weapon from the criminal mastermind, Dr. Mabuse.

D:Hugo Fregonese SP:?

P:CCC/Franco-London/Serena

a French-Italian-German co-production

S:Peter Van Eyck, O.E. Hasse, Yoko Tani

Die Tote Von Beverly Hills (1964) b/w

(The Dead Woman Of Beverly Hills)

A flirtatious 17-year-old girl is murdered, and all of her past boyfriends are suspects.

D:Michael Pfleghar

SP:Pfleghar, Peter Laregh, Hanjürgen Pohland, from a novel by Carl Goetz

P:Modern Art

S:?

Das Wirtshaus Von Dartmoor (1964) b/w

(The Inn At Dartmoor)

Detective story in which a young Australian solves the mystery of twelve convicts who escaped from Dartmoor (prison) and who disappeared into the marshland.

D:Rudolf Zehetgruber

SP:Zehetgruber, Lukas Michael, from a novel by Victor Gunn

P:?

S:Heinz Drache, Paul Klinger

Der Fluch Des Schwarzen Rubin (1965) b/w

(The Curse Of The Black Ruby)

Detective Story about a jewelry theft in Thailand.

D/SP:Manfred R. Kohler

P:Rapid/Gala International/Publitalia/

C.L.C./Tai Tri Mit

a Italian-French co-production

S:Thomas Adler, Peter Carsten, Serge Norret

Hotel Der Toten Gäste (1965) b/w

(Hotel Of The Dead)

A detective and a reporter solve mysterious murders in a hotel in San Remo, Brazil.

D:Eberhard Itzenplitz

SP:Hanns-Karl Kubiak, Michael Dreesen, from a novel by Heather Gardiner

P:Music House

S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor

Mädchenjagd In St. Pauli (1965) b/w

(Girl On The Chase In St. Paul's)

Detective story with drug smuggling, murder, bordellos, and striptease.

D/SP:Gunter Schlesinger

P:ABC

S:Margot Hildenbrand, Dagmar Schneider

Der Morder Mit Dem Seidenschal (1965) b/w

(The Murderer With The Silk Scarf)

A man murders a nightclub singer, then pursues her young daughter, who witnessed the crime.

D:Adrian Hoven

SP:Hoven, from a novel by Thea Tautentzien

P:Aquila/Sagittaro

a Italian-German co-production

S:Susanne Uhlen, Carl Mohnner, Folco Lulli

Der Würger Vom Tower (1965) b/w
(The Strangler Of The Tower)

Detective story in which the boss of a gang of thugs murders and tortures his way to the possession of a valuable and rare emerald.

D:Hans Mehrlinger
SP:Michael Thomas
P:Urania

S:Charles Regnier, Ellen Schwiers

Mister Dynamite-Morgan Kusst Euch Der Tod (1966) b/w
(Mister Dynamite)

A madman with an atom bomb extorts billions of dollars from the U.S. government, until a German agent is assigned to the case and catches up with him.

D:Franz Josef Gottlieb
SP:Gottlieb, from a novel by C.H. Guenter
P:Paras/Record/Cine Secolo/Cine Teatri
a Spanish-Italian-German co-production
S:Lex Barker, Maria Perschy

Der Tod Eines Doppelgangers (1966) color
(The Death Of A Double)

A jeweler's assistant with a strong inferiority complex, becomes the victim of a look-alike who plans the perfect crime.

D/SP:Rolf Thiele
P:Roxy/Soc. De Doublage Et De Sonorisation
a Belgian-German co-production
S:Jurgen Draeger, Werner Pochath

Liebsnachte In Der Taiga (1967) color
(Nights Of Love In The Taiga)

A U.S. agent is assigned to gather detailed information about a secret missile base in Siberia.

D:Harald Philip
SP:Philip, Werner P. Zibaso, from a novel by Heinz Konsalik
P:Franz Seitz
S:Thomas Hunter, Marie Versini

Das Rasthaus Der Grausamen Puppen (1967) color
(The Inn Of The Gruesome Dolls)

Five women break out of prison and set up a "murder game" in an isolated inn in the Scottish highlands.

D/SP:Rolf Olsen
P:Lisa/Bruno Ceria
a Italian-German co-production
S:Esy Persson, Helga Anders

Der Sarg Bleibt Heute Zu (1967) color
(No Open Coffin Today)

French agents prevent an attack by a secret Chinese organization.

D:Ramon Comas
SP:Keith Luger, Chris Chatterly
P:Aquila/Procensa/Lucas
a Spanish-Italian-German co-production
S:Adrian Hoven, Coren Del Rio

Mit Teuflischen Grüssen (1967) color
(Devil's Greetings To You)

(aka Diabolically Yours)

A man suffering from amnesia (the result of a car wreck), becomes involved in a intricate scheme to replace a man who was killed by his wife and her lover.

D:Julien Duvivier
SP:Duvivier, Paul Gregault, from a novel by Louis C. Thomas
P:Lira/Tichberg/Igor
a French-Italian-German co-production
S:Alain Delon, Senta Berger, Sergio Pantoni

Schreie In Der Nacht (1968) color
(Scream In The Night)

(aka The Unnaturals)

Detective story. The two owners of a country home force their guests to participate in a game, then accuse them of murder.

D/SP:Antonio Margheritti (aka Anthony M. Dawson)
P:CCC/Super International/Ido
a Italian-German co-production
S:Joachim Fuschsberger, Marianne Koch, Dominique Boschero

Blonde Koder Fur Morder (1969) color
(Blonde Bait For A Murderer)

Detective story. A young, mentally ill painter with a preference for blondes murders a rich young American woman without knowing it.

D/SP:Harald Philip
P:Maris/P.A.C.
a Italian-German co-production
S:Dean Reed, Nadja Tiller, Anita Ekberg, Fabio Testi

Der Mann Mit Der Torpedohaut (1969) color
(The Man With The Iron Skin)

The jealous wife of a Parisian antique dealer shoots the husband and then put the police on the trail of a spy ring.

D:Jean Delannoy
SP:Delannoy, Jean Cau, from a novel by Francis Ryck
P:Paramount-Orion/Copernic/Comacico/Mars
a French-Italian-German co-production
S:Stephan Audran, Klaus Kinski

Satan Der Rache (1969) color
(Satan Of Revenge)

An Englishman is released after ten years in jail and sets out to get revenge on the friend who stole his property and sent him to prison.

D:Antonio Margheritti SP:Margheritti and Giovanni Addessi
P:Peter Carsten/D.C. 7
a Italian-German co-production
S:Klaus Kinski, Peter Carsten, Marcella Michelangeli

Sieben Tage Frist (1969) color
(Seven Days Time)

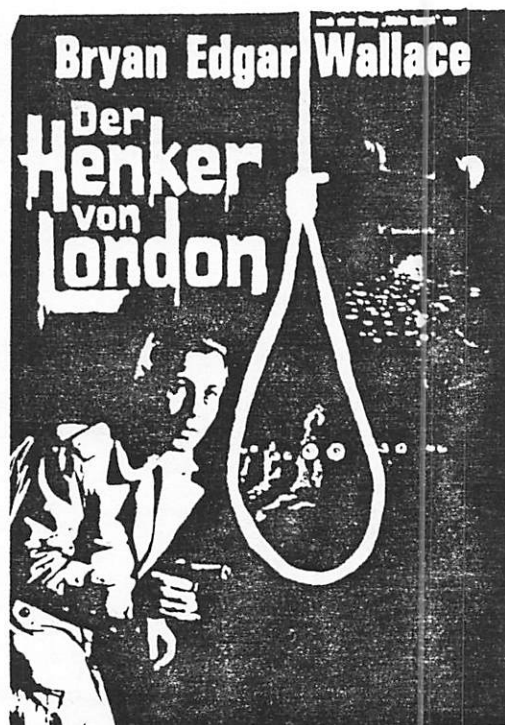
Detective story about the disappearance of a student from a boarding school.

