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KING KONG SPECIAL

FAMOUS

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OF FILMLAND

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Gogor

WORLD'S No. 1 FALL GUY



Birds gotta swim, fish gotta fly (well, haven't you ever heard of flying fish?)—Kong gotta love one gal till he dive. And you'll love all the Great Features in this X-mas Issue, especially the super KONG coverage started on page 6. Dive in!



OUR COVER
The entire world knows his name. He's one of the most spectacular simians ever to walk earth. Read the towering tales of Kong!

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FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

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KONG KONG 1977

the skull-crusher of skull island returns

KONGTROVERSIAL is the word for the remake of KONG. It's the picture "nobody" wanted remade—if you count such famous people as Ray Bradbury, Ray Harryhausen, Darlyne O'Brien, Jim Danforth & scores of others as "nobodies." Their feeling: the original was a masterpiece, virtually a sacred work of folkloric art that could never be surpassed and not even equalled.

I personally felt a new KK classic could be created IF its script remained a period piece and vitamin enriched, IF basically the Max Steiner score were retained, IF to color were added Sensurround, IF it were projected in IMAX (the 70' wide by 93' high screen image) and IF, of course, essential, it employed the inspired collaboration of today's half dozen top model makers & animators.

By New Years virtually every Kong fan in the USA will have had the opportunity to make up his/her mind: either it's the feared fiasco or, despite all misgivings, the new version works and we have a great new work of fantasy entertainment.

The story which follows was the one approved at the end of 1975 but in the intervening year some changes, hopefully for the better, may have been made. We under-

stand your flood of irate cards & letters to the Studio had something of an effect.

After you've read the article & seen the picture, let us know if you wish any further coverage in future issues. We have plenty more fotos.

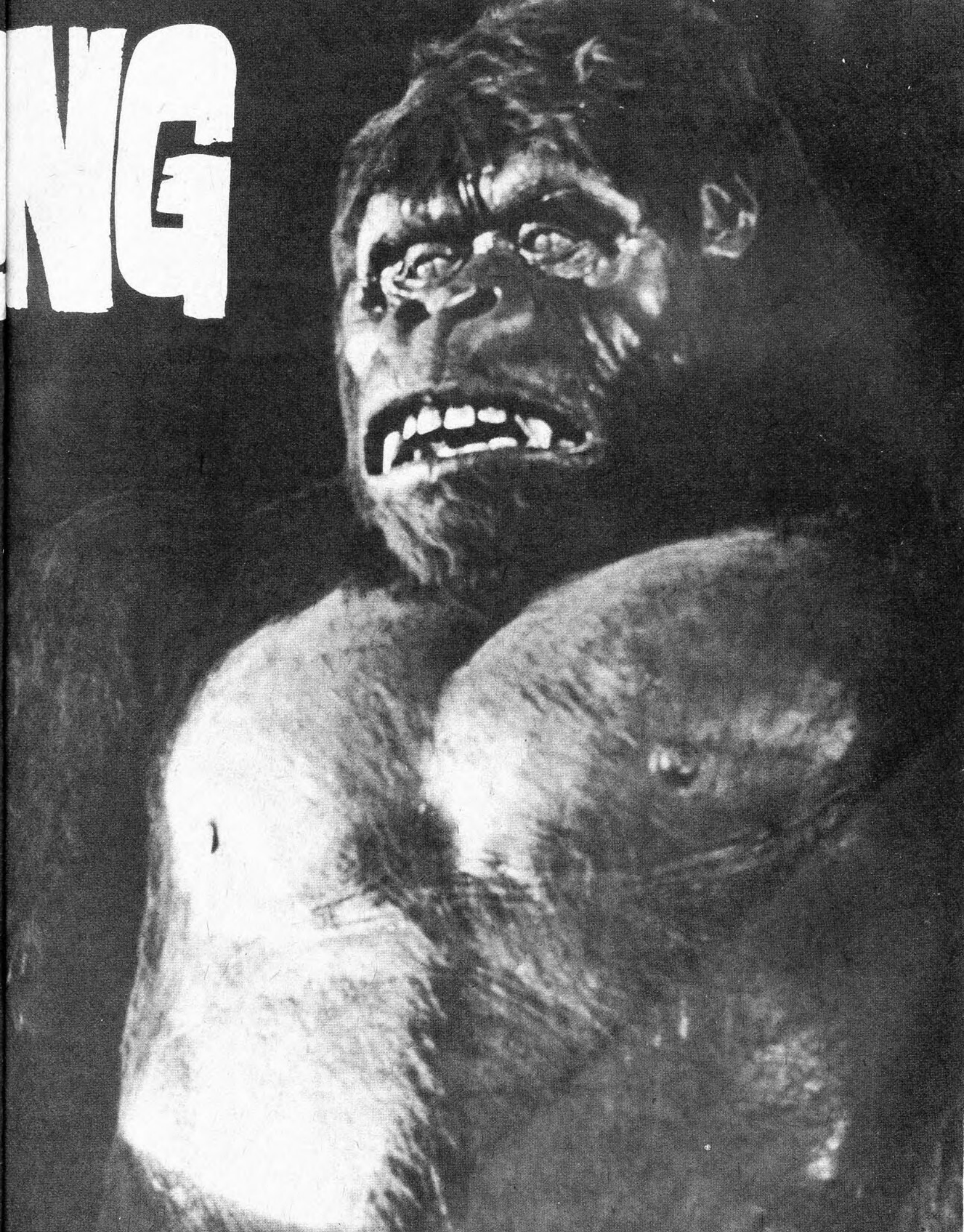
the legend of skull island

As the huge vessel SS PETROX EXPLORER leaves the port of Surabaya (in Indonesia), young Jack Prescott (JEFF BRIDGES) slips stealthily aboard the supertanker—a stowaway!

Mysterious rumors circulate about the ship:

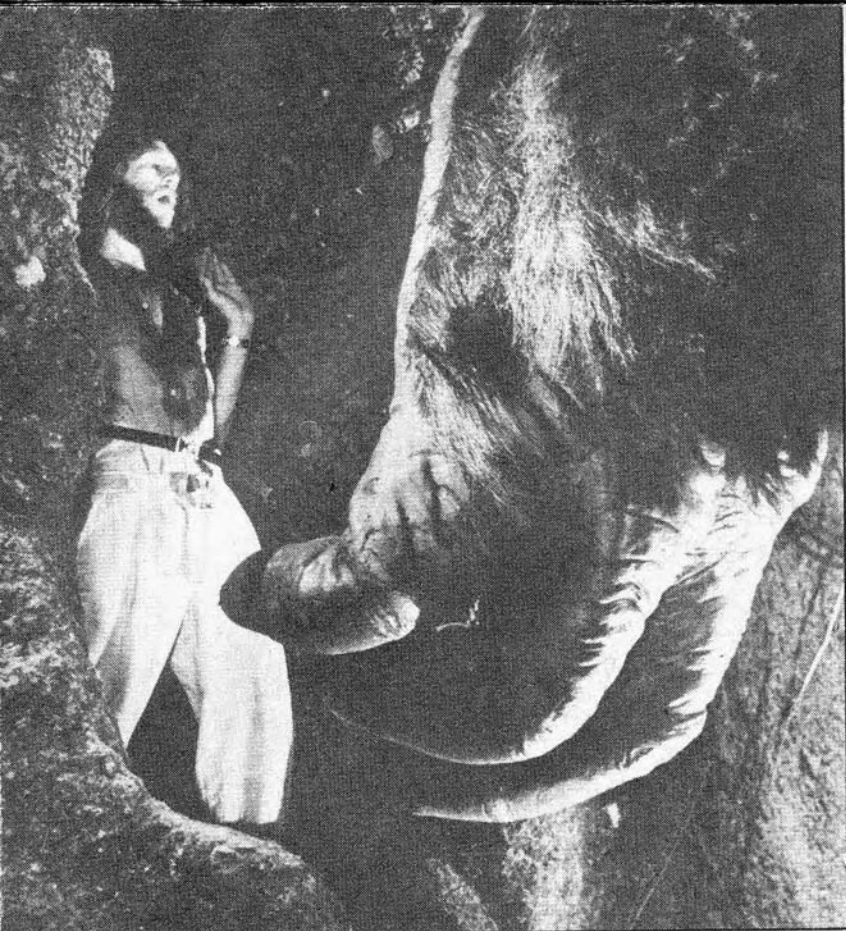
Its destination is top secret. The crew is supposed to be heading for a new oil-drilling site. So why are there only 2000 feet of pipe aboard? Some drilling operations didn't come in until 26000 feet! And why the rush? Because Shell & Exxon are said also to be in competition RE what is mysteriously referred to as "The Island."

The rumors are stilled when Fred Wilson (CHARLES GRODIN), the leader of the expedition, assembles the crew in the mess room for an announcement. A New York desk jockey, he sold Petrox Oil Company on the idea that—



ING

With a snarl that would snarl traffic, the New Kong prepares to give a Roar-Shock Test.



What our Terrified Hero reads in the palm of King Kong's Hand makes him wish he'd never studied palmistry!

"... We may be sailing into the history books. I believe we're headed for the biggest oil strike ever... on an island hidden by a perpetual fog-bank—never seen by human eye nor walked by human foot. The island is the tip of a huge underground oil tank, just waiting for us to twist the cap off. I'm betting everything I got on it."

"I'll take 50¢ of that," comes a voice from the back of the room as Jack Prescott steps forward. "There's all kinds of things that might account for the excess CO-2 found in your spectrograph & infra-red photos. One would be animal respiration... *animal breathing*. I also have to question that human feet have never walked that island. In 1605 Pero Fernando de Quieros was blown south from the Tuamotu Archipelago. He wrote in his log of 'piercing the White Veil'—that's the fog, obviously—and landing on 'the Beach of the Skull' where he heard the 'roar of the Greatest Beast.' The rest of that log entry, unfortunately, was suppressed by the Holy Office in Rome."

Prescott cites other sources to back up his theory that the island had been visited, then introduces himself as a student from Princeton University. Department of Primate Paleontology... stowaway.

But he is not believed. Wilson concludes that he is a spy sent by a competitive oil company.

siren from the sea

On his way to the brig, Prescott spots an orange rubber lifeboat. Sprawled in the wet bot-

tom is a beautiful girl wearing a very clinging evening gown.

While the unconscious girl is brought aboard, verification comes over the ship's radio of Prescott's authenticity, all the way down to his fingerprints. Since the report also reveals he had one year of med school before he switched to zoology, Wilson asks Prescott to be present when the girl awakens.

