

EPISODE GUIDES! – INTERVIEWS! – PHOTOS! – CAPTIONS!

TELEVISION CHRONICLES

Number 2

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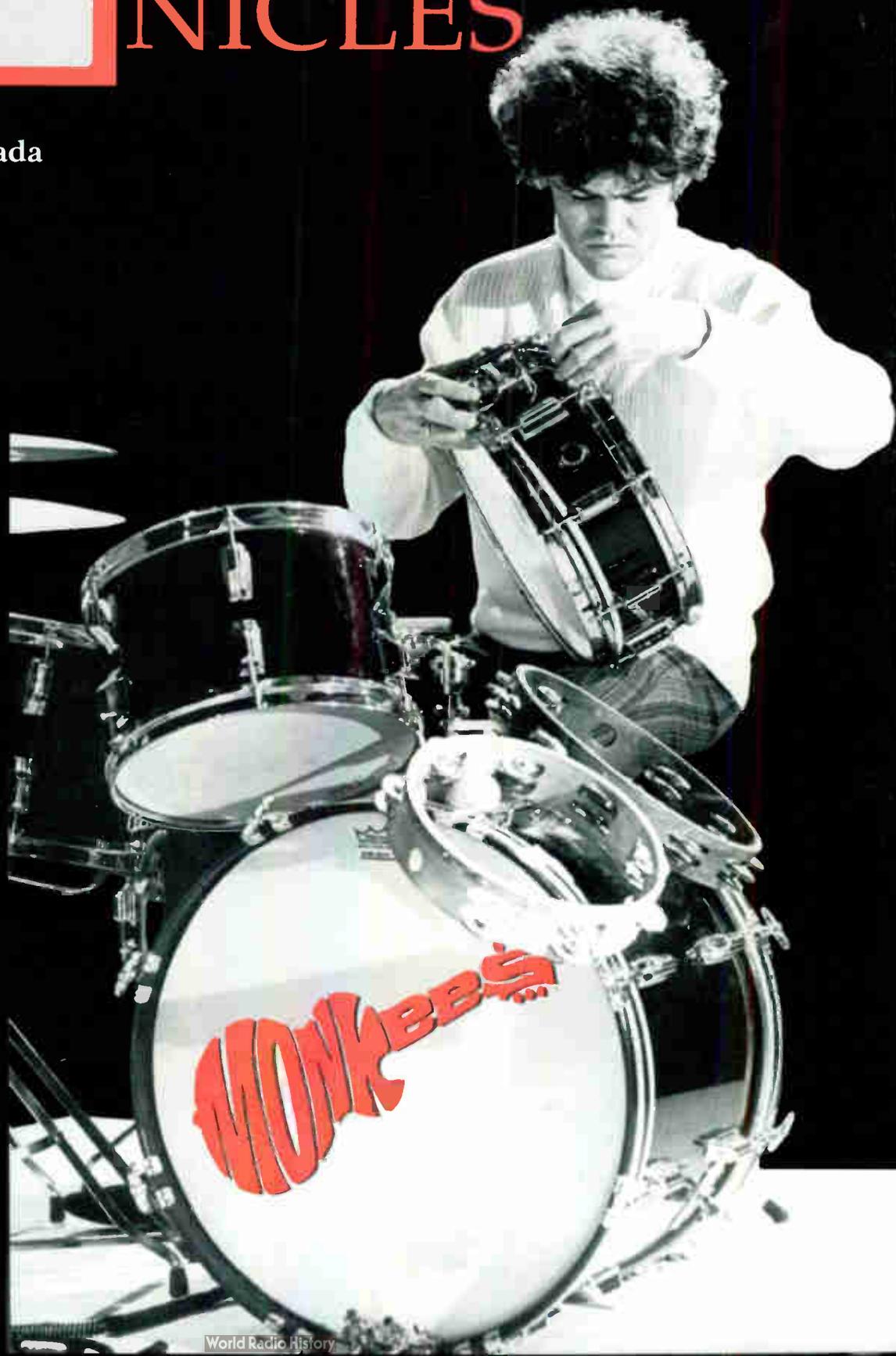
Also in this issue:

*The Adventures of
Brisco County Jr.*

*Jonny
Quest*

THE
NEW
MONKEES

SABLE



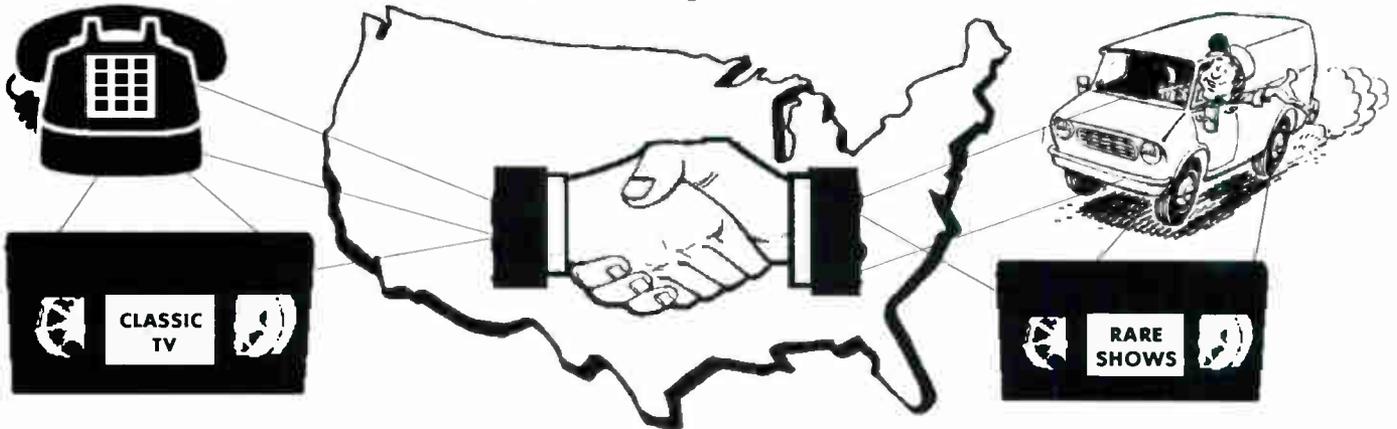
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TELEVISION CHRONICLES

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Copies of our first issue are still available for \$7.50 (\$9 Canada). The first issue features Elvis - the Series, The Green Hornet, I Spy, Moonlighting, The Rifleman, T.H.E. Cat, and Yancy Derringer.

Of course, subscriptions are available for \$20 (\$35 Canada) for four quarterly issues. Sample copies of our current issue are available for \$6.50 each (\$7.50 Canada).

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SIGNING ON

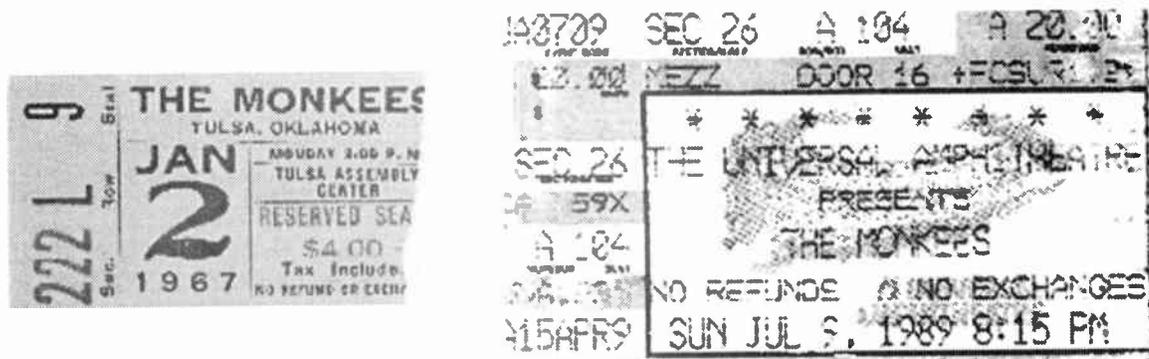
Well, here we are; the second issue and I'm already breaking the rules by featuring *The Monkees*, a show which has been heavily documented in various print forms, including Eric Lefcowitz's volume, *The Monkees Tale*; the somewhat darker *Monkeemania: The True Story of the Monkees* by Glenn A. Baker; the exhaustive *The Monkees: A Manufactured Image*, by Ed Reilly, Maggie McManus, and Bill Chadwick; autobiographies by Davy Jones and Micky Dolenz; and even extensive liner notes in compilation albums such as *Monkeemania* and *Then & Now*, plus those accompanying the various Rhino Records releases. Allow me to rationalize my decision.

For one thing, it seemed appropriate to do a piece on *The Monkees*, in view of the fact that last year Rhino Records/Video acquired all rights to the series for the first time, and will soon be issuing the complete series on home video, along with the rare *33 1/3 Revolutions Per Monkee* NBC special, on the heels of their recent reissues of all nine original albums. There are also tentative plans for a new tour and feature film. On another level, however, I thought that it would be a good opportunity to set the record straight for readers who might have little or no interest in the show/group. Due to the fact that the above-mentioned documentation, as well as other media resources, such as talk show appearances or video documentary material, are likely to be consumed primarily by those who are already fans, many outside such circles still labor under misconceptions regarding the casting of the performers, their degree of talent, and the quality of their output. Consequently, previous attempts to correct such misperceptions have effectively amounted to preaching to the choir. As one who has followed *The Monkees* from their first steps up to the present, having seen them perform in 1967 during their first concert tour and again when reunited officially in concert as a foursome for the first time (see the "artifacts" pictured below), I feel qualified to state their case to those who may have purchased this magazine for its coverage of *Jonny Quest* or *Brisco County*.

On another matter; although for a time I risked injury patting myself on the back for coming up with such a great idea for a magazine, my bubble was burst around the time that the text for the first issue was roughly 75% complete. It was then that I learned of the existence of a similar magazine called *Epi-log* (\$24, including postage, for 4 issues; published by William Anchors, Jr., P.O. Box 1322, Dunlap, Tennessee 37327), which had been around for two or three years already. Its distribution is apparently not as widespread as what we will be attempting with *Television Chronicles*, which explains why I had never run across it. Upon examining an issue of *Epi-log*, however, I was relieved to find that it takes a different approach to the material, concentrating more upon the storylines of the individual episodes, and less upon the background of the series as a whole (special issues excepted). More recently, I discovered *The TV Collector* (\$20 for 6 issues; published bi-monthly by Stephen and Diane Albert, P.O. Box 1088, Easton, Massachusetts 02334). Its small format belies its wealth of information. Although its size (5.5" x 8.5", approximately 40 pages) necessarily limits its coverage to one episode guide per issue, said guide will be accompanied by interviews and articles, related or not, as well as classifieds, new video releases, cable programming notes, celebrity obits, and a letter column that unfortunately has the same name I had originally planned to use here. The research and scholarship is first rate. For anyone compiling information on past TV series, both of these publications are worthwhile. It is my hope, therefore, that *Television Chronicles* will be seen by *Epi-log* and *TV Collector* readers as more compliment than competition.

Though I was generally happy with our first issue (certainly relieved to see it finished), I was chagrined to discover certain errors which some of you have also spotted and pointed out, albeit graciously. Unfortunately, having already fallen months behind our originally-planned launch date, and with our hard deadline rapidly approaching, certain of these slipped by that would almost certainly have been caught had the final product been given a thorough, last-minute proofreading. Then there is the fact that a number of the images printed out much too dark. We had already adjusted many of them when we discovered that they printed out darker on the laserprinter than they appeared on the computer screen. We didn't realize, however, how much darker still they would appear on the type of paper we had selected for the magazine (you can imagine what the ones looked like that we *didn't* use). There were also some images that were a bit ragged after sizing, and we did not yet know the ways in which these effects could be prevented/remedied due to our unfamiliarity with the new software we were using. Be assured that we will take steps to see that future issues will not be so afflicted. We will also be more careful to ensure that we select a shade of color for our cover logo that won't result in its getting lost in the image. The improvements should be evident in this issue. All in all, given our inexperience, we can't be too hard on ourselves regarding the visual aesthetics, especially since the main thrust of the magazine is information. Nevertheless, those sympathetic types among you may feel free to stroke me.

We would also like to offer our profoundest apologies to Vic Vinson for the misspelling of his name in the first issue acknowledgements. His eleventh hour contribution was pivotal in our getting the issue to press on time.



*Shortly before going to press, a reader informed me that, according to his information, *Epi-log* has ceased publication. I have not been able to verify this, but would suggest that anyone considering a subscription to *Epi-log* should send a letter of inquiry before sending a check.

Bill Groves
Managing Editor

TEST PATTERN - Basic information about the *Television Chronicles* format

In general, each entry in an episode guide contains the episode title, original air date, plot synopsis, guest cast, writer, director, and any miscellaneous information regarding awards, other adaptations of the same material, etc. Individuals receiving "story by" credit are included with the actual writers of the teleplay, with no distinction made, although the authors of the teleplay will be listed ahead of the "story" writers.

No series will be featured that has not completed its run. In other words, no series that is currently in production will receive coverage. This does not mean, however, that series that have been revived will be so restricted. For instance, the fact that revived *Kung Fu* and *Columbo* episodes are presently being filmed will not necessarily mean that we will not do a guide for the original series while the new one is still in first-run. On the other hand, when a series has received more than one incarnation, and the revival(s) is/are no longer in production, such as in the cases of *The Brady Bunch* or *Maverick*, we will most likely combine them, though the articles may be split into multiple installments.

Episodes will be listed in the order of broadcast, not production, except in the case of syndicated shows, in which case there is no uniform air date. Where an episode is designated as "unaired," this is in reference to the original run of the show. In most cases, such episodes will have eventually aired in syndication. Where sources of information conflict, the on-screen credits will have the final word, unless they are conclusively known to be in error. Multiple-part episodes receive one listing (unless split between seasons), but each part counts toward the episode total. Pilots (defined as the first episode produced) are identified as such when they are not the first episode to be broadcast. When an episode carries an "aka" title, this generally refers to a previous working title of the program, which may appear on some documentation related to the episode.

A couple of points should be made. First of all, from the early days of television through the mid-to-late 60s, corporate sponsorship was closely tied to series production; so much so that it was extremely common for the sponsor to be featured in the opening and/or closing credits sequences of the program. Therefore, for any series falling into this time frame, when you watch them in syndication today, you are quite possibly not seeing the original credit sequence(s). One example of this is *Yancy Derringer*, which originally featured a theme song. Though the song has been replaced by a softer instrumental theme (lifted from *The Rifleman*) in the syndication prints, the songwriting credits remain in the closing titles.

Secondly, some years back, the FCC made a ruling that allowed broadcasters to devote additional time to commercials. The result of this is that any show produced prior to that year is missing a couple of minutes or so when broadcast today. Fortunately, many popular series are being issued on home video in their uncut versions (though generally with the syndication credits sequences, as opposed to the original, sponsor-tagged versions).

Bear in mind that all information is on an as-available basis. Sometimes it is virtually impossible to find all of the information desired for a particular series or episode, or information that is wholly authoritative. When multiple sources are utilized, such as previously published books or magazines, TV listings, archival information, videotapes, and personal recollections, it is not only common for the sources to contradict each other, but frequently errors in one source find their way into what become other sources, thus compounding the problem. Sometimes the decision of which information to print comes down to instinct or a coin toss. We have made the best effort possible, given our resources, to print information that is accurate. If we are found to be in error, we will always welcome correction, but such correction should be well documented.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the following individuals and firms for their contributions to this issue:

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Tom Safer
Lenny Santarsiero
Sony Pictures
Wendy Spence
Gary Strobl
Turner Pictures
Warner Bros.
Worldvision
Gary Yoggy

CORRECTIONS TO ISSUE #1:

The Green Hornet

- The air date of SEEK, STALK AND DESTROY should be 1/6/67.

Yancy Derringer

- The character of Jody Barker first appears in THE SAGA OF LONESOME JACKSON.
- Jock Mahoney's second film as Tarzan was *Tarzan's Three Challenges*.

Views From the Couch: Letters From Our Readers

Issue #1 shows great promise. Will you periodically issue an index, so I don't have to go through several issues to find what I'm looking for? Just in case that's what you're planning, please start my subscription immediately, so I don't end up with a hole in my index. Are you going to attempt variety shows (*Hollywood Palace*, *Shindig*, etc.)?

Edgar Bullington
Duarte, California

Periodically? Was that a pun, Edgar? The answer is yes, sort of. Since we plan to offer back-issues, the ads for them which will be contained in future issues will serve the purpose of an index, but if we get to the point where space or back stock supplies impact the information contained in the back-issue ads, never fear. In that case, we will certainly offer a stand-alone index. As for variety shows, we don't currently have any plans to include them (likewise with documentary series), in part because the episode guide format seems to lend itself more to "dramatic" series, but I can't rule anything out. If reader demand for variety shows is significant, we're open to the possibility.

Thank you for the *Moonlighting* episode guide in issue one. I am looking forward to future issues and would like to request the following shows: *Starsky & Hutch*, *WKRP* (original and new), *Three's Company* and *The Muppet Show*.

James Higgins
Van Nuys, California

Glad you liked the Moonlighting piece, James. Although we don't have any of the shows you mentioned pencilled in for coverage as yet, they are certainly obvious candidates for profiles and we will certainly get around to them eventually, with the possible exception of The Muppet Show, which we would classify as a variety series. How soon the others are featured will depend on several factors, including reader demand.

I'm still looking to finish my collection of the following TV series: *Amos & Andy*, *Car 54*, *Where Are You?*, *The Real McCoys*, *The Rifleman*, and *SCTV* - the Cinemax episodes. Now if you can tell me how many episodes of *SCTV* the Cinemax episodes there were in your coming issues, I'd certainly appreciate it.

Gary Smith
Fayetteville, TN

Well, Gary, some episodes of Amos & Andy, Car 54, and The Rifleman have been released on prerecorded home video (though I can't attest to their current availability). As for SCTV, I was under the impression that the episodes that aired on Cinemax were not unique to the cable network, but simply a package of some of the previously broadcast shows, run on Cinemax to give them broader exposure than they'd received up until that time. Anyone out there care to clear this up?

I enjoyed the premiere issue of *Television Chronicles*. Try not to call it TVC because those letters are already confusing me between TV Connection and *TV Collector!* I found the first issue very readable, much more so than *Epilog*. The *TV Guide*-ish episode descriptions are just fine with me, rather than giving every minor plot point. Please try to list the character names along with the guest stars. I hope you'll run an article soon on the late, lamented *Adventures of Brisco County Jr.* I'd also enjoy reading about *Trackdown*, *Spenser: for Hire/Man Called Hawk*, Bob Newhart's three sitcoms, *The Charmings*, and *Nichols*.
David Rutman
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Well, David, you've pointed out a dilemma we've got. Given the name of our magazine, we're a bit limited as to what set of initials makes sense, and frankly I can't come up with any better than TVC, despite your very valid observation. I suppose all I can say is "context, context, context." We will make it a point never refer to either of the other entities as TVC within our

own, so as to keep the confusion to a minimum. Regarding the listing of character names, I'm afraid that, given the number of errors that have to be weeded out on just the actor credits alone, I'm not too inclined to throw another element into the mix, especially since quite a few shows don't list the guest cast character names in their credits or presskits. As for your wish list, I'm sure you'll be happy to see that we've anticipated your desire for a feature on Brisco in this very issue; ably written by our first contributing writer, Mary Jo Hanold. Also, check out the "Stay Tuned" page at the back of this issue and I think you'll be pleased at what you find.

First, some praise for your fine new publication. I am one of the co-supervisors of the Film Study Center here at the Museum, in charge of publications, special collections, etc. I picked up your first issue when I was in Santa Monica recently for the International Federation of Film Archives annual Congress. I had occasion to bring your magazine to the attention of Johnny Crawford (*The Rifleman*) whom I met on the Santa Monica pier. He seemed very enthused. I am subscribing under separate cover.

Ronald S. Magliozzi
Film Study Center
The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Thanks for passing the magazine on to Mr. Crawford, Ron. I attempted to contact him through Hollywood Collectors Show organizer Ray Courts for his input into our Rifleman piece, but was unsuccessful. Glad to hear that he appreciated our efforts. And thanks for the endorsement. In a word: wow.

TV On the Bookshelf:

Riding the Video Range: The Rise and Fall of the Western on Television

by Gary A. Yoggy
\$65 (\$68 postpaid)
McFarland & Company, Inc.
Publishers
Box 611
Jefferson, NC 28640



This is a tough book to get through. Tough, because one is continually suppressing the desire to drop the book and turn on the TV in order to actually watch one of the many shows that Gary Yoggy has profiled so thoroughly. However, the reader soon returns to the book because so many of the classic and not-so-classic westerns that Yoggy documents are not so easily viewed, either on video or television. Several adjectives come to mind when describing *Riding the Video Range*. "Comprehensive," "definitive," and "essential" are merely the most obvious.

Clearly no "golden age" elitist, Yoggy's introduction lists his top 25 favorite westerns. The list includes venerable favorites such as *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza*, and *Maverick*, as well as the much later (and largely forgotten) series such as *Ned Blessing* and *Wildside*, and such recent fare as *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* and *The Adventures of Brisco County Jr.*

Some seven years in the making, the book begins with the earliest days of television, when movie cowboys such as Bill Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy), Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers bucked the trend (so to speak) and embraced the new medium while studios were struggling to keep it at arm's length, first adapting their theatrical films, then producing new adventures to satisfy the growing home-based audience. Then there is the simultaneous evolution from radio to television of a number of established figures such as The Lone Ranger and Sergeant Preston, as well as the landmark anthology *Death Valley Days*. Yoggy doesn't jump in midway, but thoroughly documents the origins of the earliest TV series which were translated from other dramatic forms, and discusses the contrasting ways in which these properties were adapted.

Chapters such as "Television Westerns Grow Up" and "The Video Range Gets Bigger" discuss the transition from juvenile-oriented (such as those starring the movie cowboys) to "adult" westerns (generally beginning with *Gunsmoke*) and the development of 90-minute westerns (primarily *The Virginian*) as the ancestors of the TV-movie and miniseries, respectively. There is also "Wagon Trains and Cattle Drives," which includes the staples *Wagon Train* and *Rawhide*.

Although the subtitle of Yoggy's book might seem to indicate a more analytical approach to the material, the emphasis is overwhelmingly historical, with the only major indulgences in philosophical analysis coming in the ninth chapter ("Meanwhile Back On the Reservation"), which is

devoted to the portrayal of Native Americans in film and television, and the final chapter ("Which Way Did They Go?"), in which a review of the recent semi-revival of the genre is evaluated, and the themes present in the recent projects (which include some of the documentary works) are considered along with the purely factual information.

Though most of the book's material is presented chronologically, several chapters isolate popular sub-genres or formats within the TV western, such as "Law and Order Arrive in the Video West," which focuses on such series as *Wyatt Earp*, *Bat Masterson*, *Lawman*, *Trackdown*, etc.; "Single Parent Families on the Video Frontier," which includes *The Rifleman*, *Bonanza*, and *The Big Valley*, among others; "Bounty Hunters, Gamblers and Hired Guns," which profiles the likes of *Maverick*, *Have Gun Will Travel*, and *Wanted Dead or Alive*; and "Alone Against the Wild West," in which he discusses such offerings as *The Rebel*, *Cheyenne* (and its offspring), and *The Texan*.

Perhaps the most surprising chapter is one devoted to the contribution of Walt Disney, a figure (and studio) not generally associated with the genre. Yoggy, however, points out the number of western heroes that were created under the Disney banner. Aside from Zorro, several western figures made repeated appearances on Disney's Sunday-evening show that went under several titles during its lengthy run. Following on the heels of Davy Crockett were adventures featuring Andy Burnett, Elfego Baca, Texas John Slaughter, and Daniel Boone, all real-life heroes.

There are other chapters devoted to still other themes, and the timeliness of the book is such that it even includes the barely cold (though still a going concern when the book went to press) *Hawkeye*, starring Lee Horsley and Lynda Carter. In addition to utilizing other scholarly sources for the historical material, Yoggy frequently cites contemporary reviews of the series covered, usually from multiple sources, which frequently contradict each other. To capture the flavor of the shows profiled, Yoggy discusses many individual episodes and even includes dialogue excerpts for added emphasis.

In addition to regular weekly series fare, there is frequent discussion of special presentations, including made-for-TV movies and mini-series including *Centennial*, *The Legend of Walks Far Woman*, *Mystic Warrior*, *Son of the Morning Star*, and the landmark *Lonesome Dove*. The thoroughness of Yoggy's work is perhaps the book's most obvious quality, and one is hard pressed find any omissions (*Bearcats!*, *The Monroes*, and the short-lived TV version of *The Cowboys* are perhaps the most conspicuous absences; with others such as *Buckskin* and *The Chisolms* mentioned only in passing). If there is a criticism to be made of the work, it is that there are fairly regular instances where names of actors or production personnel are misspelled, such as the repeated references to *Nakia* star Robert Forster as "Forester." It is, however, entirely possible that the majority of these, if not merely typos, stem from faulty source material. All in all, *Riding the Video Range* is a tribute to the genre that no fan of westerns should pass up, and for those who aren't fans, it remains an enjoyable read and an invaluable reference work.

Bad TV - The Very Best of the Very Worst

by Craig Nelson

\$9.95

Delta Trade Paperbacks

Bad TV is a mixed bag. For every instance where the reader finds himself chuckling in agreement at the observations of author Craig Nelson, he will just as often, if not more, be likely to shake his head and ask, "Just what *does* this guy like?" Although Nelson acknowledges the classic *Golden Turkey Awards*, a brilliant tribute to enjoyably bad movies, as being an ancestor of *Bad TV* (or *BAD TV*, the blend of upper and lower cases being just one of the book's inconsistencies), his volume is far less focused than the earlier work, and consequently not as casually enjoyable. *Bad TV* is probably best utilized in the same manner as a Leonard Maltin movie guide; to be picked up and flipped through in search of a particular entry rather than read in a linear manner. A cover-to-cover reading will take the reader through Nelson's efforts to humorously analyze the medium; efforts which, although certainly containing a number of insightful observations and comments, are characterized by a pervasive nastiness and cynicism. Likewise, there is a condescending pretentiousness to his humorous lists of "lessons" that can allegedly be gleaned from the various sub-genres that he discusses in the book.

Inconsistency is the operative word in evaluating *Bad TV*. Despite his occasional expressions of affection for television in general or for "BAD TV" in particular, Nelson sprinkles the text with quotes by noted individuals that in one way or another disparage the medium as a whole. He also can't seem to adhere to any consistent definition of "BAD" TV. In the book's introduction, he defines it as "TV so bad, it's in a class all by itself." He goes on to state, "You won't find here shows that are merely dull, meretricious, sickening, and poorly done; BAD TV only showcases amazingly, stupefyingly, remarkably 'I can't believe they did this!' television." After this statement of purpose, Nelson immediately proceeds to go all over the map.