D:Alfred Vohrer
SP:Ernst Flügel, from a novel by Paul Henricks
P:Roxy
S:Joachim Fuschsberger, Karin Hubner

Das Grauen Kam Aus Dem Nebel (1970) color
 (The Terror In The Fog)
 Detective story. A mentally ill young woman is kidnapped and eventually murdered.
 D:Duccio Tessari
 SP:Tessari, Biaggio Proietti, Artaur Brauner, from a novel by Giorgio Scerbanenco
 P:CCC/La Lombard/Films Cinematografica
 a Italian-German co-production
 S:Raf Vallone, Eva Renzi, Gabrielle Renzi, Frank Wolff

Das Madchen Von HongKong (1972) color
 (The Girl From Hong Kong)
 An aging rogue gets involved in a hunt for a drug smuggling gang when his friend is killed in Hong Kong.
 D:Jurgen Roland
 SP:Herbert Reinecker, from his novel
 P:Rapid/Jacques Willenetz
 a French-German co-production
 S:Joachim Fuchsberger, Lili Pacz

Das Ratsel Des Silbernen Halbmonds (1972) color
 (The Puzzle Of The Silver Half-Moon)
 (aka Sette Orchidee Macchiate Di Rosso)
 (aka Seven Orchids Stained In Red)
 (aka Seven Orchids For The Murderer)
 Detective story about a series of murders of young women. The killer leaves behind the clue of a small, silver half-moon.
 D:Umberto Lenzi
 SP:Lenzi, Paul Hengge, Roberto Gianviti
 P:Rialto/National
 a Italian-German co-production
 S:Antonio Sabato, Uschi Glass, Marisa Mell



DAS UNGEHEUER VON LONDON-CITY.
 Regie Erwin Zbonek. 1964.



ULTRA Q: The TV Series

By Kentaro Hayashi

ULTRA Q: The Beginning Of The ULTRA series

When I think about Japanese live-action TV shows in general, I have the feeling that the quantity of them far surpasses the quality.

From the 1960's through the 1970's, young Japanese males had grown up watching every conceivable kind of monster show on the television. These TV shows that featured enormous monsters built up a reputation as a Japanese pop culture phenomenon and involved various other forms of media which is today referred to as the "Monster Culture".

These young males are today now in their thirties and the mass media has given this generation a name, they call them the "Ultraman Generation" (they are also referred to as part of the "Ultra Age").

In the year 1964, in Tokyo, Japan, the 18th Olympic Games took place. Many people applauded the athletes and performers and called the Japanese gymnasts surprising performance and technique ultra C (which signified great strength and ability).

The title Ultra Q is a mixture of ultra C and the letter Q which is the initial letter of the word "Question". Literally, Ultra Q means Ultra Question.

Ultra Q was the first Tsuburaya Productions special effects TV series which was made for an absurd, high production cost in the early 1960's. Investing the techniques and essence of the special effects as used in monster movies since Godzilla (aka Gojira) (1954 Toho) and science fiction films such as The Human Vapor (1960 Toho). Ultra Q became the pioneer in Japanese sci-fi television.

It is almost certain that Ultra Q appeared under the great influence of (American TV shows like) "The Twilight Zone" and "The Outer Limits". The basic story line is that a monster of some sort should be placed in the center of each story was adopted and emphasized in the Ultra Q series and this concept resulted in the program's strong originality and lure for the young viewers.

Supervised by the late Eiji Tsuburaya (the guru of Japanese special effects movies), Tsuburaya thought that the monster is not only an object of horror (that should be feared) but (that it) should have it's own character. Tsuburaya also emphasized humor in many of Ultra Q's scripts. According to Tsuburaya's instructions, Ultra-monsters appeared on the TV screen with a strange realism. Many of the episodes featuring a monster scene were shot in real-time using a live-action method of a man dressed in a monster suit and not like the western stop-motion effects process like the kind created by the American Oscar-winner, Ray Harryhausen.

This method of filming special effects has been in use (in Japan), since Godzilla (aka Gojira) (1954 Toho) and was adapted for use in almost every Japanese live-action TV series. Using this form of special effects, the movements and the expressions would be more rich and more comical as needed for the episode and as a result of the molding and careful design of the suits and miniature sets, the Tsuburaya staff was known for working in great detail.

The monster has been both a freak and a nightmarish dream which we hold in awe and respect. In the early episodes of the Ultra series, from Ultra Q through Ultra Seven, the beauty of the designs of the creatures excelled over other similar TV shows. The Tsuburaya art staff was composed of avant-garde artists who were affected by 20th Century modern art—dadaism, surrealism, cubism, etc... and so they gave life to the Ultra-monsters with their artistic souls.

The composer Kunio Miyauchi composed the musical soundtracks to the show. He is also known as the composer of the score for The Human Vapor (1960 Toho). In the Ultra Q series, sometimes the score of Miyauchi's work for The Human Vapor can be heard playing alongside the new work he composed for the Ultra Q series in the same episode.

ULTRA Q (1966) B&W 30min. 28 episodes

Producer: TBS & Tsuburaya Productions

Supervisor: Eiji Tsuburaya

Director(s): H. Tsuburaya, T. Iijima, M. Nonagase, etc...

Writer(s): T. Kinjou, S. Uehara, etc...

"A break between our real world and the unknown world—this space is called the "unbalance zone"

The main actors featured in the Ultra Q series were Kenji Sahara (as Jun Manjome), Hiroko Sakurai (as Yuriko Edogawa), and Yasuhiko Saijo (as Ippei Togawa). These characters were portrayed as ordinary people. No super heroes ever appeared in the Ultra Q TV series. The Ultra Q cast encountered many and various mysterious happenings which included space monsters and invaders, but sometimes they either ran away or just stood in place with vacant expressions, a slave to their helplessness to deal with a situation that they could do nothing about.

Ultra Q was not always such a piece of didactic fiction. Some episodes also have ironic messages and some have absurd stories as well. Each episode has a complex and varied plot.

The following is a list which divides the episodes of Ultra Q into types:

Attacks By Monsters And Invaders From Space

<episodes: 1,3,5,7,10-14,16,18-21,24,27>

Giant Animals And Plants

<episodes: 2,4,6,8,9,23,26>

*Originally these were normal animals and are not to be blamed for their actions in these episodes. They were the victims of chemical experiments that were human made and the humans are out to kill them. In these episodes, the writers describe humans with much satirical wit.

Theme Of Metamorphosis

<episodes: 15,17,22>

Supernatural Phenomena And Absurd And Surreal Ideas

<episodes: 25,28>

*Episode 28, "Open Door" was televised only after the show was in reruns because of the hard to understand content of this episode.

A sampling of some Ultra Q episodes:

Episode #3: A Gift From Outer Space

A space capsule which was blasted off to the planet Mars a year previous returns to the Earth's atmosphere. When the capsule lands and is opened by the government it is found to contain some strange photographs and two golden balls.

Scientists cannot figure out what these balls were, are or signify. Eventually, they guess that they must be gifts from outer space. One of the balls expands when exposed to extreme heat and a giant slug monster (called) Namegon comes out from this ball. At the climax, Namegon falls into the sea and too easily dissolves into the salt water.

What on Earth did this gift convey to Human beings and what did it mean?

Episode #12: I Saw A Bird

It is midnight in a zoo, suddenly the animals begin to become unruly and in great fear they break from their cages and escape from the zoo. In the morning, a zoo guard is found suffering from some serious injury. All he says is

"I saw a bird", then he collapses and dies. At the same time that this unexplained phenomena is happening, an old western sailing boat washes ashore on a beach near a small fishing village. The ship seems to have been made in the 17th Century.