When she revives, she tells them that she was on deck on the yacht, *Cynara*, by herself, and then—she was swimming to a star... to a light. The ship had mysteriously exploded and, by a miracle, a life raft was blown overboard near her. It was self-inflating, with an automatic flare.

There were no other survivors.

Her name is Dwan (JESSICA LANGE). The owner of the yacht had promised her a role in a movie he was making in Hong Kong.

As the days pass, Dwan & Prescott become friends. One day, while walking on deck, she confides to him: "Baffling... where can he be?"

"Where can who be, luv?" asks Prescott.

"I had my horoscope done before I flew out to Hong Kong—this superguru in Topanga Canyon. He is never wrong. My stars said I'd take a trip over water and meet the biggest person in my life."

The island, surrounded by a fogbank is sighted, and a landing party is lowered. Dwan refuses to stay aboard and because she is so lovely & so persuasive, no one can say no to her. Leading the expedition is Wilson, followed by Prescott, who has agreed to take pictures for his passage of the "greatest oil discovery in history."

The plan is to push into the interior and plant seismic charges for a picture of the underground geological structure.

When they land, they discover that the fog-bank does not extend over the entire island. As they push into the jungle, the white mist diminishes and the lead guides slacken their pace.

An enormous wall appears ahead. It towers a hundred feet high! Made of earth and stone and timber, it parallels the river a little way beyond the further bank, beginning in the sea and running off into the jungle above the trees.

It looks as old as the Great Pyramids of Egypt, except that the Pyramids weren't repaired 6 months ago...

The earth chinking the timbers had to be replaced after each monsoon season!

It is difficult to believe that there are people living on the island until—

jungle ju-ju

From the interior, echoing along the wall, resounds the BOOM BOOM BOOM of DRUMS!

Atop a slight rise, the party is awed to see—First a single aborigine drummer... then—farther along the clearing—50 drummers! The scene is around a pair of enormous gates which run the full height of the wall. They are secured shut with a wooden bolt about 5 times the size



KING KONG Meets the ACKERMONSTER in perilous shot taken by Ace Photographer Walt Daugherty. And Kong pleads: "Please take me back to Skull Island!"

of a telephone pole.

Suddenly high-pitched female chanting is heard as a procession emerges from the jungle. Aborigine women are chanting as they carry a bamboo platform on their shoulders. On the platform kneels a girl, 16 or so, dressed in a fantastical gown of bird feathers & dyed skins. Her head is crowned with flowers. Then over the women's voices come deeper male voices. A male procession comes from the jungle at another angle, converging with the women toward side steps leading up to a raised dais before the gates. In front are wildly dancing ju-ju men, their bodies painted with bizarre, fearful designs.

Wilson notices a smallish dark pool near the

gates and excitement rises in him—it could be oil!

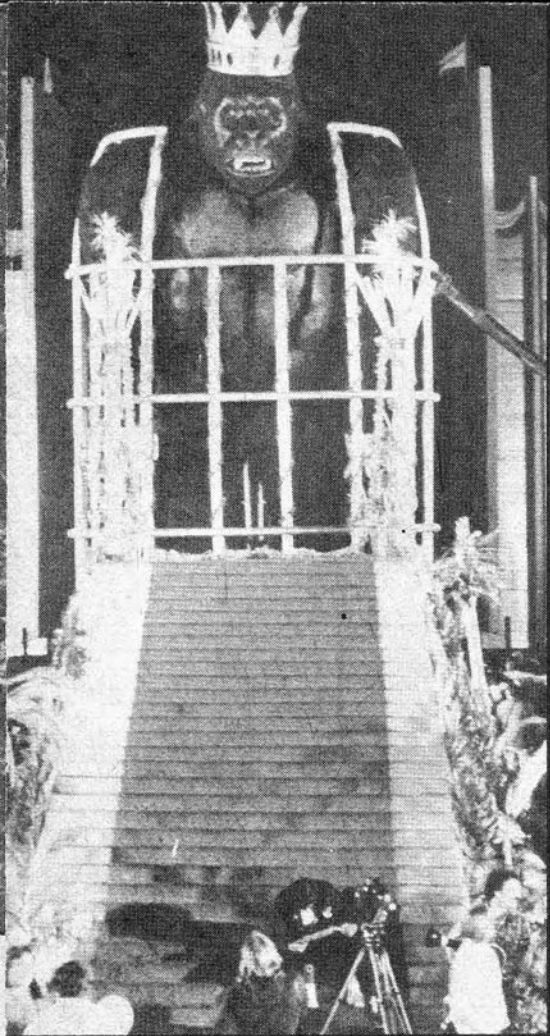
The chant begins to change. All that can be picked out is one syllable which is repeated often: "KONG! . . . KONG! . . . KONG!"

Another ju-ju man dances into view in a strange ape mask. He wears high platform footgear to increase his height and paw-like skin gloves.

"I'd say it looks like a wedding," says Dwan. "But where's the groom?"

Prescott gestures to the dancing ju-ju man in the ape mask. "You might say that's the groom's stand-in. The actual groom is on the other side of the wall."

"Far out!" cries Dwan. "Like, you mean, it's



In a Kingsize Cage, Kong demonstrates His Royal Rage at being reduced to a Sideshow Freak. So that his Captors will get the point, he tears up the joint.

bad luck if they see each other before the Wedding March—”

“Ghastly luck—for the whole congregation,” murmurs Prescott.

Suddenly they are spotted! The drums cease. Every face turns in their direction and 3 ju-ju men, towering Ape Mask in the middle, start to walk up the slight rise.

The chief indicates that their magic has been contaminated . . . until he sees Dwan. Then he wants to trade six of his maidens for the beautiful white woman.

The natives make a menacing move after their offer is rejected and Wilson’s party lift their rifles and fire a volley in the air. The natives flee from the strange thundersticks.

kidnapped!

Later that night, after the party returns safely to the ship, unknown to them a pair of outrigger canoes glide silently over moonlit water toward the ship . . .

Prescott & Wilson are arguing. After Prescott convinces him of the *possibility* that a creature called Kong *might* exist, Wilson decides: “When we go inland, we’ll take plenty of TNT. Any sign of a monkey bigger than 4 feet, send it bang bang.”

“You wouldn’t,” gasps Prescott, jumping to his feet. “Even an environmental rapist like you

—even *you* wouldn’t be (dumb) enough to murder a unique new species of animal! Why, kids would burn every Petrox gas station from Maine to California!”

Later, Dwan spies Prescott stealing a boat and supplies. “It’s a chance that comes once in a lifetime, baby. You grab it or you’re dead meat,” he explains.

“Jack, you really shouldn’t go ashore tonight,” she urges. “It’s not a good night for Aries like you.”

“You read that up in the sky, huh?”

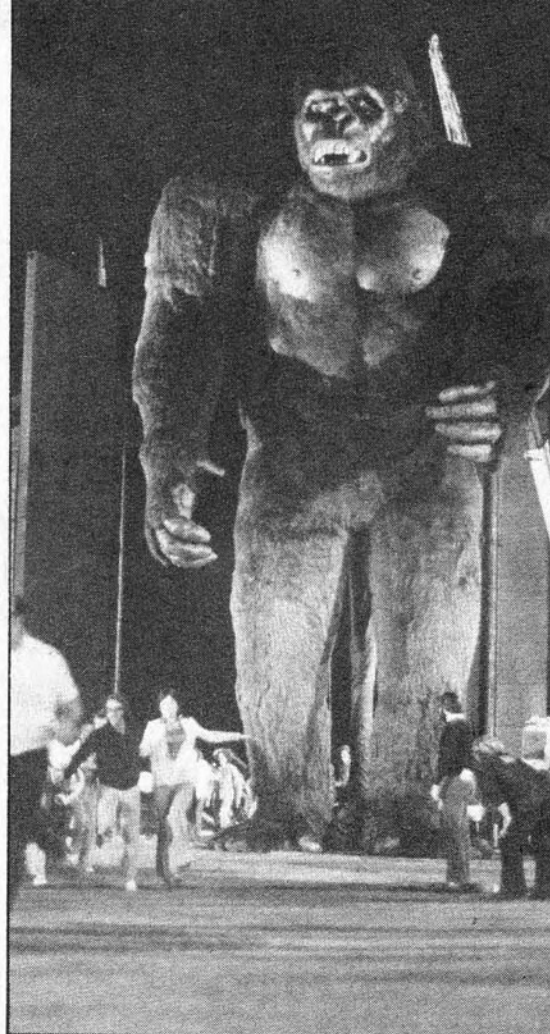
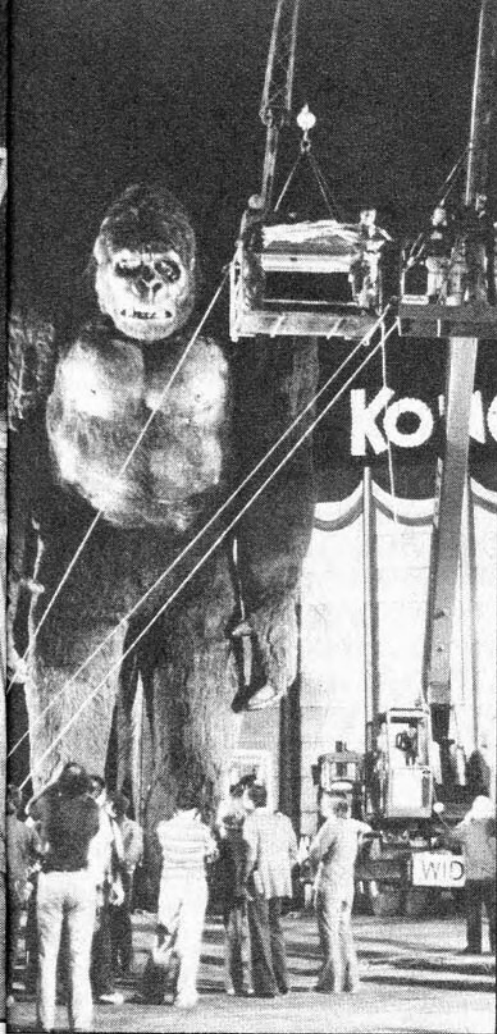
Dwan pulls a horoscope book from her jeans and reads: “Aries. In evening, steer clear of unconventional activities. A surprise with unpleasant aspects may be in store for you.”

Prescott shrugs her words away and hurries up the stairs for another load of gear . . .

So he does not see the dark figures which suddenly appear out of nowhere . . . and the dark hands that pull the struggling Dwan over the side!