For instance, while Nelson includes such obvious targets as *Turn On*, *Pink Lady and Jeff*, *Thicke of the Night*, and the obligatory *My Mother, the Car* (though how he omitted *The New Monkees* is a mystery), he also includes shows that at worst could be considered dated (*The Mod Squad*, *That Girl*, *Sing Along With Mitch*), intentionally silly (*The Andy Griffith Show*, *Green Acres*), or outright spoofs (*Police Squad*, *Sledge Hammer*), regardless of the actual quality of the productions themselves. Other highly-regarded productions that come under the knife for no apparent reason other than personal taste include the John Carpenter biofilm *Elvis* starring Kurt Russell; *The Guyana Tragedy* starring Powers Boothe, in reference to which Nelson seems to attribute bizarre lines of dialogue to poor writing, apparently unaware that such statements are all too characteristic of cultic mentalities (he also misidentifies Meg Foster as Amy Irving "in her alien/zombie contact

lenses"); the BBC import documentary *Television*; and Steve Allen's *Meeting of Minds*.

Nelson also plays free and easy with his category definitions, as his section on made-for-TV movies includes the likes of *The Eye Creatures*, *Mars Needs Women*, Ed Wood's *Night of the Ghouls*, and even the production of "Casino Royale" that was an episode of the anthology series *Climax!* On the other hand, the failed pilot movie *Poor Devil* is listed with the sitcoms, as are *Supertrain* and *Covington Cross* (the latter of which Nelson himself describes as a "dramedy"), not to mention *Operation Petticoat* and *Popi*, both of which would seemingly have been more appropriately included in his section for shows based on movies. In this latter category, Nelson so enjoys pointing out the failure of many series based on movies to find an audience that he neglects to mention even in passing the occasional successes, such as *M*A*S*H*, *Alice*, and *The Virginian*.

Some of Nelson's remarks are so catty that they give the impression that the minor factual errors in the book, such as mis-dating *Turn On* (1979, according to the book) and *Maya* (1985, ditto) and identifying *Tarzan in Manhattan* as a remake of *Tarzan's New York Adventure* (which could be true only in the loosest sense, based on the geography) are less typos and more due to carelessness, his top priority being attempts at humor. Even so, such errors are innocuous when compared to the personal attacks. The Meg Foster comment referred to above is nothing compared to the venom Nelson saves for Mayim Bialik, whom he describes as "utterly repulsive." He also refers to political satirist Mark Russell as "tedious," which may or may not be some sort of political comment (he makes plenty of those, as well).

The author also seems to be obsessed with people's names. He includes a section that lists many of the more unusual names in television history, which in and of itself is fine and marginally interesting, but he continues to harp on the topic when elsewhere in the book an unusual name comes up in the text, and he feels the need to preface it with the phrase "the name-cursed _____."

Nelson includes ratings in much of the book, but the definition of the rating is left a bit fuzzy. Utilizing the symbol (also employed as a paragraph divider) of a pair of nuclear power plant cooling towers inspired by Three Mile Island, he calls his rating/award the "Tammi" (TMI). It's hard to tell, however, whether a show which receives six Tammis is supposed to be better or worse than a show with, say, two Tammis in terms of being enjoyably bad versus unwatchably bad. According to Nelson's original thesis, everything in the book should fall into the latter category anyway, so what's the point of the ratings?

Bad TV is entertaining enough to pick up and flip through, especially as a way of recalling those shows you can't quite come up with the title for but that you remember watching. Nevertheless, unlike the characters of *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, whom you'd love to have with you in a theater, Craig Nelson comes off in print as the kind of guy you'd eventually turn to and ask "Would you mind shutting the hell up?"





The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr. - 27 episodes, 1993-94 - Fox

Credits:

Produced by Jeffrey Boam, Carlton Cuse
 Theme by Randy Edelman

Regular cast:

Brisco County, Jr. - Bruce Campbell
 Lord Bowler - Julius Carry
 Socrates Poole - Christian Clemenson

Semi-regular:

John Bly - Billy Drago
 Pete Hutter - John Pyper-Ferguson
 Dixie Cousins - Kelly Rutherford
 Professor Albert Wickwire - John Astin

Set in the old west, *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.* was an hour-long tongue-in-cheek, action-adventure show that had something for everybody. You might call it *Wild, Wild West* meets *Indiana Jones*. Bringing back the feeling of the old cliffhangers of yesteryear, where the good guy always wins, our heroes live in an era of marvelous inventions. A rocket (PILOT), a mechanical gun (NED ZED), a weapon suspiciously similar to a stun gun (BOUNTY HUNTERS CONVENTION) and the use of fingerprints to solve a crime (BRISCO

FOR THE DEFENSE) are but a few of the wondrous contrivances that pop up throughout the series. The audience also got its share of hilarious puns that might have gone over the heads of some viewers.

The creation of Jeffrey Boam and Carlton Cuse, the show had some rather powerful creative



WANTED

FOR MURDER



BRISCO COUNTY, JR.
\$50,000 REWARD

DEAD OR ALIVE

genius behind it. Screenwriter Jeffrey Boam had been responsible for *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, as well as the action thrillers *Lethal Weapon 2* and *Lethal Weapon 3*. His screenwriting career began with *Straight Time* and was followed by Stephen King's *The Dead Zone*. Boam's other credits include *Innerspace*, *The Lost Boys*, and *Funny Farm*.

Carlton Cuse's career began

while a student at Harvard (something he shares with our hero, Brisco). His documentary on the sport of rowing was narrated by George Plimpton. Cuse later developed the films *St. Elmo's Fire*, *Sweet Dreams*, and the television mini-series *Elvis and Me*. Other credits include episodes of *Crime Story*, the television special *Headin' Home for the Holidays*, and the made-for-television movie *A Promise to Keep*. Cuse also made appearances in a couple of *Brisco* episodes (PILOT and STAGECOACH) as Owen, the scenic painter. Boam and Cuse teamed together in 1988 to form Boam/Cuse Productions.

The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.

begins in the year 1893 and follows the exploits of an adventurer on a mission to avenge the murder of his legendary father, Marshal Brisco County, Sr. In the pilot, Marshal Brisco (R. Lee Ermey) is escorting the nefarious John Bly gang to justice aboard a prison train. One of the prisoners is Bly's cohort, Big Smith (M.C. Gainey), whose own men hire a painter (Cuse, as the aforementioned Owen) to paint a scene (a deceptive

perspective, as it happens) on a boulder that has been placed upon the train tracks. As a result of the ensuing crash, Bly and his gang escape, killing the Marshal in the process.

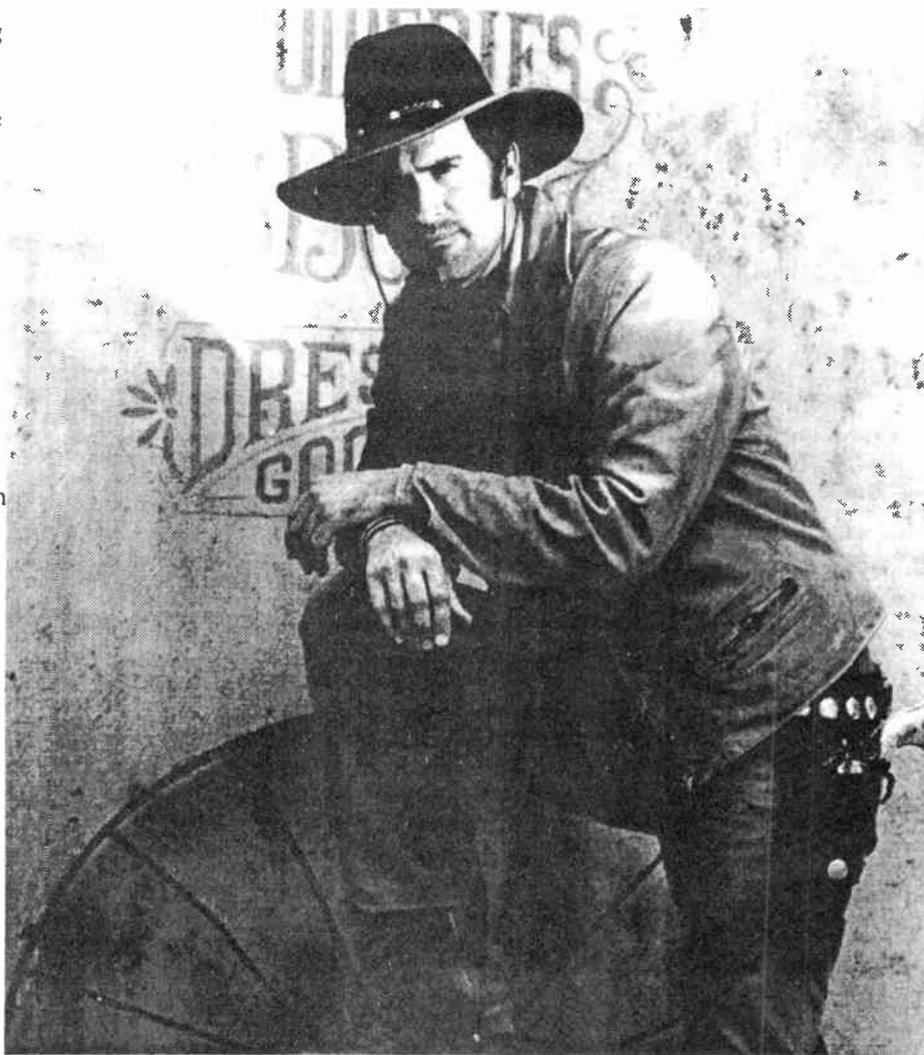
Enter Brisco County, Jr., a Harvard-educated lawyer, though he hasn't practiced law for five years. He is hired by a group of wealthy businessmen intent on protecting their financial interests. Brisco's

Marshal, however. He's not at all what they expected, but they give him a chance and assign Socrates Poole, a nerdish, uptight attorney to keep an eye on him. Poole gives Brisco his father's effects, but the only thing Brisco keeps is the famous ivory handled gun, carved by an old friend of Brisco's father, Lee Pow (played by James Hong). This gun would play an integral part towards the end of the series, for it holds a secret that

eventually becomes the downfall of Brisco's nemesis, John Bly.

Brisco, Jr., a dreamer with an eye to the future and "the coming thing," is played by Bruce Campbell, who played the part as if it was written with him in mind. Campbell had previously starred in such films as the cult-classic horror trilogy *The Evil Dead*, *The Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn*, and *Army of Darkness* (the first two of which he co-produced), *Going Back*, *Maniac Cop*, *Moontrap* and *Mindwarp*. Other film credits include *Crimewave* (which he co-produced), *Intruder*, *Sundown*, *Waxwork II* and *Darkman*. He also co-produced *Lunatics: A Love Story*, in which he put in a special appearance.

Campbell acquired an interest in acting when his father, who went to work for Alcoa Aluminum in Detroit instead of following the creative career he had himself desired, got involved in community theater. Campbell saw his father in *The Pajama Game*, "dancing, singing, wearing different clothes... He was dancing with women that weren't my mother, and I thought, 'That's really



Bruce Campbell as Brisco County, Jr.

assignment is to hunt down and recapture the men his father tried to bring in. The businessmen, referred to by Brisco as the robber barons, are played by a group of western film and television veterans; James Drury (*The Virginian*), Rayford Barnes (*Gunsmoke*), Robert Fuller (*Wagon Train*), and Paul Brinegar (*Rawhide*). The coalition are not exactly ecstatic when they meet the son of the late

odd." He had thought that "only kids do that sort of thing."

When he got a little older, Bruce started to play small parts in summer plays. His forays into theater included *Fiorello*, *South Pacific* (as a Polynesian servant boy), and *The King and I*.

"...Some kid who was playing the king's son fell ill and I don't know why, but they said, 'Here, you. You take the part.' I did, and you know, it was a small part, but I still had lines ... the audience responded to those lines. It really made all the difference and so that stuck with me."

When he told his father that he wanted to "do this sort of stuff," young Campbell met with no resistance. In fact, his father became the first investor in *The Evil Dead*, Campbell's first feature. His partner in this cinematic venture was Sam Raimi, a classmate he met in a 1975 drama class. The first time he saw Raimi was in a junior high hallway "dressed as Sherlock Holmes, and I thought, 'Well, nothing will ever come of that kid!'" Later, when they were doing "embarrassing pantomimes" in drama class, "I said, 'Yours was really bad,' and he said, 'Yeah, so was yours.'" Their later forays into Super 8 moviemaking eventually "blossomed" into their first feature.

One of the things Campbell enjoyed about Brisco is that he was not only a capable *physical* hero, but a "mental" one as well. Brisco, as Campbell puts it, is "not just an 'aw shucks' dirt kicking cowboy." Campbell also believes that Brisco "had a lot of heart and is fair, a good role-model."

Brisco's competition in his quest is bounty hunter Lord Bowler, who is himself famed for his tracking abilities. Bowler had been the area's leading bounty hunter until Brisco, Sr. came along. Finding that his new competition is another Brisco County, Bowler sizes him up and declares to young Brisco, "You don't have the huevos rancheros to handle this job." The race is then on to see who will be the first to round up the gang.

Bowler is played by Julius Carry whose prior roles include Mitchell Baldwin, the network boss on *Murphy Brown*, and a role on the series *Doctor, Doctor*. Guest credits include



Bruce Campbell found himself in good company: (left to right, standing) Robert Fuller, James Drury, Stuart Whitman, (seated) Paul Brinegar, and Rayford Barnes

A Different World, *Family Matters*, *Moonlighting*, *227*, *The Jeffersons*, *Benson*, *Newhart*, *Alice*, and *Hill St. Blues*. Carry's telefilm roles include *Perry Mason: The Case of the All Star Assassin*, *Jake Spanner: Private Eye* and *Independence*. He has also been seen in such feature films as *The Last Dragon*, *Moving*, *World Gone Wild*, *The Man With One Red Shoe* and *The Fish That Saved Pittsburgh*.

Brisco and Bowler eventually

team up as partners in *DEEP IN THE HEART OF DIXIE*, though there is a running argument as to who is sidekick to whom. Nevertheless, the two men make a rather formidable team, each saving the other on numerous occasions. Socrates Poole joins them on many of their adventures, much to the chagrin of our heroes. Initially rather stiff, Poole's character changes during the course of the series as we see him loosen up



Julius Carry as Lord Bowler

and become a little more willing to bend the rules from time to time.

Christian Clemensen is Socrates Poole, having come to the show with a background in both film and television. Prior roles include the films *Apollo 13*, *The Fisher King*, *Hero*, *Bad Influence*, *Broadcast News*, *Hannah and Her Sisters*, and *Black Widow*. Among his television credits are guest appearances on series such as *L.A. Law*, *Matlock*, *Designing Women*, and numerous others.

Dixie Cousins, played by Kelly Rutherford (in a manner reminiscent of Mae West in *My Little Chickadee*) is Brisco's romantic interest, and she helps him in some of his pursuits. Rutherford had roles in the soap operas *Loving and Generations*, and appeared in *Homefront* as bartender Judy Owen. Brisco and Dixie's relationship always seems to be in limbo, resulting in Brisco stealing a bit of romance here and there from other women as the occasion arises. At one point, Dixie admits that she would like some kind of commitment from Brisco, but she knows that it cannot happen until Brisco catches

John Bly. Finally, in AKA KANSAS, they profess their love for each other.

Brisco seeks assistance from time to time from eccentric scientist and inventor Professor Albert Wickwire, who is portrayed by John Astin. Astin is probably best loved for his role as Gomez Addams in the

television series *The Addams Family*. His other roles include the films *West Side Story*, *That Touch of Mink*, *The Brothers O'Toole*, and *Freaky Friday*. He is a veteran with extensive stage experience as well, plus numerous guest-starring roles on prime-time television. Professor Wickwire is responsible for getting Brisco and Bowler out of numerous jams, the most significant being their planned execution in *HIGH TREASON (PART 1)*. In this episode, Wickwire produces an invention that saves the lives of Brisco and Bowler when they face the firing squad.

Another character that appears quite often, and who seems to have the nine lives of a cat, is villain Pete Hutter. He is a likable character with a special affinity, bordering on neurosis, for his gun, which he calls "Pete's Piece." Everyone knows that "nobody touches Pete's Piece." Hutter has an extensive vocabulary and an appreciation for fine art that seems delightfully incongruous for an outlaw in the old west. He is played by John Pyper-Ferguson, who has had principal roles in *Unforgiven*, *Bird on*

a Wire, *Bye Bye Blues* and *Stay Tuned*. Pyper-Ferguson has also appeared in several other movies, and on television in series such as *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *MacGyver*.

The underlying story laced throughout most of the episodes begins in the pilot with the discovery of a mysterious orb; a metallic sphere uncovered by Chinese workmen digging for the railroad, which is dubbed a "U.F.O." (Unearthed Foreign Object) by the government. No one knows its origin or what it is made of, but the extraordinary powers it possesses, and bestows upon those who come in contact with it, make it the object of desire for those who would use it for evil purposes. It becomes a part of Brisco's destiny to find the secret of the orb, its connection to John Bly, and to keep it from falling into the evil villain's possession. Little by little throughout the series the secret of the orb is revealed.

Billy Drago plays the dastardly John Bly with a flourish uniquely his. Bly is one of many villainous roles he has played on the big screen as well as the small. His film credits include Clint Eastwood's *Pale Rider*, *Vamp*, *Delta Force 2*, and *The Untouchables* (as Frank Nitti). In addition to his many movie roles, Drago has also appeared on numerous television series, including *Moonlighting*, *Hunter*, *Hill St. Blues*, *Trapper John, M.D.*, and *The Fall Guy*.

IN THE ORB SCHOLAR, Bly actually shoots Brisco, but thanks to a mysterious Professor Coles (Brandon Maggart), Brisco experiences a miracle through the orb, and is able to continue his mission. Brisco's next encounter with the orb is in *SENIOR SPIRIT*, where he also meets up with the spirit of his father who is there to offer support to his son a la *Hamlet*. In this episode, John Bly has captured Professor Coles in order to force his assistance in harnessing the power of the orb. The spirit of Brisco, Sr. reveals to his son a startling secret about the orb; that it is only one of three in existence.

Brisco's future encounters with the orb are equally mysterious, as in *AKA KANSAS*, wherein Brisco meets himself coming back in time to retrieve the orb. His other self tells Brisco that he is there from the future,

sort of a "telegraph through time". Future Brisco tells him that he's on the right track but has to find the third orb with Professor Coles (confused yet?). Future Brisco says he needs this orb, takes it, and disappears. In *BYE BLY*, we learn the reason for Future Brisco's trip through time to bring back this particular orb.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH finally reveals the secret of the orb, when Bly once again captures Professor Coles, coercing him into producing the orb in order to save his daughter, who isn't quite what she appears to be. Coles complies before Brisco arrives to confront Bly, who is now gaining power from the orb. Bly tells Brisco the secret of who he is, where he is from, and what he wants with the orb (to rule the world). Brisco defeats Bly (or so it appears) but is warned by Coles that his "destiny is not yet fulfilled" and he'll have to find out more about the orb in preparation for yet another confrontation with Bly.

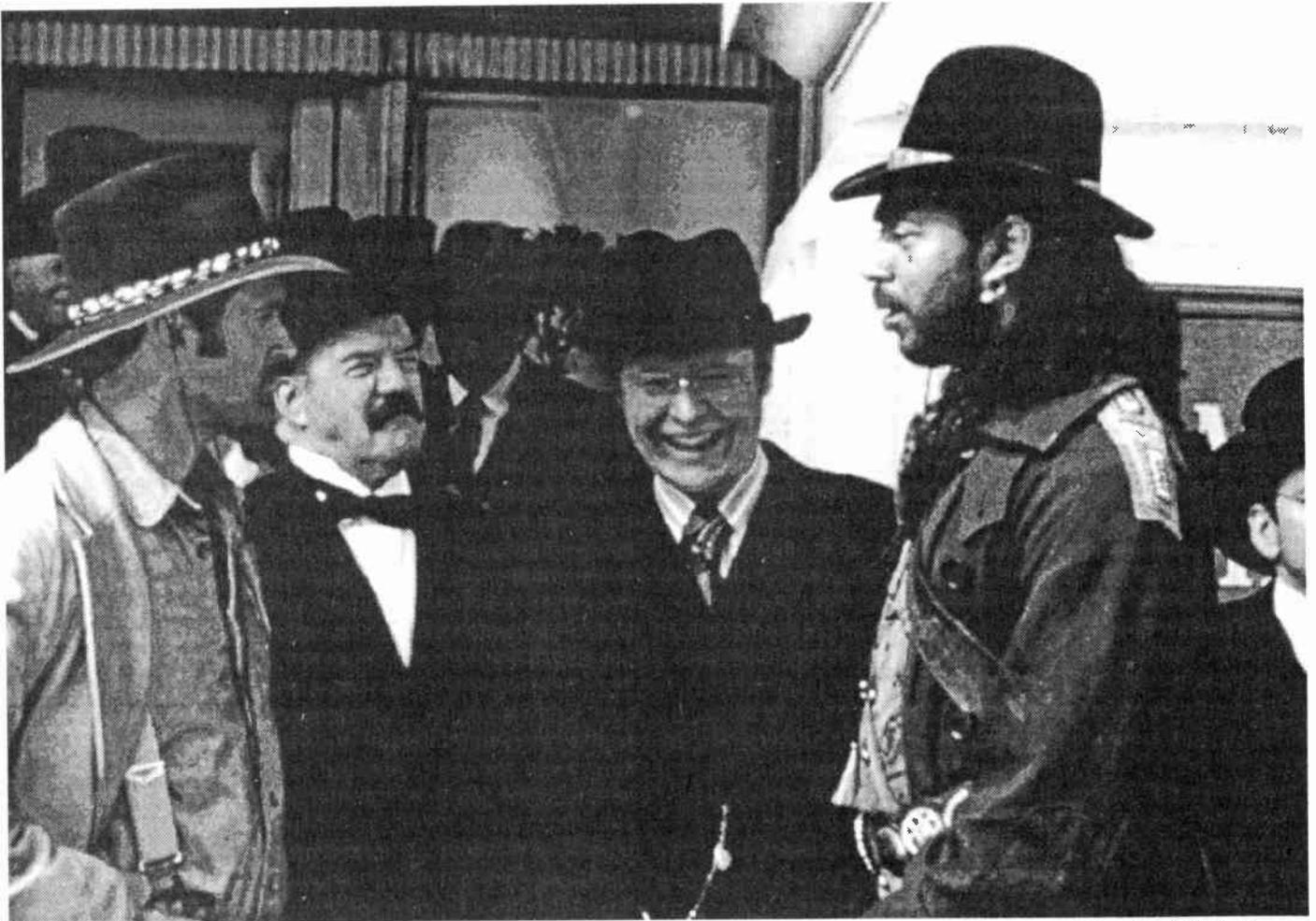
The Bly storyline concludes in *BYE BLY*, when Brisco is visited by a woman from the future who explains that it was her people who created the orbs to aid in the advancement of mankind. She warns Brisco that Bly will return, and indeed Brisco meets Bly for a final confrontation. Although Bly displays a superhuman power, our hero forges on in a fantastic battle and emerges victorious by using the power of the orb.

With Bly and his gang defeated, Brisco and Bowler must then decide what to do with themselves. They receive a commendation from the President who requests that they become his special agents, handling matters of great delicacy. Socrates Poole is assigned to be their contact.

Fans of contemporary humor are treated to such lines as those delivered in *HIGH TREASON (PART DOS)*. Professor Wickwire tells Brisco that a Count Von Zeppelin is

interested in investing in his new invention, an airship, on the condition that the ship be named after him and fitted with armaments. Brisco responds, "A lead zeppelin! It might just be your stairway to heaven!" Wickwire replies, "Yes. If I sell them just one airship, it will be a good year!" In *NO MAN'S LAND*, there is a familiar plea to stop arguing from one in a gang of brothers: "Can't we all just get along?" *SHOWDOWN* has an especially liberal supply of clever lines, including an introduction to a gunfighter named Utah Johnny Montana whom we learn used to be called John Cougar Montana ("He dropped the Cougar 'cuz he thought it was pretentious"). In the same episode, Brisco, Bowler, and Brisco's old flame, Annie, are going after the bad guys. Annie asks, "What do you want me to do?" to which Brisco responds (all together now), "Annie, get your gun!"

Such anachronistic humor wasn't



Brisco and Bowler hobnob with President Teddy Roosevelt (Richard Herd) and Socrates Poole (Christian Clemenson) in BYE BLY.

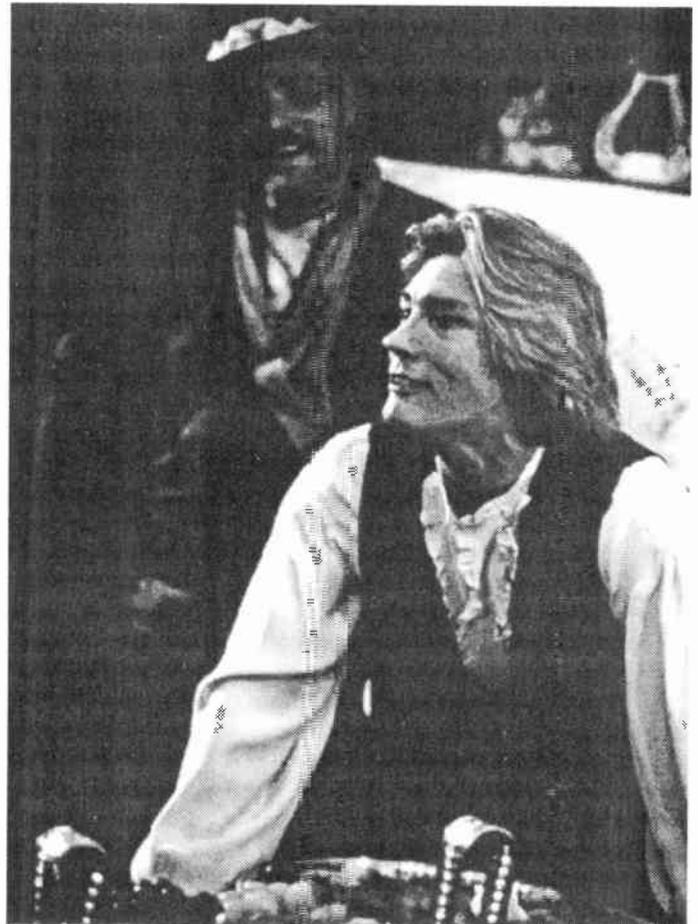


Kelly Rutherford as Dixie

limited to the dialogue.

Occasionally, Brisco and his cohorts would encounter cultural ideas that were as far ahead of their time as Wickwire's inventions. In BROOKLYN DODGERS, for example, Socrates Poole is introduced to sushi (served by Clyde Kusatsu of *All American Girl*).

In discussing the development of the characters in the show, Campbell recalled, "We'd tell the writers 'Challenge us! Don't assume after five episodes that we do certain things as actors or that our limits are only X, Y, or Z.' So it was really just saying, 'Hey, you wanna make me fight somebody underwater? Do it. If you wanna put us on a rocket and chase the bad guys that way, great! If you want me to defend a friend in court, do that. None of those were my ideas, but the point is, they were doing a lot already. I just wanted to make sure they didn't fall into some boring pattern. I mean, there's a 50--50 thing. Viewers want to see an element of consistency, yet they don't. You have to be consistently inconsistent, or something like that."



