

The Australian Women's Weekly

May 19, 1976
40c *
New Zealand 50c



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ABBA TICK?
PLUS PIN-UP PICTURE**

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says goodbye to
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**SPECIAL 6-PAGE PULLOUT:
WINTER BABY
KNITS**



After 43 years "presumed dead,"

KING KONG MAKES A COMEBACK

—and two film companies compete for him

THE most expensive actor in Hollywood today is King Kong. It took \$2 million just to get him on his feet for filming.

The graffiti we read on subway walls, "King Kong died for our sins," are erroneous. Those bumper-stickers of the '60s, "King Kong Lives," are right.

The great ape's fall from the Empire State Building in New York in 1933 wasn't fatal, merely stunning. Living in seclusion, he's obviously been receiving treatment — maybe monkey glands.

Now he is starring again in "King Kong," a remake of that classic old monster movie which brought him world-wide fame. Paramount Pictures and producer Dino de Laurentiis have scheduled the movie to open in 1000 theatres across America before Christmas.

Late-TV viewers remember the story — the beautiful blonde heroine, Fay Wray, is seized by the natives of Skull Island and offered as a sacrifice to King Kong, the giant ape worshipped as their god. Kong is captured and brought to New York, where he breaks loose and vents his fury.

In the classic final scene, the huge monster, clinging to the Empire State Building, is strafed by bullets from old bi-planes. Finally he falls. For 43 years he has been "presumed dead." Not so.

Now rejuvenated in Hollywood, the \$2-million ape is what his designers call "completely articulated." His 12-metre high frame of structural tubing is filled with thousands of yards of electrical wiring which will enable every joint to move electronically, by remote control.

He can cover five metres in one stride — and presumably chew every tasty mortal (repeat "mortal") 40 times.

In the back lot of MGM a 300-metre long wall, 15m high, is under construction, also costing \$2 million.

What shenanigans will occur at the Great Wall is de Laurentiis' secret.

"Just let me tell you it will be a contemporary version of an old story," said Ken Markman, Dino's spokesman.

It cost RKO \$650,000 to make the original "King Kong" movie in 1933. The Paramount/de Laurentiis production will cost about \$16 million. It will need to gross between \$30 and \$40 million to break even.



The new King Kong will be electronic, an advance on the mechanized brute of 1933.

"It will do much better than that," says Markman.

With monster movies now flourishing, it may not have been entirely coincidental that two entertainment giants decided almost simultaneously to do a "King Kong" remake — resulting in suits, counter-suits and astronomical legal fees.

Paramount Pictures and their associates Dino de Laurentiis Productions finally withdrew their legal actions, with the proviso that Universal Studios won't release their King Kong film until 18 months after the de Laurentiis release.

It seems unlikely, however, that

Universal will proceed with its "King Kong" re-make.

The last time two studios produced movies on an identical subject — a biography of Jean Harlow in 1965 — both (Paramount and Magna) lost millions.

In de Laurentiis' production Fay Wray's part will be played by Jessica Lange, a New York model.

Nowadays Fay Wray is a housewife (Mrs Sanford Rothenberg, of Los Angeles). She has yet to meet her old admirer, the revived King Kong.

— PHILIPPA DAY BENSON