It takes a little while for Prescott to return, find Dwan gone and discover—a feathered native ringlet! A terrible dawning understanding spreads across his face as—

Women chanting, drums beating & strange pipes playing surround her. Her face is dreamy. She wears a garland of flowers in her brow. Women’s hands force her mouth open and tilt her head back. Dwan offers no resistance as a drugged potion is poured down her throat from a shell.



Camera Crew has to be hoisted high to get Kongs-eye view. Then—"Run for your lives—the King is loose!" And the crowd in the bleachers blanches and splits!

She is kneeling on a bamboo platform—the same that the native maiden was seen on that afternoon—wearing the same fantastic gown of feathers & brightly-dyed thin leathers.

The atmosphere is *joyous*.

Shouldn't a wedding be joyous?

Natives pour bamboo buckets of hot oil onto the massive bolt, lubricating it. Then they tug & strain to pull it back from the huge wooden rings fixed to the gate sections... and it slides open.

Dwan is borne forward as the gates swing open to a stepped stone pedestal.

Dreamy, vacant-eyed, the drugged girl is led quietly unresisting up the 50-foot steps to be tied—but in a purely symbolic way, because the tie is only a garland of flowers. Then the bridesmaids race down the steps.

Native men climb ropes & ladders to the top of the wall on the inner side. A huge horn of skin stretched over a bamboo frame is placed on top of the wall, aimed out over the jungle. Ten natives hurry into place at the horn's 10 mouth-pieces as—

The gates swing shut.

The huge bolt is pushed in.

And the bride awaits the groom...

bride of the monster

At the beach the whole crew of the *SS Petrox Explorer* is landing in a small flotilla of launches

& barges & lifeboats. They hear—

The echoing blasts of a great horn and a terrible unison chant: "KONG! KONG! KONG!"

Again the horn is blown and again the chant.

There is a shape which towers over the tree-tops!

A harsh sound like great *breathing* and animal *grunts* can be heard over the chant.

Trees are *pushed* aside like blades of grass to fall crashing onto the jungle floor.

Thru her drug-hazed mind, Dwan cannot focus on the shape towering above her—

Until a mammoth paw suddenly reaches down and wraps around her, lifting her up!

High. *Higher!* HIGHER!

Then she is brought close to its face and she sees—

The most fearful ape-face in the whole world!

Kong roars his approval to the tiny dark figures on the wall and fades back into the jungle night.

"We're too late!" cries Prescott. "Set off the show!"

A flare-pistol is aimed & fired.

A little pop is heard and the whole scene is bathed in a flickery red glare. Stillness & silence fall over the cavorting celebrants; every head swivels up.

From the jungle a fusillade of gunfire barks into the air. Yelling crewmen stream from the jungle, sending the natives fleeing, wailing & howling with fear.



Dwan, a captive, waits for that captivating bwana devil Kong to come and "take her away from all this."

As the crewmen draw back the giant bolt, others plant dynamite charges around the gate.

The great gates swing inward and lights blaze thru.

They see the stone pedestal, jungle; but no person, no great beast.

"He's taken her!" cries Prescott.

"Someone's taken her!" Wilson echoed skeptically.

"Who do you think went thru there—some guy in an ape suit?"

They walk slowly ahead.

Suddenly Wilson stumbles & falls forward out of the glaring light. In the light of his flashlight Prescott finds Wilson picking himself up out of a depression he tripped into.

"It's OK, I just fell into this hole."

"You're not in a hole—that's a footprint," Prescott states quietly.

Prescott & a group of sailors follow the path of knocked-down trees for 2 miles without a sign of Dwan . . . or her remains.

They keep contact with Wilson at the base via radio. When it becomes necessary to stop until dawn, they pitch camp. During the night the radar on board ship sweeps their area to immediately notify them of any "large furry blips moving in their direction."

The footprint measures 6'4". Multiply by 8 and you have his height.

"He'd make a great commercial, wouldn't he?" observes the Captain of the ship. "You know, The battles we at Petrox fight to fill your gas

tank, blah, blah, blah."

The group within earshot laughs . . . but no laughter comes from Fred Wilson . . .

He *likes* the idea!

would you let your daughter marry an Aries?

Dwan awakens at dawn in a jungle glade. At first she doesn't realize where she is, then she looks up . . .

The mammoth ape is squatting beside her, his eyes studying her every move.

Panicked, she tries to crawl away on her elbows & knees. But she is lifted up into the air. She desperately holds onto the monster's soft black hairs.

"I can't stand heights!" she screams.

The upward motion ceases abruptly. She is flabbergasted. Perhaps she is emboldened by the unlikely success of her plea, perhaps she simply wants to hear the sound of a human voice. But anyway, she says: "Honest to God, I can't! When I was 10 years old and taken up the Empire State Building, I barfed in the elevator! With no offense, I can't stand the smell of a zoo monkey-house either! Is it fair to persecute a person for something they can't help?"

Kong picks up the little white doll and brings it closer to his face—she amuses him.

Dwan can stand it no longer; she breaks into hysterical yelling & kicking. "You chauvinist pig ape, what are you waiting for? If you're gonna eat me, EAT ME! CHOKE ON ME!"

Kong is more fascinated than angered.

Suddenly Dwan realizes what she has been doing. She looks up at him in utter horror. "I didn't mean that! I swear I didn't! Sometimes I get too physical, it's a sign of insecurity, you know? Like when you knock over trees? Nice ape—nice monkey—oh, such a nice sweet, sweet monkey—we're going to be friends—I'm a Libra—what are you? Don't tell me. You're an Aries! Of course you are—I knew it! Oh, how *wonderful*! Oh, how *neat*!"

The search party continues thru the next day. Most of the men believe Kong had long since destroyed the girl. Their imaginations conjure ghastly ways in which the giant ape could have ended her life.

Suddenly they feel the earth move under their feet. An earthquake? No! Something *alive* is undulating beneath them—something scaly & reptilian!

A huge snake wraps its mammoth coils around one of the sailors, crushing the life from him as the others flee into the jungle in all directions.

The snake follows for a little distance, gathering others into its huge maw, but eventually gives up the chase . . . and feasts.

The sole survivors, a mere handful, gather together to formulate a plan. Only Prescott wants to go forward. All the others want to return to the ship and their sheer numbers outweigh Prescott's pleadings.



KONG admires his picture on the cover of **FAMOUS MONSTERS**.

OUT OF KONGTROL!

Run for Your Wives, Big Babby is looking for His Baby Doll!