Billy Drago as John Bry, with M.C. Gainey in background as Big Smith

He spoke candidly about his experiences with Comet, his amazing horse companion. He said that upon meeting wrangler Gordon Spencer, Spencer asked, "You know how to ride, kid?" "Oh, sure I know how to ride. Oh, yeah." He noticed the smirk on Spencer's face when he rode for the first time.

There were several horses used to portray Comet. The horse which did the "talking" and all the hero acts was named Strip. He was the horse that had the real coloring and was a smart trick horse according to Campbell, but "you couldn't sit on that horse and give dialogue to save your life." He said that trick horses are nervous and are "always sort of looking around, saying 'When do I do my trick?'"

Copper was the horse Campbell actually rode. He had nicknamed him "Leadbelly" because, "You could sit on him all day." There was also a horse that reared, and a racing horse for the stunt rider. There was even a backup horse or two. All had to wear makeup to resemble the trick horse,

Strip.

Campbell went on to explain that "the right horse has to be chosen for the right shot and then you have to figure out how to *use* the right horse for the right shot." The horses "get programmed" after one take and try to go into action again before the start of the next take. What has to be done is to trick the horse by taking him a different direction between takes or ride him at a different pace so he will become thoroughly confused, "Which way do I go now?" Another problem Campbell told of was that the horses know the words "roll sound." He said, "You can see their ears perk up, and they know the 'A' word, they know 'action'." He said that hand signals had to be used to "fool the horse."

Campbell recounted one painful incident when a horse stepped on his foot. "The fun thing about horses is they step on your foot, and then you see them shift their weight to that foot." He also brought up one of the problems that is sometimes encountered while working with

horses, which is that certain horses can be afraid of objects like light meters or microphone booms. He told of one horse that had been in a war movie and had been exposed to multiple explosions. The poor horse panicked whenever it heard gunshots and was unworkable. When asked if that was one of the horses he had worked with, he responded, "I think we gave it to some bad guy... the wrangler's smarter than that. Give it to a day player!"

The show took a blow below the belt when, on December 18, 1993, *The Los Angeles Times* published the findings of a study presented by Senator Byron L. Dorgan which surveyed a week of primetime television shows. It listed *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.* as one of the most violent shows on television. The research was done by students at

Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, whose definition of violence was established by the National Coalition on Television Violence. Acts defined as violent ranged from shootings to fistfights and assaults with any sort of weapon.

Carlton Cuse defended the show in a rebuttal to the *Times* article, which in its headline story stated that the study showed the series to be the "bloodiest" on prime-time. Cuse pointed out that the Senator's press release made no mention of blood and that in the twenty hours of the show



Rocketing to the rescue in the pilot

produced to that point, blood had been shown only once. He also claimed that the violent acts counted in the study were not clearly defined, nor was there any regard for the context in which the acts occurred. Furthermore, the episode surveyed was RIVERBOAT, which happened to feature a boxing match. Cuse went on to cite critical ratings of the show in *TV Guide* which ranked it as one of the best family shows on television, and in *Family Life* which put it at the top of the list for quality programs on network television for children.

shutdowns prompted by air traffic while filming on the studio backlot. (During the Santa Ana winds, air traffic was worse since planes were rerouted directly over the studio). As Bruce Campbell puts it, "a low-rated, expensive show that's a pain in the butt to produce equals cancellation."

Author Gary A. Yoggy, in his book *Riding The Video Range*, rates his favorite 25 television westerns, placing *Brisco* at number 13. Yoggy enjoyed the "Saturday matinee" feel of the show with its for-the-most-part wacky chapter titles (see episode

The ironic thing about the whole violence label is that the show truly *was* one of the few family shows on network television. Violence on the show for the most part was understated and never gratuitous. Sex was handled basically with kisses and innuendo. More violence could be found in Saturday morning children's programming than in a single episode of *Brisco*.

The eventual demise of the show could be blamed in part on scheduling. The night (Friday) and hour the show aired is a difficult slot for almost any series. Cost was another trouble spot, especially when combined with ratings problems. Movie-quality special effects and the generous use of horses and wranglers contributed to the high budget, as did the approximate hour each day that was lost during

guide). He found particular humor in the episode NO MAN'S LAND, wherein one of the characters was named "Dr. Quintano, Medicine Woman," an obvious reference to the current hit television show, *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*. Yoggy points out that reviews for *Brisco* were positive for the most part, though he does cite one expression of doubt issued by a critic for the *New York Times*.

Not taking the loss of the show lightly, fans responded to a poll in *TV Guide* which was designed to save shows destined for cancellation. *Brisco* won a third of the vote, with the other two-thirds of the vote being divided between the remaining shows. An ad was even taken out in a trade paper pleading for the show's return. In spite of public efforts to save it, however, *Brisco* was banished to the television netherworld of a studio vault.

There was some talk of a *Brisco* TV-movie, but Warner Bros. shot the idea down rather quickly. According to Campbell, until the foreign numbers (ratings) come in, the question will be how the show has performed in other markets. If it were to do well enough in certain countries, he feels that there could be a chance. With only having 26 episodes, however, not many buyers would be likely to get too excited.

In an interview with TVC, Campbell indicated that he would be willing to do a movie or a continuation of the series "under the right conditions," which would be to hopefully get the original actors back to play the main characters; and it would have to be written by some of the original writers as well. In regards to the show's cancellation, Campbell states, "I don't think it could have been made anywhere else *but* Fox, but I don't think it was *for* Fox. I think if it was on CBS, we'd still be on the air. But I don't think that CBS would have let us do the stuff that we did. We were a little 'out there' on some of these episodes."

According to Campbell, tentative plans for the second season had called for a change in format; trying to center the show in one town and making appearances by Dixie and Wickwire more regular. In regards to Wickwire, Campbell liked the sort of "James Bond element" that the



John Pyper-Ferguson as Pete Hutter

character supplied.

After *Brisco*, Campbell was cast in supporting roles in *The Hudsucker Proxy* and, more recently, *Congo*, the movie adaptation of a Michael Crichton thriller. He has directed an episode of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (THE VANISHING DEAD), as series in which he also plans an upcoming guest appearance, and he has been seen in a repeating role as the head of an international crime cartel in *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*.

Those who mourned the loss of

Brisco could, for awhile, find solace in another tongue-in-cheek western that premiered on April 18th of this year on Paramount's fledgling UPN network. *Legend*, starring Richard Dean Anderson of *MacGyver* fame, delivered a similar blend of action, humor, and parody. In place of the upright, straight-shooting *Brisco* County, Jr., there is dime novelist Ernest Pratt, whose meal ticket is his literary creation, Nicodemus Legend, an upright, straight-shooting hero (in contrast to Pratt himself, who fancies the bottle, the cigar, the poker table,

and the ladies). When forced to essentially impersonate his creation, Pratt is aided by professor Janos Bartok, a Hungarian genius with a grudge against Thomas Edison. Like Wickwire and Brisco, Bartok and Pratt utilize a number of inventions that are, to varying degree, ahead of their time. Ironically, Brisco is just the sort of hero that a writer like Pratt would have created.

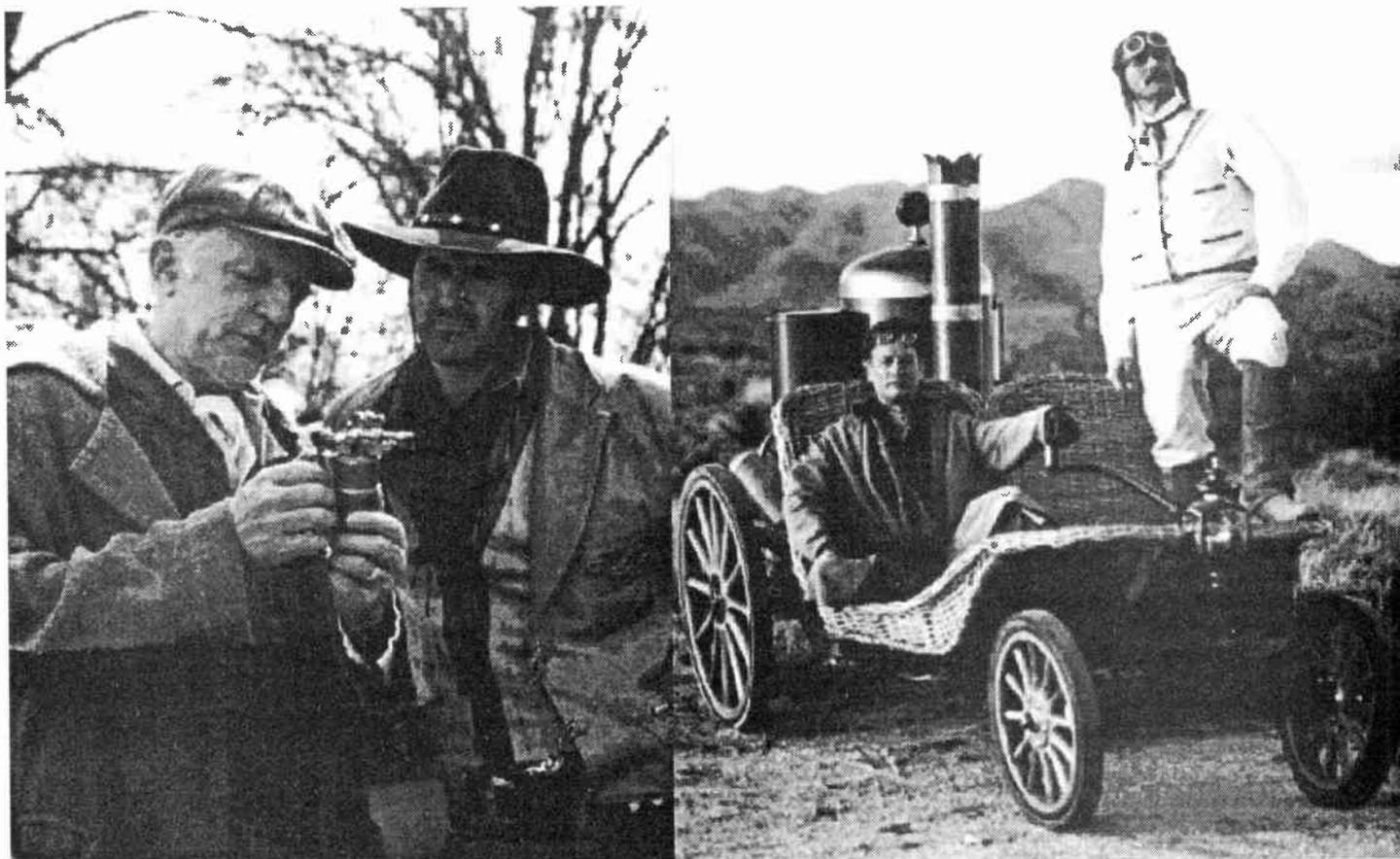
Unfortunately, it appears that *Legend* has met the same fate as its predecessor, *Brisco*, though without the benefit of running a full season. UPN has followed in the footsteps of other networks by cancelling the show too early to give it a chance to reach its audience. If the networks had always been so quick with the ax, we would have long forgotten such shows

as *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* and *St. Elsewhere*. There may be a glimmer of hope, however, in that UPN's publicity department has indicated to TVC that it is possible that *Legend*, while not on the upcoming Fall schedule, could return as a replacement later on. The question remains; can it be that the world is just not ready for a comedic, adventure western, or are shows like *Brisco* and *Legend* just too unique for the network brass?

When asked if he had any message for *Brisco* fans, Bruce Campbell responded with humor:

"I'd like to thank the six viewers that watched the show, you know, for watching!"

-Mary Jo Hanold



Brisco redux? The teamwork of *Legend*'s Janos Bartok (John DeLancie) and Ernest Pratt aka Nicodemus Legend (Richard Dean Anderson) is not so different from that of Professor Wickwire (John Astin) and *Brisco*.

PILOT (2 hours; 8/27/93)

While a mysterious orb is unearthed by railroad workers, elsewhere Marshal Brisco County is murdered in a daring escape by John Bly's gang, prompting a coalition of wealthy businessmen to hire Brisco County Jr. to bring in his father's murderers

R. Lee Ermey, M.C. Gainey, John Pyper-Ferguson, Kelly Rutherford, Anne Tremko, Stuart Whitman, Rayford Barnes, Paul Brinegar, James Drury, Robert Fuller, James Hong, Mark Twogood, Charles Noland, Rick Dean, Gary Cervantes, Bill Bolender, Frank Vlastnik, Leo Louis, Kevin Lowe, Buck Rooney, Norman Merrill, Chi Muoi Lo, Jerry Potter, Stuart Quan

Written by David Simkins, Jeffrey Boam, Carlton Cuse; Directed by Bryan Spicer

Chapters: "The Blast Supper"/

"Scarred Feet Turn Up the Heat"/"Hot Flames, Two Dames and Loose Reins"/"Lowdown Showdown"/"Yell to Your Horse"/

"Spur of the Moment"/"Grave Peril"

Winner of Golden Reel Award for Sound Editing (Walter Newman, Supervising Sound Editor)

THE ORB SCHOLAR (9/3/93)

Brisco meets Professor Cole, who uses the orb to save his life after being shot by Bly

Brandon Maggart, Pat Skipper, Robert Picardo, Ray Bumatai, Dewey Weber, Tom Simmons

Written by Jeffrey Boam; Directed by Andy Tennant

Chapters: "Our Ace in a Hole"/

"R.S.V.P. to R.I.P."

NO MAN'S LAND (9/10/93)

Brisco, Bowler, and Professor Wickwire are caught in an all-woman town when it comes under the control of the Swill brothers

Denise Crosby, Dennis Forest, Brook Susan Parker, Jeremy Roberts, Judson Scott, Tracey Walter

Written by Tom Chehak; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "No Man's Land"/"Tanks for the Memories"

BRISCO IN JALISCO (9/17/93)

Brisco and Poole get caught up in a revolution while trying to keep stolen guns out of the hands of a Mexican dictator

John Pyper-Ferguson, Kelly Rutherford, Paul Brinegar, Robert Fuller, Michael DeLorenzo, Miguel Perez, Marco Rodriguez

Written by Carlton Cuse, Jeffrey Boam; Directed by James Contner

Chapters: "Brisco in Jalisco"/"Guns or Hutter"

SOCRATES' SISTER (9/24/93)

On the trail of counterfeiters, Brisco faces Socrates' sister and an underwater diving suit

Judith Hoag, John Pyper-Ferguson, William Russ, Ashby Adams

Written by Chris Ruppenthal; Directed by Greg Beeman

Chapters: "Get the Drop, Tie 'Em Up, Shoot 'Em Dead, Rawhide"/"Tight Ropes and Sunken Hopes"

RIVERBOAT (10/1/93)

Brisco, a la Bret Maverick, maneuvers Lord Bowler into a high-stakes boxing match on a riverboat

Kelly Rutherford, Xander Berkeley, Monte Russell, Don Stroud, John Shumski, Gary Lee Davis, A. Michael Learner

Written by John Warren; Directed by Fred Gerber

Chapters: "Rushin' Roulette"/"Bone Dry"

PIRATES (10/8/93)

Prairie pirates, quicksand, and a sick boy keep Brisco and Bowler on their toes

Andrew Divoff, John Walcutt, Robert O'Reilly, Janel Moloney, Adam Wylie, Josef Pilato

Written by Richard Outten; Directed by Daniel Attias

Chapters: "Quick Sands of Time"/"A Pile of Dynamite, A Keg of Wine, and Thou"

SENIOR SPIRIT (10/15/93)

Brisco must battle John Bly for the orb and confront the spirit of his father, who has come back to give Brisco guidance in his quest

R. Lee Ermey, Steve Rankin, Jason Marsden, Adrian Sparks

Written by John McNamara; Directed by Michael Lange

Chapters: "Leap of Faith"/"Father Knows Best"



A close shave in PIRATES

BRISCO FOR THE DEFENSE (10/22/93)

Brisco comes to the aid of an old school chum accused of murdering the husband of his mistress

Edward Blatchford, Carol Huston, Tony Jay, Felton Perry, Jenson Daggett, John Bellucci, Duane Tucker, Carmen Fildi

Written by John McNamara, David Simkins; Directed by Andy Tennant

Chapters: "Trial by Hurry"/"Runaway Train"

SHOWDOWN (10/29/93)

In his efforts to free his hometown from the clutches of a powerful cattleman, Brisco must contend with a hitman, an old girlfriend, and her alcoholic sheriff father

Jessica Tuck, Michael Bowen, Anthony Starke, John Hawkes, Richard Venture, John P. Ryan, Ken Johnson, Jason Reins, Hal Burton, Brandon Simpson, David Carpenter, Vincent Klyn, James Staley

Written by David Simkins; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "Tender Hearts, Tenderloins"/"Number One With a Bullet"

DEEP IN THE HEART OF DIXIE (11/5/93)

Brisco, Bowler, and the government must find Dixie, who is on the run with a wax cylinder that has information that could be damaging to the United States, before the bad guys do

Kelly Rutherford, David Warner, Andrea Parker, James Greene, Jake Crawford, Danny Costa, Ashby Adams, Deke Anderson, Michael Lowry

Written by Brad Kern, John Wirth; Directed by Joe Napolitano

Chapters: "Tension Headache"/"Mission Impossible"



On the horns of a dilemma in BRISCO IN JALISCO

CRYSTAL HAWKS (11/12/93)

A female bounty hunter leads the pack when Brisco goes on the run after being mistakenly accused of murder

Sheena Easton, M.C. Gainey, Rayford Barnes, Tom Dahlgren, James Gleason, Patrick Fischler, Adrienne Hampton, Kevin Lowe, John Mueller, John Voldstad, Joseph Whipp, Harry Woolf

Written by Carlton Cuse, John McNamara; Directed by Win Phelps

Chapters: "The Piano Lesson"/"Zen and the Art of Orb Maintenance"

STEEL HORSES (11/19/93)

Brisco and Bowler try to save Socrates' job by recovering a stolen piece of top secret equipment that he was entrusted with and is now being used in a crime spree

Don Michael Paul, James Greene, Geoffrey Blake, Brian Cousins, Josh Richman, Dennis Fimple

Written by Tom Chehak; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "Steel Horses"/"Sleazy Riders"

MAIL ORDER BRIDES (12/10/93)

The Swill brothers are at it again when they steal dowries from a group of brides and a prize bull destined for the King of Spain

Elizabeth Barondes, Jeremy Roberts, Abraham Alvarez, Kim Walker, Dennis Forest, Romy Rosemont, John Vargas, Tracey Walter, Nan Martin, Mark and Brian (Mark Thompson, Brian Phelps)

Written by David and John Wirth, Tom Chehak; Directed by Michael Schultz

Chapters: "For Whom the Bull Tolls"/"Relief From the Bull Pen"

AKA KANSAS (12/17/93)

Socrates is stalked by his escaped convict former lover, and Dixie's ex-husband is ready to do battle with Brisco over Dixie and a secret super cannon to be used in a scheme to steal the orb from a government facility

Kelly Rutherford, Christopher Rich, Andrea Parker, Obba Babatundé, Andreas Renell, Vaughn Armstrong, Robert Keith, Ashby Adams, Peter Dennis

Written by Brad Kern, John McNamara, Carlton Cuse; Directed by Rob Bowman

Chapters: "Not a Welcome Wagon"/"Here's Looking at You, Kid"

BOUNTY HUNTER CONVENTION (1/7/94)

With undertones of *Ten Little Indians*, Brisco, Bowler, and Socrates are stuck on an island at a bounty hunter convention where the world's best bounty hunters have gathered and are now being knocked off one-by-one

Jonathon Schaech, Claire Wren, Morgan Woodward, Ian Ogilvy, Clement Von Franckenstein, Rex Linn, Robert Winley, Luis Contreras, John Hertzler

Written by James L. Novack; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "Rub a Dub Dub, Watch Out for the Tub"/"A Day at the Beach"

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH (1/14/94)

The secrets of the orb and John Bly are revealed, leading to a climactic battle between Brisco and his arch-enemy

Terri Ivens, James Hong, Brandon Maggart, Wolf Larsen, Blake Bailey, Gregg Thomsen, Dan Blom

Written by Kathryn Baker; Directed by Michael Caffey

Chapters: "Boiling Point"/"Future Shock"

HARD ROCK (2/4/94)

Brisco and Bowler come to the aid of an old friend of Bowler's who is being leaned on by a one-man protection racket names Hondo

Gary Hudson, Jeff Phillips, Nicholas Surovy, JoNell Kennedy, Hawthorne James, William Frankfather, Jim Wilkey

Written by John McNamara; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlan

Chapters: "A Grizzly Situation"/"Hondo Accord"

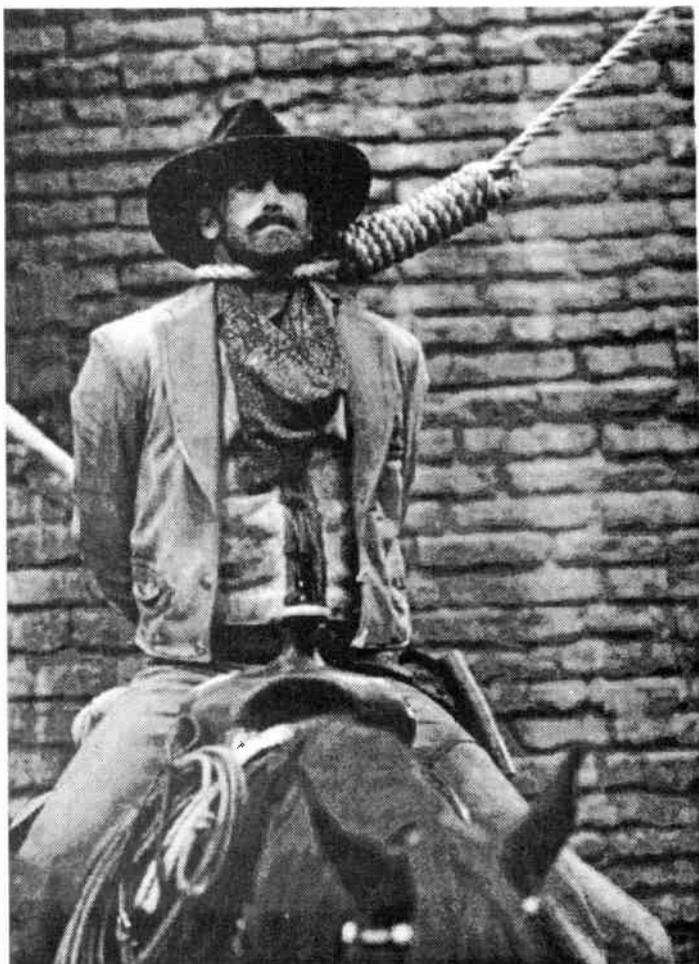
BROOKLYN DODGERS (2/11/94)

Brisco and Bowler agree to help two orphans claim their inheritance, but must take on some thugs from Brooklyn in order to do it

Michael Cade, Clark Brolly, Mercedes Alicia McNab, Sam Anderson, Clyde Kusatsu, Perry Barndt, Ryan Cutrona, Kenneth Tigar, Melissa Berger, Scott Harlan, Chris Branham, Devon O'Brien

Written by Donald Marcus; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "Heavy Metal"/"Top of the World, Ma"



At the end of- oh, never mind. It's too easy.

BYE BLY (2/18/94)

A visitor from the future brings Brisco a dire warning, leading to a final showdown with Bly

Dennis Cockrum, Steve Blaylock, Melanie Smith, Kevin Lowe, Hal Burton, Richard Herd, Ryan Thomas Johnson, Stewart Bick, Webster Whinnery

Written by Carlton Cuse; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "As Time Goes Bly"/"Bye Bly"

Production of this episode was interrupted by the Northridge Earthquake of January 17

NED ZED (3/11/94)

Brisco must escape from the clutches of Frenchie Bearpaux, then bring in a diminutive bank robber with a big attitude

Casey Siemaszko, Brenda Bakke, Ray Bumatai, James Drury, Frederick Coffin, Phillip Van Dyke, Tom McCleister, Charles Bailey-Gates, Michael Boston, Matt McColm, Vince Melocchi, Steve Peterson, Fernanda Gordon, Gary Cervantes, Grace Etchen, Robert Kempf

Written by Jeffrey Boam; Directed by Bryan Spicer

Chapters: "I'll Be Sawing You in All the Old Familiar Places"/"When All is Zed and Done"

STAGECOACH (4/1/94)

Brisco is appointed to guard a woman bound for a south-of-the-border prisoner exchange, but Bowler and Socrates discover that the mission is a set-up

John Pyper-Ferguson, Aries Spears, Lisa Collins, Debra Jo Rupp, Timothy Leary, Carlton Cuse

Written by Jeffrey Vlaming; Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcala

Chapters: "Babe Scoping"/"A Kiss Before Dying"

WILD CARD (4/8/94)

Dixie's sister, Dolly, has lost her Reno casino to a couple of hoods and needs Brisco's help to get it back

Kelly Rutherford, Jeff Phillips, Elaine Hendrix, Louis Giambalvo, Paul Ben-Victor, Peter Dobson

Written by Brad Kern, John Wirth; Directed by Larry Shaw

Chapters: "Magnum Force"/"House of Cards"

AND BABY MAKES THREE (4/22/94)

During a mission to save the infant heir to the Chinese throne from would-be assassins, Brisco faces ninjas, kidnappers, and his mother's killer

Kelly Rutherford, John Pyper-Ferguson, James Hong, Jeff Phillips, Tzi Ma, Gary Armagnac, Peter Dennis, Francis Chau, David Youse, Craig Ryan Ng, Marianne Bradford

Written by Tracy Friedman; Directed by Kevin S. Bright

Chapters: "Missed Carriage of Justice"/"Up Hutter's Creed Without a Paddle"

BAD LUCK BETTY (4/29/94)

Brisco and Bowler track Socrates' kidnappers to a town whose sheriff is extremely accident prone, where prominent citizens are disappearing, and a mysterious "horseless hearse" keeps showing up

Jeff Phillips, Annabella Price, Jane Sibbett, Adam Hendershot, Michelle Sepek, Jeff Doucette, Morgan Hunter, Edith Fields, Dana Craig, Don Keith Opper

Written by Tony Blake, Paul Jackson; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlan

Chapters: "It Only Hearse When I Laugh"/"A Grave Situation"

HIGH TREASON (2 parts; 5/13/94, 5/20/94)

Accused of high treason, Brisco and Bowler stand trial for aiding the enemy when they refuse to return a kidnapped woman they rescued who, as it happens, didn't want to be

John Pyper-Ferguson, Jeff Phillips, Gary Hudson, Michael Fairman, Ely Pouget, Andrew Hill Newman, Ray Birk, Macon McCalman, Victor Rivers, Terry Bradshaw, Michael Jare, Jaime Cardriche, Richard Herd, Carl Banks, Jim Harbaugh, Ken Norton Jr.

