

SIXTIES (1961-1970) P-R
All reviews by Michael J. Weldon

PASSION FEVER (SW, 66) D Nick Economon

In this pretty simple b/w Greek movie, young Yarkos (Pano Katteri) drives a convertible, wears black clothes and always scores with the ladies (and an underage school girl). He falls for blonde Mickel (Katarenia Helmy) but insults, humiliates and hits her when he thinks she's still involved with an older man. Then the rejected school girl kills herself. Doris Wishman (as "Louis Silverman") added a few mismatched no-face nudity and sex scenes for the 69 U.S. adults only release. The music is over dramatic organ playing.

PATTERN FOR PLUNDER (SW, 62) P/D John Ainsworth, S Christopher David (THE BAY OF ST. MICHEL, OPERATION MERMAID) A group of WWII Navy vets sail to France on a small yacht to attempt to find a treasure stashed by the Nazis. Bearded skipper Nick Rawlings (Keenan Wynn) is the leader. Blonde Helene (Mai Zetterling) is first seen twisting wildly in a Cherbourg club. Dave (Trader Faulkner), who sings, had been living as a drunk, still in love with pub pianist Pru (Rona Anderson) and Bill (Ronald Howard) is a London bank exec. There's also a Nazi recently released from Spandau. Audio Instructions are played on a Philips reel to reel. Awkward flashbacks show Nazis plotting and actual sea battle footage. The double twist ending doesn't make up for the mediocre script. The b/w British production was filmed in the Pinewood Studios and in Greece. Herts Lion released it here.

PERMISSIVE (Alpha Blue, 70) D Lindsay Shontiff, S Jeremy Craig Dryden, P Jack Shulton

Suzy (Maggie Stride) arrives in London to visit her groupie friend Fiona (Gay Singleton) and becomes the main groupie for the lead singer (Alan Gorrie) of the band Forever More. The sad tale includes drugs (huge joints), mild sex scenes, some full nudity (this got an X rating in America), flash forwards, a cat fight and suicide. The short lived actual band (2 LPs on RCA) do all the music (including some whole songs on stage and in a studio) and are pretty good, featuring harmonies, a moog, a fiddle and mysterious unseen horns. They seem influenced by The Byrds, Jethro Tull, and Family, and wear typical bell bottoms and long hair of the period. The director had just done THE MILLION EYES OF SU-MURU (67) and NIGHT AFTER NIGHT AFTER NIGHT (69). The print is worn. The Scottish Gorrie, who looks like Roy Wood here, was late in The Average White Band.

THE PHANTOM PLANET (Englewood, 61) D/S William Marshall, P/S Fred Gebhardt, S William Telaak, Fred de Gorter

In the future (1980) Lunar base astronaut Capt. Chapman (Dean Fredericks) lands on a planet, shrinks down to the tiny size of the small group of aliens living in caves there, and is put on trial. He falls for the mute Zetha (Dolores Faith), but she's carried off by a Solanite prisoner (Richard Kiel in a monster suit). When challenged to a duel (by Tony Dexter), Chapman says, "I'd like to hang one on you!" Coleen Gray (THE LEECH WOMAN), is the daughter of the ruler (old Francis X. Bushman). Marvin Miller narrates the A bomb opening of the minimal AIP release. Faith and Kiel both also went on to THE HUMAN DUPLICATORS.

THE PHYNX (VSOM, 69) D Lee H. Katzin, S Stan Cornyn, P Bob Booker, George Foster

A female robot chooses 4 students and comic U.S government agents force them to form a rock group (the black guy plays drums and an American Indian plays bass) and trains them as spies. They play on ED SULLIVAN (Ed plays himself), break sales records, tour Europe and eventually play a private show in a castle in

