

THE ONLY MAGAZINE OF ITS KIND - A PREVIEW OF ALL THE
TOP SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FILMS FOR 1977

\$2.00

PRINT PUBLICATIONS

SCIENCE FICTION

ILLUSTRATED: 1977

KING KONG

THE NINTH WONDER
OF THE WORLD

RAY HARRYHAUSEN'S
NEWEST CREATION:

SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER

THE MAKING OF
STAR TREK

• 2 •

THE FUTURE OF LOGAN'S RUN

COLLECTOR'S
EDITION

KING KONG

THE NINTH WONDER OF THE WORLD

BY JOHN R. CHRISTOPHER

A dimly-lit street in the Queens section of New York City. Shadows criss-cross the avenues, sporadically. Terror-stricken citizens abandon their homes and vehicles, racing for their lives. Upon this street, Jack and Dwan search for safety. Behind them, a black cloud pursues, THE BIG ONE, encompassing all which lies before it. A black cloud called... KING KONG.

"Every picture I have worked on," observes producer Dino De Laurentis, "has had certain problems, like WAR AND PEACE

and THE BIBLE. But Kong has been a special situation. Our pictures must have quality for it to be a success...be a better picture than the original."

Happily it must be noted, the new KING KONG is a success. The 1976 re-make is equal in every way--and in many ways, superior--to its noble predecessor.

Director John Guillermin is no novice at this kind of large scale drama. In films ranging as far afield as TOWERING INFERNO and TARZAN'S GREATEST ADVENTURE, he has displayed an ability to inject subtlety and character within a spectacular format.

A fine cast has been assembled, even to the smallest parts. Jeff Bridges and Charles Grodin head

off the players, with Jessica Lange making an impressive debut as the Beauty which lures the beast. Then of course, there is Kong...from man-size to forty feet of mechanical marvel.

"Everyone knows the monster is the star of the picture," comments cinematographer Richard Kline, "...and you have to trust him just like the other actors, even though you know he's a mechanical creature. For the story of Kong is told through his eyes and mouth. His true emotions are in his facial expressions."

"His eyes!" exclaims Guillermin when pressed for the secret of Kong's ability to move the audience. "Those F-----eyes!"

As Dwan, of course, Jessica got

JOHN R. CHRISTOPHER — A former editor of various film magazines, John's maverick ways lead him into free lance writing of which he is very much respected.



Man in monkey suit and acquaintances: Rick Baker as King Kong, from left to right— Julius Harris, Jessica Lange, Jeff Bridges, Rene Auberjonois, Charles Grodin, and Ed Lauter.

to know Kong the best. Especially in a playful moment when the beast disrobes her.

"It was no longer an abstract mechanical, a hand coming at me. I had to respond to him as a lover."

Confesses De Laurentis, with a smile; "It can't be a straight 'G'. There is a relationship between beauty and the beast." A relationship etched more sensitively and deeply than ever before. The triangle of Jack, Dwan and Kong, in the hands of Guillermin and crew, becomes a thing of exquisite beauty and amazing intricacy.

For this reason, the new Kong is not afraid to take its competitors head on. Little references are made, here and there, almost as a snicker to its skeptics.

When lifted into the air for the first time, Dwan is haunted by

childhood memories. "No, I can't stand heights!" she screams. "Once when I was a child, my parents took me to the top of the Empire State Building and I got sick!"

In a later scene, the Captain of the expedition pulls oil company executive Grodin aside. "Y'know, I just thought of something," remarks the Captain regarding the still unseen Kong. "Wouldn't this make a great commercial?"

The film does have its tongue-in-cheek moments, but the story is played straight and Kong is never buffooned. If anything, he becomes a more realistic, sympathetic figure.

True, as the cynics have made an effort to point out, Kong is a monkey suit. But what a monkey suit! Built to scale in Kong's image, it towers 40 feet in height and weighs more than six and a half tons. Thousands of feet of cables and wiring within this shell connects Kong to a control panel, where six men are required to direct his actions for the film.



Unlike the 1933 version, the film is not laced with rock-em sock-em battles between monsters, designed to dazzle the audience. The new Kong actually takes its viewers on a journey into the world of fantasy...a fantasy as real as the person seated beside you. The wizards manning these effects have channelled their

Jessica Lange, as Dwan, wonders what the fates have in store for her as she is held in King Kong's massive hand, after having been offered to the giant gorilla as a human sacrifice.



With Kong now at her feet, smashed on the pavement of New York City, Dwan screams in anguish at the greater terror to be found in civilization than in Kong's island.