Written by Carlton Cuse, Brad Kern, Tom Chehak, John Wirth; Directed by Kim Manners

Chapters: "The Unprofessionals"/"Better Luck in the Next World"/"Heaven Can Wait"/"Life After Death"

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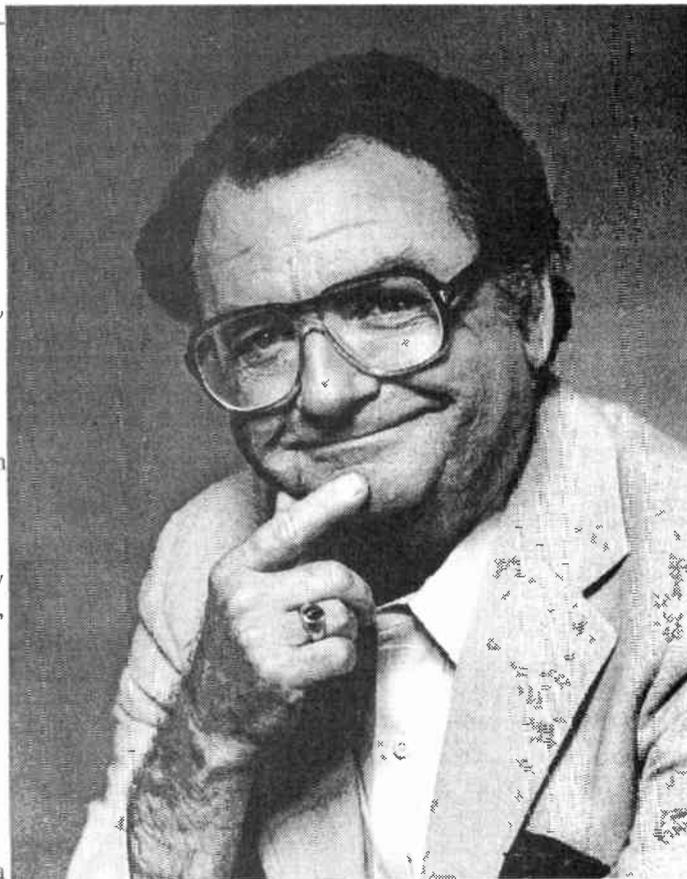


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Jonny Quest - 39 episodes, 1964-65/1987 ABC/Syndicated

Credits:

Produced and Directed by Joseph Barbera and William Hanna
 Musical Direction and Theme by Hoyt Curtin
 Based upon an idea created by Doug Wildey

Regular Cast:

Jonny Quest - Tim Matthieson (Matheson; 1st series), Scott Menville (2nd series)
 Dr. Benton Quest - John Stephenson (1st series in denoted [*] episodes), Don Messick
 Roger "Race" Bannon - Mike Road (1st series), Granville Van Dusen (2nd series)
 Hadji - Danny Bravo (1st series), Rob Paulsen (2nd series)
 Bandit - Don Messick
 Hardrok - Dorian Harewood (2nd series, beginning with THE MONOLITH MAN)

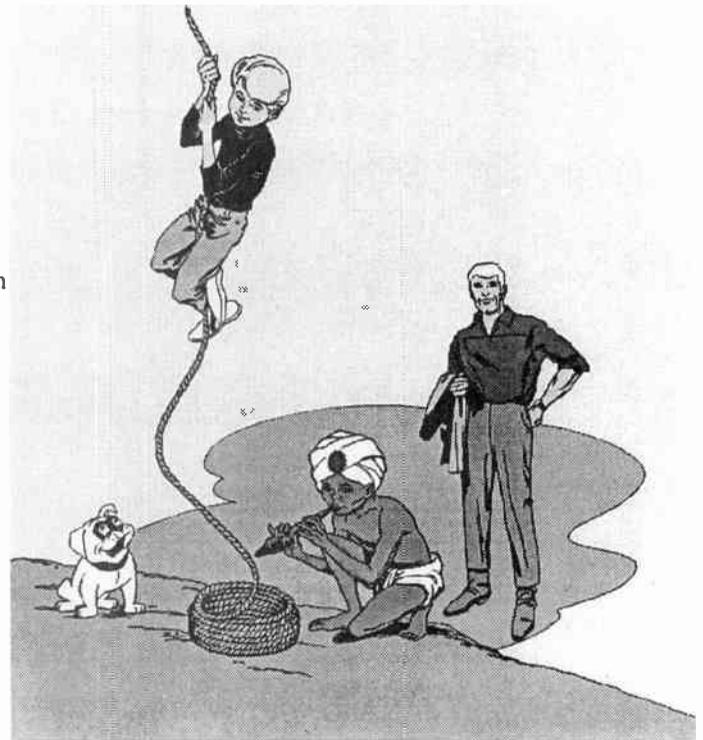
Semi-regular:

Dr. Zin (1st series) - Vic Perrin
 "Jezebel" Jade (1st series) - Cathy Lewis
 Various - Doug Young (1st series)
 Various - Henry Corden (1st series)

Probably the nearest literary antecedent one could come up with for *Jonny Quest* would be the Tom Swift juvenile sci-fi novels penned under the name Victor Appleton, most particularly the 50s-60s series featuring Tom Swift, Jr. In his autobiography, *My Life in 'Toons*, however, while Hanna-Barbera co-founder Joseph Barbera acknowledges reading the earlier Swift novels, he

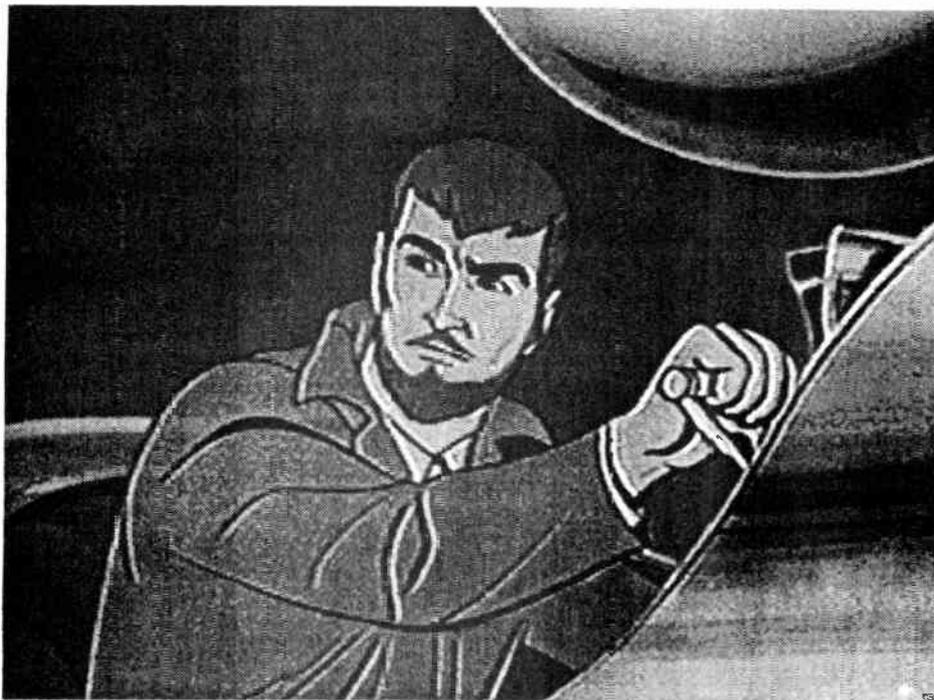
cites the comic strip *Terry and the Pirates* as the primary inspiration for *Jonny Quest*.

Regarding the genesis of the overall project, the *Quest* format was born out of a thwarted attempt by illustrator Doug Wildey and H-B to adapt radio hero Jack Armstrong into an animated series. In fact, it was this unrealized Jack Armstrong



project which provided the segments in the series' closing credits showing African tribesmen attacking the Quest party, as these scenes do not appear in any of the final episodes.

Wildey's original title for the series was "The Saga of Chip Balloo," which, with the change in character



Jonny's father, the eminent Dr. Benton Quest

names, was first altered to "Quest File 037" (the label on the intelligence file containing the data on the Quests; the file itself appearing in the first aired episode, *MYSTERY OF THE LIZARD MEN*), and finally to the name of its central character.

Like the somewhat older Tom Swift Jr., Jonny is the son of a famous inventor. Unlike Tom, however (whose only dramatization thus far has been in a 1983 unsold pilot, *The Tom Swift and Linda Craig Mystery Hour*), Jonny is more of a regular boy than a boy genius. Although he is adept at handling the multiple devices he is exposed to, Jonny is generally more interested in horsing around with his buddy, Hadji, his



Dr. Quest was originally voiced by John Stephenson, seen here in Hogan's Heroes (BAD DAY IN BERLIN).

bodyguard/tutor, Race Bannon, or his dog, Bandit, than in trying to invent anything himself.

Jonny Quest was one of several animated series that Hanna-Barbera was successful in placing in prime time (as opposed to Saturday mornings). Although no other enjoyed the longevity of *The Flintstones* (*Quest* lasted a single season), the mere fact of a cartoon in the evening lineup was then, and remains now, a novelty. Despite the recent success of *The Simpsons*, other animated prime-time broadcast network offerings continue to have a high mortality rate (*Fish Police*, *Family Dog*).

Jonny Quest was also unique in that it was straight adventure, rather than comedic in tone. Although the main character was an 11-year old boy, the scripts did not patronize the younger audience members, which made the show palatable to adults. The storylines seemed to harken back to pulp adventure stories, blending elements of science fiction (*THE INVISIBLE MONSTER*, *TERROR ISLAND*), Cold War espionage (*THE DREADFUL DOLL*, *PIRATES FROM BELOW*), jungle dangers (*PURSUIT OF THE PO-HO*, *ATTACK OF THE TREE PEOPLE*), and even good old-

fashioned Universal-style monsters (*THE CURSE OF ANUBIS*, *THE SEA HAUNT*).

As for the central characters themselves, Dr. Benton Quest is a world-renowned scientist-inventor who works for the government on his Palm Key island compound. He and Race Bannon, a government-assigned bodyguard, look after Jonny and his Indian friend, Hadji. One episode, *CALCUTTA ADVENTURE*, recounts how the Quests met Hadji, an orphan, and how he came to join their group.

The Quest party globe-hops in a private jet that also transports some rather nifty mini-hovercrafts that resemble the rafts used in amusement park whitewater rides. Also available to them are individual strap-on rocket belts. For seafaring adventures, there



Jonny #1, Tim Matheson, seen here (as Tim Matthieson) as he appeared in Yours, Mine, and Ours.

is the *Sea Quest*, a yacht that is eventually destroyed in *ATTACK OF THE TREE PEOPLE*. (This episode features a blooper, when, just before the fire breaks out onboard the ship, Race and Dr. Quest are playing chess with a chess set that mysteriously vanishes between shots)

Dr. Quest's research and troubleshooting activities take him to exotic locales around the world, which provide a broad range of villainous types. One villain, however, stands out from all the others. The Asian genius, Dr. Zin, plays Fu Manchu to Dr. Quest's Sir Nayland-Smith, first appearing (in broadcast sequence) in *RIDDLE OF THE GOLD*. Despite several instances where Zin most certainly should be

killed, he repeatedly proves to be as invulnerable as your average cliffhanger hero, and is the only repeating villain in the Quest canon (though the second series introduces several allegedly "old" enemies).

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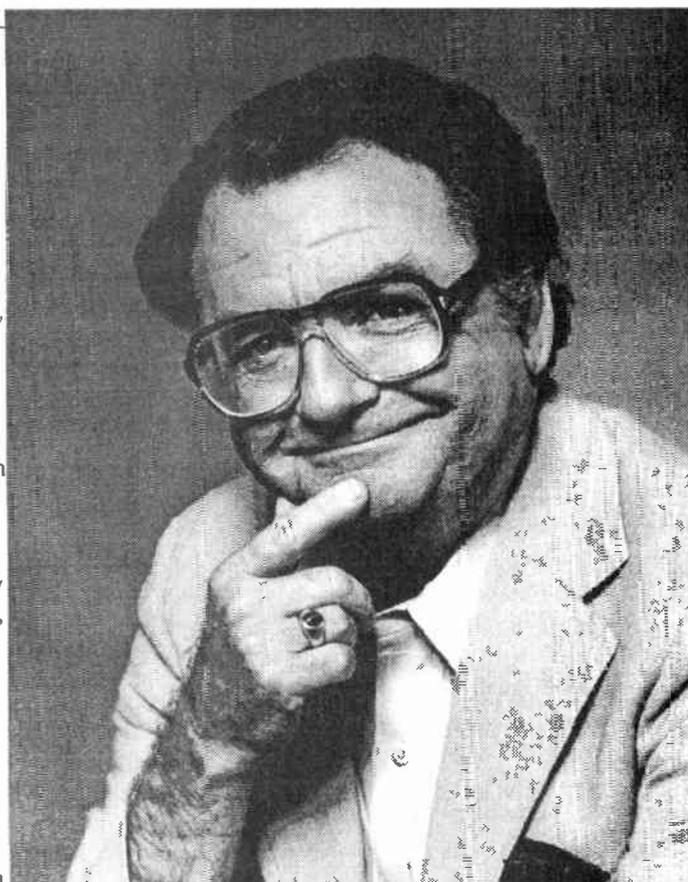


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voiced another *Quest* villain in **THE CURSE OF ANUBIS**, and he would return in other non-Zin villainous roles in **CALCUTTA ADVENTURE** and **THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GARGOYLES**. The majority of guest voices for the series, however, were provided by Henry Corden, Doug Young, and Everett Sloane.

Just as the quality of animated programming in general has declined over the past quarter-century in terms of the process itself, so too has the writing. Despite the fact that *Quest* was originally a prime time series, which might theoretically account for the more sophisticated level of its scripts, its later popularity in the Saturday morning lineup demonstrates that cartoons need not be patronizing in order to appeal to children. Only recently, with the new respect animation has received (on the heels of the feature *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* and such television programs as the aforementioned *Simpsons*, *Batman: The Animated Series*, and *Ren & Stimpy*), has there begun to be a turnaround. In truth, the animation itself on *Quest* isn't anything to get excited about, but much of the artwork is of high quality, and some of it is reminiscent of work by such comic book artists such as Neal Adams, Bernie Wrightson, and Jack Kirby.

Following the cancellation of *Jonny Quest*, Tim Matheson went on to provide the voices of Jace in *Space Ghost* (Mike Road took on the role of Ugh in *Space Ghost's* backup feature, *Dino Boy*) and the lead roles in *The Adventures of Sinbad Jr.* and *Young Samson and Goliath*, and live-action roles in the feature films *Divorce*, *American Style* and *Yours, Mine, and Ours*, before graduating to adult roles. Recently he has also been found in the director's chair. Most of the other original *Quest* cast members would continue to provide cartoon voices, primarily for Hanna-Barbera.

The incredibly prolific Don Mes-

sick added more animals to his resumé on such shows as *Atom Ant*, *Dastardly and Muttley in Their Flying Machines*, and *Josie and the Pussycats*; and gave voice to perhaps the most famous cartoon television canine ever, Scooby-Doo. He was finally seen on-camera as, naturally, a cartoon voice-over actor in NBC's short lived 1984 comedy, *The Duck Factory*, which starred then-unknown James Carrey (*In Living Color*, *Batman Forever*).

Mike Road provided voice talent for Hanna-Barbera's original *Herculoids* (as Zandor), and later took over the role of Reed Richards, aka Mr. Fantastic, for DePatie/Freleng's 1978 *Fantastic Four*



Dr. Zin lay behind many of the world-threatening menaces encountered by the *Quest* party.

series. Henry Corden, one of the regular supporting character voice actors, would go on to a degree of on-camera fame as Mr. Babbitt, first-season landlord of *The Monkees* (see the *Monkees* feature elsewhere in this issue). He could also be seen in other comedies such as *Hogan's Heroes* from time to time. In 1979, he took over the role of one of Hanna-Barbera's crown jewels when he began voicing Fred Flintstone in *The New Fred and Barney Show*.

Doug Wildey went on to work on *The Herculoids* and DePatie-Freleng's *Return to the Planet of the Apes*. Ironically, he nearly developed an animated series based on Tom Swift,

but bailed out when the producers wanted to update the character, whereas Wildey strongly preferred the 1920s version. He also explored the possibility of animating the adventures of pulp hero Doc Savage as a weekly series, based on the recommendation of his friend and employee, Dave Stevens, who would later create *The Rocketeer* (Stevens based the character of Peevy, the *Rocketeer's* mentor, on Wildey).

The current issue of *Toon* magazine (Issue #7) includes some conceptual art for a proposed follow-up series: *Young Dr. Quest: The Adventures of Jon Quest*, which apparently was conceived in the late 70s. This series would have followed the exploits of Jonny as an adult. Hadji would have been included, as would a young Japanese girl that would have been, in some manner, their adopted daughter. They would travel with pets Bandit II and Oboe, a monkey, and been occasionally supported by a semi-retired Dr. Quest and Race Bannon, who has since married Jade. Given the success in the early 80s of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and the inevitable similarities between the properties, it appears that the proposed series was simply victimized by bad timing. (This same

issue of *Toon* promises a more in-depth look at the *Quest* canon and the career of Doug Wildey in their next issue)

In 1986, Hanna-Barbera produced a new series of 13 *Jonny Quest* episodes that aired, along with the original shows, as part of the *Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* syndicated block. Don Messick and Vic Perrin returned to their respective roles for the new episodes, with Scott Menville, who had previously played the role of Spanky in H-B's *Little Rascals* cartoon series, taking over the part of Jonny, and Rob Paulsen providing Hadji's voice.

Less noticeable was the transition



Dr. Zin's voice was provided by Vic Perrin, seen here to the right of Susan Oliver in the classic *Twilight Zone* episode PEOPLE ARE ALIKE ALL OVER.

from Mike Road to Granville Van Dusen as Race Bannon. Van Dusen, who played Patty Duke's ex-husband in a short-lived sitcom for Fox called *Karen's Song*, did a good job of recreating Road's lower register, and most viewers were likely unaware of the change.

A number of notable actors provided guest voices for the second series, including Keye Luke (who had done two original episodes, THE QUETONG MISSILE MYSTERY and THE SEA HAUNT), Darryl Hickman, Jeffrey Tambor ("Hey, Now" Hank Kingsley in HBO's *The Larry Sanders Show*), Dick Gautier (*Get Smart's* Hymie the robot), Ed Begley Jr. (*St. Elsewhere*), and a trio of actors who have made their marks in the *Star Trek* universe; George Takei, Roger C. Carmel (Harry Mudd in a pair of original *Treks* and a sequel in the animated series), and Rene Auberjonois (of *Deep Space Nine*).

A new regular character was introduced into the cast of the second series in the form of a stone man named Hardrok (voiced by Dorian Harewood, known to many as Alex Haley's father, Simon, in *Roots: The Next Generations* or, more recently, as the star of the action series *Viper*). Discovered as the last surviving

member of an underground race (in THE MONOLITH MAN), Hardrok's tissue has been turned into a stonelike substance (hence the name given him by Jonny) by the radiation emitted from the scarlet crystals that provide light to his subterranean world. The change in his physiology has imbued

him with massive strength and near-invulnerability. His only weakness seems to be electricity (though the connection is never explained). Unfortunately, Hardrok is merely the most obvious example of the way in which the second series was more blatantly geared for children, as his assimilation into the surface world and into the lives of the Quests is achieved extremely easily, especially where his sense of humor is concerned (it's much too contemporary).

Though Jonny's age is still officially 11, due to the casting of the younger-sounding Menville in the role, Jonny seems younger in the second series than in the first, perhaps as young as eight or nine if his voice is any indication. It's hard to guess whether this may have been an attempt to make him more identifiable for the young Saturday morning audience (as opposed to the prime time mix of the first series) or possibly it was part of the trend to "infantize" cartoon characters a la *Muppet Babies*, *Flintstone Kids*, *Tiny Toons*, etc.

The second series suffers by comparison in the areas of animation and writing. The animation is as stilted as any of its contemporaries, and the credibility of the action is seldom a concern. Aside from the *deus ex machina* available in the form



Hardrok, the stone man, joined the Quest party in the second series' THE MONOLITH MAN.

of Hardrok, much use is also made of Hadji's mystical powers, far more so than in the original shows, in order to extricate the Quests from peril.

Although many of the gadgets of the 1964 episodes remain futuristic today, the Quests of 1986 have an even more impressive array of toys. Their new jet (Questor One) carries a smaller jet (Questor Two) piggyback as it zooms through the clouds. The pair are stowed in a concealed underground silo which contains an elevator used to bring them to the surface. There are a variety of smaller conveyances carried aboard Questor One (or its seafaring sister craft, the new and improved Sea Questor), including mini-hovercrafts that vaguely resemble the sidewalk scooters of old; single-wheeled, jet-propelled "dirt wheeler" motorbikes; and small "sea sleds," similar to the mini-hovercrafts. Another impressive craft is the Sea Spider, an elaborate bathysphere equipped with four large grappling arms that give it a spider-like appearance (though with only half the required appendages for a true arachnid).

Around the time that the second series debuted, a new comic book company, Comico, began publishing a series of Jonny Quest adventures designed to appeal to those who had loved the original series. In fact, Doug Wildey was persuaded to contribute the first issue's wraparound cover and related story. Subsequent issues would feature artwork by such noted comic artists as Wendy Pini (*Elfquest*), Dave Stevens, and Bill Sienkiewicz (*Moon Knight*).

For whatever reason, the second series failed to fulfill the expectations that Hanna-Barbera had for it. Though an additional 26 episodes had been planned, which, according to Scott Menville, would have featured the addition of Jessie Bradshaw (DEADLY JUNKET) as a regular character, production ceased after the first 13.

Jonny #2, Scott Menville, continued to work as a voice-over actor in such series as *Rugrats*, *Where On Earth is Carmen Sandiego* (as Zack), and *Captain Planet* (as Ma-Ti). He has also appeared on-camera in the film *Ernest Goes to Camp*, and has been featured in recurring roles on *The Wonder Years*

(as Wayne) and *Full House* (as Duane). Rob Paulsen, who was Hadji to Menville's Jonny, went on to give voice to Raphael of the animated *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and more recently has picked up the vocal mantle of the lead character in the upcoming Saturday morning animated series, *The Mask*, based on the comic book and hit movie.

Also around the time of the second series of *Quest* episodes, filmmaker Fred Dekker (*Night of the Creeps*, *The Monster Squad*) announced plans to write and direct a live-action Jonny Quest feature for Taft-Barish productions. His plans, as revealed in the aforementioned *Comics Scene* article, included making Benton Quest a struggling alcoholic and Race Bannon "a cross between James Bond and Martin Riggs" (Mel Gibson's character in the *Lethal Weapon* series). As Dekker described his vision of Bannon, "He can kill you with a wadded-up piece of paper at nine yards." Dekker also expressed the hope of luring Oscar-winning set designer Ken Adam, whose work graces the more visually distinctive 007 adventures (*Goldfinger*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *Moonraker*, etc.) into working on the picture. Failing that, he would get a Ken Adam imitator.

Obviously, Dekker's project never materialized. Perhaps the failure of the second animated series, followed by the folding of the comic title, prompted the producers to back away from their commitment.

Jonny eventually did return, however, in 1993, in an animated made-for-cable (USA Network) movie, *Jonny's Golden Quest*. Rather than being a "further adventure," it appears that the decision was made to recreate the Quest mythos. Jonny's mother, named Rachel, is alive in *Golden Quest*, and it is within this story that she dies, violently, in a confrontation with Dr. Zin. Given the intent to rewrite the Quest canon in the new film, it is understandable that the character would be sacrificed, though it is unfortunate that her death is used to set up a very "90s" father-son conflict more appropriate to a Sunday night "true crisis of the week" movie than anything resembling the relationship of the characters in the original series. By contrast, Comico's



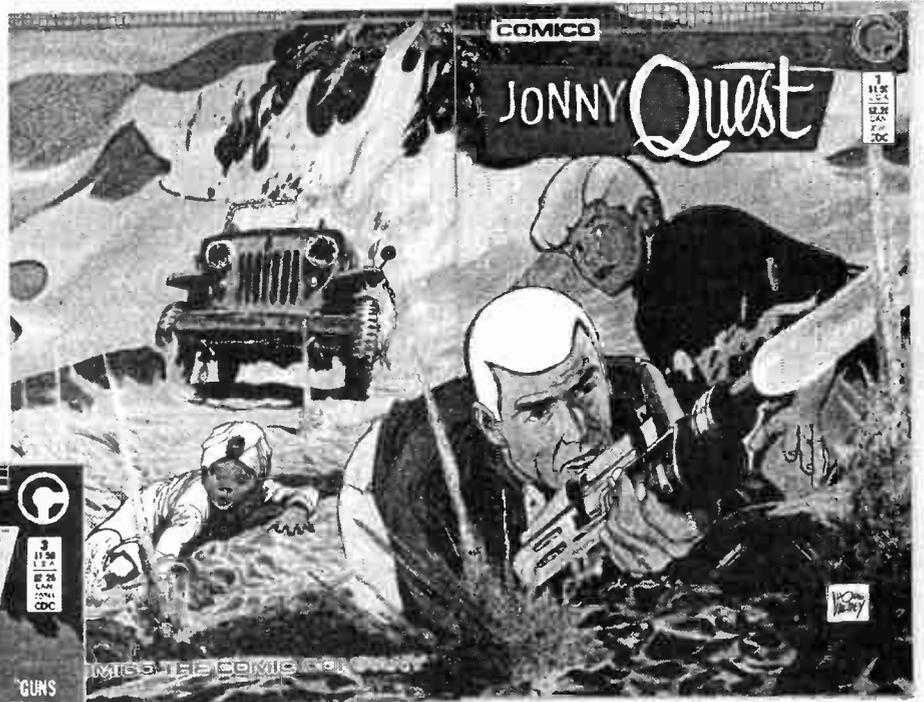
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At about the time he played Crutchfield, the young troublemaker in Ernest Goes to Camp, Scott Menville inherited the role of Jonny Quest.

Jonny Quest featured a story in the second issue recounting the death of Mrs. Quest, given the maiden name Judith Waterston, from natural causes. In Comico's telling, her death drove Jonny and his dad closer together rather than apart.

Golden Quest fails to qualify as a "prequel," as some have postulated it to be, for a couple of reasons, despite the initial presence of Jonny's mother. To begin with, the technology of *Golden Quest* is substantially advanced beyond what was present in the original series. Then there is the deterioration of Dr. Zin's health to consider. (Mysteriously, in *Golden Quest*, Dr. Zin has lost his accent.

There is one other key element that tags *Golden Quest* as a "remake," rather than a story somehow fitting into the same time line as either or both series. In the 1964 episodes, the Quests were occasionally assisted and/or rescued by "Jezebel" Jade (though she was almost never referred to by any name other than simply "Jade"), a Mata Hari-like former colleague and old flame of Race Bannon's. In *Jonny's Golden Quest*, Jade is introduced as Race's ex-wife,



Comico's *Jonny Quest* comic book of the late 80s boasted cover and story artwork by the likes of *Jonny Quest* creator Doug Wildey (Issue #1, above), Wendy Pini of *Elfquest* fame (#2, below), and Dave Stevens, whose *Rocketeer* has become a latter-day classic and popular movie (#3, left).



having married him in a whirlwind (and quickly dissolved) romance intertwined with their mutual espionage careers. The new Jade, now given the last name of Kenyon, has long, flowing red hair, unlike the raven-haired beauty of the original series.