Albania (to recover kidnapped celebs). THE PHYNX was an excuse to cram in over 40 (!) name stars. My favorites here are Leo Gorcey and Huntz Hall, Colonel Sanders and James Brown. Johnny Weissmuller, Maureen O'Sullivan, Xavier Cugat, Edgar Bergen, Dorothy Lamour, George Jessel, Butterfly McQueen, Andy Devine and The Lone Ranger And Tonto watch the Phynx. Joan Blondell, Martha Raye, Michael Ansara and others actually have small roles. Harold "Odd Job" Sakata, Trini Lopez, Richard Pryor, Sue Bernard, Ultra Violet and Dick Clark also appear. The humor (an odd mixture of slapstick, mild politics and Playboy party jokes) is often incredibly off base. Also with the voice of Rich Little, a Phil Spector take off and the 2nd Blue Cheer LP cover! The light pop score (4 whole songs are performed) was written by Leiber and Stoller (the singer sounds like Nilsson or Emitt Rhodes). In one segment, magic glasses make clothes (but not underwear) disappear like in X - THE MAN WITH X-RAY EYES. Although rated GP, photos in Adam Film World reveal that nude scenes were filmed. MGM gave it a very limited release, then a dubbed version played on Spanish language TV. VSOM offers the English language version.

THE PICK-UP (SW, 68) D/S/cine. R. L. Frost, P/S/act Wes Bishop

In this b/w drama Frankie and Tony (Bishop and Stefan Zema) deliver boxes of money in their new 69 black Cadillac between Vegas and L.A. for the syndicate. They pick up two women (Tracy Saunders and Lynn Harris from THE STEWARDESSES) stranded by the road. After sex in a hotel, the men are handcuffed and robbed. Afraid of the mob, they track down the women in an attempt to save themselves. Adult movie legends David F. Friedman and R.W. Cresse play the mob bosses. Friedman is in shooting action scenes and even in an (under the cover) sex scene. This was rated X when released. The sex and nudity is tame but the scenes where the women (in underwear) are tortured, whipped and electroshocked are pretty intense (even though they suffer no lasting damage!). Using the desperate characters, plot twists and surprise comic ending, this could be remade as a modern Tarantino-style movie. Also with John Alderman (in a Nehru jacket), Marie Lease (SINTHIA, THE DEVILS DOLL), a brief lesbian scene and a folk singer. The video has Danish subtitles.

PICTURE MOMMY DEAD (Charter, 66) P/D Bert I. Gordon, S Robert Sherman

Three years after her mother (Zsa Zsa Gabor) was burned to death Susan (Susan Gordon) returns to the Beverly Hills family mansion from Catholic School. She says "I'm the worst thing that's alive!" Her self esteem isn't helped by the fact that her scheming slutty governess turned wicked step mother Francene (PYRO star Martha Hyer), is plotting against her with the scarred handyman (Maxwell Reed) with a steel hook. A doll sings about worms crawling in and out of your stomach and mouth, paintings talk and bleed, a burning Zsa Zsa ghost appears and there's death by grappling hook. The awkward dialog is morbid and hateful. Don Ameche is the oblivious father and the cast includes Wendell Corey (mean court trustee), Signe Hasso (Sister Rene), and Anna Lee. It was Gordon's first "adult" appeal movie since TORMENTED (60), also with his short and not very appealing daughter Susan. Embassy released it the same year as William Castle's LET'S KILL UNCLE.

THE PILL (SW, 67) P/D George Weiss, D Merle Connell

A Brit doctor (John Maitland) at a desk talks endlessly about the future population explosion (by the year 2000) and the history of pills, condoms, douche... Meanwhile a nurse (Monica Davis) stands by. Then we get about 30 mins. of the 1948 (!) movie TEST TUBE BABIES (PV #15) starring Timothy Farrell. This is followed by sex education drawings and a long detailed actual birth of a baby reel. Once an adults only box office draw, similar scenes are now available live on the internet. The doc returns to talk about VD followed by a guy and a hooker in a room, then a very weird (and "dreadful and hideous") nightmare part

(in color) on a distorted set. Echoed laughs are heard, voices are slowed down and menacing doctors show up. Both characters have huge sores. This is the last known production of the man who backed Ed Wood movies in the early 50s.

A PLACE CALLED GLORY (Sinister, 65) D Sheldon Reynolds, S Edward Di Lorenzo, Jerold Hayden Boyd, Fernando Lamas, P Danilo Sabatini, Artur Brauner (DIE HOLLE VON MANITOBA) Posters everywhere announce an annual public gunfight in Glory. Reese (French born Pierre Brice), a gunslinger from New Orleans, arrives and announces that he has killed one of the contestants. He then meets and befriends bounty hunter Clint (Lex Barker) and in a hard to believe plot twist neither knows that the other is his planned opponent. Meanwhile the rancher father (Georges Rigaud) of Brenner's former lover Jade (Marianne Koch), now a bar girl, needs help from her villain boss Villaine (Gerard Tichy) and his thugs. A large crowd and a band show up for the shootout. Victor Israel plays the nervous hotel clerk. The W. German/Spanish production has a mood somewhere between darker Italian westerns and old Hollywood ones and the two leads (better known for the WINNETOU series of westerns) are both fun as good natured killers. The score by Angel Arteaga, features some nice guitar work. Embassy released it here. The color print is letterboxed but faded. Like Barker, co-writer Lamas was starring in Euro movies at the time. The director is British.

