

Issue 69  
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# THE DARK SIDE

The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic



## THE WARREN REPORT

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A 3D Classic Revisited!

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Horror Guide \* Video Vault \*  
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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1997

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# Horror Guide

## KILLING EDGE, THE (1986)

\* Canadian filmmaker Lindsay Shonteff shot this interminable 'futuristic' thriller on video in the countryside around his Berkshire home. It's a virtually plotless affair in which a nameless guy (Bill French) wanders through a nuclear wasteland searching for the man who murdered his family and shooting it out with 'Terminators.' Most of the budget obviously went on ammo, but even the explosions aren't worth tuning in for. Strictly for Shonteff completists, if such an animal exists... Also starring Al Lambert, Marv Spencer. Directed by Lindsay Craig Shonteff. 90 minutes. Colour.

## KILLING HOUR, THE (1982)

\* Manhattan artist Elizabeth Kemp is troubled by disturbing dreams which turn out to be premo-

nitions of "The Handcuff Murders," a series of sadistic killings committed by a masked maniac. She contacts talk show host Perry King to tell him she can draw the faces of the victims-to-be - and then her troubles really begin! An intriguing premise is wasted in this typical stalk and slash epic, which is sunk by poor scripting, lacklustre direction and unconvincing gore effects. Also starring Norman Parker, Kenneth McMillan and Elisabeth Kemp. Directed by Armand Mastroianni. Lansbury. 90 minutes. Colour.

## KILLING KIND, THE (1973)

\*\* Director Curtis Harrington (*Games, What's The Matter With Helen?*) does his usual interesting job on this weird shot-in-Malibu psychothriller starring a pre-*Deer Hunter* John Savage as a young man just released from prison on a trumped-up rape charge. Ten years in the poky have left him with a bitter hatred of Ruth Roman, the lawyer whose ineptitude got him banged up in the first place, and he gets revenge by burning her to death. He also slaughters the girl who accused him of rape, and takes out his general hatred of women on the occupants of a boarding house run by his equally barmy mum (Ann Sothern). In one scene he has a nightmare in which he's in a crib surrounded by taunting women. The performances are good, but this is too



"KING KONG" - THE ANSWER TO EVERY SHOWMAN'S PRAYER!...  
"KING KONG" is shown in color throughout and throughout...  
...and meet the greatest ape in the world...  
...and meet the greatest ape in the world...



"Who's the real star of this show?" Krull's leading man has his doubts...

strange and unsavoury (and slow-moving) to appeal to mainstream stalk and slash audiences. Also starring Luana Anders, Cindy Williams. Directed by Curtis Harrington. Media Trend. 95 minutes. Colour.

## KILLING OBSESSION, THE (1994)

\*\* Two decades on from *The Killing Kind*, John Savage was still playing psycho serial killers, this time in a remake of the same director's sleazy 1972 shocker *Poor Albert And Little Annie*. Dr. John Saxon reluctantly lets Savage get out of his

mental asylum after 20 years, and John-Boy immediately sets about murdering women from the phone book named Annie Smith. (He has his reasons - just don't ask, okay?). It's a bit like a tame version of *Nightmares In A Damaged Brain*, with poorly staged hallucination scenes and not very good gore make-up. Porn star Hyapatia Lee has a minor role as a hooker. Also starring Bobby DiCiccio.

**Directed and written by Paul Leder. Triboro. 87 minutes. Colour.**

## THE KILLING OF AMERICA (1981)

\*\*\*\*  
One of the best (and most gruelling) of all mondo shockumentaries, this chilling look at "the land of a million murders and a hundred million guns" is enough to put anyone off taking a holiday there. The right to bear arms becomes the right to bury bodies as scriptwriter Leonard Schrader (brother of film director Paul) presents us with a catalogue of true-life slaughter that runs the gamut from political assassination to police shootouts and interviews with serial killers Ted Bundy and Ed Kemper. Guesome highlights include close-up images of what a bullet does to a

human head, though none of it is as disturbing as the final bullet-in-the face scene in the British mondo tape *Executions*. Supposedly an earnest attempt to stress the need for gun control in America, this is actually a thin excuse to show a great deal of graphic gore. The film was originally produced for the Japanese market and was never officially released in the USA.