How it was done. First the story board sequence showing the camera angles and action to be filmed. Kong was filmed on a miniature jungle set with the actor in the ape suit. Dawn was filmed in front of a blue screen to be later matted into the background with Kong. When she is picked up it is with the giant mechanical hand and this is filmed against the blue screen.

THE STORY

Wilson is a rising young executive with the Petrox Oil Company. His future, however, is hanging by a thread. Wilson is betting on a mysterious fog bank which hasn't changed in thirty-five years. It is his belief that a rich oil shelf lies a short distance beneath the ocean's surface.

Jack Prescott does not agree. His recent years have been spent researching proof of an unexplored island, and the creature which inhabits it. A humanoid shape, more ape than man, but unlike any simian before encountered. For this reason, Jack is a stowaway on board the vessel.

The list of unofficial passengers grows when a luxury yacht is capsized in a storm. A life boat is found floating in the morning's calm, bearing the sole survivor. Dwan is a would-be actress, whose disinterest in a screening of "Deep Throat" was the margin which saved her life. After the incident, a shipboard romance with Prescott helps to save her sanity, as well.

Dwan convinces Wilson to add her to the initial landing party. Scaling a giant wall dividing the scenic splendor, the party interrupts an indefinable ritual. Dwan's presence draws the attention of the head tribesman, and the crew beats a hasty retreat.

That night, natives steal on board the ship and kidnap the actress. Jack notes her absence and quickly forms a rescue team, but they arrive too late. A drugged Dwan has been served up to the "gods" of the island in a ritualistic "wedding".

Death takes its toll on the team, and Jack stands alone when he finally retrieves Dwan. Kong hot on the heels, Jack and Dwan clash with the terrain to reach the safety on the other side of the wall.

His hopes for a rich oil reservoir dispelled, Wilson knows there is only one way to make amends to his employers. He needs a fantastic publicity gimmick. Working into the twilight hours, the crew sets up a trap for the creature, into which Jack and Dwan unwittingly lead Kong.

The spectacle back in New York disgusts Jack; a gaudy stadium presentation exhibiting Kong in humiliating costume. A stage re-enactment of the ritual wedding backfires when reporters rush up to photograph the scene. Thinking they mean harm for Dwan Kong breaks his bonds and rampages through the metropolis.

Jack has rescued Dwan from the panicked crowd, and they cross the bridge into Manhattan. Kong overcomes his basic instincts, defying a natural fear of water to cross the river; and finds the pair pausing for respite in a deserted tavern. A hand crashes through, and Kong takes refuge to the top of the World Trade Center, his girl in tow.

Jack's efforts to capture the beast alive are defeated when the military initiate an onslaught upon the creature. When attacked by helicopters, knowing his end is near at hand, Kong lowers Dwan to the comparative safety of the roof-tops. She protests in vain, knowing that her safety will seal Kong's doom. The depth she sees in his eyes are too much to bear; those eyes which could never have belonged to one who is merely animal.

When Kong finally surrenders to fate, plummeting 107 stories to the street, it is a cold death which awaits him. The madness finally breaks loose, the flood of emotions. For the terrorized New Yorkers, a nightmare has ended. But for others, for the girl who weeps upon his chest and the man who defended him, the nightmare of Kong will never end.

efforts to the creation of life, rather than a mere fairy tale.

Throughout the two-hours-plus length of the story, the audience will find themselves forgetting KING KONG is only a movie. The film is so consistently effective, it is difficult to single out just a few memorable sequences.

One such scene has Kong bathing Dwan. After showering her beneath a waterfall, Kong dries the girl off with puffs of his warm breath. Her eyes closed, Dwan sways exotically, contentedly, to the buffeting breeze.

Outwardly, the scene is amusing in its simplicity. Under the surface, however, it is a complex situation. Within her mind is a hot-bed of emotion, reacting to a dream lover who cannot survive reality. It is the first time Dwan regards Kong as anything more than a beast.

Equally effective are the New York sequences, topped off by a new version of the classic climax. Jack and Dwan's parts have been embellished to give the audience a wider range of identification. In the original, Fay Wray was the threatened and Bruce Cabot the savior. Bridges and Lange, on the other hand, have found their futures inextricably bound with Kong's. They are thrown into dire conflict at his potential demise.