Is there a connection between these events?

Episode #15: Plan 1/8

The government carries out an 1/8 plan for solving the over population problem. People who volunteered for this plan are shrunk by 1/8 size by the use of a special machine and are sent to a miniature town which the government had built for a specific purpose. In the miniaturized town, people call themselves by a given number (just like in The Prisoner TV series). Yuriko accidentally got mixed up in the crowd flocking to apply for the miniaturization by accident and was shrunk and sent to the miniature town. Two of Yuriko's friends, Ipppei and Jun, look for her and the scenes of them walking around the miniature town like two giant monsters as tiny people run about trying to escape, is very humorous and an interesting idea.

Episode #17: Kanegon's Cocoon

Kaneo is a young man and one of his greatest pleasures is collecting money. He always turns his gaze to the ground in hopes of finding coins. One day he finds a strange cocoon. When he shakes it, he hears the sound of coins dropping into a ringing cash register. He imagines that he will be able to get more money and begins to shake it often and keeps this cocoon carefully hidden in his house. It is not long before the cocoon grows to a giant size and Kaneo is swallowed up by it. Changed into a monster (Kanegon), He cannot survive without eating money. Suddenly, Kanegon breaks into a bank and eats his fill!

As soon as the program began, the Ultra Q series became a hit and "Monster Fever" started all over Japan. This "Fever" expanded to the mass media and begot consumer marketing like monster picture trading cards, vinyl toys, models, etc...

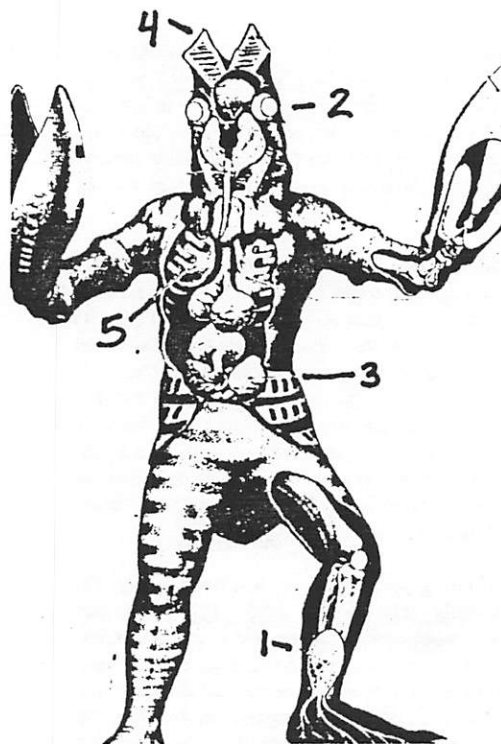
Children became wildly excited with this kind of stuff and Ultra Q had the enormous benefit of this publicity machine that eventually was named the "Monster Culture".

An example of the kind of tie-in products associated with the Ultra Q television show is this reprint of the Baltan figure. Baltan was a monster that appeared in episodes of Ultra Man and this unusual reprint details his anatomical chart.

Visual artists, Shoji Otomo (1936-1971) worked out the idea of bringing an imaginary monster and a anatomical chart close together to help to fully realize the artistic process of creating the creatures for these programs. Otomo's book (available in Japan), "An Illustrated Guide To Ultra Monsters", is the bible for the "Ultraman Generation".

Otomo's drawings showed Baltan's body as shown:

- 1) Colorless erosion liquid (this sticks to Baltan's footprint, when you touch it, your flesh is burned).
- 2) Eyes made of 5000 eye cells (Baltan can see a grain of rice 1000 yards away).
- 3) Bad smell organ (this just smells real bad, but has no lasting harmful effects).
- 4) Telepathic brain (using the art of body division (?), Baltan deceives his intended victims).
- 5) Baltan breath (a white beam of power).



ULTRA Q Episode Titles

1. Attack Gomez
2. Gorou and Goro
3. Gift From Outer Space
4. Mammoth Flower
5. Pegira Camel
6. Grow Up! Turtle
7. S.O.S. Mt. Fuji
8. Terror of Sweet Honey
9. Baron Spider
10. Superexpress goes to the West
11. Barunga
12. I Saw A Bird
13. Garadama
14. Tokyo Ice Age
15. Kanegon's Cocoon
16. Revenge of Garamon
17. Plan 1/8
18. Rainbow Egg
19. Challenge of the Year 2020
20. Ocean-Floor Primitive Man
21. M774
22. Metamorphosis
23. Anger in the Southern Ocean
24. Gora's Image
25. Devil Child
26. Burn My Glory Up!
27. Flight 206 Disappeared
28. Open The Door!

Monster

Gomez, Rilla
Goro
Namegon
Julan
Pegira
Gameron
Gorugos
Mongular
Tarantula
Artificial
Barunga
Ralugeus
Garamon
Pegira
Kanegon
Garamon

Pagos
Kemul
Ragon
Cicada Man

Sudarl
Gora

Peter
Todora



BLOOD TIMES VIDEO



EUROPEAN HORROR
CAT ON NINE TAILS (1974) (French)
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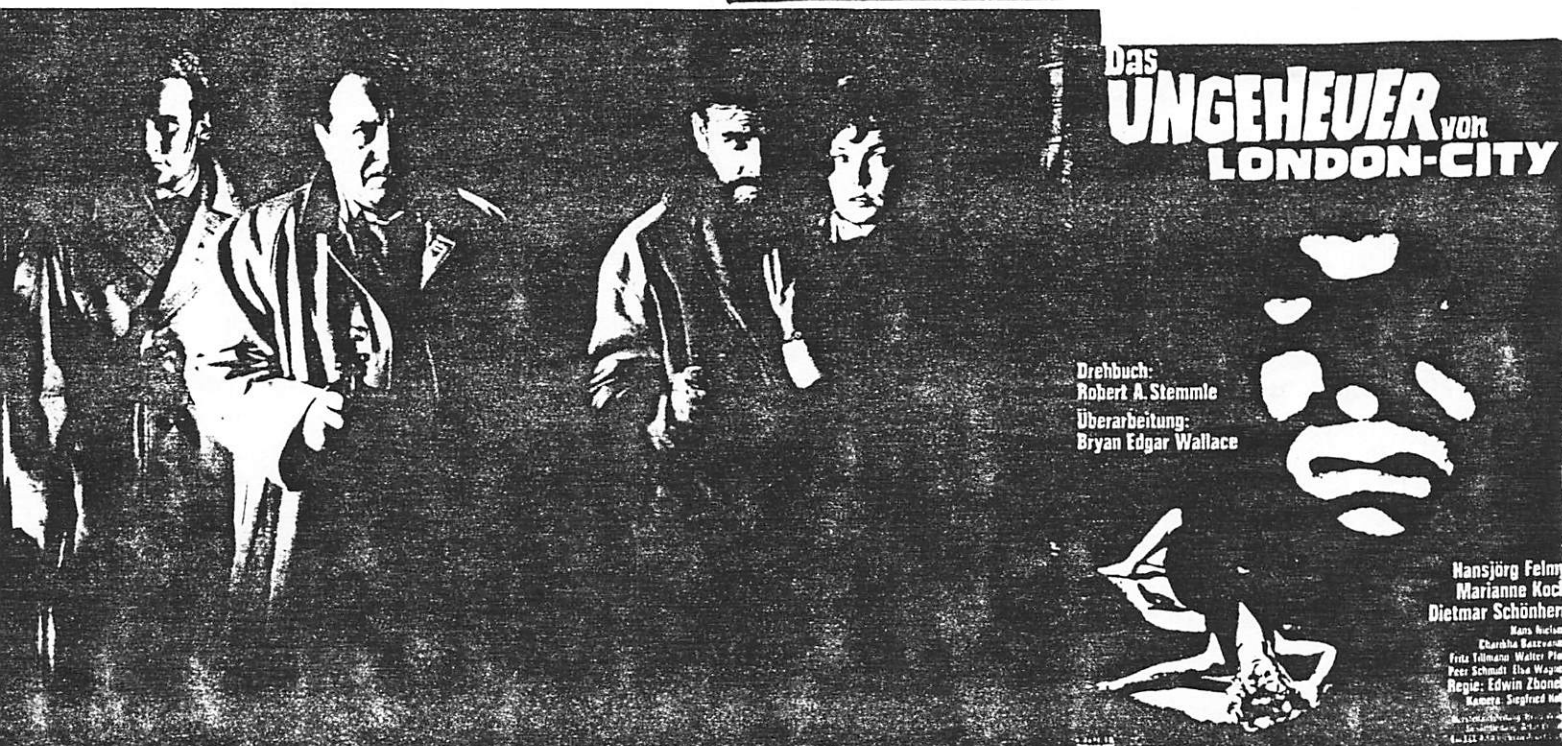
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Jean Rollin