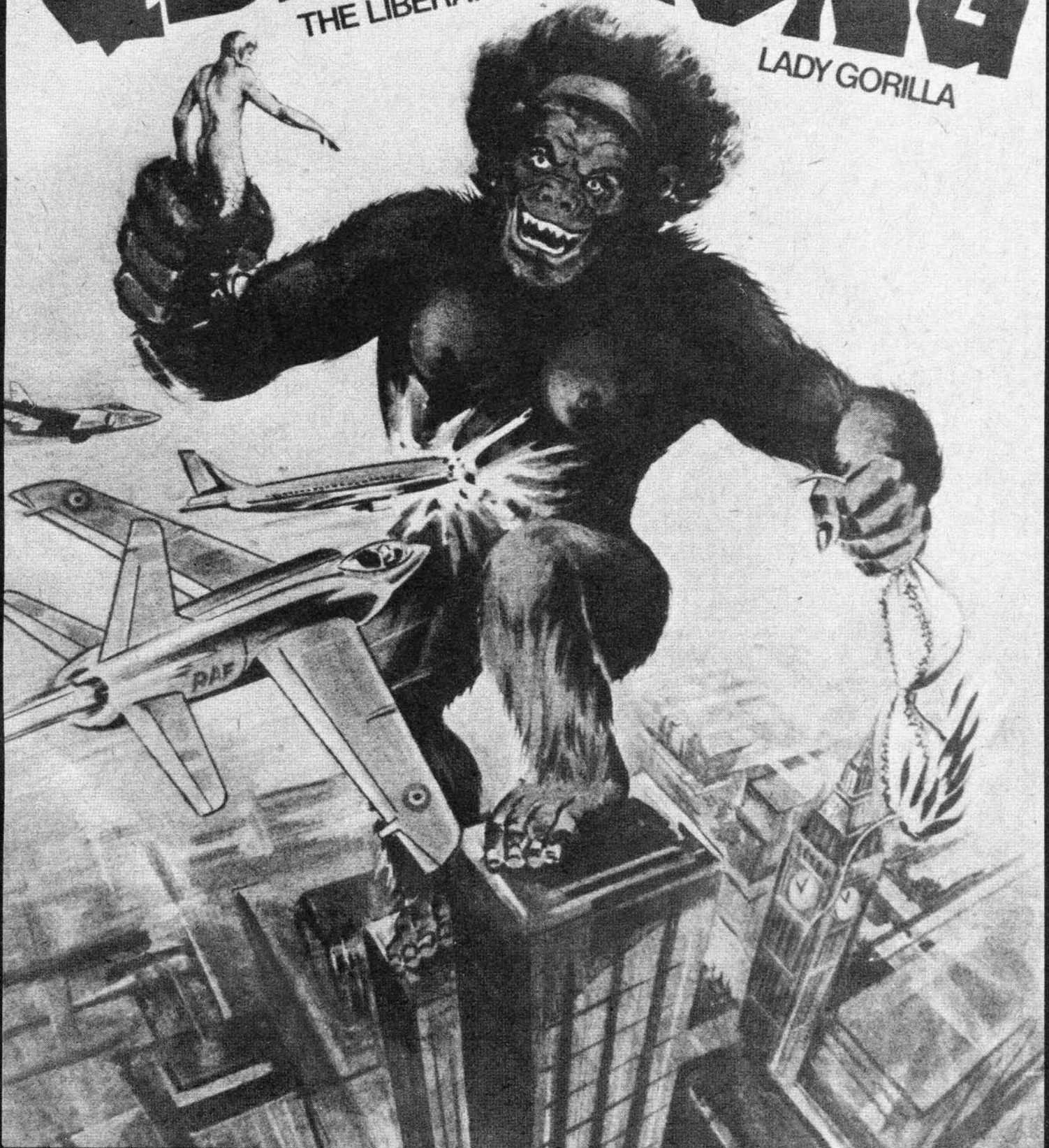


ANDRE GENOVES

QUEENKONG

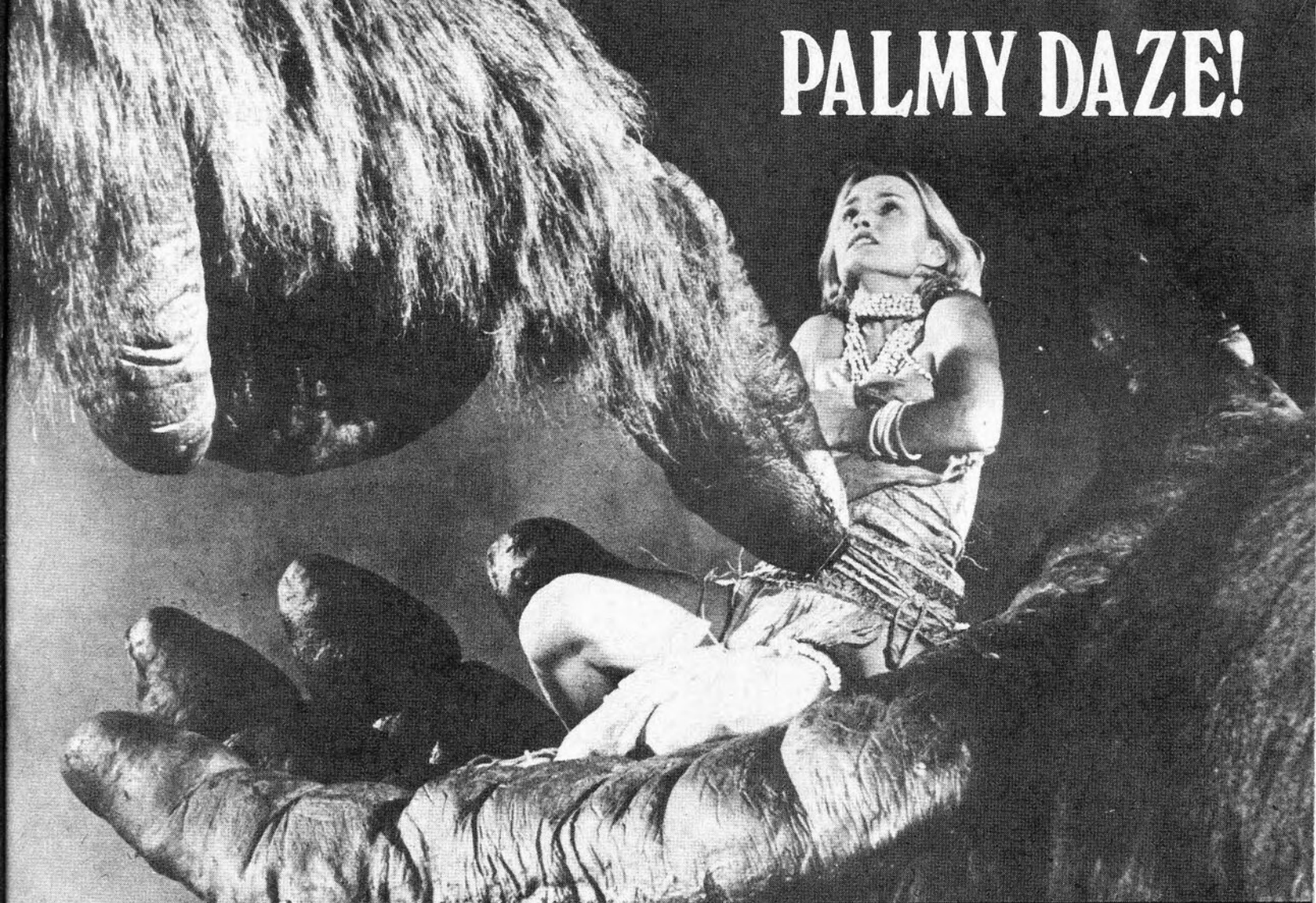
THE LIBERATED

LADY GORILLA



Question: Can a Giant Gorilla be accused of being a Male Chauvinist Pig? Anyway, demanding equal time is this Kinky Kong! And pipe the cast—Ray Fay? Luce Habit? Wot, no Bob Strongarm? Animation by Wallace O'Brain? Models by Sylmar del Grotto? And introducing Noble Jackson as the Chief of Skeleton Island?

PALMY DAZE!



You'd have an upset stomach too if you got your tummy tickled by a one ton furry forefinger!

escape from the paws of death

Headed in the direction they thought would bring them closest to the gates, they encounter a ravine, spanning about 50 feet, across their path.

Prescott is urged forward to test the strength of the log which spans the chasm and crosses it swiftly & smoothly.

As the other men start across in single file, they are halted in the middle by—

KONG! His huge bulk looms over the trees, still carrying Dwan.

When the terrified crewmen fire their carbines wildly at him, Dwan is deposited in a treetop as the great ape leaps toward the log.

Prescott dives headlong for the roots hanging over the ravine and lithely scampers out of sight.

Kong's paws close around the end of the log. He shakes it. The men dance & scream & fight for balance. Two of the doomed men fall the hundreds of feet into the greenery below. Then two more!

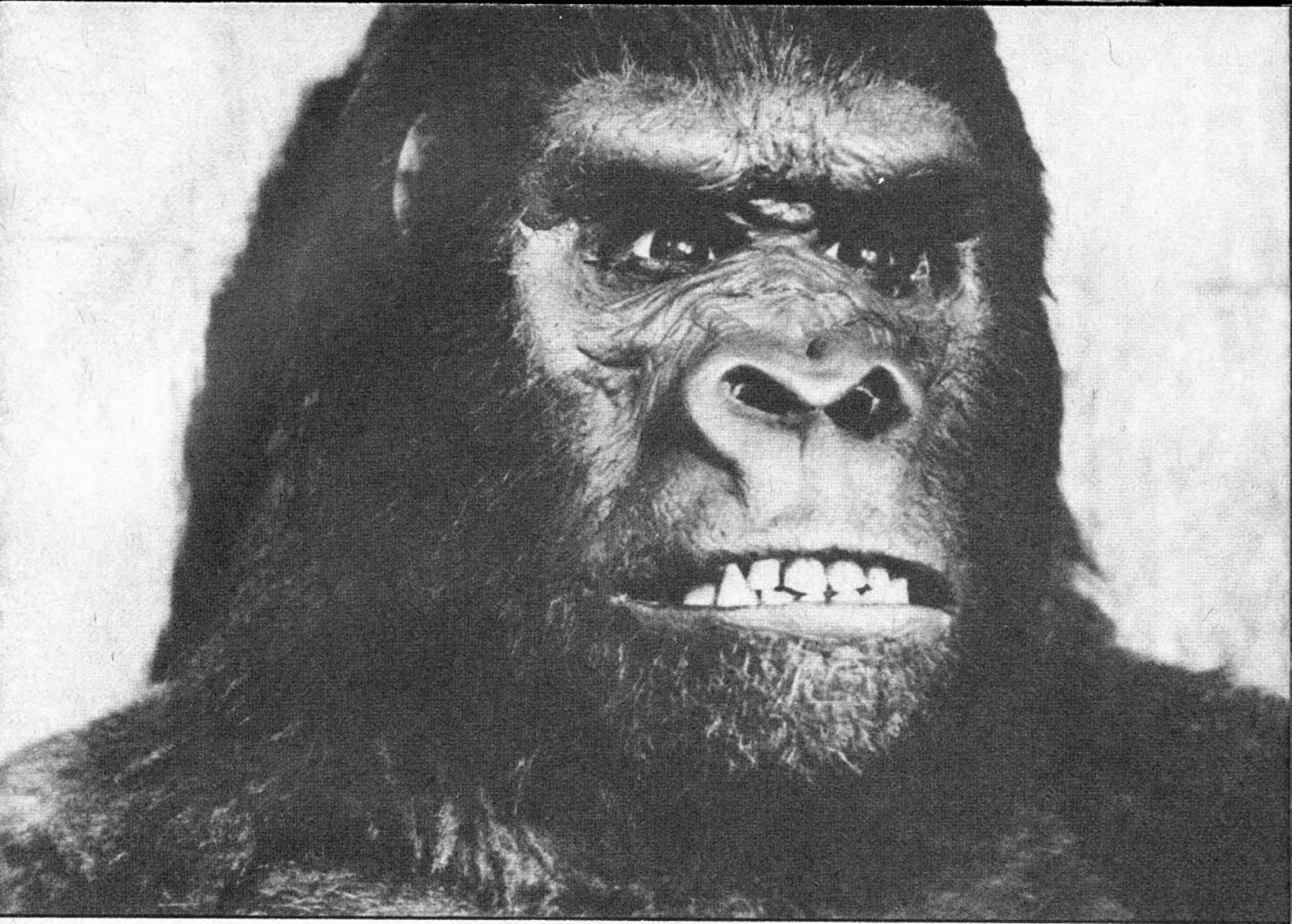
Triumphant, Kong beats his mighty chest, retrieves his bride and lumbers away into the dense jungle.

Prescott follows at a safe distance.

Later that evening he comes across Kong & Dwan.



Kong breaks his bonds as if they were made of cardboard!



Too close for comfort is this closeup of KONG!

He hears a great thrashing & angry roars. Kong is locked in mortal combat with the giant snake! And the snake isn't losing, throwing coil after coil over the ape.

Prescott is able to spirit Dwan away but not before Kong spies the both of them in each other's arms.

A roar of rage causes their heads to spin—and they see Kong's anger.

As the 2 humans race away, Kong seizes the repulsive reptilian head by both its jaws and rips it in half!

Kong rises, smashing aside trees, rushing to retrieve his stolen doll.

Dwan & Prescott are stopped at the edge of a precipice. Rather than face Kong, together they leap over the edge and fall toward a turgid river . . . Kong's roar of rage is lost in the incredible distance.

After swimming to safety, they race toward the gates . . . with Kong in pursuit!

Wilson has not been idle . . . a fantastic trap has been laid for the giant gorilla!

A lookout spots the fleeing couple and urges the gates open.

As the survivors are welcomed warmly, Kong emerges from the bush!

Before the bolt of the gate is halfway home,

Kong hurls himself against the gates.

Debris begins to fly!

Wilson pushes down the handle of a detonator box he clutches precariously and a thousand gallons of pure chloroform pour out—into a dark pit.

But at the same time, Kong breaks thru the gate—

And falls into a mammoth pit which had been dug to exactly accommodate him.

Kong roars & thrashes about in the pit.

Fumes overcome him. His bellowing roars are choked. The only sound from the black pit is a feeble muddy splashing as he beats feebly around in the chloroform puddles under him.

Then . . . silence.

Kong is taken to New York where he is exploited by the Petrox Oil Company. Remember the "Put A Tiger In Your Tank" commercial? Well . . . Kong is not exploited for long. In his first public appearance, he breaks his chains and the city of New York finds the gigantic ape unstoppable as he ravages the city!

Will KING KONG be the "biggest event in the history of the cinema" as Dino de Laurentiis has called it? Or will it be a big-budget GOD-ZILLA sequel—forgotten after a year or two?