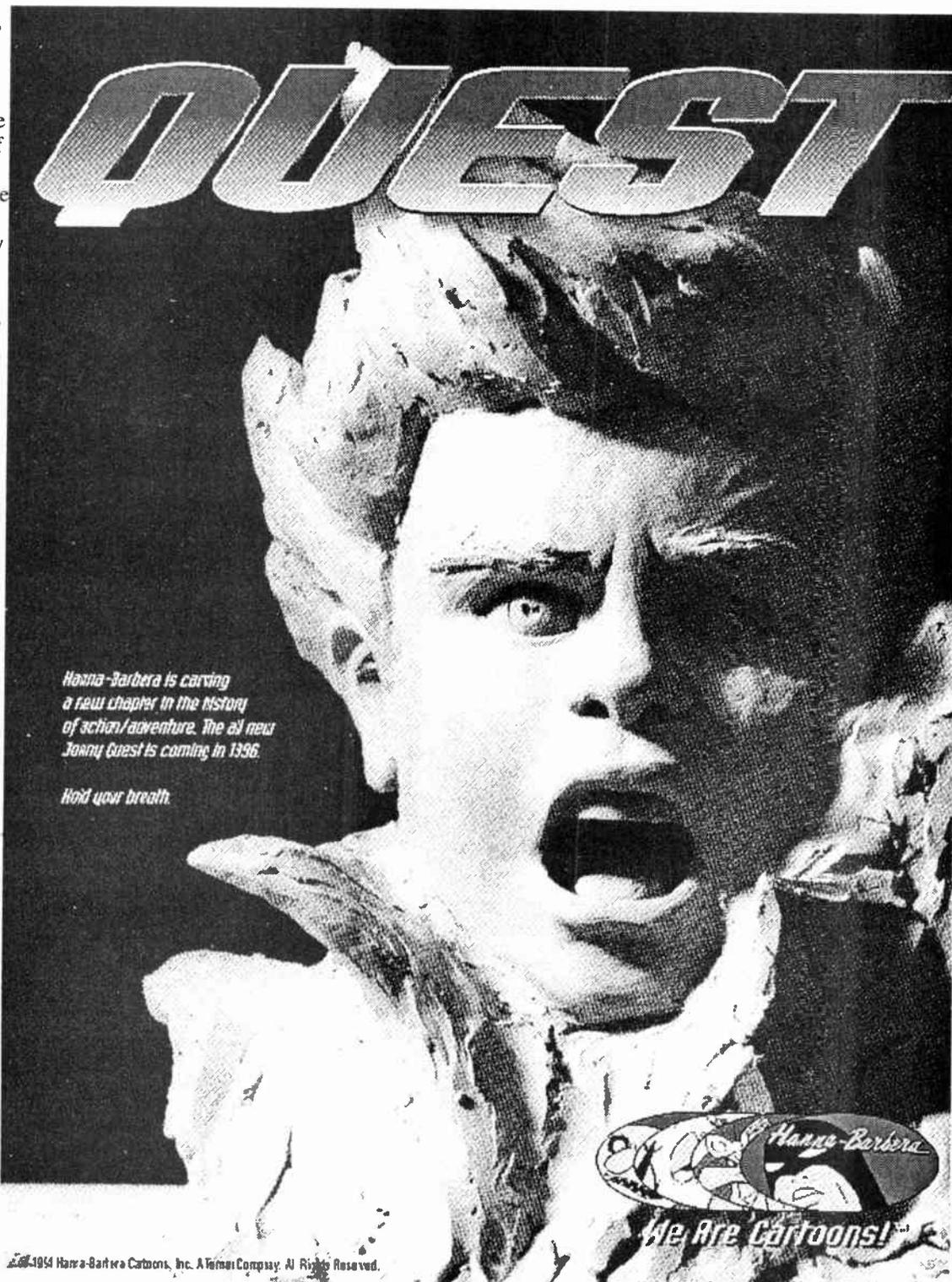
For *Golden Quest*, Don Messick returned yet again to voice the good Doctor, with Granville Van Dusen reprising Race Bannon. Vic Perrin had passed away in the interim, and the part of Dr. Zin was taken over by Jeffrey Tambor. The new Jonny was played by Will Nipper (and by Whitby Hertford as an even younger Jonny in a flashback sequence), and Rob Paulsen returned to the role of Hadji. Feature film actress Jobeth Williams (*Poltergeist*) provided the voice of Jade.

Shortly after *Golden Quest*, another adventure was filmed, currently set for a late 1995 premiere on the Cartoon Network, entitled *Jonny's Global Impact*, in which Dr. Zin returns once again to pursue his goal of world domination. Kevin Michaels steps into the role of Jonny, whereas the other principal roles are reprised by the established cast. In addition to notable supporting voices Teresa Saldana and Hector Elizondo, the Quest's latest talking computer, 4-DAC, is voiced by none other than the original Jonny, Tim Matheson.

Although few details are available at this time, it has been announced that more *Jonny Quest* projects within the next couple

of years will include a new animated series (*The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*) and a live-action feature planned by Turner Pictures.

In October of 1994, *Jonny Quest* creator Doug Wildey passed away in his sleep at the age of 72.



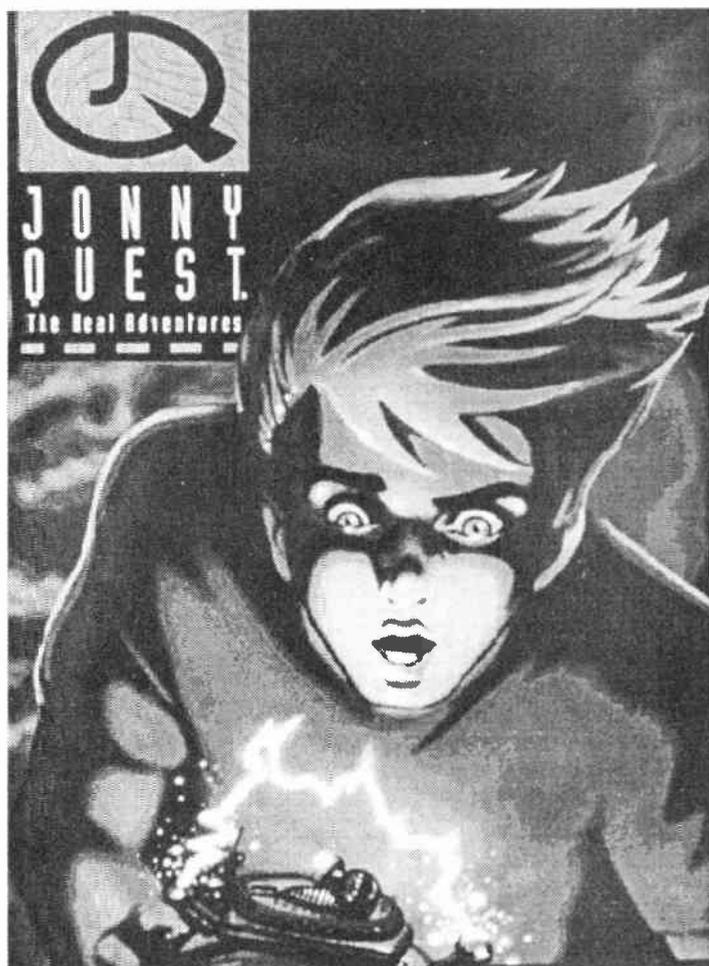
Hanna-Barbera is carving a new chapter in the history of action/adventure. The all new Jonny Quest is coming in 1996.

Hold your breath.

© 1994 Hanna-Barbera Cartoons, Inc. A Turner Company. All Rights Reserved.

This 1994 trade ad announced forthcoming Jonny Quest adventures.

Excerpts from Turner Home Entertainment Press Release, 6/19/95, regarding "Hanna-Barbera Cartoons, Inc.'s highly-anticipated new animated television series *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*":



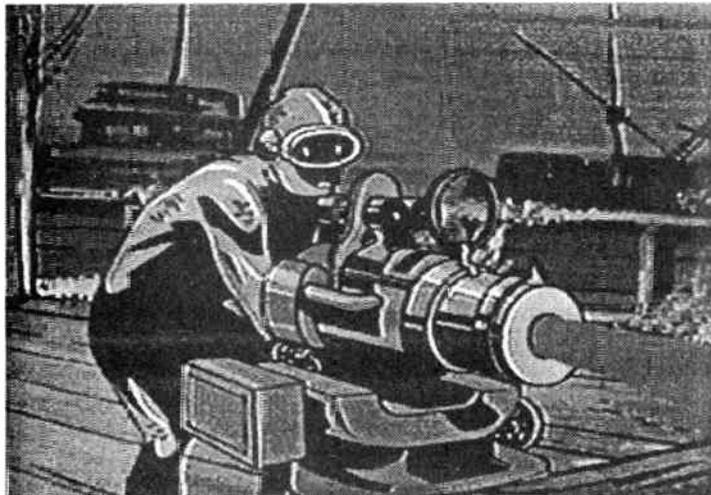
The strength of *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest* lies in its support across all Turner Broadcasting divisions. It will air an unprecedented 21 times weekly in the most heavily watched kids' dayparts. There will be a Monday-Friday strip on Turner Network Television (TNT), TBS Superstation, and Cartoon Network and a once-a-week airing on TNT's Saturday afternoon line-up.

Production of the series will take place on three continents as Hanna-Barbera produces 65 half-hour *Quest* episodes utilizing state-of-the-art animation technology, including Japanese-style animation, also known as "anime," from one of Japan's largest animation studios, Pacific Animation Corp. France's Toon's Factory will also be responsible for bringing feature film-quality digital color, computer compositing and a wide range of sophisticated special effects to the show.

The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest marries international intrigue, cutting-edge technology and teamwork into an evocative mystery-adventure, featuring real teenage heroes caught up in extraordinary dangers in the real world and in virtual reality. The show will boast feature film-quality animation technology never before used in television, including a new and exclusive combination of manual and computer animation technology that allows for total control of lighting, mood, special effects and most importantly, camera movement, giving the show a more life-like three-dimensional effect. The series is based on Hanna-Barbera's *The Adventures of Jonny Quest*, which debuted in September 1964 on ABC-TV's prime time schedule.



First Series, 1964-65 - ABC:



In the debut episode, MYSTERY OF THE LIZARD MEN, one of the title villains wields a laser cannon.

THE MYSTERY OF THE LIZARD MEN* (9/18/64)

Dr. Quest is sent to investigate the destruction of several ships in the Sargasso Sea by a mysterious beam of red light

Don Messick

written by Doug Wildey, Joseph Barbera, other credits unavailable**

Hadji does not appear in this episode

ARCTIC SPLASHDOWN* (9/25/64)

Dr. Quest races an enemy sub to retrieve an important missile

Doug Young

Original credits unavailable**

The original *TV Guide* listing refers to this episode as "Splashdown Antarctica," which may have erroneously been the title in the original press materials, but such a title would have been technically incorrect, since the story includes polar bears, which are found at the North Pole, not the South

THE CURSE OF ANUBIS* (10/2/64)

An Egyptian mummy awakens to wreak vengeance when a valuable statue is stolen from its tomb by a corrupt archaeologist

Vic Perrin, Doug Young, Don Messick, Henry Corden

Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

PURSUIT OF THE PO-HO* (10/9/64)

Dr. Quest flies to the Amazon to rescue a fellow scientist who has been taken captive by a tribe that intends to sacrifice him

Don Messick

Original credits unavailable**

RIDDLE OF THE GOLD (10/16/65)

Dr. Zin uses the cover of a tapped out mine in India to develop a process for man-made gold

Doug Young, Daws Butler

Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

TREASURE OF THE TEMPLE (10/23/64)

Graverobbers threaten the Quest party as they explore Mayan ruins

Everett Sloane, Henry Corden

Original credits unavailable**

CALCUTTA ADVENTURE (10/30/64)

The Quests recall their first meeting with Hadji, when Dr. Quest was investigating nerve gas attacks on shepherds in India

Vic Perrin, Jesse White, Doug Young

Written by Joanna Lee; Story direction by Alex Lovy

THE ROBOT SPY (11/6/64)

Dr. Zin uses a Trojan Horse ploy to get his spider-like robot into the compound where Dr. Quest is developing a new weapon

Doug Young

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Dan Gordon

DOUBLE DANGER* (pilot; 11/13/64)

Dr. Zin substitutes a lookalike for Race while Dr. Quest searches for a rare plant in Thailand

Don Messick, Cathy Lewis, Tol Avery

Written by Joanna Lee; Story direction by Paul Sommer

SHADOW OF THE CONDOR (11/20/64)

Engine trouble forces Dr. Quest to make an emergency landing in the Andes, where the group is menaced by a deranged WWI flying ace

Everett Sloane

Written by Charles Hoffman, Doug Wildey; Story direction by Paul Sommer

SKULL AND DOUBLE CROSSBONES (11/27/64)

Dr. Quest's ship is commandeered after Jonny discovers a sunken treasure ship

Henry Corden, Doug Young

Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Alex Lovy**

THE DREADFUL DOLL (12/4/64)

Voodoo is used to frighten islanders away from a secret submarine base under construction

Henry Corden, Sandy Wormser

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Paul Sommer

A SMALL MATTER OF PYGMIES (12/11/64)

Race and the boys run afoul of a tribe of pygmies after an emergency landing in the jungle

Doug Young

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

DRAGONS OF ASHIDA (12/18/64)

An evil zoologist has created a strain of large, man-eating lizards with which he terrorizes the natives of his island

Henry Corden

Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

TURU THE TERRIBLE (12/24/64)

In the heart of the Amazon, a wheelchair-bound tyrant operates a mine with workers kept in line by a trained pterodactyl

Henry Corden, Everett Sloane

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Dan Gordon

THE FRAUDULENT VOLCANO (12/31/64)

Dr. Quest is asked to use his new fire-extinguishing bomb on a volcano, unaware that Dr. Zin is behind the troublesome eruptions

Henry Corden

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Kin Platt

WEREWOLF OF THE TIMBERLAND (1/7/65)

Threats of a werewolf are used in an attempt to scare Dr. Quest away from his research in an area near a Canadian gold-smuggling operation

Tol Avery, Doug Young

Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Lewis Marshall



A plunderer of Egyptian tombs meets a timely death, courtesy THE CURSE OF ANUBIS.

PIRATES FROM BELOW (1/14/65)

Foreign agents operating from an underwater submarine base steal Dr. Quest's new seabed exploration vehicle
Doug Young, Henry Corden
Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

ATTACK OF THE TREE PEOPLE (1/21/65)

Following the destruction of the Sea Quest, Jonny, Hadji, and Bandit wash up on an island where they are adopted by a group of apes
Henry Corden, J. Pat O'Malley
Written by Walter Black; Story direction by Paul Sommer

THE INVISIBLE MONSTER (1/28/65)

A laboratory mishap spawns a destructive creature made of pure energy
John Stephenson
Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Dan Gordon

THE DEVIL'S TOWER (2/4/65)

Pursuing a lost atmospheric probe, Dr. Quest and company discover a tribe of cavemen ruled by an old Nazi high on an African escarpment
Henry Corden
Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Paul Sommer



THE INVISIBLE MONSTER, Dr. Quest's early experiment in colorization.

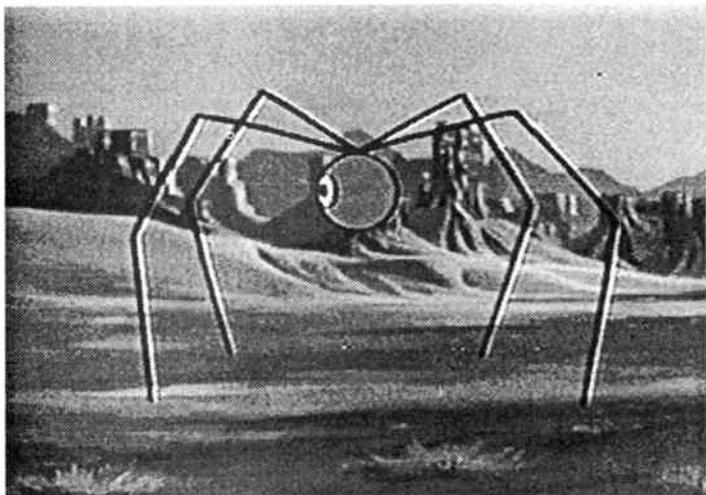
MONSTER IN THE MONASTERY (3/4/65)

A Tibetan village is terrified at the appearance of Yeti in an abandoned palace nearby
Sam Edwards, Henry Corden
Written by Charles Hoffman; Story direction by Lewis Marshall
Video title: MONSTERS IN THE MONASTERY

THE SEA HAUNT (3/11/65)

The Quest party becomes trapped aboard a deserted freighter with a murderous creature from the deep
Keye Luke, Henry Corden, Sam Edwards
Written by Charles Hoffman. Story direction by Alex Lovy

** Currently circulating prints of some early episodes contain credits lifted from a later episode. This is obvious, due to the discrepancy between the voices credited and those actually heard. By cross checking other information, it appears that the credits in question were taken from SKULL AND DOUBLE CROSSBONES, though no documentation has yet been obtained to verify this.



Possibly the most memorable image from the original series, THE ROBOT SPY of Dr. Zin.

THE QUETONG MISSILE MYSTERY (2/11/65)

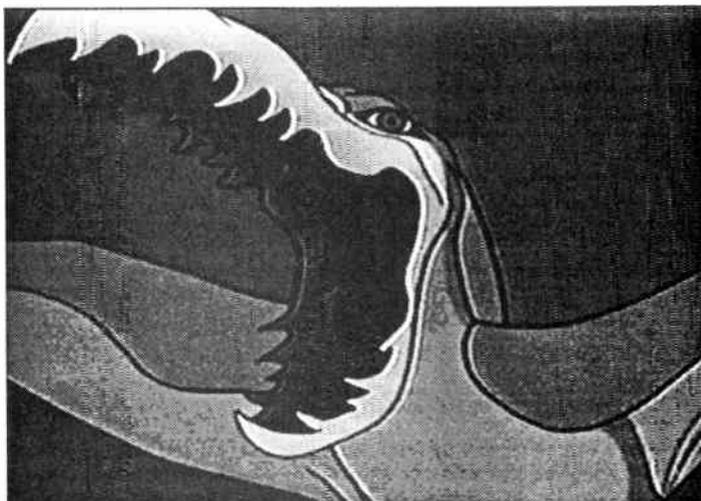
While investigating fish poisoning, the Quest party stumbles onto an underwater missile base concealed in a swamp
Keye Luke, Henry Corden, Sam Edwards
Written by William D. Hamilton; Story direction by Kin Platt
Video title: THE "Q" MISSILE MYSTERY

THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GARGOYLES (2/18/65)

A Norwegian scientist working in an old castle has a valuable formula, which is desired by enemy agents operating nearby
Vic Perrin, Henry Corden
Written by Charles Hoffman; Story direction by Lewis Marshall

TERROR ISLAND (2/25/65)

Jade helps rescue Dr. Quest after he is kidnapped during a visit to Hong Kong by a scientist who has developed a process for creating monster-sized animals
Cathy Lewis, Will Kuluva, Sam Edwards
Written by Alan Dinehart, Herbert Finn, Doug Wildey; Story direction by Paul Sommer



TURU THE TERRIBLE.

Second Series, 1987 - Syndicated:

Animation directed by Oscar Dufau, Don Lusk, Ray Patterson, Rudy Zamora

PERIL OF THE REPTILIAN

In a story foreshadowing *Jurassic Park*, a deranged biochemist has devised a means to clone and cross-breed prehistoric creatures

Ruth Kobart, Michael Bell, Andre Stojka

Written by Alan Burnett; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

NIGHTMARES OF STEEL

A band of Arab night raiders ride on mechanized stallions invented by a friend of Dr. Quest's

Roger C. Carmel, Howard Caine, Dick Erdman, Les Tremayne

Written by Mark Zaslove; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

ALIENS AMONG US

Using a UFO as a cover deception, Dr. Zin attempts to steal Dr. Quest's new matter transporter

Candy Brown

Written by John P. Loy; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

DEADLY JUNKET

Dr. Zin forces a kidnapped scientist to develop a system for sabotaging defensive missile systems

Georgi Irene, Jeffrey Tambor, Allan Lurie

Written by David Schwartz; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

FORTY FATHOMS INTO YESTERDAY

While trying to solve the mystery of a sunken Nazi sub, the Quest party is transported back in time

Dick Erdman, Dick Gautier

Written by Glenn Leopold; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

VIKING LIVES

While Dr. Quest is excavating a frozen Viking ship, volcanic tremors revive a giant warrior ape

Rene Auberjonois, Jennifer Darling, Frank Welker

Written by Charles M. Howell IV; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

THE MONOLITH MAN

A drilling operation penetrates a cavern containing the ruins of an ancient civilization

Aron Kincaid, Barry Dennen, Ernest Harada

Written by Mark Edens; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

SECRET OF THE CLAY WARRIORS

A Chinese archaeologist ignores warnings by villagers not to disturb an ancient burial chamber

George Takei, Keye Luke, Soon-Teck Oh

Written by Steve DeKorte; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

WARLORD OF THE SKY

A former adversary of Dr. Quest's wreaks havoc from an airship concealed within an artificial thundercloud

Stan Wojno, Steve McGowan, Bernard Erhard

Written by Mark Zaslove; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

THE SCOURGE OF SKYBORG

A vengeful cyborg from Race's past steals Dr. Quest's new aircraft-piloting computer

B.J. Ward, Darryl Hickman

Written by Don Glut; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

TEMPLE OF GLOOM

Hadji's mentor is being forced to use his telepathic abilities to sabotage a peace conference

Paul Lukather, Bernard Erhard, B.J. Ward, Chris Latta, Larry Moss

Written by Eric Lewald; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt



CREEPING UNKNOWN

A bizarre plant creature is stalking animals and people deep in a swamp

Allison Argo, Ed Begley Jr.

Written by David Schwartz; Dialogue directed by Andrea Romano

SKULDUGGERY

Dr. Zin craves a crystal skull that possesses great power

Philip Clarke

Written by Gary Warn; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt

Jonny's Golden Quest (1993)

An investigation into rain forest mutations leads to a deadly confrontation with Dr. Zin, who is developing a new process for creating pure synthetic gold

Will Nipper (Jonny), Don Messick, Granville Van Dusen, Rob Paulsen, Jeffrey Tambor (Dr. Zin), Jobeth Williams (Jade), Ed Gilbert, George Hearn, Whitby Hertford (Young Jonny), Meredith MacRae (Rachel Quest), Anndi McAfee, Peter Renaday, Pepe Serna, Marcelo Tubert, B.J. Ward, Frank Welker

Written by Sean Roche, Mark Young; Animation directed by Don Lusk, Paul Sommer; Dialogue directed by Gordon Hunt
Original TV movie for USA cable network

Jonny's Global Impact (1995)

(synopsis unavailable at press time)

Kevin Michaels (Jonny), Don Messick, Granville Van Dusen, Rob Paulsen, Jeffrey Tambor, Teresa Saldana, Anndi McAfee, Olivia White, Victor Love, Robert Ito, Hector Elizondo, Tim Matheson
Dialogue directed by Kris Zimmerman

Original TV movie for The Cartoon Network



The Monkees - 58 episodes. NBC

Regular cast:

Davy Jones
 Micky Dolenz
 Michael Nesmith
 Peter Tork

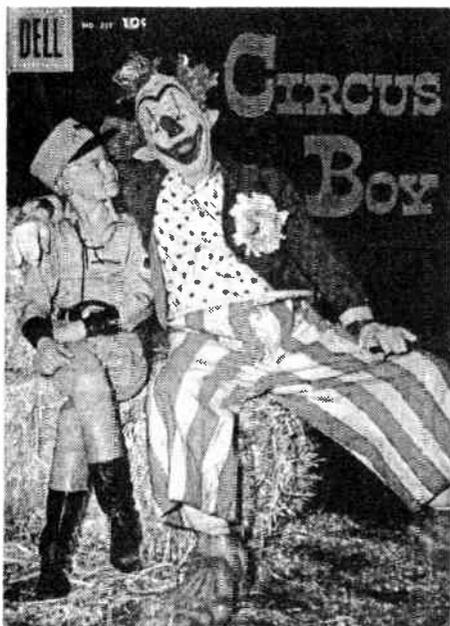
Semi-regular:

Mr. Babbitt - Henry Corden (Season 1)

Let us begin by establishing this fact; there are The Monkees, the band, and there is *The Monkees*, the TV series (Eric Lefcowitz, in his *The Monkees Tale*, refers to the two entities as Monkees #1 and #2). Although there can be no comprehensive consideration of one without the other, each incarnation may nevertheless be evaluated on its own merits. Even so, it is rare that the TV series is ever discussed as just that. Usually the subject is the Monkees' music, and the series is merely the evidence used for dismissing the legitimacy of the group's recording career. As for acting ability, no one has derided the four members in the way that they have been brutalized by the musically elite for not having the "proper" band lineage. An example of this schizophrenic history is the fact that, despite the lack of musical respect that has dogged the group, volumes such as *The Monkees Tale*, *Monkeemania*, or the autobiographies of Micky Dolenz and Davy Jones,

when stocked in bookstores, are more often than not placed in the music section, rather than with other TV series-related books; with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the Doors instead of with *I Love Lucy*, *Star Trek*, and *Maverick*. This is particularly ironic when considering the fact that the primary defense given by various members of the group, when criticized for their "impure" approach to musical success, was that they were first and foremost





cast members of a television program depicting a band, rather than actually being one.

When producers Bob Rafelson and Bert Schneider (under the banner "Raybert") assembled the Monkees, they did not, as is commonly believed, recruit a group of no-talents and artificially craft their success by manipulating the various entertainment media at their disposal. Davy Jones, Micky Dolenz, Michael Nesmith, and Peter Tork each had some degree of demonstrated musical talent. Jones had appeared in the Broadway casts of *Pickwick* and *Oliver!* (in his role as the Artful Dodger, he and other *Oliver!* cast members performed a number from the musical on the same bill with the Beatles' debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show*). He and Nesmith had already cut records for Colpix, a division of Columbia Pictures, and Jones had his own fan club. Dolenz was a guitar player who had fronted a rock band (one incarnation of which was called, ironically enough, The Missing Links), and Tork had attended a conservatory and become proficient on multiple instruments, eventually immersing himself in the early 60s folk scene.

1966 was a banner year for television. *The Monkees* was one of three new series that would profoundly impact not only their parent medium, but virtually all other entertainment forms as well. The spring of '66 had brought *Batman*, and

the camp phenomenon that inspired such television offerings as *Captain Nice* and *Mister Terrific*, in addition to influencing the writing of existing shows such as *The Avengers* and *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* On the heels of ABC's success with *Batman*, NBC contributed a cultural one-two knockout punch in the Fall season with Gene Roddenberry's "*Wagon Train* to the stars," *Star Trek*, and *The Monkees*. Of these landmark programs, none would last beyond three seasons, and *The Monkees* was the shortest-lived, at two seasons. Yet while the full impact of *Star Trek* would not be felt for a number of years, and the *Batman* camp craze has since been eclipsed by the character's recent renaissance (spawned by artist/writer Frank Miller's decidedly darker portrayal of the character in the comics); *The Monkees*, on the other hand, hit big and immediately. In fact, the group's first musical release, "Last Train to Clarksville," was a hit even before the TV series had debuted.