An Interview by Robert Monell

JEAN ROLLIN INTERVIEW

by Robert Monell

In the early 1970's, French director, Jean Rollin, became a cult figure with a legendary series of erotic, innovative vampire films. But today, twenty years later, it is easy to underestimate the historical importance of "Le Viol du Vampire," "La Vampire Nue," "Frisson de Vampires," and "Requiem pour un Vampire." Fantasy genre fans will recognize that these four titles, produced between 1967 and 1971, were a stylistic influence on such later, more widely known, works as "Daughters of Darkness," "Vampyres," "The Hunger," and "The Lost Boys." Rollin pushed the envelope by deploying an unfettered eroticism and surreal imagery which gave his films a unique, totally stylized look, and a mood of sexual delirium.

Contemporary horror and fantasy fans in the United States are still mostly unaware of Rollin's vampire classics because of the scant distribution they, and his subsequent fantasy films, received here. The only Rollin titles which his American fans are likely to find at their local video store are a dubbed and heavily edited version of "Requiem pour un Vampire" (retitled "Dungeons of Terror"), and his 1980 quickie "Zombie Lake" (credited to J.A. Lazar). The lack of major theatrical and video distribution of Rollin's films in America have forced his U.S. fans to search out duped transfers available from mail order companies.

Rollin's own favorite of his films is "Levres de Sang" (1975), an elegant, dreamlike evocation of sexual dread which ends with the eerie image of the protagonist and his vampire sister floating out to sea in a coffin. "Levres de Sang" can easily take its place alongside Murnau's "Nosferatu" and Dreyer's "Vampyr" as one of the key works in the genre. Unfortunately, "Levres" was not a financial success and Rollin began a more commercial phase of his career with several gore ("Raisons de la Mort," "Morte Vivante") and hard/soft-core sex films ("Phantasmes," "Emmanuelle 6").

During the last decade, Rollin has worked in several different genres, directing thrillers ("Sidewalks of Bangkok," which Rollin says he tried to film in the style of a comic strip), and, using pseudonyms, comedies. At the time of this interview Rollin had just completed "Lost in New York," which he shot

in New York City for French TV. He was also involved in searching for production money which would allow him to begin two projects which would bring him back to the fantasy genre: an omnibus film which would dramatize ten (!) Edgar Allan Poe stories; and an adaptation of his own novel "Maiden of the Weird."

I would like to thank Daniel Lesoeur of Eurocine for his kind assistance in arranging this interview.

QUESTION: Do you prefer to work in the horror genre?

ROLLIN: No, I do many genres, including comedies. The only thing I insist on, and it's a must, is the chance to work on the script freely.

QUESTION: Did you have more creative freedom on your horror films than when you worked in the sex and comedy genres?

ROLLIN: I don't consider them to be horror films, I prefer the term "fantasy," they are part of the cinema of the fantastic. I just like to work on interesting films; there are no bad genres, only bad films. I had the most freedom on "Levres."

QUESTION: What were your budgets for the four vampire films which launched your career—"Le Viol du Vampire," "Frisson," etc.

ROLLIN: My early vampire films cost about \$80,000 for each. It was a long time ago. But, even a long time ago, it was a very, very low budget. Each was shot on a three week schedule.

QUESTION: Were these films commercially successful?

ROLLIN: They found a good audience in Belgium and England; later, in Germany and Italy.

QUESTION: Do you know why more of your films haven't been picked up for theatrical or videocassette distribution in America?

ROLLIN: I have no control over that. I am looking for American videos of my films. Somebody told me that a few are available in pirate versions, but I don't know.

QUESTION: Which of your films have been the most financially successful?

ROLLIN: "Raisons de la Mort" and "Trottoirs de Bangkok."

QUESTION: Some confusion exists about your exact involvement in "Zombie Lake." Did you direct this film?

ROLLIN: I was required by the producers just the first day of shooting, because the director, Jesus Franco, was not there. It's not really a film of mine. I didn't work on the script.

QUESTION: Where did you find those atmospheric castle locations for "Frisson de Vampires" and "Requiem Pour un Vampire"?

ROLLIN: There are many castles in France. The one in "Frisson" is a medieval dungeon in a little village named Septmont. For "Requiem" we used two or three different castles.

QUESTION: Some of your films contain scenes of very explicit sex, and violence. Have you ever had any problems with censorship?

ROLLIN: The French censors forced me to cut a scene from my first film, "Le Viol du Vampire." It was the scene where the queen of the vampires says "ite missa est" over the coffin with the bride inside. In "Raisons de la Morte" I had to cut a man splitting a head open with an axe. I made these cuts right before the censor's screening, but I put the shots back in later.

QUESTION: Some critics have noted that certain images in your vampire films resemble the paintings of Max Ernst, Rene Magritte and other surrealist painters.

ROLLIN: Yes, I am a kind of surrealist. I used Magritte's paintings as inspiration for some shots in "Frisson." I also used a text by [surrealist writer] Andre Breton on the soundtrack at the end of "Levres de Sang," but I later decided to remove it.

QUESTION: Brigitte Lahaie was excellent in "Fascination" and "La Nuit des Traquees." Did you enjoy working with her?

ROLLIN: Brigitte is a very old friend of mine. I put her in her first real film, "Raisons de la Morte." I like working with her because she is, for me, very strange, like a speaking statue. She is, in a certain way, a surrealist presence. She can just stand there in front of the camera, doing nothing, and she is fascinating. That's why I named one of my films with her "Fascination."

QUESTION: Have there been any contemporary fantasy films which you have particularly admired?

ROLLIN: I liked George Romero's "Night of the Living Dead," and, especially, his "Martin." I also liked Alan Parker's "Angel Heart." But I love the old black and white fantasy films like "The Mask of Fu Manchu" and the work of Tod Browning. Do you know of a very strange 60's Mexican picture named "Les Proies du Vampire" by Fernando Mendez? In my remembrance, it's one of the best vampire films ever.

QUESTION: The music in your vampire films is very unusual. Did you work closely with the composers?

ROLLIN: Yes, I like to work with the composer. Music doesn't have to be just an illustration of what you see on the screen. I believe that film music should create a mood, something deeper than just an effect. Music should not be just a noise among other noises.

QUESTION: Who is going to produce your current Poe project?

ROLLIN: I am trying to do something with an American producer, somebody like Roger Corman, but not him. I want to film the Poe stories in my way, but with that strange kind of morbidity that he had. I've written a synopsis of ten of his tales. The producers have translated it into English and are now proposing it to a partner. But nowadays it's almost impossible to get financing. We're hoping to set up a co-production with TV or with other countries. We shall see!

QUESTION: Would you like to work with bigger budgets in the future?