You will be the judge. Let us know your reaction to the new KING KONG!

40 FEET OF FURRY FURY!



If Kong should decide to swat those cameramen on the elevated platforms, they'd feel like they were wearing elevated platforms! (Well, that's shoe business.)

END



A "photographer," perched high on Kong's chest, attempts to take photos.



THE KING IN NEW YORK

TEXT: DICK SIEGEL
PHOTOS: TOM KOWAL

colossal coverage of classic remake

King Kong, the 8th Wonder of the World, lay dead after a 1000-foot fall from the North Tower of New York's famed World Trade Center. He lay amid shattered remnants of the sidewalk and was surrounded by an ever surging mass of people desiring a better look, held in check by the combined forces of the police and National Guard. Suddenly, a middle-aged woman in an emerald-green pantsuit burst past the police and began to frantically remove clumps of hair from the great ape when the director cried "Cut!"

It was a warm, cloudless night in late June, 1976, when Producer Dino DeLaurentiis began production in



John (The Mole People) Agar portrays the Mayor of New York in the new King Kong.

New York of his remake of the famed Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack film classic KING KONG. That evening scores of special tactical police officers and National Guardsmen battled the imaginary "Dino" Kong, as the King refused to make a personal appearance. Paramount's special effects technicians would later matte the mechanical, forty-foot version of Kong into the film during post-production filming. However, for the scenes at the World Trade Center, Kong would be there in the flesh.

The next night the paid extras filed into the open-air plaza at the World Trade Center; they received their first glimpse of Kong. Forty feet long, Kong, made of styrofoam, rubber, wood and an \$85,000 horsehair coat, lay dead. The ape was virtually surrounded by Klieg lights, cameras and boom, an energetic crew of filmmakers and, behind wooden police barricades approximately 1,000 feet in back of Kong, thousands of curious New Yorkers.

Before actual shooting commenced on the final sequences, a search was on for extras with ties and suit jackets. Thesefortunates were handed cameras and assumed the roles of reporters who scamper about on Kong's massive chest.

Finally, the other extras were led into place in a large circle around "Mr. K" (as the film crew nicknamed the monster) while the director, John Guillerman, took closeups of the stars for a cou-

ple of hours. Meanwhile, the 500 camera-hungry, star-seeking extras grumbled about standing around. Most were telling humorous anecdotes about Kong ("It wasn't the planes that got im, t'was Dino killed the beast." (sic)), making friends with the police (who were Screen Actors Guild members that pointed out the differences between themselves and real police. They carried no notepads or pens and have problems getting their guns out of the holster) or attempting to stump one another with Kong trivia (who said: "All hands on deck! All hands on deck!""?) or drooling expectantly over the fabled treasures of a boxed lunch.

Soon it was time for the non-professionals to emote. The assistant director who was in charge of the crowd and, via walkie-talkie, in constant communication with the director, told the crowd to "Turn around and take ten giant steps back and thin out." The mob was then told to advance slowly, become excited, accelerate their pace and try to push their way past the police and guardsmen to reach Kong. "Do not look at the cameras! This is reel life! Look only at Mr. K, roll-em!!!"

Spurred on by the novelty of playing with "the tallest, darkest lead in Hollywood," a green-clad housewife continually managed to escape the "police" and, reaching Kong, taking souvenirs for her children, ruining several takes. Other shots were spoiled by an overly enthusiastic extra who shouted out "That's Carl Denham! He must be the man who captured the ape!" and thereby making half of the crowd laugh.

In between scenes, a curious event would take place, as a man carrying plastic bottles of a murky red liquid would slowly ascend the prostrate form of Kong. He inched precariously upward until, rising atop Kong's chest, he bent over, unscrewing the top of his bottle, and proceeded to pour the old red Karo syrup all over. Indulging in a little bit of movie magic, Guillerman would constantly ask for more "blood" to be poured on, "Mr. K had a big fall." The "blood man," as he was dubbed, would always receive enthusiastic cheers and applause for his bloody trek.

Assuming their starting positions again, the extras began their lackluster charge forward. Another assistant director tried to psych the crowd up by wielding his megaphone and marching around crying: "This is a science fiction movie, serious stuff, no laughing or giggling please! You're on your way home after a day at the office, school, whatever, and you're confronted with a forty-foot ape that just fell 100 stories and is a bloody mess. You're scared, curious and compelled to see Mr. K! Remember, we're trying to beat the old classic!" His last statement brought more giggles and words of disbelief. At approximately 12 midnight Director Guillerman cried out in anguish, "Hour break for lunch!"

Quickly, the cast and crew dispersed and embarked for the various dining areas. The extras formed several huge lines and soon attained the mythical, yet real-tasting, boxed lunch.

After the break, the professionals and non-professionals assembled for a sequence in which



Kong, resplendent in his \$85,000 horsehair suit, lies dead.

Jeff (son of Lloyd) Bridges attempts to break through the crowd to rescue his beloved leading lady, Jessica Lange, from the flashcubes of the fourth estate. Bridges assumes the Bruce Cabot role, revamped for the '70's, an anthropologist aboard the Petrox explorer, a research ship sailing to Micronesia (Skull Island?) in search of undersea oil. On the way, they rescue Ms. Lange, who is adrift at sea after the explosion of a yacht she was on. Charles Grodin (11 Harrowhouse), who was not present at the New York shooting, portrays a variation of Robert Armstrong's role, as "Wilson," the ruthless oil tycoon who sees in Kong the ultimate publicity stunt. "Wilson" does not sound like a man who would say, "We'll be millionaires, boys! I'll share it with you all!"

Before shooting begins, Bridges gets a layer of sweat from the prop man, who sprays him with an atomizer. Strategic people in the crowd then separated themselves, giving Bridges a path. Then the director began rolling and Bridges bobbed and weaved his way through the crowd, only to be repulsed by the police. On most shots, the cameras stopped as he reached the police,

but on several occasions, they kept rolling as Bridges ran back through the mob, knocking over unwary extras who thought the take took.

Then, while the crowd relaxed, a sequence involving Jessica Lange, the reporters and the Mayor of New York took place. The mayor was being played by a man who, until two years ago, was believed dead by the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences, Mr. John Agar. Agar, in the scientifilms of the '50's, had saved the world several times from *The Tarantula*, *The Mole People*, *The Brain from Planet Arous* and others, would now save Ms. Lange from the fearless photographers. The scene unfolded as "Dwan," freed from Kong's grasp, is hysterical and besieged by the flashcubes and questions of nosy reporters. Suddenly, Agar, resplendent in his black evening tuxedo, rushes forth and puts his arm around her. She doesn't want to be consoled by a smiling publicity-seeking mayor and Ms. Lange breaks free, rushing off camera to seek her lover, leaving a very disappointed John Agar.

Later, John Agar was signing autographs and chatting with fans behind the large boom. Agar,



Kong's head!

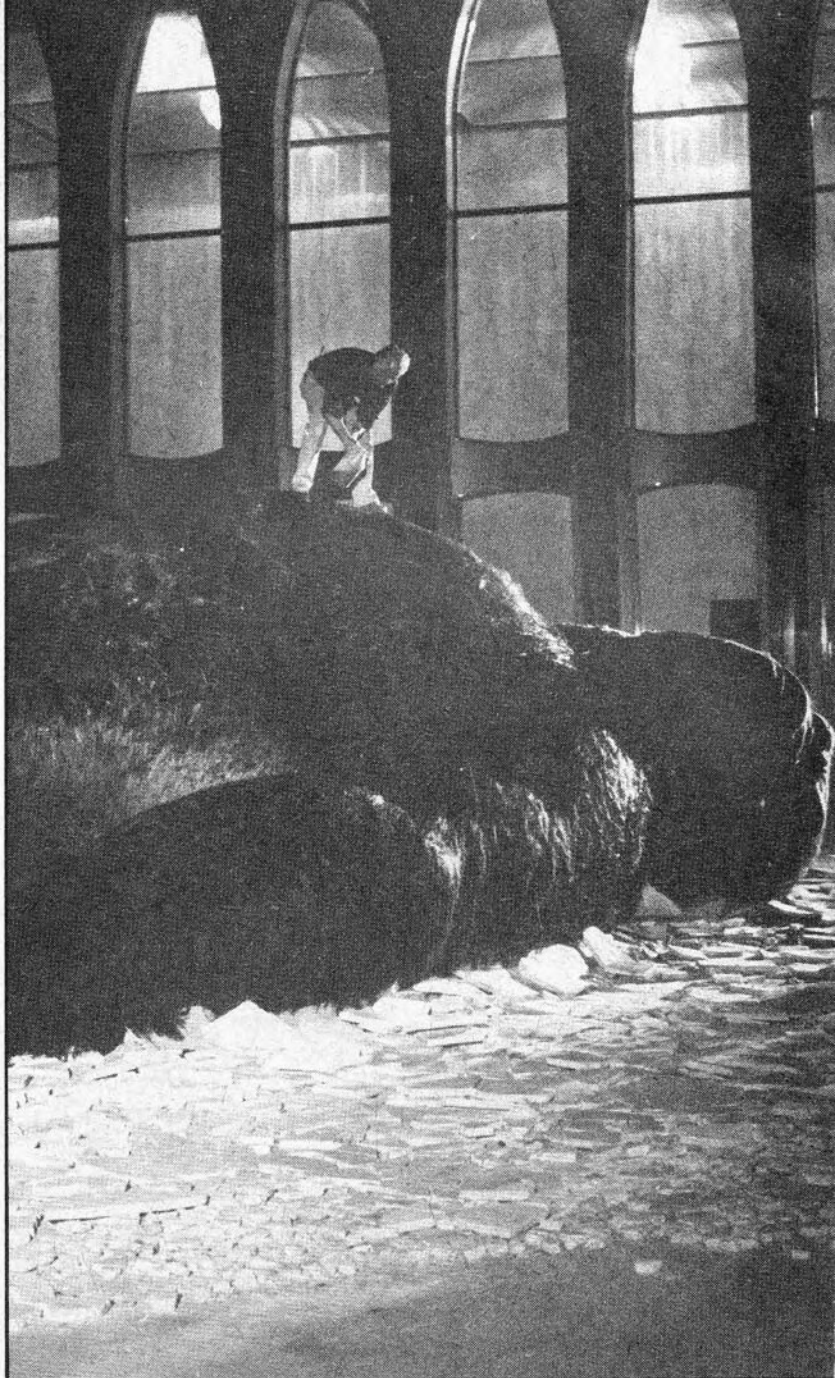
at 54, is still in excellent condition. He's slimmed down from his *Tarantula* days, has neatly barbered grey hair and sports a Carl Denhamesque moustache. He recounted how, in a western with John Wayne, he was forced to ride a horse bareback for the first time and told of the ensuing results. To relieve his posterior pain, he was advised to fill a hot bath with sea salt. When he had done so, and sat down, he "promptly went through the ceiling! OOOOW!!!" Agar says, "That really hurt! Never put raw meat to salt water!" When asked about Hugh Beaumont, his one time co-star, he replied, "You're thinking about a film called *The Mole Men* (sic)" and proceeded to tell about when a friend and fellow actor, Rock Hudson, saw a relaxed John Agar sitting on the set, surrounded by actors in mole people guise. Hudson chuckled, "What the hell's going on here?" Agar just laughed. Before asking Mr. Agar about his "obituary" in issue 106, an elderly couple came up to him and queried as to who he was playing. Agar replied, "I'm the man with the red carnation!" Then they asked Agar if he ever was a producer. "Producer? Sure . . . I produced three kids." Broaching him about his obit, Agar responded, "Famous Monsters? Oh yeah . . . I went to a witchcraft convention in Los Angeles when someone came up to me and said 'You're John Agar! But . . . you're dead.' 'Well, mebbe,' I said, but I haven't had a chance to lie down yet.'" Then the editor, Forrest Ackerman, came out and said, "You're alive!" Agar smiled, "I think so—Anyhow, it's kinda fun to read your own obituary."