**Directed by David Weisman. 85 minutes. Colour.**

## KILLING OF SATAN, THE (1974)

\*\*  
Another madcap horror yarn from the Philippines, this one even barmier than most. In fact we strongly recommend that your blood levels are topped up with alcohol before you settle down with it. Ramon Revilla stars as a guy who is chosen to battle

the forces of darkness, as represented by a devil in a red suit (with a tail and a pitchfork) who keeps naked women chained to the wall of a cave. The effects are poor but still enjoyable, particularly a yukky bit where a giant boulder crushes some poor schmuck into a bloody pulp. The battle of magic at the end is absolutely hilarious. Not good by any means, but pretty entertaining if you're in the right kind of silly mood.

**Directed by Efron C. Pinon. Paragon. 87 minutes. Colour.**

## KILLING SPREE (1990)

\*  
The guy who stars in this low-rent shot-on-video gore flick is named Asbestos Felt (1) and he gives a fairly toxic performance as a psycho mechanic who splatters anybody who gives a lustful



glance in the direction of his wife Courtney Lercara. "You screw my wife and I screwdrive your head!" says the demented joker as he thrusts a screwdriver into some poor guy's skull. Felt cuts off a girl's head and French-kisses it. He also slices the top off a handyman's bonce by holding him close to a ceiling fan, but the ultimate gore scene sees him wiring the innards of a TV repairman up to the mains and making him dance about. The grisly bits are quite effective, but everything else about the movie is inept, with awful acting and the kind of music score that makes you want to rip your own head off. The 21-year-old Florida-based director also made *Truth Or Dare* and *Wicked Games*. Don't expect to find a copy of any of them in Blockbuster... Also starring Raymond Carbone, Rachel Rutz. **Directed by Tim Ritter. Films Around The World. 88 minutes. Colour.**

## KINDRED, THE (1987)

\*\*\*  
The folk behind *The Dorm That Dripped Blood* also gave us this enjoyable, old-fashioned monster

flick starring David Allen Brooks as a teenager who inherits his mum's laboratory in an isolated house and turns up there with a bunch of his beer-swilling school pals. Unfortunately for them, the old dear has been messing about with gene-splicing and has created a horrid fish creature which lives under the house and pops out to slice 'em and dice 'em. Rod Steiger also turns up in one of the worst hairpieces in movie history, and the romantic interest is supplied by British-born Amanda Pays. A good effort, with nice makeup and a score by David Newman that's way above average for the genre. Joseph Stefano (an *Outer Limits* mainstay) worked on the screenplay. Also starring Talia Balsam.

**Directed and written by Jeffrey Obrow and Steven Carpenter. Vestron. 92 minutes. Colour.**

## KINGDOM (1994)

\*\*\*\*  
The Swedish director of *Breaking The Waves* and *Zentropa* came to international prominence with this one-of-a-kind TV mini-series that



*Krull - a film that's worth keeping an eye out for...*





*Kwaidan - a classic Japanese ghost story...*

plays like *ER* meets *Twin Peaks*. If you think you've seen everything, wait until you settle down for a four-hour marathon viewing of this nightmarish saga set in a gothic-looking hospital in Copenhagen. The anything-goes plot takes in ghosts, voodoo, organ transplants, weird sex and lashings of black humour. It's very macabre indeed, and alternately depressing and exhilarating. Stuff as odd as this doesn't come along very often, so you should make an effort to see it. The unusual look of the film was accomplished by shooting on 16mm, transferring to video, editing on video, transferring back to 16mm and finally blowing up to 35mm!

**Directed by Lars Von Trier. Ripe. 271 minutes. Colour.**

## KINGDOM OF THE SPIDERS (1977)

\*\*\* Captain Kirk takes on an infestation of evil arachnids in this highly entertaining B-movie classic. When pesticides kill off their natural food supply, hordes of tarantulas, funnel-webs and other eight-legged terrors begin attacking the residents of a small desert community. Goodness knows how they managed to persuade so many of the cast to let spiders crawl all over them, but there are some really suspenseful scenes as full-blown invasions. If you can't stand the hairy little critters you'll be under your seat by the end - guaran-

teed. William Shatner gives one of his less hammy performances here as the town vet who becomes the hero of the piece. Also starring Tiffany Bolling, Woody Strode, Altovise Davis.