POUND (Shocking, 70) P/D/S Robert Downey

Each time a black lady guard (Carolyn Cardwell, who sings) brings a new stray dog into the Manhattan pound, it becomes a person. The dog/people argue, fight, sniff each other, try to hump each other, talk about racism, speculate about life after vivisection, plan how to escape and have flashbacks and fantasies. Cute little five year old Robert Downey Jr. looks at the hyper "Mexican Hairless" (Lawrence Wolf) and asks "Do you have any hair on your balls?" then is sold for \$5. The "Mutt Bitch" (his mom Elsie Downey) sings "That Old Black Magic" to a black dog/man and sister Allison Downey is an angel. Stan Gottlieb (who I remember from the HOT L BALTIMORE TV show) plays a skinny old "Boxer" who smokes pot and snorts coke. Meanwhile in the free world, a busy (white) Son Of Sam type sniper kills people, calls the cops and convinces them that he's black. In the end all the dogs are gassed. The multi-racial cast includes the familiar faces of Antonio Fargas (racing greyhound), big Marshall Efron (German Shepherd with a Hitler mustache), Charles Dierkop, and Don Calfa, plus George Morgan, Carolyn Groves, and Ching Yeh. One comic rock song with a swearing female singer sounds a lot like late 70s punk. United Artists released it with an X rating. Downey's next was GREASER'S PALACE (72). While his contemporaries are retired or dead, Downey still makes features when he can. HUGO POOL (97) also featured his son.

PREHISTORIC WOMEN (Anchor Bay, 66) P/D/S Michael Carraras

(SLAVE GIRLS) In a magical alternate reality (or past), dark haired women led by Kari (Martine Beswick) worship a white rhino statue, use blonde slave women for servants (and dancing and singing shows) and keep bearded, manacled slave men in caves. Blondes are occasionally chosen to be the brides of mysterious masked (black) African natives. Kari demands satisfaction from a 19'th century safari leader (Michael Latimer), but he falls for captive blonde Saria (Edina Romay) and the slaves revolt. Former Miss Jamaica and Bond girl Beswick, is simply perfect for her sexy, angry, demanding warrior queen role. First seen naked from the back, she lounges in brief animal skin bikinis and has some major fight scenes (as in FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE). Everyone but the blacks (who also dance and chant) speak perfect English. The whole nutty, racist story is like an H. Rider Haggard novel (Carraras had just produced SHE), using sets from ONE MILLION B. C. (also with Beswick). Also with Carol White and Steven Berkoff. 20th Century released the Hammer Cinemascope production here in 67, but English audiences had to wait for a heavily cut version in 68. The letterboxed tape includes two trailers.

PRIMITIVE LOVE (SW, 64) D/S Luigi Scattini, P Fulvio Lucisano, Dick Randall (L'AMORE PRIMITIVO) Jayne Mansfield (as herself) shows (and narrates) third world movie clips to a balding professor in an Italian hotel room. Scenes include topless Filipino rice paddy women, topless African women, a live pig sacrifice, a cockfight, a gator hunt, witch doctors and hookers. Many of the (often) staged scenes look pretty convincing but all are very tame by mondo movie standards. The most outrageous is the "Brazilian panther woman" who does a naked run through the jungle. Meanwhile, Franco and Ciccio (the tall one with a mustache) are hyper idiot voyeur bellboys and Mickey Hargitay is their boss. You might think the comedy team (also in DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE GIRL BOMBS) inspired Jim Carrey. Jayne appears in a grass skirt in a dream sequence (while Annette Funicello is heard singing "Date Night In Hawaii") and when she does a strip tease the Prof. becomes Dr. Jekyll. The theme ("Bella") is in Italian. It's a Johnny Legend Untamed Video release. Jayne returned to the States for THE FAT SPY (PV #25) and LAS VEGAS HILLBILLIES.