ROLLIN: I don't know, I've never had a big budget! But smaller is fine for me, it's stimulating...!

END



Gazing Far Eastward: Asian Films by Jeff Segal

GAZING FAR EASTWARD by Jeff Segal

The most sought after underground videos are currently Japanese and Chinese in origin. Their previous obscurity encouraged a "must see" attitude among fans.

Thanks to video, many appreciative readers already cut their teeth on hundreds of American and Old World obscurities. Films deemed lost for decades routinely turn up on cassette. While small screen presentation lacks the overwhelming spectacle of theater, it is unlikely that our movie houses will ever match the international variety of cassettes.

Asian videos come in a conflicting selection of formats. This phenomena already beset commercial obscurities such as Jorge Grau's *NO PROFANER EL SUEÑO DE LOS MUERTOS* (1974). The legendary Spanish film may be found under different titles [as *BREAKFAST AT THE MANCHESTER MORGUE* and *LET SLEEPING CORPSES LIE* -ed.], languages and formats (video and laserdisc). Its censored USA drive-in version, *DON'T OPEN THE WINDOW*, is also probably obtainable.

The pattern holds true for Far Eastern films. Even the most popular Hong Kong movies show up in alternative formats. Depending upon its source, John Woo's famous *THE KILLER* (1989) may be found with or without English subtitles, dubbed in Cantonese or Mandarin dialects. Some rare editions sport English dialogue. Length and presentation also changes, depending on the version seen; *THE KILLER* can be letterboxed or panned and scanned. Collectors of Far Eastern productions will find their hobby fraught with challenges and headaches.

My genuine appreciation of Asian cinema began after a summer 1990 viewing of *ONIBABA* (1964) and *A BETTER TOMORROW 2* (1987). The two movies instantly revoked preconceived reservations I had over seeing any more Far Eastern films.

An inventory of previously seen productions had not prepared me for the aforementioned movies. I had already outgrown available Asian efforts, from Nipponese giant monster "kaijuciga" to their classic television animation. One needs to be in the proper frame of mind to appreciate dubbed Chinese kungfu films, which is probably why I did not respect these traditional actioners.

I had also sampled Asian horror. Masaki Kobayashi's 1964 *KWAIDAN* anthology contained four artfully filmed Japanese ghost tales. *KWAIDAN* blunted some of its chills through colorful over-stylization. Less aesthetic fear erupted in *BLACK MAGIC TERROR* (released in American label video in 1985) and Ho Menga's cult classic, *REVENGE OF THE ZOMBIES* (aka *BLACK MAGIC 2*, 1982). Each Hong Kong financed movie brewed together imaginative sorcery, sexual mayhem and gore. But their over-the-top plots, amphetamine editing and careless pacing was a problem. Though amusing diversions, these Chinese films lacked the calculated horror which streamlined my favorite Western hemisphere movies.

Transferred to video letterboxed in order to preserve its original black and white scope photography, *ONIBABA* was a stark

contrast. Kaneto Shindo's film retold medieval legend through the experiences of samurai-bashing peasant women. During the pivotal sequence, the eldest peasant (Nobuko Otowa) prides a demon mask off her latest victim. The corpse's face is disfigured with a mysterious rot. The woman dares to utilize the mask...with horrific results.

ONIBABA's no nonsense storytelling is enhanced by authentic period detail, gruesome realism and an uncomfortably eerie atmosphere. The film is set within a hazardous ocean of reeds. The tall marsh plants crackle like wind blown bones. Even *ONIBABA*'s supernatural elements were not softened by their ambiguity; the paranormal is only an extension of ruthless 16th century Japan.

ONIBABA teased me with the possibilities of Nipponese cinema. I sought and eventually found *KURONEKO* (1968), Shindo's overtly supernatural companion piece. Both films included the cold blooded action and carefully laid out photography (the slow camerawork suggests a contemplative look at humankind and nature) characteristic to Japanese movies. Though I branched out beyond horror films into their actioners, comedies and dramas, Japan's frightfests continued to be potent viewing. Films such as *MOJU* (aka *THE BLIND BEAST*, 1969; a demented, sightless sculptor kidnaps a beautiful model), *JIGOKU* (aka *INFERNO*, 1981; the entire cast wind up in a Hell that is as frighteningly impressive as any realm depicted in western hemisphere cinema), and the relatively recent *SHIRYO NO WANA* (aka *THE SPIRIT TRAP*; a hooded Giallo style killer butchers isolated civilians in a sadistic cat and mouse game) will command the attention of even jaded fans. And these films are only the tip of the bloody iceberg.

The *Blood Times* #16/17 reviewed *A BETTER TOMORROW 2* slammed through my VCR only months after *ONIBABA*. Korean born director John Woo and high profile producer Tsui Hark expanded the cops and counterfeiter melodrama of their Hong Kong box office smash, *A BETTER TOMORROW* (1986). *PART 2* climaxed its soap operatics with a prolonged bloodbath which recalled the fury in Sam Peckinpah's *THE WILD BUNCH* (1969). I immediately replayed the climatic battle before my disbelieving eyes, wincing as criminals were exploded, shot or carved into oozing carcasses. This avalanche of violence has become Woo's trademark; fans around the world now know the director for his stylized excesses. He dwarfed *A BETTER TOMORROW 2*'s carnage with *THE KILLER*, *BULLET IN THE HEAD* (1990; a numbing drama focusing on three Chinese friends trapped in the Vietnam war) and *HARDBOILED* (1992; Woo's favorite actor, Chow Yun Fat, rampages through the Triads in a cop role Dirty Harry fans will love).

Panned by some critics (and Woo himself), *A BETTER TOMORROW 2* is actually worthy viewing. It fleshes out a complicated cast of characters beyond the comicbook sketches most thrillers populate their running times with. Sentiment, honor and loyalty are stirred into a relentless scenario that merges Hollywood "Golden Age" gangster cinema, European western energy, and Peckinpah style antics. *ABT 2* even leavened some of its plotting with humor and compassion. The movie's appearance impressed me; I was taken aback by the

thriller's intelligently edited, glossy look. The scoring also enhances A BETTER TOMORROW 2's appeal, adding considerable weight (as well as recognizable musical themes which appear in all three ABT films) to the wistful protagonists.

This movie opened the gates to a steady stream of Asian cinema. My newfound respect for Hong Kong film craftsmen has not yet been dulled by dozens of Chinese thrillers (woman warrior, buddy, gambling, kungfu comedies, war epics), fantasies (both period piece and modern era), comedies, dramas, horror-thrillers and even the odd science fiction selection (Tsui Hark produced and co-starred in the impressive I LOVE MARIA/ROBOFORCE; the grisly HK/Japanese collaboration, STORY OF RICKY, also packs a vicious futuristic punch). At their best, Chinese films maintain a global attraction. Not only will these movies coax formerly close minded viewers into appreciating distant cultures, but they may encourage serious study of pre-1980 Hong Kong cinema.

Japanese and Chinese films have cut through my reservations over untranslated or poorly subtitled productions. The variety of movies I would like to see has broadened. I recently savored the wholesale chaos of GODZILLA VS. KING GHIDORAH (1991), a successful stew of childhood nostalgia, speculative fiction (some of it quite thought provoking) and metropolis-mashing-monsters. From Hong Kong comes Tsui Hark's ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA (1991). Though its subject matter and setting differ little from traditional kungfu films, ONCE UPON A TIME... is powered by Tsui's state of the art direction and usual political themes. For me, Asian cinema has finally come full circle - childhood favorites or English dubbed oddities, my first taste of the Far East is now back. I have changed and the movies I watch have similarly changed. But the bond between viewer and media remains as strong as it always had been.