That the band was intended to be an American version of the Beatles, and the series a variation of *A Hard Day's Night* (though the plots were actually closer to *Help!*, which had not yet been released when *The Monkees* was pitched), has become something of a given, though co-producer Rafelson attributes the genesis of the series to a folk group

concept which he had originally pitched to Universal, based on his own experiences as a musician in the early 50s; and the team of Paul Mazursky and Larry Tucker, who wrote the pilot, laid claim to the concept in a lawsuit that was eventually settled out of court. Nevertheless, it was the success of the Beatles that paved the way for the show. In fact, according to one source, Rafelson and Schneider's pitch to Screen Gems executive Steve Blauner was essentially "We want to do *Hard Day's Night* on television," to which Blauner responded favorably.

When the time came to cast the pilot, Raybert's search included looking at some existing groups to plug into the series format. The Lovin' Spoonful is usually cited, although another group that was tested was The Wellingtons, whose claim to fame is having sung the theme song for *Gilligan's Island*. Dave Clark, of the Beatles-challenging Dave Clark Five, claims to have turned down a television project that "became" *The Monkees*. Ironically, Andrew Sandoval, in his liner notes for the Rhino reissue of The Monkees' first album, quotes Bobby Hart as citing the DC5's "Catch Us if You Can" as the inspiration for The Monkees' "Theme"; and in his autobiography, Davy Jones relates the story of how he was once mobbed while attending a DC5 concert by a group of girls who



The unaired version of the pilot billed Micky Dolenz under his *Circus Boy* name.

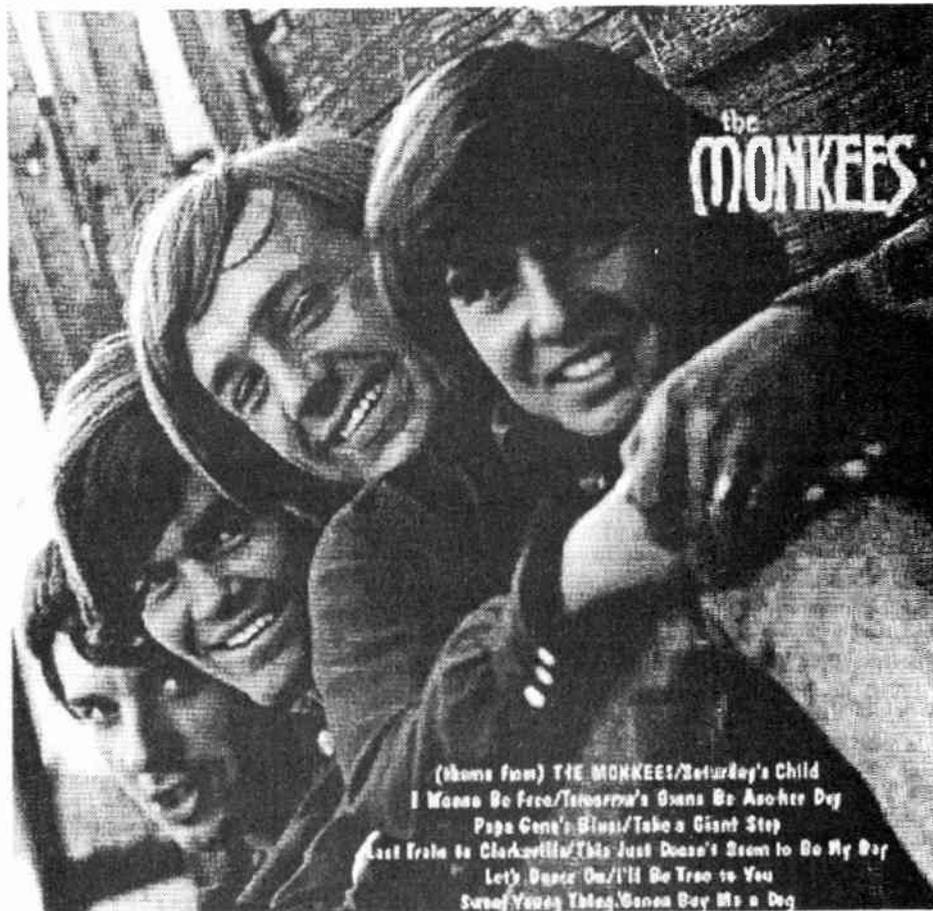
thought he was DC's brother. Ultimately, Raybert decided to put together a quartet of "unknowns." A now almost legendary trade ad was taken out soliciting "4 Insane Boys," to which throngs of aspiring teen idols responded.

As it happens, the group that was ultimately assembled was made up primarily of individuals who had not even seen the ad. The group was essentially built around Davy Jones, whose agent, Ward Sylvester (who had previously put Jones up for roles in *Wackiest Ship in the Army* [the pilot of which was co-produced by Rafelson] and *Hogan's Heroes*), had come on board as associate producer for the show. The fact that Jones was British gave the project a strong "Beatles" hook, as the average American viewer wasn't going to distinguish Jones' Manchester dialect from the Beatles' Liverpoolian.

Micky Dolenz, who was sent to the auditions by his agent (who had seen the ad), came from an acting family. His father, George, was TV's *Count of Monte Cristo* in the 50s, and his mother, Janelle Johnson, had appeared on the stage and in such 40's films as *The Brute Man* and *Since You Went Away*. As a child, Dolenz himself had starred in the series *Circus Boy* under the name Micky Braddock, for which his hair was dyed blonde.

Tork (real name: Thorkelson) was referred by his friend, Stephen Stills, who had been well-received, but rejected for thinning hair and bad teeth. Tork, bearing a more than passing resemblance to Stills, but without Stills' physical flaws, fit the bill. It was Nesmith who, alone among the Monkees, actually saw and responded to the ad, though his previous relationship with Colpix, as recording artist Michael "Blessing," couldn't have hurt. His screen test, along with Jones', was later edited into the pilot episode.

There were some notable also-rans among those auditioning for the program. Foremost was the singing/songwriting team of Tommy Boyce and Bobby Hart, who later wrote and/or produced several of the group's hits, including their first single, "Last Train to Clarksville." Other talented near-misses included Danny Hutton, who would go on to



Three Dog Night; Paul Williams, whose "Someday Man" would become one of The Monkees' last single releases; and Harry Nilsson, who would pen "Cuddly Toy," "Daddy's Song," and the unreleased tracks "Rock and Roll Music" (not the song recorded by the Beatles and Beach Boys) and "Mr. Richland's Favorite Song" for The Monkees before coming into his own in the 70s. Reportedly, Paul Petersen, of *The Donna Reed Show* was another performer who aspired to Monkeehood. A popular rumor in recent years was that Charles Manson had auditioned for the show. According to Monkees scholar Gary Strobl, the rumor sprang from comments made by Dolenz to popular Los Angeles DJ (and Davy Jones' double in *THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER* episode) Rodney Bingenheimer to the effect that so many people from off the street came in to try out, that conceivably Manson could have been among them (he was, however, in jail somewhere at the time). It was an intriguing rumor nevertheless, given that Manson was known to rub elbows with rock & roll types such as The

Beach Boys. In any event, the four young performers that were cast quickly sold their personalities to the American public.

In his autobiography, *I'm a Believer*, Micky recalls:

"The four of us Monkees met for the first time as a unit during a wardrobe fitting. Looking back now it seems kind of funny, but there we were, four strangers, introducing ourselves to each other like we had just boarded the same plane... The airplane metaphor is quite apt, actually, considering the destination, altitude, and speed of the trip we were all about to take together."

When it came to assigning musical roles, it was felt that it would be pointless not to allow Nesmith and Tork to be featured on the instruments with which they were most proficient (guitar and bass/keyboards, respectively). This left Micky in the position of having to learn to play the drums. Reportedly, he was initially concerned about being hidden behind the large drum set, but due to his vocal assets, it would prove to not be an obstacle. A combination of determination and professionalism



Photo by Henry Diltz

Jim Frawley, at right, was instrumental in preparing the young stars for the cameras that would be trained upon them.

pushed him through the arduous lessons, and he became quite competent as a result. Jones was saddled with hand-held percussion instruments, though in some videos he sits in on the drums.

Instead of being given character names, the boys' real ones were used onscreen. There was an attempt to give Nesmith the nickname "Wool Hat," which he adamantly resisted, and its only use occurs in the opening moments of the pilot. No doubt this melding of onscreen and offscreen personas accounted for some of the hostility that came later when it was revealed that they didn't play their instruments on the early records. The fictional communal living arrangement (their address is given as 1334 Beachwood [Drive] in *YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD KIDNAPPERS*, which in reality was the location of the staff writers' apartment offices) apparently wasn't enough to drive home the point to the public that The Monkees were make-believe.

The series pilot was written by Paul Mazursky and Larry Tucker. Mazursky, who would later become a major writer-director (*An Unmarried Woman*, *Moscow On the Hudson*, *Down & Out in Beverly Hills*) appears in the prologue as a reporter doing man-on-the-street interviews. Larry Tucker is his interviewee. The plot of the pilot is generally representative of the formula as it would be developed

during the course of the series. The band gets a chance to play for a sweet sixteen party, only to have Davy and the 16-year-old in question fall in love. The girl's disapproving father nixes The Monkees and hires a Lawrence Welk-style combo to play, leaving the boys with the task of crashing the party for love and money. Defying linear storytelling film techniques, Rafelson and Schneider played fast and loose with camera

angles and lighting, also adding bizarre cutaways and freeze-frames adorned with word-balloon commentaries. As it happens, this iconoclastic approach, which was attempting to appeal to a youthful "with-it" audience, failed miserably in its first test screening. When Rafelson was given the opportunity to hold a second screening, he used the interim to drastically recut the show, and the result was a complete flip-flop. The numbers went through the roof.

Boyce & Hart had recorded the songs for the pilot, and the version shown to potential sponsors carried their vocals (this version also billed Dolenz as "Micky Braddock," a carry-over from his days as *Circus Boy*). After the series was sold, the songs were redubbed by the cast. There are stories told by Monkees and other witnesses of how, during breaks in filming, the band asked to have the amps turned on, and they held impromptu concerts, which impressed those present enough for one Columbia Records executive to comment that he would have offered them a record contract even if they hadn't had a TV show.

After the pilot was filmed and sold, Rafelson and Schneider brought in James Frawley, an actor and experimental filmmaker who would



Henry Corden, seen here with Micky in GIFT HORSE, provided the lads with a first-season antagonist in Mr. Babbitt, their landlord.

later direct many of the episodes, to conduct classes in improvisation in order to loosen the boys up for the camera. This was intended to be most beneficial to Tork and Nesmith, who were primarily musicians, without the dramatic background of Jones and Dolenz, though the latter two ironically had the most difficulty with the required spontaneity because of their being accustomed to working with scripts and specific direction. The hard work paid off, for onscreen the group functioned effectively as a comedic ensemble, despite their varying offscreen musical styles and personalities.

"Even in the early episodes," Micky writes, "we were starting to ad-lib the dialogue, much to Bob and Bert's pleasure and surprise. Unlike a normal TV show, they decidedly did not want us to stick faithfully to the script. They encouraged, nay urged us, to be spontaneous, zany, wacky, and off-the-wall. We would get a script each week and review it, but when we got on the set, anything went. If the scene involved other actors and some important plot points, then we would try to hold it down, but if we were left on our own, you just never knew what was going to happen."

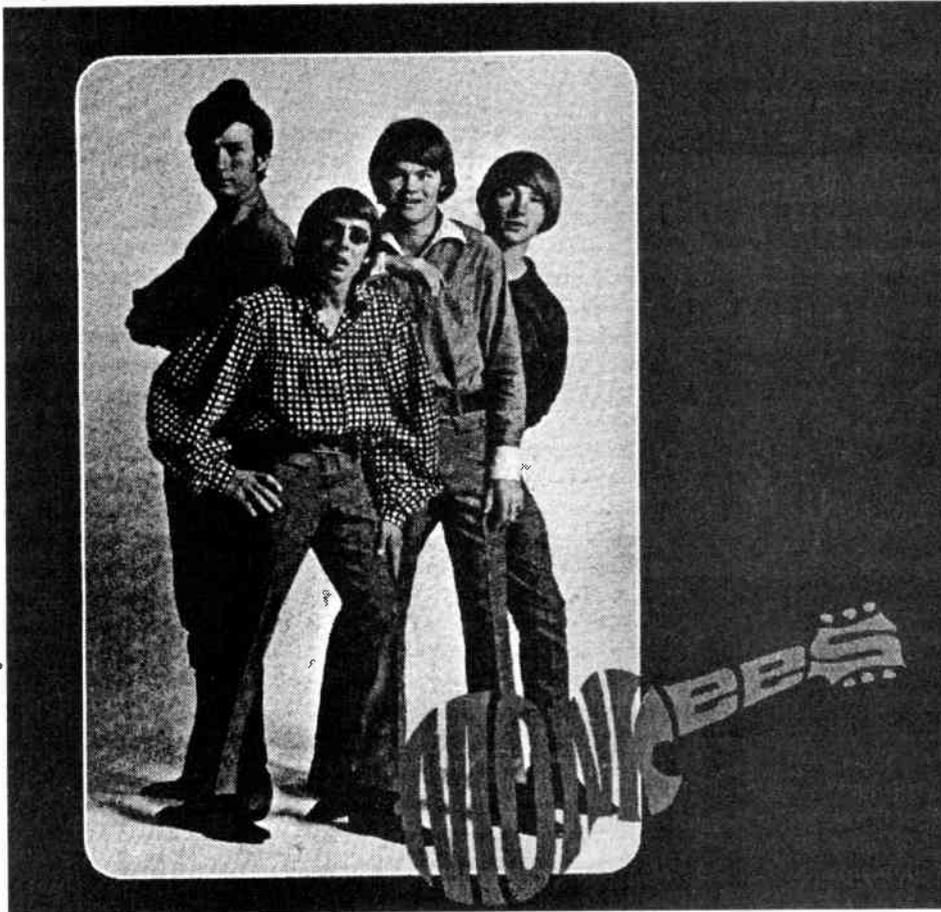
Their characters became very distinct. Jones was the ultra-cute teen idol, the teddy bear that every girl in America wanted to hug and squeeze to death. Dolenz was the class clown and mimic, ready to throw himself into a maniacal frenzy, baby voice, or an exaggerated James Cagney imitation at the drop of a hat. Nesmith, on the other hand, was the sardonic, laid back Texan, always trying to maintain a degree of dignity

amidst the chaos. It has been said that these three essentially played themselves, which seems true enough, whereas Tork was cast as a moron, but perhaps this impression has developed as a defense mechanism; an excuse for the way in which Tork's contributions to the group have been overlooked. In fact, it would be hard to find many examples of instances where his character could be accused of anything that could be classified as actual stupidity. More often than not, Peter exudes a childlike innocence or

recent comparisons might be made to *Being There's* Chance the gardener, or *Forrest Gump* (though due to Gump's objectively low I.Q., as established in the movie's script, he is a poorer comparison than the others). An example of a legitimately stupid character, on the other hand, would be Lowell Mather (brilliantly played by Thomas Haden Church) in the NBC comedy *Wings* (though Lowell's proficiency with tools prompts a fellow character to refer to him as a "mechanic savant" in one episode). Tork's friend Stephen Stills was

quoted in a 1967 *Tiger Beat* article as referring to Tork as playing "the Tommy Smothers character." Given Tork's later statements regarding his mindset during the Monkees era, his character on the show may have indeed been a reflection, though a somewhat exaggerated one, of his own philosophical and idealistic personality.

One incident in some ways foreshadowed the controversy that would later be generated by the musical issues. The Monkees were introduced by Dick Clark at a dinner held at the famous Chasen's restaurant



Concert program from '66/'67 tour.

naivete, sometimes bordering on the surreal, similar to the screen characters of Harpo Marx or Stan Laurel, whom no one ever seems to classify as moronic characters. An example of this would be in a short segment in *MONKEES MIND THEIR MANOR* in which he gives Christmas greetings of peace and brotherhood, only to have Mike tell him that Christmas is months past, so Peter can't be giving Christmas greetings. Peter asks, innocently, "Why not?", to which Mike has no answer. More

for NBC affiliate station executives. As if there wouldn't already be a degree of resistance on the part of "The Establishment" to a quartet of long-haired rock musicians, the improvisation exercises that the boys had gone through under the tutelage of James Frawley now came back to haunt them. Presumably, they considered that an appearance by The Monkees, in the absence of any musical instruments, meant that a sampling was called for of the kind of zaniness required of them in the show.

The resulting bizarre display of comedy schtick laid an enormous egg, and offended several of the executives enough to prompt them to drop the show from their local schedules.

In Glenn A. Baker's *Monkeemania*, there are accounts of similar reactions to the boys on the part of studio personnel during the filming of the series. Apparently, the long-timers felt that there was just too little respect shown to traditional ways of doing things, and some would actually vacate the studio commissary when the Monkees entered (this would be depicted in, presumably, exaggerated form in the Monkees feature *Head*).

These difficulties aside, the young audience was carefully cultivated, most notably in an elaborate publicity stunt in San Juan Capistrano, renamed Clarksville for a day. A train was hired and packed with listeners of L.A.'s KHJ radio station for the trip to "Clarksville," where The Monkees arrived by helicopter for a short concert. Following this spectacle, "Last Train to Clarksville" began to climb the charts, and the stage was set for the series debut.

The first episode to air was *ROYAL FLUSH*, starring Theo Marcuse (try to find a series from the 60s in which he *didn't* play a villain) as an evil uncle to a princess. The uncle wants to see her dead so that he may inherit the throne of the kingdom of Harmonica. The boys stumble onto the plot and set out to foil it. Marcuse's sidekick in the show is Vincent Beck, who would become a repeating comic heavy on the show. The episode was a bit more polished than the pilot, and was well-received by the critics. In fact, it would go on to win an Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Achievement, and the show as a whole would capture one for Outstanding Comedy Series.

The format was essentially that the boys were a struggling band, always hard up for cash and usually late with the rent. Life was a never-ending search for the next gig, hopefully the one that would make them a huge success. Though the storylines often went in other directions, a number of them specifically related to their musical



Photo by Henry Diltz

"Randy Scouse Git." Note Davy on drums.

pursuits, including *FIND THE MONKEES*, *YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD KIDNAPPERS*, and *SOME LIKE IT LUKEWARM*. Other types of storylines usually involved Davy's love life (*TOO MANY GIRLS*, *EVERYWHERE A SHEIK SHEIK*, *A NICE PLACE TO VISIT*), run-ins with spies or crooks (*CARD CARRYING RED SHOES*, *MONKEE CHOW MEIN*, *MONKEES IN A GHOST TOWN*, *ALIAS MICKY DOLENZ*), looking for alternative employment options (*MONKEE VS. MACHINE*, *MONKEES ON THE LINE*) or getting one of the boys (frequently Peter) out of a jam (*DANCE, MONKEES, DANCE*, *THE SUCCESS STORY*, *THE MONKEES PAW*).

The free form approach to the series extended beyond the framework of the ways in which the stories were presented. Many times the final version came up short of the desired running time. No problem. Just as screen test excerpts were used to fill out the pilot, episodes that were short on story would be augmented with spontaneous interviews with the young stars on a variety of subjects; what was happening in their lives; what they thought of events concerning teenagers of the day or in the world of music; critical press; fan mail, etc. *The Monkees* also anticipated a trend that is now very much in vogue, as *MONKEES ON THE WHEEL* and *THE MONKEES PAW* feature outtakes at the end of the show, the latter of which shows a frustrated

Hans Conried losing his patience when the boys horse around a little too much to suit him.

During the first season, character actor Henry Corden had the repeating role of the Monkees' hardnosed landlord, Mr. Babbitt. Corden was also known for cartoon voice-over work, having been a regular contributor to such Hanna-Barbera shows as *Jonny Quest*, *Atom Ant*, *Banana Splits Adventure Hour*, and eventually taking over the role of Fred Flintstone; also, he was the voice of General Urko in DePatie-Freleng's *Return to the Planet of the Apes*. Though Babbitt was written out of the second season, Corden would appear again as a hotel manager in *WILD MONKEES* (as a hotel manager named Blauner!).

Like many other shows of the 60s, the central characters were equipped with a unique set of wheels. *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *The Munsters*, *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, *The Green Hornet*, and, of course, *Batman*, all had vehicles tailored to their personal needs. The Monkees had the Monkeemobile, essentially a modified 1966 Pontiac GTO convertible. Bright red, with a white top, bucket seats, chrome headers, and a large blower that seemed to emerge from the hood like a chest-bursting alien, the car originally was equipped with a trailer which Micky nicknamed "the doghouse." The doghouse was

actually a portable stage intended to accompany the boys on personal appearances for the purpose of holding spontaneous concerts in parking lots. Despite the early stages of the Monkee experience, the consensus was that this was not a good idea, and the "doghouse" was eliminated. Later experiences with public adulation would bear this decision out. The one question that immediately comes to mind re the Monkeemobile and its place in the series is this: How is it that four young lads barely able to make each month's rent were able to purchase and maintain such a cool and, presumably, expensive car?

No fools, the producers saw to it that the comedic rookies were regularly supported by veterans such as Stan Freberg (MONKEE VS. MACHINE), Hans Conried (THE MONKEES PAW), Jerry Colonna (GIFT HORSE), Stubby Kaye (MONKEES RACE AGAIN), Vincent Gardenia (CASE OF THE MISSING MONKEE), Godfrey Cambridge (A NICE PLACE TO VISIT), Dub Taylor (HILLBILLY HONEYMOON, which also includes a post-*F Troop* Melody Patterson and pre-*H.R. Pufnstuf* Billie Hayes), Robert Strauss (ALIAS MICKY DOLENZ), and Carl Ballantine (FIND THE MONKEES). There were also several comic actors who made repeated appearances on the show. They included Vincent Beck, Vic Tayback, Joey Forman,

Rip Taylor, George Furth, Rose Marie, and Monte Landis, the most prolific, with seven second-season appearances (beginning with EVERYWHERE A SHEIK SHEIK). In addition to established performers, there were some burgeoning talents that also received exposure. Ruth Buzzi appeared in A COFFIN TOO FREQUENT just before landing a spot in the ensemble cast of *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*; Pat Paulsen served as host/narrator of MONKEES WATCH THEIR FEET as he was becoming a cult figure on *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*; Charlie Callas has a small role in THE SUCCESS STORY; MONKEES IN MANHATTAN includes Spike Jones' sideman Doodles Weaver and an early appearance of Foster Brooks' drunk routine, which he became famous for on *The Dean Martin Show*; and Bobby Sherman, who would become a full-fledged prime-time heartthrob when he starred in *Here Come the Brides*, plays a conceited heartthrob in MONKEES AT THE MOVIES. Other appearances of note include Lon Chaney Jr. (MONKEES IN A GHOST TOWN), Richard Kiel (I WAS A TEENAGE MONSTER), later James Garner sidekick Stuart Margolin (MONKEES WATCH THEIR FEET), Julie Newmar (MONKEES GET OUT MORE DIRT, which also includes a brief cameo by Wally Cox), Mike Farrell (MONKEE CHOW MEIN), Burgess Meredith (cameo in MONKEES

BLOW THEIR MINDS), Butch Patrick (MONKEES CHRISTMAS SHOW), and a bizarre cameo by Liberace in ART, FOR MONKEES SAKE. Frequent *Monkees* director James Frawley appeared on-camera in SON OF GYPSY, MONKEES IN PARIS (as himself), and MONKEES BLOW THEIR MINDS, and producer Bob Rafelson can be seen in MONKEES RACE AGAIN.

It's ironic that, even as the performers were being marketed to the hilt and often misused and abused as a result, that many of the show's storylines were satirical barbs at that very process. MONKEE VS. MACHINE, for instance, portrays an automated corporation using its computers to design popular toys without regard for simplicity or the human element, even using planned obsolescence as a sales concept to justify inferior products. CAPTAIN CROCODILE takes aim at the way in which television simultaneously panders to and manipulates its audience, particularly younger minds. Issues of musical exploitation and deception are addressed in I'VE GOT A LITTLE SONG HERE, in which Mike is victimized by a shady music publishing company, and THE DEVIL AND PETER TORK finds Mike challenging the Horned One in a court of the damned over a contract for Peter's soul. Television as a mind-numbing tool of indoctrination is the theme of MIJACOGEO (aka THE FRODIS CAPER, drawing its name from Micky's slang term for pot).

Despite the incredible success of The Monkees with their early record releases, they soon began to tire of not being allowed to make any substantial contribution to the creative process. Dedicated musicians Nesmith and Tork were especially frustrated, though Nesmith did manage to produce and write some of the early cuts. Don Kirshner, "The Man With the Golden Ear," had utilized his stable of top-notch songwriters, which included the likes of Neil Diamond, Gerry Goffin & Carole King, and David Gates, and the result was a pair of phenomenally-selling albums (there are records of an unreleased track entitled "Black and Blue" penned by the dynamite triumvirate of Leiber & Stoller plus Neil Diamond). When word began to get out, however, that the Monkees themselves were little more than



Photo by Henry Jiltz

Peter Tork was the most instrumentally prolific of the group.



The pivotal album.

vocalists, the resulting flack convinced the group that it was time to revolt, and Kirshner was severed from the Monkees project. Similarly, as the show progressed, the Monkees were allowed to contribute to the on-camera proceedings in more substantial ways as well. They were able to eliminate the laugh track roughly halfway through the second season, and as the series wound to a close, the extra time left over from filming the plot, which had previously been filled with spontaneous Monkee interviews, became opportunities for the performers to express themselves in a more individual manner. Peter Tork stepped behind the camera to direct *THE MONKEES MIND THEIR MANOR*, and Micky Dolenz both co-wrote and directed the final episode (*MUJACOGEO*). On-camera, Davy Jones invited his friend Charlie Smalls onto the show (*SOME LIKE IT LUKEWARM*) to demonstrate a bit of their songwriting collaboration. Smalls would later go on to write the hit Broadway musical *The Wiz*. In a memorable opening sequence (*MONKEES BLOW THEIR MINDS*), Nesmith brought in Frank Zappa for a role-reversal bit which includes a mock interview and a performance by Zappa in which he demolishes a car with a sledge hammer while Nesmith conducts. Courtesy of Micky, guitarist/singer Tim Buckley closed out the final show with his "Song to a Siren." Peter had wanted folk legend Pete Seeger to his guest on the show, but the logistics couldn't be worked out.