PRIVATE RELATIONS (SW, 68) D/songs Larry Crane, S Walter M. Berger, P/edit/act Lou Campa
Earl (Don Canfield, who narrates), a struggling PR man with an office in The Brill Bldg., wants to represent Corny Williams ("the latest teenage rage"), so plots to make compromising films of his big Texan manager. Earl's rich blonde fiance (Uta Erickson from BACCHANALE), an out of work actress (Anne Brent, from MINI SKIRT LOVE) and his adoring secretary (Elizabeth Easter) all happily help with his ridiculous scheme. The b/w NYC comedy is not funny but features some sex scenes (with men in their underwear), nudity, some real bad songs (horribly synched) and one stand out scene of a nightclub stripper (Linda Boyce, also in TO HEX WITH SEX).

THE PSYCHO LOVER (Alpha Blue, 69) P/D/S Robert Vincent O'Neill
A wealthy shrink (Lawrence Montaigne) with a super modern yellow convertible is asked to hypnotise and question Marco (Frank Cuva), a murder suspect. Inspired by THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, he decides to use the psycho insomniac to kill his alcoholic blonde wife (Joanne Meredith) so he can be with his younger mistress (Elizabeth Plumb). "Obey the voice!" Marco has flashbacks and nightmares and wears a stocking over his head while strangling and raping. One sequence copies DIAL M FOR MURDER. Several females have topless or nude scenes. With frequent tape recorder close-ups, cliché romantic interludes, electrocution by TV set, some freakout music and light pop songs. The Medford release was rated X at the time, but except for the nudity, it could be a network TV presentation these days. It's by the director of BLOOD MANIA, and was "presented by" The Isley Brothers (!?) who had just launched their T-Neck record label. Gary Kent was production manager. The print is worn.

PYRO (SW, 64) D Julio Coll, P/S Sidney Pink, P Richard C. Meyer
(FUEGO, WHEEL OF FIRE) Engineer Vance (Barry Sullivan) and his family move from England to Madrid so he can work on a Dam project. He has an addictive affair with jealous widow Laura (Martha Hyer), who wears black leather pants. When he breaks up with her, Laura starts an arson fire killing his wife Verna (Sherry Moreland from MESA OF LOST WOMEN). Vance's face is burned so bad while saving his daughter that he needs to wear a mask. He loses his mind with revenge ("My breath on your back will be like a cold wind from hell!") and joins a traveling carnival, repairing Ferris wheels. The owner's blonde daughter Liz (16 year old future Jesse Franco regular Soledad Miranda) falls for him and tells him a story about a witch who was burned. There's a fiery climax. The Spanish/American production (released by AIP) is told in flashback by a carnival worker (Fernando Hilbeck). The actual carnival used was in the Calicia region of northern Spain.

THE RAMRODDER (SW, 69) P/D/S "Van Guilder"/Ed Forsythe (SAVAGE PASSION) A cattleman (Jim Gentry, also the assistant director) watches 8 laughing splashing naked Indian maidens in a river, then returns home to find his beautiful red haired girlfriend Lucy (Julia Blackburn) bathing in a tub. He falls for Tuwana (Kathy Williams from SISTERS IN LEATHER), but is wrongly accused of the rape of another Indian woman. Tuwana and Lucy have a topless fight while tied to each other then Lucy does a naked fireside dance (to distract the tribe). Manson follower Bobby Beausoleil (still in jail for murder) plays a sadistic Indian and Catherine "Gypsy" Share is also in it. Nobody looks like Indians (especially not Marsha Jordan) and the dialog is ridiculous but the color adult western features lots of outdoor nudity and sex and the cinematography (by Bob Maxwell who later worked on Ted Mikels movies) is incredible. Long closeups of female body parts were shot from impossible angles. David Friedman released it through Entertainment Ventures. The score was by the guy who wrote the famous Marlboro theme. The same year all offered these sex westerns: A. C. Stephens' LADY GODIVA RIDES (also with Jordan), H. G. Lewis' LINDA AND ABELINE, R. L. Frost's THE SCAVENGERS and Warhol's LONESOME COWBOYS (!).