Asian cinema will only complement the more familiar American and European product flooding international fandom. Hopefully, this time we will pay attention. Entertaining films should never go out of fashion, regardless of current trends. It is up to the reader to preserve these movies until they are permitted to find lasting support in the west.

Editorial

Our many thanks to those subscribers who have waited the long months in between issues for the epic one you're holding in your hands right now. Patience, never being a virtue that I, myself can claim a preference for, is something that many of you readers have had to endure while waiting for Vol. 2 No. 2. Among the many things that delayed this issue was a move to two separate locations, many personal upheavals in the lives of all involved in the publishing and editorial office and the disappointing delay of a planned spectacular filmography of the Sword & Sandal films of the 1960s. While the aforementioned filmography will be published in the near future, I feel that what has replaced it is even better and is probably one of the best things that I have ever written in the genre field, ever. I have always enjoyed a fondness for the German Edgar Wallace films of the 1960s and while preparing that filmography (that I actually began preparation on a year or so ago) I began to find out many interesting things about the writer that I felt must be told in print. So, here's the result of a long and hard nine months of research and yes, it is like giving birth when one finally unleashes upon the public something that contains the blood, sweat & tears of hours and hours of toiling in a dark, under-lit apartment going through German-language books and fanzines and reading pulp fiction until I needed new glasses. Enough about the featured article...I would like to welcome aboard our new staff of writers...

Robert Monell who interviews the elusive French film director Jean Rollin and who also contributes an interesting appreciation of Jess Franco's "Love Letters Of a Portuguese Nun".

Kentaro Hayashi, BT's Japan correspondent weighs in with a superb remembrance on the Japanese television series of the 1960s "Ultra Q".

Jeff Segal, a writer whose name has appeared in many film journals during the past year or so makes his BT debut with two exciting pieces on Asian Film. Both "Defying Expectations" and "Gazing Far Eastward" skirt the cutting edge of fanzine journalism and take it to a new level of awareness and enjoyment.

Thanks to John Donaldson for his assistance.

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-LP

Peter van Eyck Klaus Kinski
Sabine Bethmann Hans Nielsen
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Love Letters Of A Portuguese Nun-
An intimate look at Jess Franco's obscure work
by Robert Monell

LOVE LETTERS OF A PORTUGUESE NUN: A FRANCO FAIRY TALE

by Robert Monell

Jess Franco has reportedly stated that he considers *LOVE LETTERS OF A PORTUGUESE NUN* his best film. Of course, every Franco fan has their own personal favorite among the Spanish sleazemaster's 150-odd titles. Some prefer the obsessively literary *SUCCUBUS/NECRONOMICON*, while others are partial to the jazz-infested delirium of *VENUS IN FURS*. But both of those titles come from one of Franco's richest periods, the late 1960's. *LOVE LETTERS* was one of several films Franco directed in 1976—a hectic schedule for most directors—but representing a temporary slowdown for Franco who, during the mid-70's, was knocking off five or six features a year!

Franco's other two 1976 titles of note, *JACK THE RIPPER* and *DORIANA GRAY*, are representative of the variations he was playing on hard-core gore/exploitation during this period—*RIPPER* tilting toward the gore category, while *DORIANA* is a series of hard-core sex sequences with horror undertones. Other 70's Francos (*LORNA, THE EXORCIST; THE SWALLOWERS; EXORCISMO*) also mix varying degrees of sex, gore and horror. One element most of these films share is the presence of Lina Romay, who had replaced Janine Reynaud and Maria Rohm as Franco's actress of choice.

Two of the initially striking aspects of *LOVE LETTERS* are the absence of Romay and the casting of the virginal Susan Hemingway in the role of the beleaguered Portuguese nun.

Romay's disturbing sensuality had given many Franco titles of this period a mood of barely contained depravity. But the tone of *LOVE LETTERS*, keyed by Hemingway's fresh-faced innocence, is a startling change of pace. The film has a lyrical, fairy tale quality which Franco could only achieve in isolated sequences of such films as *SUCCUBUS* and *VENUS IN FURS*. Franco's other films which deal with witchcraft during the Inquisition (*THE BLOODY JUDGE, THE DEMONS*) are inferior imitations of *THE CONQUEROR WORM* and *THE DEVILS*, both controversial hits of the day. *THE DEMONS* is a particularly shoddy slice of sleaze, consisting mostly of extended witch-torture/sex scenes which are all filmed with an unrelenting and unimaginative reliance on zoom shots which end on gigantic close-ups of writhing flesh. Of course, Franco had become infamous for his slapdash-zoom/rack focus style by the mid seventies. But the elegant, restrained cinematography of *LOVE LETTERS* lends the film a mythical quality quite unlike most of Franco's other work.

The plot of *LOVE LETTERS* fuses elements of *ROSEMARY'S BABY* and *THE DEVILS*...A naive and beautiful teenage girl (Hemingway) is forced to enter a convent by a corrupt priest (William Berger), who has bribed her mother. The priest, Father Vincent, has sexual designs on Marie. But he involves her in a much more sinister plan once they reach the convent. The Mother Superior and all the novices turn out to be devil worshippers and Father Vincent has chosen Marie to give birth to Satan's child. When Marie resists this plan, she is turned over to the Inquisition and tortured. She is rescued from the stake by the direct intervention of Prince Emmanuel of Portugal, an enlightened knight-in-shining-armor who frowns upon the ways

of the Inquisition. Father Vincent and the Mother Superior are exposed and arrested.

Like Michael Reeves with *THE CONQUEROR WORM*, Franco manages to take familiar material and transform it through subtle camera-work and an ironic use of landscape and music. The film opens with lush images of Marie and her lover romping in an Edenic forest. But there is a serpent in this Eden, the sexually frustrated Father Vincent, who watches the lovers from behind a tree. After confronting and chastising the youths, the Priest marches Marie home as the credits, accompanied by the Vivaldi-esque score, appear. All the elements here—the ingenious Hemingway, the camera prowling through the greenery, the neo-Baroque music, the ascetic presence of Berger—are skillfully blended to immediately cast the fairy-tale mood which Franco sustains until the final God's eye view of the villains surrounded by the Inquisitor's soldiers.

LOVE LETTERS was a Swiss-German co-production shot on location in Portugal, allowing Franco to fully exploit that country's unique castles and cathedrals for 17th Century versimilitude. The convent, with its many religious murals and archways, is both an architectural wonder and an ironic backdrop to the Satanic orgies staged within its walls. Berger's restrained performance as the perverted Father Vincent provides a welcome relief from the way this kind of character is usually played in similar films (Michael Gothard's raving fanatic in *THE DEVILS* is a typical example).

Franco's camera takes in these gorgeous locations and brutal events from an almost contemplative distance, rather than the steady barrage of close-ups and zooms he usually relies on. There is an intelligence and perspective at work behind the camera which is rare in this particular sub-genre. *LOVE LETTERS OF A PORTUGUESE NUN* may not be Franco's best film, but it is one of his most thoughtfully crafted works. It shows what this most prolific of all exploitation directors is capable of when he is given a good script, competent actors, and an adequate budget. Although the film contains many kinky-sex scenes and several graphic torture sequences, it cannot be classified as either a sex film (like *DORIANA GRAY*) or a horror film (like *JACK THE RIPPER*); it is, rather, a fairy tale for adults.



Defying Expectations: Asian Action Films

by Jeff Segal

ASIAN ACTION - DEFYING EXPECTATIONS

Choreographed by Jeff Segal

Far Eastern film industries continue to grind out action cinema every year. Along with Japanese animation and Chinese ghost stories, Asian thrillers increasingly invite Western world attention.

Globally, actioners have the potential to shatter box office records. Film makers are wise to inject thrills into their own work, regardless of genre; comedies, dramas and fantastic films may benefit from crowd pleasing kinetic setpieces.