Having been thanked for his time, Mr. Agar posed for a photo and then, with a resounding "You bet!" vanished into the stillness of the night.

The following Sunday shooting was completed on schedule (despite a fiasco earlier that week when a real mob of New Yorkers, 10,000 strong, showed up to see Kong and rioted). The extras were thanked for their cooperation and assured all that theirs would not be the face on the cutting room floor. The propmen then covered Kong with a huge tarpaulin to prepare him for his trip home to Paramount Studios.

Upon leaving, most extras I spoke with felt that where "Dino Kong" will make a lot of money and perhaps be a good movie, it will never measure up to the genius of people like Willis O'Brien and his amazing staff of technicians, who, in 1933, produced the classic *King Kong* which has been seen and cherished by millions of people across the world. Unfortunately, once the Paramount *Kong* is released, theatrically for Christmas, '76, the original will be withdrawn from general release, so it will not compete with "Dino Kong" (according to *Variety*). This must not be done! The RKO Kong will not compete with the newer version as it is on a higher level of entertainment and must not be allowed to languish in a deep, dark vault in Paramount Studios. Although I had my brief moment of fame as an extra, there is only one real Kong for me, please!

END



Red Karo syrup, used to simulate blood on the great ape.



Wanted! More Readers Like (left to right) Mark Corcoran, John Butterfield, John Agar and Dick Siegel.

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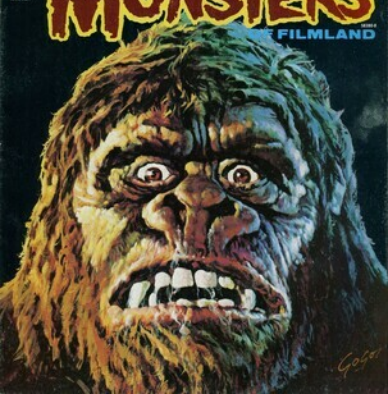
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Birds gotta swim, fish gotta fly (well, haven't you ever heard of flying fish?)—Kong gotta love one gal till he drowns. And you'll love all the Great Features in this X-mas Issue, especially the super KONG coverage started on page 6. Dive in!



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KING KONG 1977

the skull-crusher of skull island returns

KONGTROVERSIAL is the word for the remake of KONG. It's the picture "nobody" wanted remade—if you count such famous people as Ray Bradbury, Ray Harryhausen, Darlynne O'Brien, Jim Danforth & scores of others as "nobodies." Their feeling: the original was a masterpiece, virtually a sacred work of folklore art that could never be surpassed and not even equalled.

I personally felt a new KK classic could be created IF its script remained a period piece and vitamin enriched, IF basically the Max Steiner score were retained, IF to color were added Sensurround, IF it were projected in IMAX (the 70' wide by 92' high screen image) and IF, of course, essential, it employed the inspired collaboration of today's half dozen top model makers & animators.

By New Years virtually every Kong fan in the USA will have had the opportunity to make up his/her mind: either it's the feared fiasco or, despite all misgivings, the new version works and we have a great new work of fantasy entertainment.

The story which follows was the one approved at the end of 1975 but in the intervening year some changes, hopefully for the better, may have been made. We under-

stand your flood of irate cards & letters to the Studio had something of an effect.

After you've read the article & seen the picture, let us know if you wish any further coverage in future issues. We have plenty more fotos.

the legend of skull island

As the huge vessel SS PETROX EXPLORER leaves the port of Surabaya (in Indonesia), young Jack Prescott (JEFF BRIDGES) slips stealthily aboard the supertanker—a stowaway!

Mysterious rumors circulate about the ship:

Its destination is top secret. The crew is supposed to be heading for a new oil-drilling site. So why are there only 2000 feet of pipe aboard? Some drilling operations didn't come in until 20000 feet! And why the rush? Because Shell & Exxon are said also to be in competition RE what is mysteriously referred to as "The Island."

The rumors are stifled when Fred Wilson (CHARLES GRODIN), the leader of the expedition, assembles the crew in the mess room for an announcement. A New York desk jockey, he said Petrox Oil Company on the idea that—

ING



With a snarl that would snarl traffic, the New Kong prepares to give a Bear-Shock Test.



What our Terrified Hero reads in the palm of King Kong's Hand makes him wish he'd never studied palmistry!

"... We may be sailing into the history books. I believe we're headed for the biggest oil strike ever... on an island hidden by a perpetual fog-bank—never seen by human eye nor walked by human foot. The island is the tip of a huge underground oil tank, just waiting for us to twist the cap off. I'm betting everything I got on it."

"I'll take 50% of that," comes a voice from the back of the room as Jack Prescott steps forward. "There's all kinds of things that might account for the excess CO-2 found in your spectrograph & infrared photos. One would be animal respiration... animal breathing. I also have to question that human feet have never walked that island. In 1605 Peru Fernando de Quiros was blown south from the Tuamotu Archipelago. He wrote in his log of 'piercing the White Veil'—that's the fog, obviously—and landing on 'the Beach of the Skull' where he heard the 'roar of the Greatest Beast.' The rest of that log entry, unfortunately, was suppressed by the Holy Office in Rome."

Prescott cites other sources to back up his theory that the island had been visited, then introduces himself as a student from Princeton University, Department of Primate Paleontology... stowaway.

But he is not believed. Wilson concludes that he is a spy sent by a competitive oil company,

siren from the sea

On his way to the brig, Prescott spots an orange rubber lifeboat. Sprawled in the wet bot-

tom is a beautiful girl wearing a very clinging evening gown.

While the unconscious girl is brought aboard, verification comes over the ship's radio of Prescott's authenticity, all the way down to his fingerprints. Since the report also reveals he had one year of med school before he switched to zoology, Wilson asks Prescott to be present when the girl awakens.

When she revives, she tells them that she was on deck on the yacht, *Cynara*, by herself, and then—she was swimming to a star... to a light. The ship had mysteriously exploded and, by a miracle, a life raft was blown overboard near her. It was self-inflating, with an automatic flare.

There were no other survivors.

Her name is Dwan (JESSICA LANGE). The owner of the yacht had promised her a role in a movie he was making in Hong Kong.

As the days pass, Dwan & Prescott become friends. One day, while walking on deck, she confides to him: "Haffling... where can he be?"

"Where can who be, juv?" asks Prescott.

"I had my horoscope done before I flew out to Hong Kong—this superguru in Topanga Canyon. He is never wrong. My stars said I'd take a trip over water and meet the biggest person in my life."

The island, surrounded by a fogbank is sighted, and a landing party is lowered. Dwan refuses to stay aboard and because she is so lovely & so persuasive, no one can say no to her. Leading the expedition is Wilson, followed by Prescott, who has agreed to take pictures for his passage of the "greatest oil discovery in history."

The plan is to push into the interior and plant seismic charges for a picture of the underground geological structure.

When they land, they discover that the fog-bank does not extend over the entire island. As they push into the jungle, the white mist diminishes and the lead guides slacken their pace.

An enormous wall appears ahead. It towers a hundred feet high! Made of earth and stone and timber, it parallels the river a little way beyond the further bank, beginning in the sea and running off into the jungle above the trees.

It looks as old as the Great Pyramids of Egypt, except that the Pyramids weren't repaired 8 months ago....

The earth chinking the timbers had to be replaced after each monsoon season!

It is difficult to believe that there are people living on the island until—

jungle ju-ju

From the interior, echoing along the wall, resounds the BOOM BOOM BOOM of DRUMS!

Atop a slight rise, the party is awed to see—First a single aborigine drummer... then—farther along the clearing—50 drummers! The scene is viewed a pair of enormous gates which run the full height of the wall. They are secured shut with a wooden bolt about 5 times the size



KING KONG Meets the ACKERMONSTER in parlor shot taken by Ace Photographer Walt Dougherty. And Kong pleads: "Please take me back to Skull Island!"

of a telephone pole.

Suddenly high-pitched female chanting is heard as a procession emerges from the jungle. Alerigine women are chanting as they carry a bamboo platform on their shoulders. On the platform kneels a girl, 16 or so, dressed in a fantastical gown of bird feathers & dyed skins. Her head is crowned with flowers. Then over the women's voices come deeper male voices. A male procession comes from the jungle at another angle, converging with the women toward side steps leading up to a raised dais before the gates. In front are wildly dancing ju-ju men, their bodies painted with bizarre, fearful designs.

Wilson notices a smallish dark pool near the

gates and excitement rises in him—it could be oil!

The chant begins to change. All that can be picked out is one syllable which is repeated often: "KONG!... KONG!... KONG!"

Another ju-ju man dances into view in a strange ape mask. He wears high platform footgear to increase his height and paw-like skin gloves.

"I'd say it looks like a wedding," says Dwan. "But where's the groom?"

Prescott gestures to the dancing ju-ju man in the ape mask. "You might say that's the groom's stand-in. The actual groom is on the other side of the wall."

"Far out!" cries Dwan. "Like, you mean, it's



In a Kingsize Cage, Kong demonstrates His Royal Rage at being reduced to a Sideshow Freak. So that his Captors will get the point, he tears up the joint.

bad luck if they see each other before the Wedding March—

"Ghastly luck—for the whole congregation," murmurs Prescott.

Suddenly they are spotted! The drums cease. Every face turns in their direction and 3 ja-ja men, towering Ape Mask in the middle, start to walk up the slight rise.