**Directed by John "Bud" Cardos. 94 minutes. Colour.**

## KING DINOSAUR (1955)

Four scientists blast off for the planet Nova and encounter stock footage from *One Million B.C.* as well as rear-projected shots of gila monsters and armadillos. This typical Bert Gordon production (his very first) was shot in a weekend, and while watching it you may start asking yourself what took them so long, since there's about as much stock footage here as there is original material. The screenplay is by Tom Gries, who later became a respected film director in his own right with films like *Breakheart Pass*. Starring Bill Bryant, Wanda Curtis, Douglas Henderson, Marvin Miller.

**Directed by Bert I. Gordon. Zimgor/Lippert. 59 minutes. B/w.**

## KING DONG (1984)

\*\* Shot in Honolulu, this unbelievable porno ripoff of *King Kong* has some surprisingly effective stop-motion animation, but strangely enough the hardcore sex scenes are ineptly done. Crystal Holland has the Fay Wray role as a pretty actress who is shipwrecked on Kong Island along with a bunch of other bad actors who prefer to remain anonymous. They meet up with a long-necked dinosaur and a T Rex, and some Amazon women on horseback, plus of course Kong himself, who's quite similar in looks to the RKO original. The movie would have been a lot more fun had it been shot as a straight comedy-adventure, but as it is the narrative grinds to a halt every five minutes for an unappealing, badly lit porno scene. The only native who gets in on the action is a white one - big surprise, huh? The end reveals it to have been a bad dream, with Holland waking up in



*Kiss Of The Vampire - colourful Hammer horror*

hospital attended by a Dr. Cronenberg.  
**Directed and written by Yancy Hendrieth. 88 minutes. Colour.**

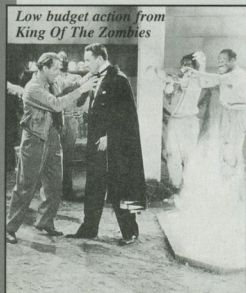
## KING KONG (1933)

\*\*\*\* One of the greatest fantasy adventures ever made, *King Kong* has deservedly attained legendary status over the years, and no remake or Japanese rip-off ever came close to capturing the original film's sense of wonder. The classic beauty and the beast fable, Kong opens with documentary filmmaker Robert Armstrong plucking pretty Fay Wray from the Depression-era breadline to cast her as the lead in his new movie. The problem is she has to travel with him and his filmmaking crew to the remote, uncharted Skull Island, a place inhabited by prehistoric beasts and ruled over by a huge ape called Kong. Wray's beauty entrances the monstrous monkey and Armstrong uses this attraction to lure the creature into captivity. Back in New York, Kong escapes and causes mass destruction before climbing the Empire State for an appointment with movie immortality. A terrific script, fine acting and Willis O'Brien's amazing stop-motion effects combine to produce sheer movie magic. Okay, so a lot of the movie trickery may look crude in the age of *Jurassic Park*, but O'Brien's Kong has much more personality than any computer graphic. The film saved RKO from bankruptcy, but they didn't show it any respect when reissuing it in 1938 in a cut form. Gone were scenes of Kong chewing and crushing human beings, and a racy sequence where the curious ape strips Fay Wray of her clothing. These scenes were restored in the 60s, but the legendary "spider pit" sequence remains tantalisingly unavailable. The script was begun by master British mystery writer Edgar Wallace and finished after his sudden death by Ruth Rose (wife of director Schoedsack) and James A. Creelman.

**Directed by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack. RKO. 100 minutes. B/w.**  
**KING KONG (1976)**  
\*\* It was obvious from the start that Dino De Laurentiis' ridiculous idea

of remaking RKO's classic giant ape movie was doomed to disaster. Dino trumpeted the fact that his Kong was an amazing full-sized mechanical monkey that stood 40 feet tall, but when it came to the crunch the majority of Kong's scenes were played out by a man in a monkey suit. Apart from that, this version does have some good things going for it. The script, by *Batman* TV series mainstay Lorenzo Semple, is quite witty in places, and the performances are appealing - especially Jessica Lange's sparky feminist Jessica of the Fay Wray role as a shipwrecked port actress! Charles Grodin is the oil-seeking tycoon who mounts the expedition to Skull island and Jeff Bridges plays heroic paleontologist Jack Prescott. Look out also for B-movie veteran John Agar in a tiny role as the Mayor of New York. Rick Baker's amazingly lifelike Kong costume carries most of the movie, with the mechanical ape only being used for unconvincing closeups of Lange in the creature's hand - in a sexy scene where the curious monster strips her. For some strange reason the monster falls off the World Trade Centre at the end and not the Empire State Building. Amazingly it won an Oscar for Best Special Effects, causing master animator Jim Danforth to resign from the Academy in disgust. The movie actually made a slim profit and sparked a far less successful sequel many years later. John Barry wrote the lush music score. Also starring John Randolph, Rene Auberjonois, Julius Harris.