REVOLUTION (Kaffke, 68) P/D Jack O' Connell

I've wanted to see this documentary since I bought the excellent (U.A.) soundtrack in a cut out bin many years ago. Blonde 20 year old 5' 3" Today Malone (probably an actress) is our guide to the 67 summer of love in S. F. She sells underground newspapers, asks for spare change, likes to eat Hostess Twinkies and candy bars, was busted in Roswell, New Mexico and has taken LSD "23 times." A commune leader predicts "Cyberated industry" and says computers will take over. A free clinic doctor talks about VD and chromosome damage. Others (police chief, preacher, nuns, people in crash pads and at be-ins...) talk to the camera and Leary and Ginsberg are seen. A segment on the "Sexual Freedom League" has naked women swimming, running and on a swing. But I wanted it for the music. Quicksilver Messenger Service ("Codine") and The Steve Miller Band ("Your Old Lady") are (barely) seen behind dancers and strobe lights - but are live (!) at The Avalon Ballroom. Both bands are at their peak (before their LPs). In a park the (all female rock band !) Ace Of Cups play, Dan Hicks (solo) does part of an unrecorded comic song and Country Joe And The Fish do "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' To Die" (the record was dubbed in). Some songs are different than on the LP, some are not on it and others (including the theme by Mother Earth and others by QMS and Miller) are only heard. The print is very good. O'Connell also directed THE GREENWICH VILLAGE STORY (63).

RING-A-DING RHYTHM (Fang, 62) P/D Richard Lester, S Milton Subotsky

(IT'S TRAD, DAD) A local mayor tries to ban jazz and pop music by closing a coffee bar, smashing records and stopping a live stage show. Lester uses sight gags, fast and backwards scenes and clever comic bits in-between the 26 (!) musical numbers. Some of them feature split screen and other visual FX. The leads even talk to the narrator. A bit with spaghetti must have inspired Lennon's MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR nightmare. Gene Vincent does a fun rockabilly novelty song, "Spaceship On Mars" (dressed in white) and Gary U.S. Bonds does "Seven Day Weekend" (backed by four singers with conked doos). Other American acts are Chubby Checker ("Lose Your Inhibition Twist"), Del Shannon (doing an interesting non hit), Gene McDaniels and The Paris Sisters. Some of them were shot in the U.S. by another director. Brit pop acts are stars Helen Shapiro (she does 3 songs with her great deep voice) and Craig Douglas, The Brook Brothers, John Leyton and Sounds Inc. The selling point at the time were the "trad" acts though. Some might scoff at the British fad, but it was more authentic than today's "swing revival." Seven bands, often with banjos, clarinets, tubas and Satchmo voice singers do 1920s style jazz. The ones led by the 3Bs: Kenny Ball (2 numbers), Chris Barber (3), and Mr. Acker Bilk (3), even hit the U.S. charts. The comic Temperance Seven (all 9 of them) clearly influenced The Bonzo Dog Band. With DJ Alan Freeman (also in RING's follow up JUST FOR FUN and GO GO BIG

BEAT!). Columbia released it here (except for the title, the UK version is the same). The print is excellent.

RUN HOME SLOW (JFTHOI, 65) P/D Tim Sullivan, S Donald Cerveris

After their criminal father is lynched, the Hagens find a treasure but wander, starving in the desert. The hate filled leader Nell (Mercedes McCambridge at her most outrageous) says "Son Of A Bitch!, Jackass Damn fool!, Hellnation!.." Linda Gaye Scott (also in PSYCH-OUT) is the giggling idiot bride (with hair like "a mess of long yellow worms crawling out of her skull" and a "puke pink parasol") of cousin Rip (Gary Kent, who spends most of the movie laid up). Then there's the cartoonish idiot hunchback Kirby (Allen Richards) who has to kill the mule for dinner. The (very rare) theatre of the absurd western has one scene that could have been in a Bunuel film, but it's too long and often too dark to see. The selling point for many will be the fact that Frank Zappa composed and conducted the instrumental score (his first after WORLD'S GREATEST SINNER!). The fast paced theme is obviously Zappa's work (it sounds almost like a track from Uncle Meat). From Emerson Films (CREATION OF THE HUMANOIDS, MANOS, THE HANDS OF FATE, MONSTROSITY..). John "Bud" Cardos was production manager and has a small role. Sullivan had been a dialog coach for DON'T KNOCK THE TWIST and KISSIN COUSINS.

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