The chief indicates that their magic has been contaminated...until he sees Dwan. Then he wants to trade six of his maidens for the beautiful white woman.

The natives make a menacing move after their offer is rejected and Wilson's party lift their rifles and fire a volley in the air. The natives flee from the strange thundersticks.

kidnapped!

Later that night, after the party returns safely to the ship, unknown to them a pair of outrigger canoes glide silently over moonlit water toward the ship...

Prescott & Wilson are arguing. After Prescott convinces him of the possibility that a creature called Kong might exist, Wilson decides: "When we go inland, we'll take plenty of TNT. Any sign of a monkey bigger than 4 feet, send it hang bang."

"You wouldn't," gasps Prescott, jumping to his feet. "Even an environmental rapist like you

—even you wouldn't be (dumb) enough to murder a unique new species of animal! Why, kids would burn every Petros gas station from Maine to California!"

Later, Dwan spies Prescott stealing a boat and supplies. "It's a chance that comes once in a lifetime, baby. You grab it or you're dead meat," he explains.

"Jack, you really shouldn't go ashore tonight," she urges. "It's not a good night for Aries like you."

"You read that up in the sky, huh?"

Dwan pulls a horoscope book from her jeans and reads: "Aries. In evening, steer clear of unconventional activities. A surprise with unpleasant aspects may be in store for you."

Prescott shrugs her words away and hurries up the stairs for another load of gear...

So he does not see the dark figures which suddenly appear out of nowhere...and the dark hands that pull the struggling Dwan over the side!

It takes a little while for Prescott to return, find Dwan gone and discover—a feathered native ringlet! A terrible dawning understanding spreads across his face as—

Women chanting, drums beating & strange pipes playing surround her. Her face is dreamy. She wears a garland of flowers in her brow. Women's hands force her mouth open and tilt her head back. Dwan offers no resistance as a drugged potion is poured down her throat from a shell.



Camera Crew has to be hoisted high to get Kong-eye view. Then—"Run for your lives—the King is loose!" And the crowd in the bleachers blanches and spins!

She is kneeling on a bamboo platform—the same that the native maiden was seen on that afternoon—wearing the same fantastic gown of leathers & brightly-dyed thin leathers.

The atmosphere is joyous.

Shouldn't a wedding be joyous?

Natives pour bamboo buckets of hot oil onto the massive bolt, lubricating it. Then they tug & strain to pull it back from the huge wooden rings fixed to the gate sections... and it slides open.

Dwan is borne forward as the gates swing open to a stepped stone pedestal.

Dreamy, vacant-eyed, the dragged girl is led quietly unresisting up the 50-foot steps to be tied—but in a purely symbolic way, because the tie is only a garland of flowers. Then the bridesmaids race down the steps.

Native men climb ropes & ladders to the top of the wall on the inner side. A huge horn of skin stretched over a bamboo frame is placed on top of the wall, aimed out over the jungle. Ten natives hurry into place at the horn's 10 mouth-pieces as—

The gates swing shut.

The huge bolt is pushed in.

And the bride awaits the grooves...

bride of the monster

At the beach the whole crew of the *SS Petros Explorer* is landing in a small flotilla of launches

& barges & lifeboats. They hear—

The echoing blasts of a great horn and a terrible unison chant: "KONG! KONG! KONG!" Again the horn is blown and again the chant. There is a shape which towers over the tree-tops!

A harsh sound like great breathing and animal grunts can be heard over the chant.

Trees are pushed aside like blades of grass to fall crashing onto the jungle floor.

Thus her drug-based mind, Dwan cannot focus on the shape towering above her—

Until a mammoth paw suddenly reaches down and wraps around her, lifting her up!

High. Higher? HIGHER!

Then she is brought close to its face and she sees—

The most fearful ape-face in the whole world!

Kong roars his approval to the tiny dark figures on the wall and fades back into the jungle night.

"We're too late!" cries Prescott. "Set off the show!"

A flare-pistol is aimed & fired.

A little pop is heard and the whole scene is bathed in a flickery red glare. Stillness & silence fall over the cavorting celebrants; every head swivels up.

From the jungle a fusillade of gunfire barks into the air. Yelling crewmen stream from the jungle, sending the natives fleeing, wailing & howling with fear.



Dwan, a captive, waits for that captivating Swano devil Kong to come and "take her away from all this."

As the crewmen draw back the giant bolt, others plant dynamite charges around the gate.

The great gates swing inward and lights blaze thru.

They see the stone pedestal, jungle; but no person, no great beast.

"He's taken her!" cries Prescott.

"Someone's taken her!" Wilson echoed skeptically.

"Who do you think went thru there—some guy in an ape suit?"

They walk slowly ahead.

Suddenly Wilson stumbles & falls forward out of the glaring light. In the light of his flashlight, Prescott finds Wilson picking himself up out of a depression he tripped into.

"It's OK, I just fell into this hole."

"You're not in a hole—that's a footprint," Prescott states quietly.

Prescott & a group of sailors follow the path of knocked-down trees for 2 miles without a sign of Dwan . . . or her remains.

They keep contact with Wilson at the base via radio. When it becomes necessary to stop until dawn, they pitch camp. During the night the radar on board ship sweeps their area to immediately notify them of any "large furry blips moving in their direction."

The footprint measures 6'6". Multiply by 8 and you have his height.

"He'd make a great commercial, wouldn't he?" observes the Captain of the ship. "You know, The battles we at Petros fight to fill your gas

tank, blah, blah, blah."

The group within earshot laughs . . . but no laughter comes from Fred Wilson . . .

He likes the idea!

would you let your daughter marry an Aries?

Dwan awakens at dawn in a jungle glade. At first she doesn't realize where she is, then she looks up . . .

The mammoth ape is squatting beside her, his eyes studying her every move.

Panicked, she tries to crawl away on her elbows & knees. But she is lifted up into the air. She desperately holds onto the monster's soft black hairs.

"I can't stand heights!" she screams.

The upward motion ceases abruptly. She is flabbergasted. Perhaps she is emboldened by the unlikely success of her plea, perhaps she simply wants to hear the sound of a human voice. But anyway, she says: "Honest to God, I can't! When I was 10 years old and taken up the Empire State Building, I barfed in the elevator! With no offense, I can't stand the smell of a zoo monkey-house either! Is it fair to persecute a person for something they can't help?"

Kong picks up the little white doll and brings it closer to his face—she amazes him.

Dwan can stand it no longer; she breaks into hysterical yelling & kicking. "You charivariest pig ape, what are you waiting for? If you're gonna eat me, EAT ME! CHOKO ON ME!"

Kong is more fascinated than angered.

Suddenly Dwan realizes what she has been doing. She looks up at him in utter horror. "I didn't mean that! I swear I didn't! Sometimes I get too physical, it's a sign of insecurity, you know? Like when you knock over trees? Nice ape—nice monkey—oh, such a nice sweet, sweet monkey—we're going to be friends—I'm a Libra—what are you? Don't tell me. You're an Aries! Of course you are—I knew it! Oh, how wonderful! Oh, how sweet!"

The search party continues thru the next day. Most of the men believe Kong had long since destroyed the girl. Their imaginations conjure ghastly ways in which the giant ape could have ended her life.

Suddenly they feel the earth move under their feet. An earthquake? No! Something alive is undulating beneath them—something scaly & reptilian!

A huge snake wraps its mammoth coils around one of the sailors, crushing the life from him as the others flee into the jungle in all directions.

The snake follows for a little distance, gathering others into its huge maw, but eventually gives up the chase . . . and looms.

The sole survivors, a mere handful, gather together to formulate a plan. Only Prescott wants to go forward. All the others want to return to the ship and their sheer numbers outweigh Prescott's pleadings.



KONG admires his picture on the cover of *FAMOUS MONSTERS*.

OUT OF KONGTROL!

Run for Your Wives, Big Daddy is looking for His Baby Doll!





ANALYTIC GENIUS

QUEEN KONG

THE LIBERATED

LADY GORILLA



Question: Can a Giant Gorilla be accused of being a Male Chauvinist Pig? Anyway, demanding equal time is this Kinky Kong! And since the cast... Ray Fay? Lute Habit? Well, no Bob Strongarm? Animation by Wallace O'Brien? Models by Sylvan del Grotto? And introducing Noble Jackson as the Chief of Skeleton Island?

PALMY DAZE!



You'd have an upset stomach too if you got your tummy tickled by a one-ton furry forefinger!

escape from the paws of death

Headed in the direction they thought would bring them closest to the gates, they encounter a ravine, spanning about 50 feet, across their path.

Prescott is urged forward to test the strength of the log which spans the chasm and crosses it swiftly & smoothly.

As the other men start across in single file, they are halted in the middle by—

KONG! His huge bulk looms over the trees, still carrying Dwan.

When the terrified crewmen fire their carbines wildly at him, Dwan is deposited in a treetop as the great ape leaps toward the log.

Prescott dives headlong for the roots hanging over the ravine and lithely scampers out of sight.

Kong's paws close around the end of the log. He shakes it. The men dance & scream & fight for balance. Two of the doomed men fall the hundreds of feet into the greenery below. Then two more!

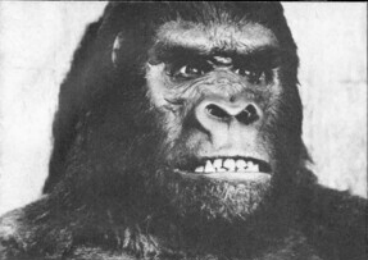
Triumphant, Kong beats his mighty chest, retrieves his bride and lumbers away into the dense jungle.

Prescott follows at a safe distance.

Later that evening he comes across Kong & Dwan.



Kong breaks his bonds as if they were made of cardboard!



Too close for comfort is this closeup of KONG!

He hears a great thrashing & angry roars. Kong is locked in mortal combat with the giant snake! And the snake isn't losing, throwing coil after coil over the ape.

Prescott is able to spirit Dwan away but not before Kong spies the both of them in each other's arms.

A roar of rage causes their heads to spin—and they see Kong's anger.

As the 2 humans race away, Kong seizes the repulsive reptilian head by both its jaws and rips it in half!

Kong rises, smashing aside trees, rushing to retrieve his stolen doll.

Dwan & Prescott are stopped at the edge of a precipice. Rather than face Kong, together they leap over the edge and fall toward a turgid river... Kong's roar of rage is lost in the incredible distance.

After swimming to safety, they race toward the gates... with Kong in pursuit!

Wilson has not been idle... a fantastic trap has been laid for the giant gorilla!