One of the outstanding episodes of the series, which perhaps best demonstrates the direction the cast

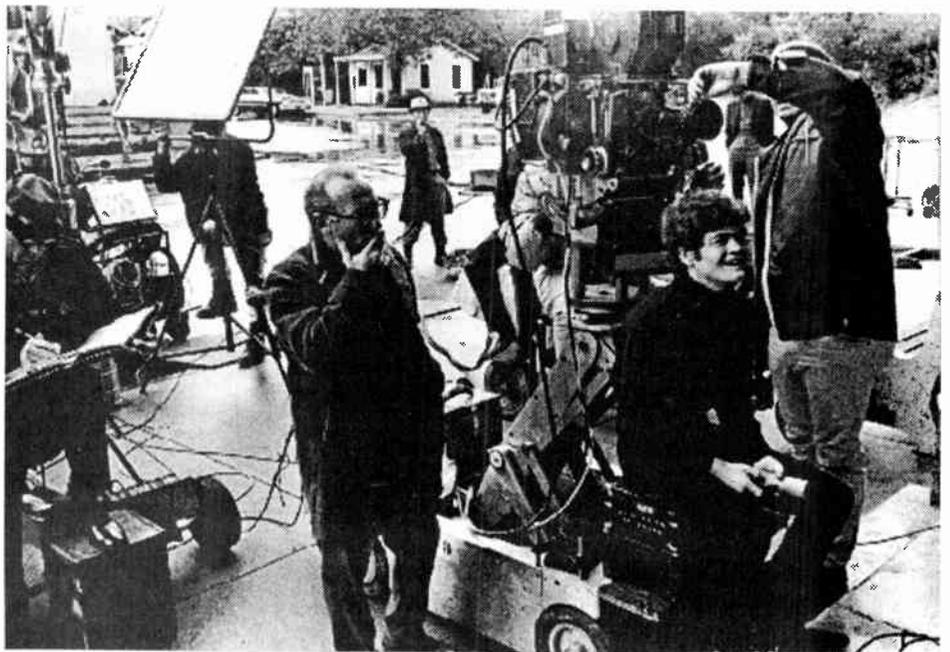
wanted to go, is the second season's *FAIRY TALE*. The episode, intended to compensate for cost overruns, is essentially an extended sketch, with the normal Monkee characterizations nowhere to be seen. Instead, the performers appear in a limbo-type set playing multiple roles. The story is a more-or-less generic fable of a poor schlub of a peasant (Peter) who falls in love from afar with a princess (Mike, who plays the role to obnoxious perfection), and must ultimately rescue her from her tower prison with the aid of a magic locket. During his journey to do battle with the dragon who guards the princess, he meets other classic fairy tale characters, including Hansel & Gretel (Dolenz & Jones), Little Red Riding Hood (Jones), and Goldilocks (Dolenz).

Other episodes which stand out include *THE CHAPERONE*, a formula tale of Davy's infatuation with the daughter of military man that benefits from some of the best one-liners in the series and the presence of character actor Arch Johnson; *I WAS A TEENAGE MONSTER*, with entertaining comedic turns by Richard Kiel in the title role and John Hoyt as his creator; *CAPTAIN CROCODILE*, featuring Joey Forman as a kiddie show host who is as perpetually wired as Frank Gorshin's Riddler; *MONKEES A LA MODE*, in which the boys turn the tables on the self-appointed purveyors

of 60s teendom (possibly inspired by a sequence in *A Hard Day's Night* wherein George is consulted on teen fashion); and *MONKEES IN TEXAS*, which includes parodies of *Bonanza* and *The Lone Ranger* (Peter masquerades as the "faithful Indian companion," wearing a Nehru jacket).

The artistic freedom that had been nurtured among the cast, combined with the pressures, resulted in them becoming somewhat unpredictable, and it was occasionally difficult to find a given Monkee at the time when he might be required for filming; or if he was in reach, he might be engaging in activities that could be distracting, either to the ears or the olfactory nerves. The producers therefore created what Micky liked to refer to as the "Frodus Room," a large, soundproofed, air-conditioned box, large enough for each Monkee to have his own personal space. While in the box, the boys could practice their music or indulge in more bohemian pleasures without disturbing the production. The interior of the box was furnished with pillows, candles, and the like for the boys' comfort; and was equipped with four differently-colored light bulbs. When a Monkee was required on the set, his personal bulb would flash, and he would report for duty, though in what shape was always in question, as Micky recounts:

"... After spending a couple of



Micky directs THE FRODIS CAPER.

Photo by Henry Diltz

hours in this dark, cool cavern, a 150-watt lightbulb has relatively the same effect on your eyeballs as a supernova. I recall, more than once, being blasted out of my reverie by this device and stumbling onto the set blinded and dazed... If you watch the show carefully, it often appears that we have just landed in the scene from outer space -- which isn't too far from the truth."

There were other manifestations of the kind of pressure that the Monkees were under, including a fistfight between Jones and the normally pacifist Tork. In Jones' autobiography, *They Made a Monkee Out of Me*, Jones relates a creative way in which the group and some of their entourage let off steam:

"On the set, and on the road, we had a game we used to play called *Killer*. Jim Frawley invented it. The idea was each person was allowed three shots per day. You could shoot whoever you liked -- you just mimed it with your hand as a gun, like kids do, y'know -- *tssshhh!* And whoever was shot had to die.

"But you couldn't just fall down, nice and simple -- it had to be a spectacular death. You had to moan and kick and fall over furniture and people and take about three-quarters of an hour to do it -- like they used to do in all the best westerns. And if you didn't die loud enough, or long enough, or imaginatively enough, or, if say you just didn't die at all, because you were being introduced to The Queen Mother at the time, then you lost a *life*.

"And if you lost three lives -- you were out of the game. Forever. No second chances. That was as good as really being dead.

"So we'd look for the best moments to shoot each other -- when it would cause the most commotion. Not everyone was included. It was a clique of about eight. Sometimes we'd have a different director -- we used to have a guest director do one or two shows. They'd be in the middle of a scene and somebody would get shot and the whole scene would be ruined because this was very serious business -- you couldn't lose a life.

"The game produced no end of possibilities for going right over the top. In the middle of a love scene

once -- I had the stars coming out of my eyes, the whole bit -- I'm walking over to the girl with my arms outstretched and she says 'Oh, Davy!' We're just about to kiss when... Tsshhh! -- Peter shoots me. I have to go into an epileptic seizure routine for about five minutes -- knocking lamps over, falling over a drum kit, out the door, roll around the parking lot, up the stairs, across the president's desk -- 'Oh my God, are you alright, David?' -- 'Aaargh! Shot, sir!' Back out the door, down the stairs, onto the set, -- collapse in a heap at her feet. Wild applause.

"One time in Australia, in front of about five million fans at the airport, Micky got shot and he fell all the way down this gigantic escalator. People were stunned. They thought he'd been assassinated."

Jones goes on to tell of the night when co-producer Bert Schneider was receiving his Emmy and got "shot," but wasn't willing to spoil the moment.

"He won an Emmy and lost a life."

Much of the resistance to The Monkees came from those who, recognizing the musical brilliance of the Beatles, no doubt felt obligated to defend the boys from Liverpool, whose honor was, in their eyes, being besmirched. Ironically enough, the Beatles were among the most prominent of Monkees fans (and vice versa). Whether conscious of the maxim that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery or simply seeing through the hype to Rafelson's core vision and recognizing the valid group experiences that lay beneath some of the exaggerated scripts, John, Paul, George, and Ringo clearly didn't feel threatened by The Monkees, even when challenged by them on the musical charts. It could also be that, having experienced the tenuous balance of a musical career and the grind of motion picture production, they respected their American counterparts on a technical level. John Lennon went so far as to compare them favorably to the Marx Brothers (ironic in that one episode, *MONKEES IN MANHATTAN*, stole its plot from the Broadway-comedy-turned-Marx-Brothers-film *Room Service*; and in *THE MONKEES PAW*, Mike, Peter, and Micky actually do themselves up

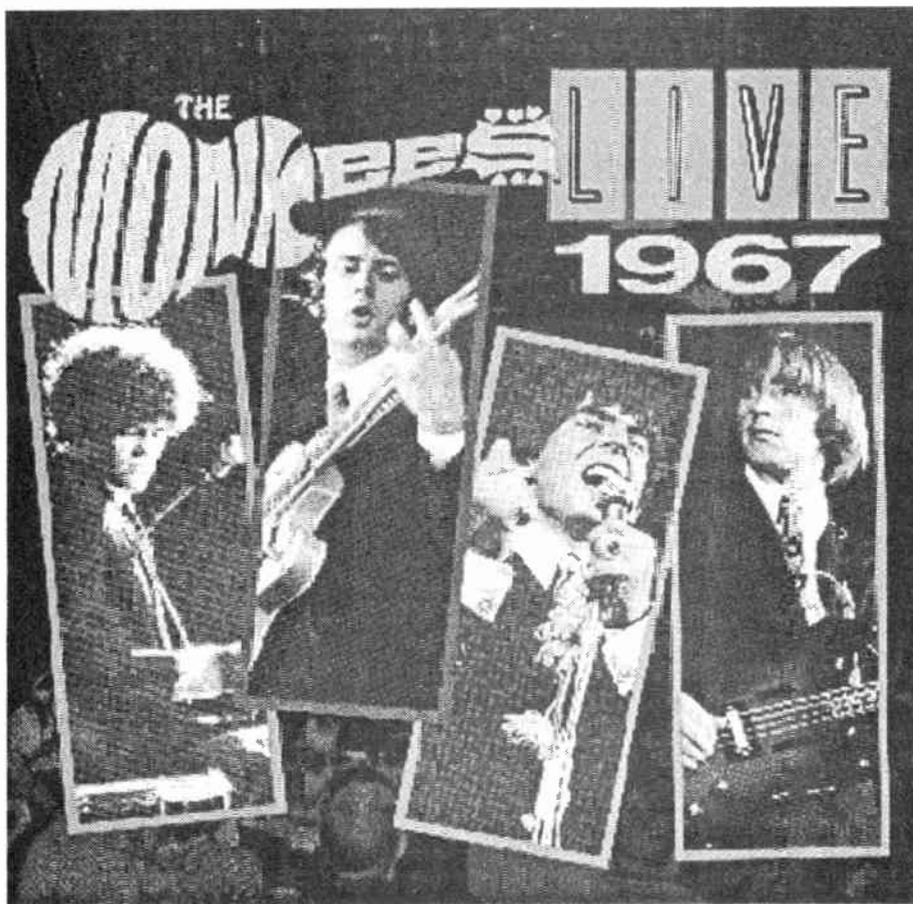
as Groucho, Harpo, and Chico). Although in the pilot, Mike throws darts at a poster of the Fab Four, the boys actually found opportunities to pay subtle tribute to their British counterparts, as in the final episode of the series (*MUJACOGEO*) when they are rousted out of bed by a blaring recording of "Good Morning, Good Morning" from the *Sgt. Pepper* album; and in the feature, *Head*, when Peter strolls into a men's room whistling "Strawberry Fields Forever."

Nesmith, in an interview with Eric Lefcowitz published in *The Monkees Scrapbook*, offered his perspective on the pressure:

"We had something that was creatively and commercially viable. But we were the focus of just rampant antipathy from the press and the people. The press and the critical community put us in the category of 'bubblegummers' and meaningless nonsense, and so that was a hard thing for all of us to go through. I won't say that it was abuse because it wasn't abuse. It was that we were constantly getting sniped at and picked at.

"And so whatever ordinary difficulties would occur between professional people were a little bit magnified by this very hostile environment."

As a means of countering the criticism they received for their less than total musical involvement, The Monkees went out on tour, where it would be (theoretically) obvious that they were competent musicians. Legendary guitarist Jimi Hendrix, after having previously offered scathing opinions of The Monkees, became their opening act during the early part of their tour. Of course, that didn't stop some from suggesting that they were merely miming to recorded tracks or that the real musicians were hidden backstage. Actually, it hardly mattered, because the level of screaming at the concerts was such that the audience would hardly have noticed if no sounds whatsoever were being produced. Material from their 1967 tour was recorded for an album, but it was not released until 1987 (*Live 1967*), when Rhino Records acquired the material and, utilizing modern technology, was able to deliver it in such a way that the music could be reasonably heard and enjoyed. The final episode of the first



20 years after the fact, Rhino Records released *The Monkees' live album*.

season, *MONKEES ON TOUR*, documented a day-in-the-life on the road for the group, and includes concert scenes with barely discernible music.

After two seasons worth of episodes, the Monkees were feeling understandably burnt out, given the demands upon them. They had endured the ridicule of the popular music press, gone out on exhausting tours in order to combat the criticism, been snubbed by veterans of television production, merchandised to the hilt, come out victorious in the struggle for musical control, recorded several top-selling albums and singles, and all the while devoted themselves to filming 58 episodes of a comedy series. Not that there weren't a few hitches, such as an unhappy Nesmith making himself unavailable for *99 POUND WEAKLING* and *CARD CARRYING RED SHOES* (he was also absent from most of *HITTING THE HIGH SEAS*, but that was due to seasickness). Still, it was understandable that the boys craved a

change. In his autobiography, Micky Dolenz indicates that as early as midway through the second season they were floating ideas for radical changes in format. An appealing concept was to do something along the lines of a comedy-variety show, similar to what *Laugh-In* brought to the airwaves on NBC a couple of years later. The network balked, however, and it was mutually decided to end the series in favor of other projects, which, following the production of a Monkees feature, would include three one-hour network specials.

The feature in question was written over a weekend in Ojai at a golf resort. Micky, Davy, Mike, and Peter, together with Rafelson, Schneider, and new friend Jack Nicholson put their heads together and held long discussions on every sort of topic imaginable, recording it all on tape. Jack Nicholson then took the tape and fashioned it into a script, which became the basis for the movie *Head*. The film that resulted is a

pastiche of ideas and images, mostly parodying movies, television, and the Monkees themselves, though often the lines are blurred. The structure is equally as stream-of-consciousness as was its conception. It was intended to be a catharsis for the group, as well as a means of announcing to the world that they were fully aware of their manufactured origins, but by golly, they were going to do their own thing, anyway, and have fun doing it, so come along for the ride. Teri Garr makes her film debut (at least in terms of having lines) in *Head*, which also features appearances by Victor Mature, silicone queen Carol Doda, Frank Zappa, Logan Ramsey, Annette Funicello, and, in a carry-over from the series, Vito Scotti. Bob Rafelson appears on-camera briefly in the film, as does Jack Nicholson; and if you look very quickly you'll catch a glimpse of Dennis Hopper. Unfortunately, the promotional campaign was so vague and unfocused in its desire to be subtle and intriguing that it failed to attract anyone. It not only didn't reveal the fact that *Head* was a Monkees movie, many of the ads didn't even inform the public that *Head* was a movie at all.



Though the original reviews were mixed, the film has since come to be regarded as something of a classic as an example of 60s consciousness. Leonard Maltin's *Movie and Video Guide* gives it three stars, describing "this overlooked item (as) a delightful explosion of crazy ideas with no coherent plot, many old film clips, some good songs... Well worth seeing." Dino Kovaš, of the short-lived *New Monkees* calls *Head* "one of the greatest movies ever made." The score features two songs by Carole King ("Porpoise Song" and "As We Go Along," which were released together as a single), Harry Nilsson's "Daddy's Song" (featuring a dance performance by singer/choreographer Toni Basil) and two songs by Peter Tork ("Can You Dig It?" and "Long Title"), who was usually lucky to have even one of his compositions on a Monkees album.

With the failure of *Head* at the box office, the Monkees' fortunes took a distinct downturn. The first of what was supposed to have been three NBC specials, *33 1/3 Revolutions Per Monkee*, was aired opposite the Academy Awards broadcast, where it was buried. The show deserved better, as it included seminal rockers Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard among the guest performers. Content-wise, *33 1/3* was essentially a smaller-scale version of *Head*, the main theme being the manipulation of the Monkees and their audience. It was during the production of the special that Peter announced his intention to leave the group.

Micky, Davy, and Mike continued on, bolstered somewhat by the impact of *The Monkees* finding a



And then there were two...

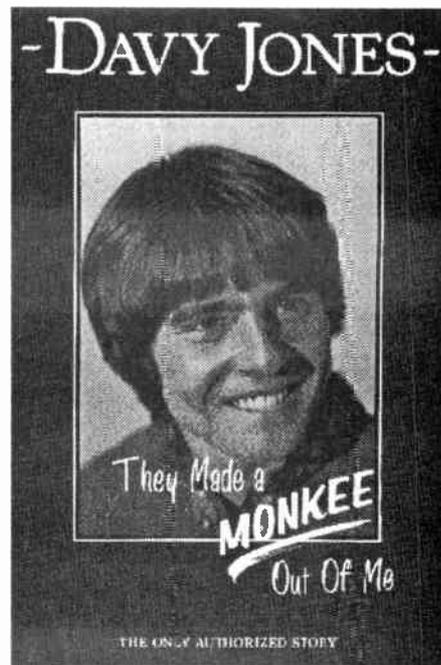
new audience in syndication on Saturday morning TV. In addition to appearing in a number of Kool-Aid commercials, they released two albums (*Instant Replay*, *The Monkees Present*) as a trio and continued to perform live as well as making guest appearances on shows such as *Laugh-In*, *Hollywood Squares*, and variety shows hosted by Johnny Cash and Glen Campbell. Despite their efforts, however, concert attendance continued to drop sharply. Several factors contributed to the decline. One portion of the potential audience had been and remained hostile to the very existence of The Monkees from the beginning. The fans that had been loyal had the short attention span of



Photo by Henry Diltz

Michael Nesmith in Television Parts

youth and moved on to other things. The group was trapped between exploiting their sound (which was no longer Top 40), that which had signified their success, and trying to achieve musical legitimacy by incorporating other styles of music into the act. This was achieved by the inclusion of a black rhythm & blues group, Sam and the Goodtimers, as both their warm-up and backup band. Unfortunately, the mix didn't take with the ticket-buying public. Within the age group that had backed the show originally, The Monkees now had to compete with the likes of *The Partridge Family* and Don Kirshner's animated *Archies* (who's

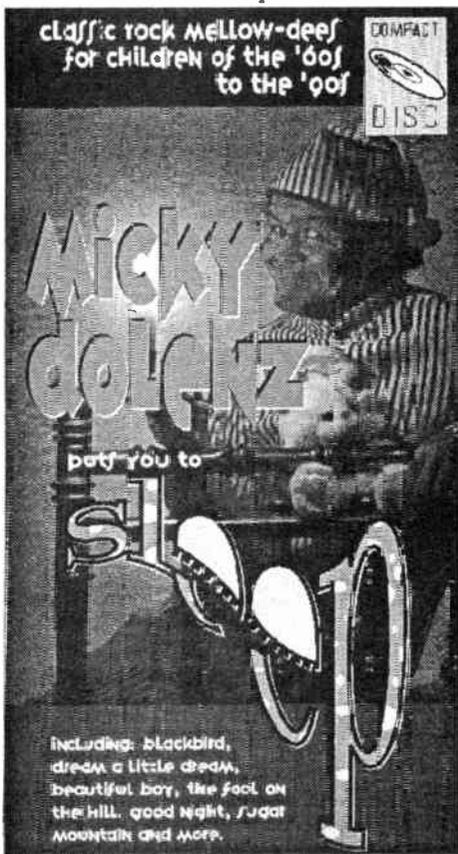


Davy's autobiography.

hit "Sugar, Sugar" was originally intended as a Monkees release, a plan thwarted by the boys' revolt).

The next to abandon the sinking ship was Michael Nesmith, whose efforts apart from the group were coming to the attention of the music world. He had written "Different Drum," which became Linda Ronstadt's first hit (with the Stone Poneys; a parody version of the song was also featured in *TOO MANY GIRLS*), and other tunes, some of which he recorded during Monkees sessions (only recently released), were recorded and released by other acts, most notably The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band ("Some of Shelly's Blues," "Propinquity"). He recorded a series of albums with his new group, The First National Band, and performed "Joanne" on *American Bandstand*. He also produced records by other artists and even scored a low budget movie, *The Northville Cemetery Massacre*, directed by Bill Dear; the beginning of a longtime working relationship that continues to this day.

Micky and Davy recorded one last, contractually mandated album, the understatedly-titled *Changes*, which features the two of them on the cover looking awfully abandoned (the photo was actually one taken during the Sam and the Goodtimers tour, but with Mike cropped out of the image). Although Micky and Davy would later speak of *Changes* with little fondness,



the cuts are by-and-large rather good, though of a different style than "traditional" Monkees releases.

Following the demise of The Monkees as a recording act, Davy juggled acting and music, making guest appearances on *Love*, *American Style*, *Make Room for Granddaddy*, and a landmark episode of *The Brady Bunch* (GETTING DAVY JONES), as well as cutting a trio of solo albums, before ultimately heading back to England and returning to the stage. In the mid-70s, he and Micky appeared in Harry Nilsson's musical stage adaptation of the classic children's film *The Point*.

Micky likewise continued acting,



Arthur (on right), sidekick to Fox's *The Tick*, is voiced by Micky Dolenz.

with roles on such television shows as *Owen Marshall, Counsellor at Law*, *Adam-12*, and *Cannon*; plus a performance in the film *Linda Lovelace for President* as a legally blind bus driver. He reunited with Davy and Monkee songwriters/producers Boyce & Hart to form Dolenz, Jones, Boyce & Hart in the mid-70s. DJB&H toured the country with an act consisting largely of Monkees hits (during a Disneyland appearance, Peter Tork joined them onstage), and cut an album before going their separate ways. Micky also loaned his voice to a number of Saturday Morning animated series by Hanna-Barbera, including *The Funky Phantom* (as Skip), *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kids* (as Harvey),

Peter Tork



Devlin (as Tod), *The Skatebirds* (as Willie Sheeler), and *These Are the Days* (supporting player along with fellow *Monkees* veteran Henry Corden). In the early 80s, Micky parlayed his directorial experience on *The Monkees* and self-training as an amateur filmmaker into a second career as a television director in England.

As his post-Monkees career evolved, Mike Nesmith developed something of a cult following as a solo artist and was a pivotal figure in the rise of the music video industry in the 80s. With the financial backing of his mother, who invented Liquid Paper, he had the freedom to take bold steps both artistically and as a



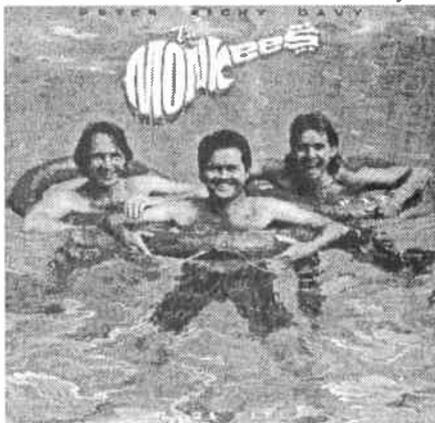
technical innovator in related media. He formed Pacific Arts, which first released his LPs, then later his landmark video album *Elephant Parts* (directed by Bill Dear), a blend of comedy and music that won the first video Grammy ever awarded; and which featured the clip that launched Nesmith down the video road, his comic conceptual video for "Rio," a song from his album *From a Radio Engine to the Photon Wing* (don't ask). Moving into the field of movie production and distribution, Nesmith was the driving force behind the films *Timerider* and *Repo Man*. In early 1985, he produced and starred in *Michael Nesmith in Television Parts* for NBC, a variety special that was brought back as a series for a brief run the following summer, and which featured a similar blend of comedy



Mike Nesmith introduces *Overview Magazine*.

and music as previously seen in *Elephant Parts*. *Television Parts* featured segments by a number of comics doing short films based on their stand-up routines, including Garry Shandling, Jerry Seinfeld, A. Whitney Brown, and Whoopi Goldberg. In addition to offering a showcase for some new acts, there were music videos featuring the likes of Martin Mull, Roseanne Cash, and Jimmy Buffet. One regular comedy bit from the show, "Deep Thoughts by Jack Handey" later turned up on *Saturday Night Live*, where it's become a regular feature and even inspired a book and a calendar. Two collections of highlights from the series are available on video, *Dr. Duck's Super-Secret All-Purpose Sauce* (the better of the two) and *The Television Parts Home Companion*.

In 1986, Nesmith attempted to launch an innovative new video product. *Overview Magazine* was intended to be the first video (literally) magazine. It was a magazine-style collection of video segments, including an on-camera editorial introduction delivered by Nesmith himself; "letters" to the editor; reviews of video releases and video equipment; experimental videos; and even what was to be a regular contest wherein viewers were invited to submit their own videos adapting a joke visually in the style of a famous director (the example shown was a Bergmanesque adaptation of a joke told on-camera by Nesmith). "Page numbers" count off in the upper portion of the screen, useful if one wishes to scan through to a particular segment. As usual, Nesmith's vision was perceptive in terms of anticipating what a new medium had to offer. Unfortunately,



The reunion album.



Photo by Henry Diltz

While waiting for their cue during the shooting of the "Heart and Soul" video, Peter does a half-hearted Gene Simmons impression.

the project failed, probably for logistical/technical reasons relating to delivery of the product in an efficient, timely, and cost-effective manner (\$4.95 was the "cover" price). Nevertheless, *Overview Magazine* would seem to have foreshadowed the current CD-ROM boom, as well as encouraging the kind of homemade video comedy seen on shows such as ABC's *America's Funniest Home Videos*.

Peter Tork, on the other hand, struggled. A combination of substance abuse and an excessive faith in the goodness and reliability of people resulted in a return to hand-to-mouth living as a struggling musician. At one point, he taught Social Studies and English courses at a school in Santa Monica and Venice, California. Glenn A. Baker, in *Monkeemania*, cites a quote given by Peter to the *National Enquirer* in which he states, "I consider myself a professional has-been," although he claimed to be getting greater satisfaction out of reaching a handful of people than when he was performing before thousands at a time as a Monkee. He has had several bands; *Release*, *The New Monks*, and *The Peter Tork Project* among them. Having cleaned up and honed his business instincts, he may now be the most at-ease member of the Monkees.

Through the years following the breakup of the act, all four ex-Monkees found themselves in great demand around the world. Japan in particular embraced the group both collectively and as solo performers much in the same way that Jerry Lewis is adored in France. Also, like the Beatles, there was a pattern of unofficial semi-reunions. Micky and Davy would show up at one of Peter's gigs, or one or two would contribute in some capacity to one of the other's recording projects. Finally, at about the time plans were being solidified for The Monkees (minus Mike Nesmith) to reunite for an anniversary tour, MTV ran a marathon of episodes from the show. The overwhelming response proved that the timing was right for the tour, which was a huge success. The highlight of the tour was when Mike Nesmith joined the trio for a couple of encores at the conclusion of their concert at Los Angeles' Greek Theatre. Also around this time, Arista released a Monkees collection entitled *Then & Now - The Best of The Monkees*, which included a trio of new cuts on which Peter and Micky perform (Davy boycotted the sessions on account of a feud with Arista). One of the cuts, "That Was Then, This is Now," made the charts (In addition to the retail LP and CD versions of the album, which contain

different cuts, there is a 2-disc vinyl version that was offered by mail order on TV).

Following the "Pleasant Valley Sunday" marathon, as it was called, MTV ran the series on a regular basis for awhile before it went into broad syndication for the first time in many years. This Monkees revival prompted the creators of the series, Bob Rafelson and Bert Schneider, along with Steve Blauner, who had also been involved with the original show, to attempt to create a new generation of Monkees for a new generation of young, musically-oriented TV viewers. A nationwide search was launched for talent from which to form *The New Monkees*. For a brief time, there was legal action over the use of the name, for which organizers of The Monkees Anniversary Tour had to pay a hefty user fee to Columbia (For a fuller account of *The New Monkees*, see the related article and interview elsewhere in this issue). The New Monkees didn't last long, however, as a band or a series, so the wrangling over the name soon became a moot point, at least where they were concerned. A new album was recorded by the three reunited Monkees (*Pool It*), but shortly after the release of the first single from the album ("Heart and Soul"), there was also a falling out with MTV over a promotional appearance fiasco, and The Monkees became persona non grata on the network. Nevertheless, another tour was carried off, and when the tour reached Los Angeles, Mike Nesmith again joined in, this time for about the final third of the show, at the Universal Amphitheatre. It was interesting to hear all four join in on Nesmith tunes "Joanne" and "Cruisin'."