Asian actioners have already impacted on our consciousness. Japanese product includes sword operas, popularized by Akira Kurosawa classics and Kenji Misumi's "BabyCart" films (based on the internationally acclaimed LoneWolf and Cub comicbook manga). Chinese martial art movies made cult stars out of Bruce Lee, actor/director Lau-Kar Leung (alias Liu-Chia Li-Ang - LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF CHINA, TIGER ON BEAT, OPERATION SCORPIO) and Jackie Chan, to name but a few.

Until recent years, these films were restricted to Asian or scattered Caucasian fans. But the international popularity of Japanese cartoons, director/producer/performer Tsui Hark and John Woo has re-directed global attention far Eastward. Frantically paced Asian actioners compare with the cream of America's and Europe's crop. Despite narrative shortcomings, language barriers, lower budgeting and exotic themes, these movies often shame their Hollywood rivals; most domestically released period action and modern thrillers seem tame by comparison.

The samurai personify Japanese history and movies for many westerners. They received various cinematic incarnations.

Hawkish Ichikawa Raizo portrayed tormented swordsman, Nemuri Kyoshiro, throughout the Son of the Black Mass series. After Ichikawa died in 1969, another actor grappled with the role. Progeny of Nipponese woman and Portuguese Satanist, Nemuri wandered across Japan. Fortunately for film fans, he never achieved peace of mind.

Ichikawa's final Black Mass performance erupted in NEMURI KYOCHIRO AKU JO GARI (aka CASTLE MENAGERIE, 1969). The film complemented its already exotic "chambara" (or sword opera) content with constant surrealism; judging from this movie, the entire saga of Nemuri Kyoshiro hosts bizarre elements.

Between frequent duels and assassination attempts that he bloodily foils, Nemuri struggles against perverted aristocracy. Renegade Christians, who were persecuted by the 17th century Japanese government, are also worked into the plot. Though untranslated, the letterboxed visuals of NEMURI KYOSHIRO AKU JO GARI rivet attention. For instance, the opening duel involving Nemuri (whose face is unseen at this point - the better to stun familiar viewers with his illness withered features?) has the wanderer stroke a sword in slow motion, beginning the "Full Moon Cut" for which he is famous. Kyoshiro slices down the other man in a blur of motion. After surviving subterfuge and mounting violence, Nemuri is enveloped by a nightmare where animal headed warriors cross over into the "real world" (similar

figures haunted a feverish Ito Ogami in LONEWOLF AND CUB issue 2). The superbly photographed NEMURI KYOSHIRO AKU JO GARI illustrated a darker aspect of the famed samurai - psychological chaos masked beneath discipline and martial skills.

Amazingly, GOYOKI 2 surpassed the aforementioned film in brutality. The creation of actor/director Shintaro Katsu (brother to Tomisaburo Wakayama, the star of the BABYCART feature movies; he played a Yakuza boss in Ridley Scott's 1989 BLACK RAIN), the GOYOKI trilogy focused on samurai-era law enforcer, Hanzo the Blade. Unlike Zato Ichi, the blind master swordsman Shintaro popularized, Hanzo evidences few heroic traits; he is unconcerned about guilt and innocence when administering justice via weaponry or a callous hardened wang (Hanzo rapes the truth out of female suspects). The officer's home reflects his feral sensibilities. The residence is a labyrinthine structure laden with ninja killing death traps (a blood spurting GOYOKI 2 highlight). His exercise room resembles a torture chamber; Hanzo strengthens muscles, mind and "member" in this place. The man works out with the zeal of a masochist.

Assisted by a comic relief duo, Razor Hanzo crashes through killer abortionists, a slave trading convent and homicidal bandits before GOYOKI 2's running time is up. The direction of the movie is frenzied, crowding aberrant sex and violence together into an unwholesome confection. Far more disturbing than the latest ZATO ICHI (1989, which Katsu directed and starred in; it does offer several incredibly visceral, state of the art swordfights), GOYOKI 2 clobbers viewers inspite of its untranslated state. Once again, Asian cinema defied the expectation of its global audience.

A return to form, GEKI TOTSU (aka SHOGUN'S SHADOWS, 1988) delivers its feudal era Japanese thrills with energy and big budget spectacle. Several cunning ronin, led by rugged Ogata Ken, escort a politically sensitive child to safety. They accomplish their mission only after slaying hundreds of the enemy. Each ronin perishes through limb rending self-sacrifice.

The epic, action filled GEKI TOTSU compares with generously budgeted Hollywood, European and Chinese productions. This chambara overcomes language and cultural barriers; despite exotic Japanese themes, GEKI TOTSU is powered by a familiar plot. Western hemisphere movies including EXODUS (1960), THE GUNS OF NAVARONE (1961), THE OUTLAW JOSEY WALES (1976), THE ROAD WARRIOR (1982), and both TERMINATOR films blast their protagonists through a gauntlet of obstacles. Sometimes the characters find salvation. In many instances, most of the people meet oblivion. This drama fuels GEKI TOTSU. The heroism of the ronin allows them to, at least spiritually, transcend their extinction.

Fans will rejoice over GEKI TOTSU's hard hitting battles and chases. The unrelenting violence explodes minutes into the film with an arrow through a maid's throat. Stylized human carnage intermixed with rampant horse abuse soon overwhelms the plot. The action in GEKI TOTSU was choreographed by chambara's ominous villain, film and television star Sonny Chiba (THE

STREET FIGHTER, 1974). This period piece resurrects a traditional Japanese genre for today's jaded audience.

On the other hand, *WILD PUSSYCAT* is a modern Nippon thriller anchored in contemporary Japan. Unlike samurai films, it is cramped into a decadent metropolis. The aforementioned chambers were set in rural or small town locations. In *WILD PUSSYCAT*, a shapely bisexual woman doctor and her associates run afoul of gangsters.

The thriller's night scenes embrace the shadowy realm of "noir". Heavily armed thugs plot murder and rape. Influential slimeballs puppeteer ordinary citizens. Japanese counterculture, including transvestites and homosexuals, are invited into the doctor's clinic. The protagonists have only themselves to turn to for protection. Japan's famed police are useless.

Though that nation's tight gun laws restricted the use of even on-set stunt weaponry, the doctor and her comrades convincingly use model firearms to shoot their opponents apart in a warehouse. Intelligent editing and exploding blood squibs (as well as stuntwork) lend this fight a brutal conviction. Supplementing the violence are borderline softcore love scenes, several of which were so explicit that they were optically censored. At least *WILD PUSSYCAT* is subtitled.

With this adult blend of blood and sex, the Japanese once again prove that they could make thrillers as morally suspect as their confrontational fantastic films (ie - *DAYDREAM*, *MOJU*, *ENTRAILS OF A VIRGIN*, *TEISUO*, etc). Modern Nippon actioners such as *WILD PUSSYCAT* and *SASORI* (an untranslated movie combining death wish, woman-in-prison and revenge-from-beyond-the-grave themes) are among the most disturbing in the world.

In spite of their often striking style and content, it was not the relatively obscure Japanese actioners which dragged out attention back to Asia. Instead, the rising quality of Hong Kong cinema sparked serious western world criticism. As with Japanese films, Chinese manufactured product mirror Far Eastern heritage and unique traditions. But HK actioners also summarize global aesthetics; the East/West cultural bonding of the Crown Colony render many Chinese flicks accessible to even mainstream North American audiences. In Addition, the sometimes vestigial English subtitles most Hong Kong movies are branded with allow unilingual viewers to better appreciate each production's virtues and failings.

Even viewers hardened against Hong Kong "B" movies by a glutted market will be impressed with *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME* (1988). The film is a scathing tour through a woman's prison.