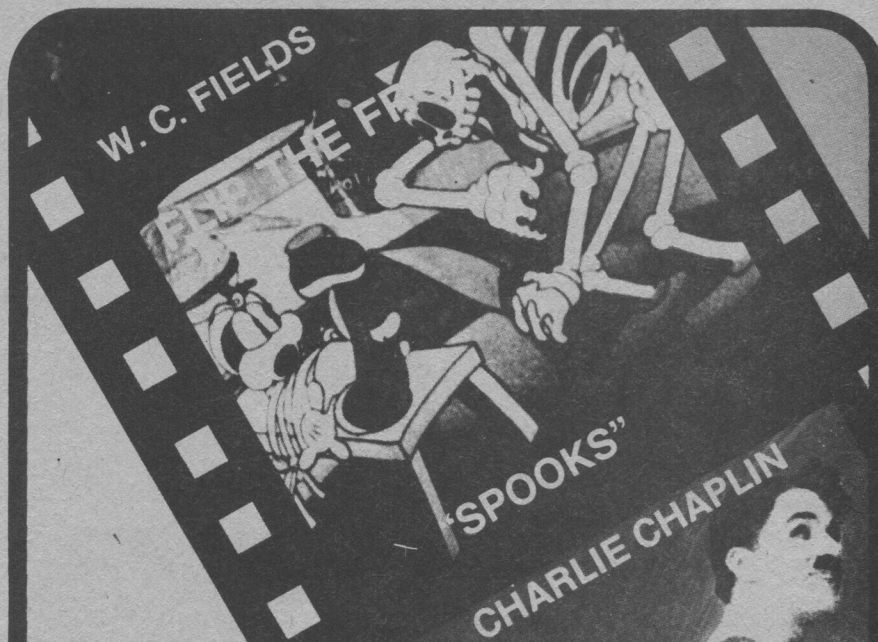
Kong is a stronger character, as well. We can actually feel his thoughts, see the self-sacrifice in those eyes. Truly, it is not the death of a king, but that of a genuine character, which climaxes the film.

More memorable, still, is the aftermath. Describing the scene would diminish its overwhelming impact. Suffice it to say, the producers have come up with one final twist which is perhaps the most beautifully moving moment in any film this past year.

"Violence is around us," concludes De Laurentis," and the motion picture industry is in the middle of our society. If I am to make a picture about the world we live in, then I must show this violence. Yet, there are too many films which are just about sex and violence."

Kong's world, on the other hand, is beyond the one in which we live.

"That's why I believe KING KONG will be unique for today's audiences. A straight, romantic adventure...a 'movie for all seasons'."



Scenes from classic films in your own home.

Let your projector become a home theatre. There's a whole new world of home entertainment waiting for you with Blackhawk Films. And to get you started, we've assembled our 8mm silent sampler and Super 8 sound sampler, showing clips from historic silent films, and classic scenes from early "talkies."

Silent sampler mixes theatre and documentary. For only \$3.99, you will receive more than 10 minutes of scenes from such classics as "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", Charlie Chaplin's "Easy Street", and Mary Pickford in "The Renunciation." See the "Keystone Cops", "The Perils of

Pauline", some early Laurel and Hardy, Douglas Fairbanks, historical segments including Lindbergh's transatlantic crossing, and much more.

Excerpts from 8 famous films in sound. Blackhawk's Super 8 sound sampler will show you 11 minutes of classic scenes from Hollywood. The golf scene from W. C. Fields' "The Dentist", Duke Ellington in "Black and Tan", Laurel and Hardy do some rare hoofing in "Way out West", and Charlie Chaplin's masterful mime sequence in "The Cure." You'll also see F.D.R. addressing Congress in his "Day of Infamy" speech, and scenes from the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Write or call for your free Blackhawk Catalog... listing thousands of movies, plus projectors, accessories and slides.



**Master Charge &
BankAmericard Orders**
Call Toll Free
800-553-1163

(Not valid in Iowa)
Please Mention Order # 2616

Use the coupon below and start your own home theatre today

Blackhawk Films, Inc.
Bringing the movies home.

261 1/2 Eastin-Phelan Building
Davenport, Iowa 52803

Please send the samplers.

- ☐ Super 8 Silent Sampler only \$3.99
☐ Super 8 Sound Sampler only \$6.99

☐ Send Catalog only **FREE**

I enclose check or money order for _____ (Iowa residents add 3% sales tax)

Charge to my BankAmericard No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Charge to my Master Charge No. _____ Exp. Date _____

(Master Charge Code No. _____)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

RETURN POLICY: If not completely satisfied, you may return merchandise within 10 days, for full refund or replacement.



BEHIND THE SCENES OF

DEMON SEED
SUPERMAN '77
STAR WARS
EXORCIST II
LEGEND OF THE
GOLDEN VAMPIRES