**Directed by John Guillermin. Paramount. 134 minutes. Colour. Panavision.**



*Low budget action from King Of The Zombies*



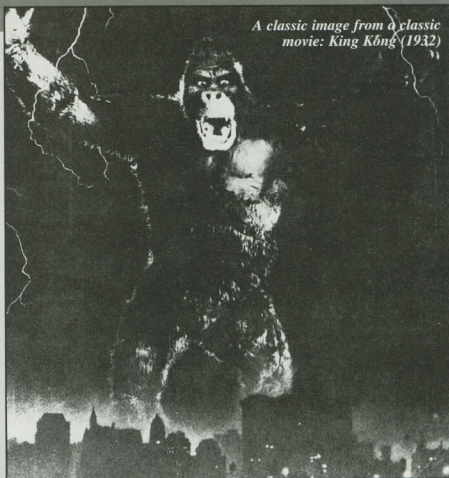
*Noel Willman and rubber bar from Kiss Of The Vampire*

## KING KONG ESCAPES (1968)

\*\*\*  
Rhodes Reason from TV's *White Hunter* series is leading an expedition into the deep jungle when he and his travelling companions are attacked by a giant dinosaur. Luckily they are saved from becoming dinosaur by the arrival of a back-projected Jap actor in a big monkey suit. The mighty creature falls in love with expedition member Linda Miller, but this is one case where size does matter and Kong's amour must remain unrequited. Meanwhile a mad scientist amusingly named Dr Who (Eisei Amamoto) has created a robotic Kong and sets up a jungle bout between old metal chops and the real thing that makes Tyson V. Holyfield look like a mild altercation. The final punch-up atop the Tokyo Tower is hilarious. The effects are pretty much the same as you get in all the Godzilla films - hardly convincing, but great fun nevertheless. As usual, extra scenes were shot for American distribution. This one went round UK cinemas as support to *Curry On Up The Jungle!* Also starring: Mie Hama.  
**Directed by Inoshiro Honda** (American scenes: Arthur Rankin Jr.). Rankin-Bass/Toho. 98 minutes. Colour. Tohoscope.

## KING KONG LIVES (1986)

\*  
If remaking *King Kong* was foolish, the idea of doing a sequel to the giant ape movie was even more stupid, and the results are actually worse than one might imagine. Once more produced by Dino De Laurentiis, and from the same director as the 1976 remake, this totally inept movie is based around the ludicrous premise that Kong didn't really die after falling from the World Trade Centre. Restored to city-stomping health by a jumbo heart transplant, he gets into a heavy romantic relationship with the equally colossal Lady Kong, leading to much cloying sentimentality and the arrival of a cute baby Kong! The Carlo Rambaldi special effects are very poor for a big studio production, and the film also wastes the talents of *Terminator* heroine Linda



A classic image from a classic movie: *King Kong* (1932)

Hamilton, here playing a friendly lady scientist. The stupid ending is pinched from *Escape From The Planet Of The Apes* and promises a further sequel - perish the thought! Also starring Brian Kerwin, John Ashton, Peter Michael Goetz.  
**Directed by John Guillermin.** Lorimar. 104 minutes. Colour. JDC Scope.

## KING KONG VS. GODZILLA (1963)

\*\*\*  
One of the very best of the Japanese monsterfests, this colourful, entertaining effort pits Japan's favourite city-stomper against America's giant ape in a right old ding-dong set atop Mount Fuji. Kong wins in the US version, while Godzilla wipes the floor with his opponent in the (longer) Japanese one. The actual bout is staged with a great deal more verve than usual, and the plot leading up to it is imaginatively realised. Kong has to fight off a giant octopus and gets stoned on berry juice while Godzilla takes on a nuclear submarine. The photography and sets are above average, and the dubbed dialogue is intentionally amusing for a change, like when one of the characters says "King Kong won't make a monkey out of us!" Great fun - and the first Kong movie in colour. Starring Michael Keith, James Yagi, Tadao Takashima.