Incarcerated after she took the rap for her creepy boyfriend, the tiny Yuk must bond with two other inmates in order to survive. One brooding friend is Winnie (Carrie Ng, of *SEX AND ZEN* and the Tsui Hark produced *GUNMEN*), an ex-prostitute jailed for blasting her undercover cop/lover's murderers to death. The trio struggle against corrupt guards, bullying inmates and the daily grind of a gray walled prison existence. Only Winnie, locked in isolation, survives.

Unlike Wong Ching's semi-humorous, semi-supernatural *JAILHOUSE EROS* (1989) and many other woman-in-prison films, *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME* does not exploit

its feminine protagonists. Under guidance of Raymond Leung (who is credited as co-director on some prints of the famous Chinese *ANGEL*, 1987) and his crew, the three friends are never compromised by their potentially stereotypical roles; the loyalty Yuk shares with her comrades resists every attempt, save death, to shatter it. *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME* is as much an ode to this friendship as it is an attack on the outside world for isolating these women in prison.

The extreme stylization pervading *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME* does not dull the film's brutal edge. Rather ambiguously, Leung's thriller evolves into a beautiful looking movie about very ugly events. Via monochrome flashback, the opening few minutes retell Yuk's incarceration. Color only saturates the screen after she enters the hellish Oz of prison. Swift camerawork, cunningly edited scenes and additional subjective flashbacks contribute to the film's glossy pacing. The beatings, knifings and homicide are not softened by this artiness, either. For instance, Yuk is frequently battered hard enough to bounce her bleeding off walls. We dive into Winnie's memories as she commits mass murder; this mobster-killing-scipiece is framed through the woman's feverish eyes, with handheld camerawork and bullet hit bodies giving the audience a taste of what it might be like to destroy someone hated. Yuk's other friend is pregnant and goes into labor during a prison riot. Unfortunately, a frenzied woman convict pounds the spasming lady's belly. The friend dies horribly, giving birth to a pool of blood. A subtle soundtrack underscores the bleakness of *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME*.

Willowy bodied, delicately featured Moon Lee (alias Li Saifeng) appeared in lighthearted entertainment such as Tsui Hark's *ZU: WARRIORS FROM MAGIC MOUNTAIN* (1983) and *MR. VAMPIRE* (1986). She also put her martial arts skills to use in fighting female flicks; including the famed *ANGEL* trilogy, the unconnected *KILLER ANGELS* (1989) and the large budgeted *BURY ME HIGH* (aka *THE CONQUEROR*, 1991). One of Moon's strongest dramatic roles was delivered in the redundantly titled *FATAL TERMINATION* (1989). Director Andrew Kam brought to this thriller the same sleek cruelty he previously contributed to the well regarded Tsui Hark produced cop caper, *THE BIG HEAT* (1988).

Though lousy subtitling does injustice to *FATAL TERMINATION*'s convoluted plot, the basic storyline will still chainwhip attentive fans. Moon is an undercover officer's wife. When he (Ray Lui) is drawn too deeply into an investigation on arms smugglers, the man's family and friends are pinched between suspicious police and child killing criminals.

The emotional trauma of *FATAL TERMINATION* is as cathartic as its fearsome firearm and martial art duels. As Moon's family is destroyed over the course of this movie, the thriller equals *THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME* in shock value. Her grief is painful to sit through. During a funeral for Moon's murdered brother, a hardboiled police officer (Simon Yam, who scored big with his Eurasian hitman role in John Woo's *BULLET IN THE HEAD*, 1990) taunts the grieving family. The intense yellfest climaxes when Moon and Ray Lui force the police out of the church. But worse tragedy awaits the couple.

Andrew Kam's controlled direction counterpoints every emotional outburst with frightening action. The violence is hardly less gory than *THE BIG HEAT*. By *FATAL*

TERMINATION's closing credits, we've been pummeled with several shootouts, edge of the seat automobile gunbattles, desperate kungfu (between Moon and the lowlives threatening her daughter), lethal child abuse, two separate impalements through the spine, and helicopter sniping. The film's most stunning scene must be a human timebomb whose meaty full body explosion showers our heroes with red ichor. Even jaded action movie fans may be too numb at this point to appreciate the punishment finally dealt to every villain.

Although THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME and FATAL TERMINATION are relatively unknown to some Asian action movie buffs, the filmography of John Woo is not so obscure. His legendary epic, THE KILLER (1989), aired on cable television in a 110 minute version. It is slated for domestic videocassette release. In fact, Hollywood deemed THE KILLER commercial enough for an English language remake. Woo's latest Chinese film is HARDBOILED (1992).

In it, versatile superstar Chow Yun Fat debuts as a Woo movie law enforcer. The Dirty Harry style officer is pit against distinctly rotten gangsters (Woo's previous urban Triad films featured antiheroic leads). His crusade is complicated by a mole (Tony Leung) sunk into the underworld; Chow's own superiors set this plan into motion. The agent, however, is tormented over crimes he commits to win mobster trust. Chow eventually teams with the undercover nian to foreclose the hostile Triad gang. The apocalyptic grand finale blows up in a hospital used by the thugs as a front for arms smuggling.

Bulking over 120 minutes, HARDBOILED delivers more than enough firepower. Its final conflict, whose triple digit bodycount is cluttered with hospital residents, cops and every last gangster, may be too intense for some audiences to stomach. HARDBOILED's action effortlessly matches that of THE KILLER and BULLET IN THE HEAD. Ironically, Woo tones down his usual overkill emotion; save for Tony Leung's character, the cast of HARDBOILED offer restrained performances...except when they are killing something. The interplay between Chow, his police girlfriend (Teresa Mo) and Leung contrasts with THE KILLER's sentimental operatics. In that earlier film, Chow Yun Fat's regretful hitman, the singer he accidentally blinded (Sally Yeh), and tough cop Danny Lee forge an unbreakable, selfless relationship. However, the script of HARDBOILED demanded that its three protagonists not be on the same emotional wavelength. They must struggle through personal shortcomings to deal with one another; Chow's relationship with his girl is fraught with uncertainty and he has difficulty keeping Leung from being devoured by self guilt. Woo may have had an eye on the western hemisphere action movie market when crafting HARDBOILED. Occidental viewers are accustomed to restrained thriller performances.

With his newest movie, Woo has once again styled an impressive epic. Some critics will judge HARDBOILED an improvement over the auteur's previous work. The editing (especially in the use of music and alternating camera angles), glowing virile photography and pace are fully realized. HARDBOILED rivals other notable action movies, from GEKI TOTSU, the DIE HARD films, INDIANA JONES AND THE LOST CRUSADE (1989) to the mammoth TERMINATOR 2: JUDGEMENT DAY (1991). The carnage of HARDBOILED is divided between four major battles and several smaller confrontations. During the first hour, rogue cop Chow bombs his prey before roping down through a warehouse roof to finish the job. Arnold

Schwarzenegger and company will be hardpressed to shame this scene (fragments of the warehouse conflict are featured in HARDBOILED's trailer, including Chow shotgunning armed motorcyclists like skeet). Less a gunbattle than full scale urban warfare, the entire hospital shootout sweeps across the thriller's final half hour. Though its structure conforms to earlier Woo filmed violence, (right down to the final standoff, an homage to THE KILLER), the unstoppable chaos is designed to burn up even bloodthirsty fans. Woo and his production company are in top shape with HARDBOILED.

Far Eastern film industries continue to grind out action cinema every year. Japan and Hong Kong mix innovative elements into their traditional films. Movies such as SEVEN SAMURAI (1954) and THE KILLER broke through cultural and language barriers to enrich North American viewers. If the examples they are provided with are striking enough, mainstream audiences may one day recognize cinema as an international language, fully capable of defying our expectations.

Dedicated to Robert Sargent,
Richard Akiyama
and Merlin David
- without whom this
essay would have been
a couple bullets short
a clip.