A lookout spots the fleeing couple and urges the gates open.

As the survivors are welcomed warmly, Kong emerges from the bush!

Before the bolt of the gate is halfway home,

Kong hurls himself against the gates.

Debris begins to fly!

Wilson pushes down the handle of a detonator box he clutches precariously and a thousand gallons of pure chloroform pour out—into a dark pit.

But at the same time, Kong breaks thru the gate—

And falls into a mammoth pit which had been dug to exactly accommodate him.

Kong roars & thrashes about in the pit.

Fumes overcome him. His bellowing roars are choked. The only sound from the black pit is a feeble muddily splashing as he beats feebly around in the chloroform puddles under him.

Then... silence.

...

Kong is taken to New York where he is exploited by the Petros Oil Company. Remember the "Put A Tiger In Your Tank" commercial? Well... Kong is not exploited for long. In his first public appearance, he breaks his chains and the city of New York finds the gigantic ape unstoppable as he ravages the city!

Will KING KONG be the "biggest event in the history of the cinema" as Dino de Laurentiis has called it? Or will it be a big-budget GODZILLA sequel—forgotten after a year or two?

You will be the judge. Let us know your reaction to the new KING KONG!

40 FEET OF FURRY FURY!



If Kong should decide to swat those cameramen on the elevated platform, they'd feel like they were wearing elevated platform! (Well, that's shoe business.)



A "photographer" perched high on Kong's chest, attempts to take photos.



THE KING -IN- NEW YORK

TEXT: DICK SIEGEL
PHOTOS: TOM RYDAL

colossal coverage of classic remake

King Kong, the 8th Wonder of the World, lay dead after a 1000-foot fall from the North Tower of New York's famed World Trade Center. He lay amid shattered remnants of the sidewalk and was surrounded by an ever surging mass of people desiring a better look, held in check by the combined forces of the police and National Guard. Suddenly, a middle-aged woman in an emerald-green pantsuit burst past the police and began to frantically remove clumps of hair from the great ape when the director cried "Cut!"

It was a warm, cloudless night in late June, 1976, when Producer Dino DeLaurentis began production in



John [The Man People] Goodman portrays the Mayor of New York in the new King Kong.

New York of his remake of the famed Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack film classic KING KONG. That evening scores of special tactical police officers and National Guardsmen battled the imaginary "Dino" Kong, as the King refused to make a personal appearance. Paramount's special effects technicians would later matte the mechanical, forty-foot version of Kong into the film during post-production filming. However, for the scenes at the World Trade Center, Kong would be there in the flesh.

The next night the paid extras filed into the open-air plaza at the World Trade Center; they received their first glimpse of Kong. Forty feet long, Kong, made of styrofoam, rubber, wood and an \$85,000 horsehair coat, lay dead. The ape was virtually surrounded by King lights, cameras and boom, an energetic crew of filmmakers and, behind wooden police barricades approximately 1,000 feet in back of Kong, thousands of curious New Yorkers.

Before actual shooting commenced on the final sequences, a search was on for extras with ties and suit jackets. Thesefortunates were handed cameras and assumed the roles of reporters who scamper about on Kong's massive chest.

Finally, the other extras were led into place in a large circle around "Mr. K" (as the film crew nicknamed the monster) while the director, John Guillermin, took closeups of the stars for a con-

ple of hours. Meanwhile, the 500 camera-hungry, star-seeking extras gossiped about standing around. Most were telling humorous anecdotes about Kong ("It wasn't the planes that got in, it was Dino killed the beast," (sic), making friends with the police (who were Screen Actors Guild members that pointed out the differences between themselves and real police. They carried no notepads or pens and have problems getting their guns out of the holster) or attempting to stamp one another with Kong trivia (who said: "All hands on deck! All hands on deck!?!") or drooling expectantly over the fabled treasures of a boxed lunch.

Soon it was time for the non-professionals to emote. The assistant director who was in charge of the crowd and, via walkie-talkie, in constant communication with the director, told the crowd to "Turn around and take ten giant steps back and thin out." The mob was then told to advance slowly, become excited, accelerate their pace and try to push their way past the police and guardsmen to reach Kong. "Do not look at the cameras! This is real life! Look only at Mr. K, roll on!!!"

Spurred on by the novelty of playing with "the tallest, darkest lead in Hollywood," a green-clad housewife continuously managed to escape the "police" and, reaching Kong, taking souvenirs for her children, ruining several takes. Other shots were spoiled by an overly enthusiastic extra who shouted out "That's Carl Denham! He must be the man who captured the ape!" and thereby making half of the crowd laugh.

In between scenes, a curious event would take place, as a man carrying plastic bottles of a murky red liquid would slowly ascend the prostrate form of Kong. He inched precariously upward until, rising atop Kong's chest, he bent over, unscrewing the top of his bottle, and proceeded to pour the old red Kato syrup all over. Indulging in a little bit of movie magic, Guillermin would constantly ask for more "blood" to be poured on, "Mr. K had a big fall." The "blood man," as he was dubbed, would always receive enthusiastic cheers and applause for his bloody task.

Assuming their starting positions again, the extras began their lackluster charge forward. Another assistant director tried to psych the crowd up by wielding his megaphone and sneering around crying: "This is a science fiction movie, serious stuff, no laughing or giggling please! You're on your way home after a day at the office, school, whatever, and you're confronted with a forty-foot ape that just fell 100 stories and is a bloody mess. You're scared, curious and compelled to see Mr. K! Remember, we're trying to beat the old classic!" His last statement brought more giggles and words of disbelief. At approximately 12 midnight Director Guillermin cried out in anguish, "Hour break for lunch!"

Quickly, the cast and crew dispersed and embarked for the various dining areas. The extras formed several huge lines and soon attained the mythical, yet red-tasting, boxed lunch.

After the break, the professionals and non-professionals assembled for a sequence in which



Kong, resplendent in his 285,000 horsehair suit, lies dead.

Jeff (son of Lloyd) Bridges attempts to break through the crowd to rescue his beloved leading lady, Jessica Lange, from the flashcubes of the fourth estate. Bridges assumes the Bruce Cabot role, revamped for the '70's, an anthropologist aboard the *Petron* explorer, a research ship sailing to Micronesia (Skull Island?) in search of undersea oil. On the way, they rescue Ms. Lange, who is adrift at sea after the explosion of a yacht she was on. Charles Grodin (11 Harrowhouse), who was not present at the New York shooting, portrays a variation of Robert Armstrong's role, as "Wilson," the ruthless oil tycoon who sees in Kong the ultimate publicity stunt. "Wilson" does not sound like a man who would say, "We'll be millionaires, boys! I'll share it with you all!"

Before shooting begins, Bridges gets a layer of sweat from the prep man, who sprays him with an atomizer. Strategic people in the crowd then separated themselves, giving Bridges a path. Then the director began rolling and Bridges bobbed and weaved his way through the crowd, only to be repulsed by the police. On most shots, the cameras stopped as he reached the police,

but on several occasions, they kept rolling as Bridges ran back through the mob, knocking over unwary extras who thought the take took.

Then, while the crowd selected, a sequence involving Jessica Lange, the reporters and the Mayor of New York took place. The mayor was being played by a man who, until two years ago, was believed dead by the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences, Mr. John Agar. Agar, in the sciencifilms of the '50's, had saved the world several times from *The Tarentula*, *The Mole People*, *The Brain from Planet Arous* and others, would now save Ms. Lange from the fearless photographers. The scene unfolded as "Dwan," freed from Kong's grasp, is hysterical and besieged by the flashcubes and questions of *many* reporters. Suddenly, Agar, resplendent in his black evening tuxedo, rushes forth and puts his arm around her. She doesn't want to be consoled by a smiling publicity-seeking mayor and Ms. Lange breaks free, rushing off camera to seek her lover, leaving a very disappointed John Agar.

Later, John Agar was signing autographs and chatting with fans behind the large boxes. Agar,



at 54, is still in excellent condition. He's slimmed down from his Tarantula days, has neatly barbered grey hair and sports a Carl Denham-esque moustache. He recounted how, in a western with John Wayne, he was forced to ride a horse bareback for the first time and told of the ensuing results. To relieve his posterior pain, he was advised to fill a hot bath with sea salt. When he had done so, and sat down, he "promptly went through the ceiling! OOOOW!!!" Agar says. "That really hurt! Never put raw meat to salt water!" When asked about Hugh Beaumont, his one time co-star, he replied, "You're thinking about a film called *The Mole Men* (sic)" and proceeded to tell about when a friend and fellow actor, Rock Hudson, saw a relaxed John Agar sitting on the set, surrounded by actors in mole people guise. Hudson chuckled. "What the hell's going on here?" Agar just laughed. Before asking Mr. Agar about his "obituary" in issue 106, an elderly couple came up to him and queried as to who he was playing. Agar replied, "I'm the man with the red carnation!" Then they asked Agar if he ever was a producer. "Producer? Sure . . . I produced three kids." Breaching him about his obit, Agar responded, "Famous Monsters? Oh yeah . . . I went to a witchcraft convention in Los Angeles when someone came up to me and said 'You're John Agar! But . . . you're dead.' Well, maybe," I said, but I haven't had a chance to lie down yet." Then the editor, Forrest Ackerman, came out and said, "You're alive?" Agar smiled, "I think so—Anyhow, it's kinda fun to read your own obituary."

Having been thanked for his time, Mr. Agar posed for a photo and then, with a resounding "You bet!" vanished into the stillness of the night.

The following Sunday shooting was completed on schedule (despite a fiasco earlier that week when a real mob of New Yorkers, 10,000 strong, showed up to see Kong and rioted). The extras were thanked for their cooperation and assured all that theirs would not be the face on the cutting room floor. The propmen then covered Kong with a huge tarpaulin to prepare him for his trip home to Paramount Studios.

Upon leaving, most extras I spoke with felt that where "Dino Kong" will make a lot of money and perhaps be a good movie, it will never measure up to the genius of people like Willis O'Brien and his amazing staff of technicians, who, in 1933, produced the classic *King Kong* which has been seen and cherished by millions of people across the world. Unfortunately, once the Paramount *Kong* is released, theatrically for Christmas, '78, the original will be withdrawn from general release, so it will not compete with "Dino Kong" (according to *Variety*). This must not be done! The RKO Kong will not compete with the newer version as it is on a higher level of entertainment and must not be allowed to languish in a deep, dark vault in Paramount Studios. Although I had my brief moment of fame as an extra, there is only one real Kong for me, please!



Red Kero syrup, used to simulate blood on the great ape.



Wanted! More Readers Like (left to right) Mark Carroon, John Butterfield, John Agar and Dick Siegel.

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