**Directed by Inoshiro Honda.** Toho. Colour. Tohoscope. 90 minutes.

## KING OF KONG ISLAND (1968)

\*  
A crazed Italian/Spanish fantasy with lousy special effects and even worse acting, this obscure movie stars Esmeralda Barros as a female Tarzan brought up in the jungle by intelligent apes. She joins forces with heroic Brad Harris to com-

bat a race of robot monkeys controlled by villainous Marc Lawrence. Strictly for those seeking a dramatic change from conventional movie entertainment. Or a celluloid lobotomy. The same director made the Barbara Steele movie *Terror Creatures From The Grave*. Also known as *Eve - The Wild Woman*. **Directed by Ralph Zucker** (Mario Pupillo). 83 minutes. B/w.

## KING OF THE ZOMBIES (1941)

\*\*\*  
One of my favourite Monogram quickies, this fast-moving and surprisingly atmospheric programmer is fun to watch mainly because of the sterling contribution of black comic actor Mantan Moreland. He's your typical bug-eyed manservant who crash-lands on a remote island along with his employer Dick Purcell and John Archer. The place is owned by sinister Henry Victor (in a role obviously intended for Bela Lugosi), a Nazi sympathiser who has created an army of zombies. The fun really starts when Moreland himself is turned into a zombie, and his continual comic asides even when in this state keep the plot boiling merrily. With more racist gags than your average episode of *Love Thy Neighbour*, it's definitely not a movie for the PC brigade. Also starring Joan Woodbury, Patricia Stacey. **Directed by Jean Yvroug.** Monogram. 66 minutes. B/w.

## KISS, THE (1988)

\*\*\*  
A very good *Cat People* style supernatural thriller directed by an English guy who went on to co-write the Kevin Costner hit, *Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves*. *The Kiss* stars the sexy Joanna Pacula as a fashion model afflicted with a hereditary curse that she must pass on to her pretty young teenage niece Meredith Salenger with a kiss. The best parts of the show are Joanna's topless voodoo rituals, closely followed by some smartly directed *Omen*-style death scenes. The effects are by Chris Walas (*The Fly*), and they are excellent, apart from a patently stuffed cat which belongs on Norman Bates' wall! The opening half of this picture is superb, but it tends to get sillier as it goes on and ends with a confusing mish-mash of special effects mayhem, much of it set in and around a swimming pool. Also starring Mimi Kuzik, Jan Rubes.  
**Directed by Pen Densham.** Columbia Tristar. 98 minutes. Colour.

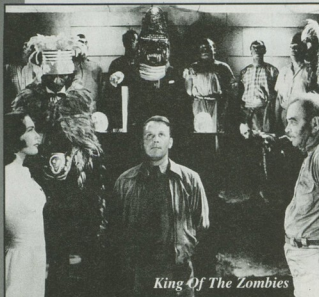
## KISS ME, KILL ME (See: BABA YAGA, DEVIL WITCH)

## KISS ME MONSTER (1967)

\*  
Anyone wanting to test their tolerance for Jess Franco flicks should slip this little beauty into their VCR. It's a mind-blowingly stupid spy spoof featuring Janine Reynaud and Rossana Yari as "The Red Lips Girls," two espionage agents working undercover as strippers in a fetish night club. They travel to a remote castle and meet up with mutant bodybuilders and lesbian killers, but I wouldn't like to have to explain the plot in any greater detail. The girls are easy on the eye, but on the evidence of this abomination Franco would be better off directing traffic. The same cast and characters appeared in Franco's *Sadistrotica*. Also starring Michael Lemoine (who was married to Reynaud in real life) and Adrian Hoven.  
**Directed and written by Jesus Franco.** 87 minutes. Colour.

## KISS ME QUICK (1963)

\*\*\*  
The sex life of the Frankenstein monster is a subject usually ignored by horror cinema. After all, the poor



King Of The Zombies



Jessica Lange meets her tall, dark and hairy leading man in *King Kong* (1976)

ONLY THE MONSTER SHE MADE COULD  
SATISFY HER STRANGE DESIRES!



clunk can't ever have any kids, because his nuts are in his neck! But this obscure "nudie cutie," often miscredited to Russ Meyer, lets Big Frankie grope some go-go girls and cut loose with a sexy female mummy. Fred Coe stars as an effeminate alien who visits the spooky castle home of a certain Dr. Breedlove to recruit some dolly birds for his women-starved planet. He certainly came to the right place, because the Doc's dungeon is full of naked girls dancing wildly to bad 60s rock music. It's pretty sexy for its day, and an absolute must for collectors

Jennifer Connelly  
and muppet pal in  
*Labyrinth*



of celluloid esoterica. Also starring Max Gardens, Jackie DeWitt, Althea Currier.

Directed by Pete Perry and Max Gardens. 80 minutes. Colour.

## KISS OF THE VAMPIRE (1962)

\*\*\*\*

One of the most atmospheric of all Hammer horrors, this stylish spooker was made during the period when Christopher Lee was refusing to don the cape of Count Dracula. Thus we get Noel Willman playing the sinister Dr. Ravna, leader of a vampire coven out to get their claws into a young couple (Edward De Souza and Isobel Black) who are honeymooning in Bavaria. Clifford Evans has the Peter Cushing role of a Van Helsing type who helps De Souza rescue his kidnapped wife from Willman's hilltop chateau. A stronger-than-usual script, good performances, and top notch set design and camerawork add up to a minor classic in the genre, with a particularly striking climax. Released in America in a heavily re-edited version as *Kiss Of Evil*.

Directed by Don Sharp.  
Hammer Films. 88 minutes. Colour.

## KONGA (1961)

\*\*\*

Another sleazy shot-in-England horror thriller from producer Herman Cohen, with his favourite star Michael Gough on top nasty form. Gough plays a barny botany professor who returns to London after a year in the jungle with a serum extracted from a carnivorous plant. Injecting the stuff into a chimpanzee causes the animal to grow to the size of a large gorilla, and he then hypnotises it into going out and murdering his enemies. (Hmmm. Doesn't sound dissimilar to *Horrors Of The Black Museum* to us). Anyway, mad Mike lusts after busty college student Sandra Banks, and when his jealous girlfriend Margo Johns finds out she gives Konga a big dose of the serum that causes him to grow to the size of a house and stomp his way round London with an action man doll of Gough in his furry mitt. It's daft but entertaining, as much thanks to Gough's leering, over-the-top villainy as the cheerfully tacky special effects (credited to a process called Spectamation). Great colour camerawork by Desmond Dickinson helps as well. Pop "sensation" Jess Conrad has a rare acting role as one of

RENE CHATEAU  
presente



IN EASTMAN COLOUR AND SPECTAMATION  
ANGLO AMALGAMATED FILM DISTRIBUTORS LTD.  
HERMAN COHEN Screenplay by JACK KANDEL & HERMAN COHEN

The Dark Side



Konga's more welcome victims. Also starring Austin Trevor, Jack Watson, George Pastell.

**Directed by John Lemont.**  
**American International Colour.**  
**Pictures. 90 minutes. Colour.**

## KONGO (1932)

\*\*\*\*  
The great character actor Walter Huston never gave a more brutal and shocking performance than in this powerful remake of the Lon Chaney silent movie hit, *West Of Zanzibar*. Huston is a white renegade who has been crippled in a confrontation with his arch enemy C. Henry Gordon years earlier. Unable to walk, he drags himself about with his ramshackle tropical house with his powerfully developed arms, and amuses himself by inflicting "unspeakable" tortures on the locals. He hooks young doctor Conrad Nagel on drugs and degrades pretty young Virginia Bruce until she is reduced to a quivering mass of slavish flesh. Huston also employs voodoo rituals to keep the natives in line, and buries somebody up to their neck in a swamp full of leeches. Surprisingly grim and gruesome for its time, and also extremely racist, the movie seems to be just an excuse to show people being whipped, starved and humiliated. And why not? It also makes good use of stock footage from the Chaney original, which was directed by Tod Browning.

**Directed by William Cowen.**  
**MGM. 86 minutes. B/W.**

## KRONOS (1957)

\*\*\*\*  
A different kind of monster threatens the future of mankind in this unusual 50s sci-fi favourite. Kronos is a 100-foot tall metal alien who washes up on the California coast and heads East, soaking up energy from its surroundings. The creature's energy field takes over the mind of scientist John Emery (who gives a great performance), much to the dismay of his colleague Jeff Morrow, and the latter races against time to find a way to defeat the ever-growing monster before it can reach the city. The

obviously low budget precludes ambitious special effects, but this is very well done of its type and well worth seeing if you're a fan of 50s sci-fi.

**Directed by Kurt Neumann.**  
**Fox. 78 minutes. B/W.**  
**Regalscope.**

## KRULL (1982)

\*\*  
We're up for any film where *Carry On* stalwart Bernard Bresslaw appears as a one-eyed cyclops, but this \$27 million flop is tough going at times. Supposedly spearheading a sword and sword craze (which never came) in the wake of *Star Wars*, it borrows ideas from *The Wizard Of Oz* and *Robin Hood* but they are not very well incorporated into a confused script about a heroic prince (Ken Marshall) who sets out to rescue Princess Lysette Anthony from the evil beast that has kidnapped her. The best bit involves a massive crystal spider (animated), but there are plenty of other imaginative touches as well. Sadly the film falls down by

having two uncharismatic leads, and all the interesting performances (by the likes of Francesca Annis, Liam Neeson and Freddie Jones) are in support. James Horner's score is much more memorable than the film as a whole.

**Directed by Peter Yates.**  
**Columbia. 117 minutes.**  
**Colour. Panavision.**

## KWAIDAN (1965)

\*\*\*\*  
A classic Japanese ghost story omnibus showcasing four short stories on spooky supernatural themes by Lafcadio Hearn, an America who settled in Japan in 1890. The first is called *Black Hair*, and tells of a Samurai (Rentaro Mikuni) who leaves his devoted wife to marry Misako Watanabe. But she is a selfish woman, and after many years he decides to go back to his first wife. He spends the night with her, only to discover the next morning he has been sleeping with a corpse! Next up is *Hoichi The Earless*, featuring Katsuo Nakamura as a blind musician who is asked to sing for a dead infant lord by a samurai ghost. Realising Nakamura is possessed, the local priests paint his body all over with holy symbols. But they neglect to paint his ears, which proves a painful oversight when the samurai ghost returns! Finally, in *A Cup Of Tea*, Genemon Nakamura keeps seeing the face of a savage samurai in his afternoon tea, and the real-life warrior turns up later in the day to attack him. A fourth story, *The Woman In The Snow*, was left out of the American edition but is in the UK print available on video. This is the best story of the lot and

tells the eerie tale of two woodcutters trapped in a lonely cabin by a blizzard. Beautiful Keiko Kishi turns up from nowhere and ghostly things start happening. This one has a genuinely chilling twist which doesn't take place until years later. For maximum effect this has to be seen in full widescreen, and subtitled rather than dubbed. The title translates as *Ghost Stories*, by the way.

**Directed by Masaki Kobayashi.** Toho. 125 minutes.  
**Colour. Tohoscope.**

## LABYRINTH (1986)

\*\*\*\*  
A fairly enjoyable kiddie fantasy, executive-produced in England by *Star Wars* man George Lucas and written by Monty Python's Terry Jones. Young Jennifer Connelly (from Argento's *Creepers*) enlists the help of a troll to rescue her little step-brother, who has been kidnapped by goblins. She has just 13 hours to rescue the infant from the clutches of David Bowie's Goblin King. Slow moving in places, with lots of amusing-looking muppets. It's quite similar in tone to the later *Never-Ending Story* movies, with a bit of *Alice In Wonderland* thrown in. Also featuring Kenny Baker.

**Directed by Jim Henson. 101 minutes.** **Henson/Lucasfilm.**  
**Colour. J-D-C Scope.**

## LADY AND THE MONSTER (1944)

\*\*  
The first but not the best movie version of Curt Siodmak's novel, *Donovan's Brain*, this overheated horror melodrama stars Erich Von Stroheim as a scientist who keeps alive the brain of a dead financier, which eventually takes over the mind of his assistant Richard Arlen. If you've seen *Donovan's Brain* (1953) or *Vengeance* (1962) then you'll know how this one goes. Good production values and atmospheric camerawork boost the entertainment value, but Vera Hruha Ralston is terrible as the leading lady - she was the Czech-born wife of Republic president Herbert Yates - and Von Stroheim goes over the top as usual. It was released in the UK as *The Lady And The Doctor*. Also starring Mary Nash, Sidney Blackmer.  
**Directed by George Sherman.**  
**Republic. 86 minutes. B/W.**

## LADY DRACULA (1974)

\*\*  
Also known as *The Legendary Curse Of Lemora*, this unusual vampire yarn features Cheryl "Rainbeaux" Smith as a hapless church singer who is lured into the woods by the vampiric Lemora (Lesley Gibb). Mild lesbian antics ensue, but this is very minor stuff indeed with barely enough plot to carry it through its relatively short running time. Smith later went on to become a popular actress in Australian pornographic films. Also starring William Whitton, Steve Johnson.

**Directed and written (with Robert Fern) by Richard**