Eventually, Rhino Records, who had issued previously-unreleased Monkees recordings, as well as LP and cassette reissues of the original nine albums, acquired all rights to The Monkees. Tentative plans call for a variety of projects; a tour, a movie, plus possible new albums, depending upon the ability to coordinate the schedules of the various participants. Nesmith has traditionally been the most difficult to pin down due to his position as head of a large, diverse corporation. Even

so, the others have kept busy with their own projects. Tork continues to perform solo, and recently released a new album, *Stranger Things Have Happened*, which features backup vocals by Dolenz and Nesmith. Dolenz helped launch the Kid Rhino label with *Micky Dolenz Puts You to Sleep*, a collection of mellow pop tunes that includes a couple of Monkees tunes ("Porpoise Song," "Pillow Time"), as well as the songs by the likes of Harry Nilsson, Lennon-McCartney, Graham Nash, and others. Jones (and, later, Dolenz) have appeared in recent stage productions of *Grease*.

Dolenz may actually be in the process of acquiring an entirely new set of fans due to his association with another cult hit. He has revived his side career as a cartoon voice-over actor, giving voice to the character of Arthur, the accountant-turned-sidekick pal of *The Tick*, Fox's hit cartoon series based on the cult comic book. As many of fans of *The Tick* are adults, it is entirely possible that there could be a considerable overlap between the two groups of fans.

What's ahead for The Monkees? It's hard to say. If they can work out their schedules and any other philosophical/artistic differences that might get in the way, it's easy to envision them as having a rare opportunity to revive a long-dormant television genre: the comedy-variety show. Perhaps under the auspices of Nesmith's production capabilities and resources they could find that perfect blend of group effort and individual expression that has always seemed to just exceed their collective grasp. Such a format

would enable them to encore past hits while exploring new musical directions, showcasing new talent, and even doing the kind of sketch and cutaway comedy bits that Nesmith has become so proficient at. The obvious title: *Monkee Parts*. It's something to think about.

In the meantime, Rhino Records/Video continues to repackage The Monkees for the 90s. The series has been licensed to Columbia House, where it is available by subscription, and soon the entire series will be available in a massive boxed set that will also include the unaired version of the pilot (featuring Boyce & Hart vocals), the rare NBC special *33 1/3 Revolutions Per Monkee*, and a collection of Monkees commercials for Kellogg's. The series episodes will be uncut and restored to their original form. Recently syndicated prints have not only been trimmed for time, but only one episode from the first season (TOO MANY GIRLS) carries the original opening credits sequence. All of the others have the second season opening. In addition, the original songs will be featured, as opposed to ones that were dubbed in later ('67 and '69) to promote newer recordings. On the audio front, Rhino is currently preparing *Missing Links, Vol. 3* for release later this year.



The Monkees receive five multi-platinum awards from Rhino Records chief Harold Bronson (at right) at the Hard Rock Cafe.

Songs listed in parenthesis were dubbed in over the original songs for subsequent broadcasts

Season 1:

ROYAL FLUSH (9/12/66)

After rescuing a her from drowning, Davy falls for a princess marked for assassination by her wicked uncle

Theo Marcuse, Vincent Beck, Katherine Walsh, Ceil Cabot, Dick Wilson

Written by Peter Meyerson, Robert Schlitt; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "This Just Doesn't Seem to Be My Day" ('67-"You Told Me," '69-"Apples, Peaches, Bananas and Pears"), "Take a Giant Step" ('67-"The Girl I Knew Somewhere," '69-"Good Clean Fun")

Won Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Achievement

MONKEE SEE, MONKEE DIE (9/19/66)

The boys go to a creepy castle for the reading of the will of an eccentric millionaire they once befriended

Stacey Maxwell, Milton Parsons, Lea Marmer, Mark Harris, Oliver McGowan

Written by Treva Silverman; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "Last Train to Clarksville," "Tomorrow's Gonna Be Another Day" ('67-"A Little Bit Me, A Little Bit You")

MONKEE VS. MACHINE (9/26/66)

When Peter is rejected by a computer for a job at a high-tech toy factory, the group plots revenge

Stan Freberg, Severn Darden, Walter Janowitz, Dorothy Konrad, Elaine Fielding

Written by David Panich; Directed by Bob Rafelson
Songs: "Saturday's Child" ('67-"You Told Me"), "Last Train to Clarksville"

YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD KIDNAPPERS (10/3/66)

A crooked manager sabotages The Monkees in order to help his own group

Vic Tayback, Andre Phillippe, David Hull, Ken Del Conte, Louis Quinn
Written by Dave Evans; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "Let's Dance On" ('67-"A Little Bit Me, A Little Bit You"), "Steppin' Stone" ('67-"The Girl I Knew Somewhere"), "Last Train to Clarksville"

Includes post-show interviews

THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COOL (10/10/66)

Davy accidentally intercepts a spy ring's microfilm when he buys a pair of maracas

Booth Colman, Billy Curtis, Jacques Aubuchon, Arlene Martel, Lee Kolima, Arlene Charles, Don Penny
Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Bob Rafelson
Songs: "The Kind of Girl I Could Love," "Old Folks at Home," "Steppin' Stone," "All the King's Horses," "Saturday's Child" ('67-"Randy Scouse Git")

THE SUCCESS STORY (10/17/66)

Davy poses as a wealthy businessman so that his grandfather won't take him back to England

Ben Wright, Ray Ballard, Charlie Callas, Ceil Cabot, Donald Foster
Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Bernie Orenstein; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "I Wanna Be Free" ('67-"Shades of Gray"), "Sweet Young Thing"

Includes post-show interviews

MONKEES IN A GHOST TOWN (10/24/66)

Lost on the way to a gig, the Monkees end up in a ghost town being used as a hideout by gangsters

Lon Chaney Jr., Rose Marie, Len Lesser, Hollis Morrison
Written by Robert Schlitt, Peter Meyerson; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "Tomorrow's Gonna Be Another Day," "Papa Gene's Blues," "Monkees Theme"

Includes post-show interviews



Photo by Henry Ditz

Taking direction from Jim Frawley.

GIFT HORSE (aka DON'T LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH; 10/31/66)

The boys are stuck with babysitting a horse for a boy whose father won't let him keep the animal

Jerry Colonna, Jesslyn Fax, Jim Boles, Chuck Bail; Kerry MacLane
Written by Dave Evans; Directed by Bob Rafelson
Songs: "Papa Gene's Blues," "All the King's Horses"

THE CHAPERONE (11/7/66)

Davy tries to woo the daughter of a strict military father
Arch Johnson, Sherry Alberoni, Diana Chesney, Judy Murdock
Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Bruce Kessler
Songs: "This Just Doesn't Seem to Be My Day" ('67-"You Just May Be the One," '69-"Midnight Train"), "Take a Giant Step"

THE MONKEES (aka HERE COME THE MONKEES; pilot; 11/14/66)

The band is recruited for a sweet sixteen party by a young socialite who falls for Davy

Paul Mazursky, Bing Russell, Jill Van Ness, Richard St. John, Robyn Millan, Larry Tucker, Joe Higgins, June Whitley Taylor
Written by Paul Mazursky, Larry Tucker; Directed by Mike Elliott
Songs: "I Wanna Be Free" (two versions), "Let's Dance On" ('67-"Words")

Includes Jones and Nesmith screen test excerpts
Unaired version features Boyce & Hart vocals on songs; different credits sequences, with Dolenz billed as "Micky Braddock"; and screen test excerpts at beginning instead of at end

MONKEES A LA CARTE (11/21/66)

The boys try to win back a restaurant taken from an old man by a gangster

Harvey Lembeck, Karl Lukas, Dort Clark, Paul Sorensen, Helene Winston, Jon Kowal, Mousy Garner, Paul DeVillie, Don Kennedy
Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Bernie Orenstein; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "Steppin' Stone," "She"

I'VE GOT A LITTLE SONG HERE (11/28/66)

Mike is duped by a fly-by-night music publishing company
Phil Leeds, Irwin Charone, Joseph Mell, Owen McGivney, Buddy Lewis, Mary Foran, Bobby Johnson, Larry Gelman, Leigh Chapman
Written by Treva Silverman; Directed by Bruce Kessler
Songs: "Gonna Buy Me a Dog," "Mary Mary" ('67-"For Pete's Sake")



Photo by Henry Diltz

MONKEES IN TEXAS: Peter as the "faithful Indian companion."

ONE MAN SHY (aka **PETER AND THE DEBUTANTE**; 12/5/66)

Peter tries to win the heart of a society girl away from her snobbish current boyfriend

George Furth, Lisa James

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Treva Silverman; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "You Just May Be the One," "I'm a Believer" ('67-"Forget That Girl")

DANCE, MONKEES, DANCE (12/12/66)

Peter is suckered into signing a lifetime contract for dance lessons

Hal March, Karen James, Stephen Coit, Elisabeth Camp, Derrick Lewis

Written by Bernie Orenstein; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "I'll Be Back Up On My Feet," "I'm a Believer"

TOO MANY GIRLS (aka **DAVY AND FERN**; 12/19/66)

The band tries to cut Davy off from the hordes of girls that are interfering with their rehearsals, but a devious stage mother may be more than they can handle

Reta Shaw, Kelly Jean Peters, Jeff De Benning

Written by Dave Evans, Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Different Drum," "I'm a Believer"

This is the only episode to retain first season opening credits sequence in syndication prints

SON OF GYPSY (12/26/66)

A band of gypsies force the boys to steal a valuable work of art

Vic Tayback, Vincent Beck, Jeanne Arnold, Gene Dynarski, Mario Rocuzzo, Elisabeth Camp, James Frawley

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Treva Silverman; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Let's Dance On," "I'm a Believer"

CASE OF THE MISSING MONKEE (1/9/67)

Peter is slipped a desperate note from an important scientist, then both of them are kidnapped

Vito Scotti, Vincent Gardenia, Norbert Schiller, Nancy Fish, Ivan Bonar

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Bob Rafelson

Song: "Stepping Stone" ('67-"Pleasant Valley Sunday")

I WAS A TEENAGE MONSTER (1/16/67)

A mad scientist plans to transfer the Monkees' musical abilities to his Frankenstein-like creation so as to gain fame and fortune

John Hoyt, Richard Kiel, Byron Foulger

Written by Dave Evans, Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Sidney Miller

Songs: "Monkees Theme," "Tomorrow's Gonna Be Another Day," "Your Auntie Grizelda"

FIND THE MONKEES (aka **THE AUDITION**; 1/23/67)

A record producer hears a tape of the Monkees and launches a search for them, unaware that they are trying to get into his office for an audition

Carl Ballantine, Bobo Lewis, Joe Higgins, Art Lewis

Written by Dave Evans; Directed by Richard Nunis

Songs: "Sweet Young Thing," "Papa Gene's Blues," "I'm a Believer" ('67-"Mary Mary")

Post-show interviews

MONKEES IN THE RING (1/30/67)

A slimy promoter makes Davy a professional boxer through a series of rigged fights

Ned Glass, Robert Lyons, Joseph Perry, D'Urville Martin, Jerry Hausner, Jimmy Lennon, George Cisar, Peter Canon, Richard S. Ramos

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Laugh," "I'll Be Back Up On My Feet"

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER (2/6/67)

Davy exchanges places with a lookalike nobleman whose murder is being planned at the same time as his marriage

Oscar Beregi, Joe Higgins, Heather North, Donald Foster, William Chapman, Clegg Hoyt, Linda Kirk, Rodney Bingenheimer (Davy's double)

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Peter Meyerson; Directed by James Komack

Song: "Mary Mary"

MONKEES AT THE CIRCUS (2/13/67)

The Monkees step in to save a small circus from bankruptcy

Richard Devon, Donna Baccala, Forrest Lewis, Carl Carlsson, Ruth Carlsson, Gene Rutherford, Felix Silla

Written by David Panich; Directed by Bruce Kessler

Songs: "Sometime in the Morning," "She"

Micky demonstrates juggling skills and sings snippet of *Circus Boy* theme

CAPTAIN CROCODILE (2/20/67)

The Monkees become TV stars as comic foils for a sadistic kiddie show host

Joey Forman, Oliver McGowan, Phil Roth, Judy Howard, Larry Gelman, Joey Baio

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Peter Meyerson, Robert Schlitt; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Valleri," "Your Auntie Grizelda" ('67-"Pleasant Valley Sunday")

Includes parody of *Batman*

MONKEES A LA MODE (2/27/67)

The group is featured in a pretentious teen magazine
 Patrice Wymore, Valerie Kairys, Nancy Walters, Carole Williams,
 George Stratton, Eldon Quick
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Alex Singer
 Songs: "Laugh," "You Just May Be the One"
 Davy lifts gag from *Help* where Ringo offers food to stuffed animal

ALIAS MICKY DOLENZ (3/6/67)

Micky impersonates a lookalike gangster to help the feds bring in his gang
 Robert Strauss, Maureen Arthur, Jimmy Murphy, Mike Wagner, Don Sherman
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Dave Evans; Directed by Bruce Kessler
 Songs: "The Kind of Girl I Could Love," "Mary Mary"
 Davy missing from episode, but appears in post-show interviews

MONKEE CHOW MEIN (3/13/67)

While dining in a Chinese restaurant operated by a spy ring, Peter takes a fortune cookie with a secret formula hidden inside
 Joey Forman, Dave Barry, Mike Farrell, Gene Dynarski, Kay Shimatsu
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by James Frawley
 Song: "Your Auntie Grizelda" ('67-"Words")

MONKEE MOTHER (3/20/67)

Due to back rent owed, Babbitt rents the house out to a new tenant
 Rose Marie, William Bramley, Alexandra Hay, Al Dennis
 Written by Peter Meyerson, Bob Schlitt; Directed by James Frawley
 Songs: "Sometime in the Morning," "Look Out (Here Comes Tomorrow)"

MONKEES ON THE LINE (3/27/67)

With no gigs in sight, the boys go to work for a phone answering service
 Milton Frome, Susan Browning, Richard O'Brien, Helene Winston, Jack Donner, Tom Bellin, Lea Marmer
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Coslough Johnson; Directed by James Frawley
 Song: "Look Out (Here Comes Tomorrow)"

MONKEES GET OUT MORE DIRT (4/3/67)

The boys all compete for the affections of a beautiful laundromat owner
 Julie Newmar, Claire Kelly, Digby Wolfe, Patricia Foster, Wally Cox
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Gerald Shepard
 Songs: "Monkees Theme," "The Girl I Knew Somewhere"

MONKEES IN MANHATTAN (4/10/67)

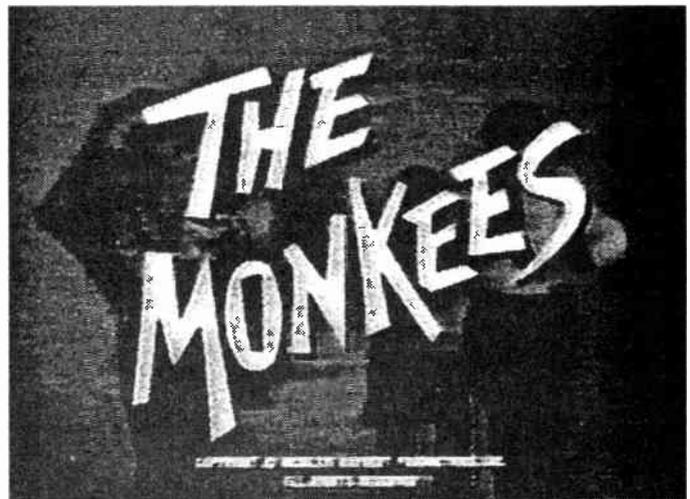
The group travels to New York, where they've been promised the leads in a Broadway musical
 Phil Ober, Olan Soulé, Doodles Weaver, Foster Brooks, Dick Anders, Alfred Dennis, Geoffrey Deuel, John Graham, Susan Howard
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Russell Mayberry
 Songs: "The Girl I Knew Somewhere," "Look Out (Here Comes Tomorrow)," "Words"
 Adaptation of Broadway play and Marx Brothers movie *Room Service*
 Post-show interviews
 Lefcowitz lists this episode as **MONKEES MANHATTAN STYLE**, though TVC has been unable to find any documentation for such a title

MONKEES AT THE MOVIES (4/17/67)

The Monkees are cast as extras in a beach movie, then run afoul of the obnoxious star of the picture
 Bobby Sherman, Jerry Lester, Hamilton Camp, David Frank, Pamela Ferdin, Aileen Carlyle, Linda Albertano
 Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by Russell Mayberry
 Songs: "When Love Comes Knocking" ('67-"A Little Bit Me, A Little Bit You"), "Last Train to Clarksville," "Valleri"
 Davy's pre-Monkees album is used as a prop
 Post-show interviews

MONKEES ON TOUR (4/24/67)

A documentary look behind-the-scenes during a concert stop in Phoenix
 Directed by Bob Rafelson
 Songs: "The Girl I Knew Somewhere" ('69-"Steam Engine"), "Last Train to Clarksville," "Sweet Young Thing," "Mary Mary," "Cripple Creek," "You Can't Judge a Book by Looking at the Cover," "I Wanna Be Free," "I Got a Woman," "Steppin' Stone," "I'm a Believer" ('67-"Words")

**Season 2:****A NICE PLACE TO VISIT (9/11/67)**

The Monkeemobile breaks down, stranding the boys in Mexico, where Davy makes a play for a bandito's girlfriend
 Peter Whitney, Nate Esformes, Cynthia Hull, Godfrey Cambridge, Pedro Gonzalez Gonzalez, Nacho Calindo, Arthur Ambrosio
 Written by Treva Silverman; Directed by James Frawley
 Song: "What Am I Doing Hangin' Round"

THE PICTURE FRAME (aka THE BANK ROBBERY; 9/18/67)

Thinking they're acting in a movie, Davy, Micky, and Mike are conned into robbing a bank
 Cliff Norton, Henry Beckman, Elisabeth Fraser, Jonathan Harper, Dort Clark, Donald Foster, Art Lewis, Joy Harmon, Robert Michaels
 Written by Jack Winter; Directed by James Frawley
 Songs: "Pleasant Valley Sunday," "Randy Scouse Git"

EVERYWHERE A SHEIK SHEIK (9/25/67)

An Arabian princess decides that she wants to marry Davy
 Arnold Moss, Monte Landis, Noam Pitlik, William Bagdad, Cherie Latimer, Anne Randall, Lisa Mitchell, Donna Loren
 Written by Jack Winter; Directed by Alex Singer
 Songs: "Love is Only Sleeping," "Cuddly Toy"
 Post-show interviews

MONKEE MAYOR (10/2/67)

When the Monkees' neighborhood is slated for urban renewal demolition, Mike decides to enter politics
 Peter Brocco, Irwin Charone, Monte Landis, Violet Carlson, Queenie Smith, Walker Edmiston, Bill Benedict, Kathy Wakefield
 Written by Jack Winter; Directed by Alex Singer
 Songs: "No Time," "Pleasant Valley Sunday"

ART, FOR MONKEES SAKE (10/9/67)

A pair of crooked security guards use Peter's painting talent to set up a museum theft
 Monte Landis, Vic Tayback, Liberace, Arthur Malet, Michael Bell
 Written by Coslough Johnson; Directed by Alex Singer
 Songs: "Randy Scouse Git," "Daydream Believer"



Photo by Henry Diltz

Mike prepares for a visit from Frank Zappa in

MONKEES BLOW THEIR MINDS.

99 POUND WEAKLING (10/16/67)

Micky decides to build up his body to deal with a beach bully
Monte Landis, David Draper, Venita Wolf, Gary Waynesmith, Benny
Levine

Written by Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso, Neil Burstyn, Jon C. Andersen;
Directed by Alex Singer

Songs: "Sunny Girlfriend," "Love is Only Sleeping"

Nesmith absent from this episode

HILLBILLY HONEYMOON (10/23/67)

While lost, the boys stumble into a hillbilly feud, and Davy faces a
shogun wedding

Lou Antonio, Melody Patterson, Dub Taylor, Billie Hayes, Jim Boles

Written by Peter Meyerson; Directed by James Frawley

Song: "Papa Gene's Blues"

Music by Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs

MONKEES MAROONED (10/30/67)

The boys go treasure hunting after Peter swaps his guitar for a map
allegedly showing where Blackbeard's loot is buried

Monte Landis, Burt Mustin, Rupert Crosse, Don Sherman, Georgia
Schmidt, Allen Emerson

Written by Stanley Ralph Ross; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Daydream Believer," "What Am I Doin' Hangin' Round?"

CARD CARRYING RED SHOES (11/6/67)

Secret microfilm is hidden in the slippers of a Soviet bloc ballerina who
becomes smitten with Peter

Vincent Beck, Leon Askin, Ondine Vaughn, Robert Cornthwaite, Gene
Otis Shane, Jerry Stevenson

Written by Lee Sanford; Directed by James Frawley

Song: "She Hangs Out"

Nesmith absent from this episode

WILD MONKEES (11/13/67)

In a virtual ghost town, the boys encounter a female motorcycle gang
Henry Corden, Norman Grabowski, Carol Worthington, Christine
Williams, Ginny Gan

Written by Stanley Ralph Ross, Corey Upton; Directed by Jon C.
Andersen

Songs: "Goin' Down," "Star Collector"

A COFFIN TOO FREQUENT (11/20/67)

The boys are forced to witness an eccentric old woman's efforts to bring
her late husband back from the dead

Ruth Buzzi, George Furth, Mickey Morton

Written by Stella Linden; Directed by David Winters

Songs: "Goin' Down," "Daydream Believer"

HITTING THE HIGH SEAS (11/27/67)

The Monkees are duped into signing on as crew members for a dubious
seagoing vessel

Ted de Corsia, Noam Pitlik, Chips Rafferty, Leslie Randall

Written by Jack Winter; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Tear the Top Right Off of My Head," "Daydream Believer,"
"Star Collector"

Nesmith absent from most of episode due to seasickness

MONKEES IN TEXAS (12/4/67)

While visiting Mike's aunt in Texas, the boys help her resist being
forced off of her land

Barton MacLane, Jacqueline De Wit, Len Lesser, Rex Holman, James J.
Griffith, Stuart Nisbet

Written by Jack Winter; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Words," "Goin' Down"

No laugh track

MONKEES ON THE WHEEL (12/11/67)

While in Vegas, Micky's good luck turns sour after he wins a fortune in
mob money from a rigged roulette wheel

Rip Taylor, David Astor, Pepper Davis, Dort Clark, Joy Harmon,
Sharon Hillyer

Written by Coslough Johnson; Directed by Jerry Shepard

Songs: "The Door Into Summer," "Cuddly Toy"

Post-show outtakes

MONKEES CHRISTMAS SHOW (12/25/67)

The boys try to instill the Christmas spirit in a brilliant, but cynical,
rich kid whom they've been hired to babysit

Butch Patrick, Larry Gelman, Burt Mustin, Jeanne Sorel, Rege Cordic,
Jill Chandler

Written by Neil Burstyn, Dave Evans; Directed by Jon C. Andersen

Song: "Riu Chiu"

The group introduces the show's crew members in a post-show segment
and under the closing credits

FAIRY TALE (1/8/68)

In an extended fantasy sketch, Peter plays a peasant called upon to
rescue an obnoxious princess, played by Mike

Murray Roman, John Lawrence, Rege Cordic, Diane Shalet, Richard
Klein

Written by Peter Meyerson; Directed by James Frawley

Song: "Daily Nightly"

Post-show interviews

MONKEES WATCH THEIR FEET (1/15/68)

Aliens capture Micky and make a flawed robot duplicate of him

Pat Paulsen, Nita Talbot, Stuart Margolin, Clarke Gordon

Written by Coslough Johnson; Directed by Alex Singer

Song: "Star Collector"

Except for brief appearance in Paulsen segment, Nesmith absent from
this episode

THE MONSTROUS MONKEE MASH (1/22/68)

Davy is abducted by Dracula, who plans to turn him into a vampire and
use Peter's brain for his monster

Ron Masak, Arlene Martel, David Pearl

Written by Neil Burstyn, David Panich; Directed by James Frawley

Song: "Goin' Down"

In middle of scene, Micky stops to take direction

THE MONKEES PAW (1/29/68)

In a variation of the classic horror story, Micky acquires the magic
talisman from a washed up magician, with disastrous results

Hans Conried, Henry Beckman, Merri Ashley, Jack Fife

Written by Coslough Johnson; Directed by James Frawley

Songs: "Goin' Down," "Words," "Monkees Theme"

Micky, Peter, and Mike do Marx Bros. bit

Post-show outtake with Conried and interviews

THE DEVIL AND PETER TORK (2/5/68)

Mike goes up against the devil after Peter is duped into a Faustian bargain in order to acquire a harp
Monte Landis, Ted de Corsia, Billy Beck, Peter Canon, Lee Kolima
Written by Robert Kaufman, Gerald Gardner, Dee Caruso; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "Pleasant Valley Sunday" (instrumental version arranged with harp), "Salesman," "I Wanna Be Free" (harp solo), "No Time"
Emmy nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in a Comedy Series

MONKEES RACE AGAIN (2/12/68)

The boys pitch in to help a friend of Davy's grandfather win an important auto race
Stubby Kaye, David Hurst, William Glover, Maurice Dallimore, Don Kennedy, Bob Rafelson
Written by Dave Evans, Elias Davis, David Pollock; Directed by James Frawley
Song: "What Am I Doing Hangin' Round"

MONKEES IN PARIS (2/19/68)

Home movie-style episode of the group cavorting around Paris chased by girls, allegedly while taking a vacation from repetitive scripts
James Frawley
Written and directed by Bob Rafelson
Songs: "Love is Only Sleeping," "Don't Call on Me," "Star Collector," "Goin' Down"
Music by Hugo Montenegro

THE MONKEES MIND THEIR MANOR (2/26/68)

Davy is summoned back to England to claim an inheritance, lest it fall to a black sheep relative
Laurie Main, Bernard Fox, Jack Good, Jack H. Williams, Myra De Groot, William Benedict, Reginald Gardner
Written by Coslough Johnson; Directed by Peter Tork
Songs: "Greensleeves," "Star Collector"

SOME LIKE IT LUKEWARM (aka THE BAND CONTEST; 3/4/68)

One of the boys must pose as a girl in order for them to enter a contest for mixed-gender bands
Deana Martin, Sharon Cintron, Bob Rudelson, Bill McKinney, Jerry Blavat
Written by Joel Kane, Stanley Z. Cherry; Directed by James Frawley
Songs: "The Door Into Summer," "She Hangs Out"
Epilogue with Davy and Charlie Smalls collaborating on song "Girl Named Love"

MONKEES BLOW THEIR MINDS (3/11/68)

Peter consults a mentalist in an effort to overcome songwriter's block, but falls under the charlatan's evil spell
Milton Frome, Monte Landis, Burgess Meredith (cameo), James Frawley
Written by Peter Meyerson; Directed by David Winters
Songs: "Valleri," "Gonna Buy Me a Dog" (instrumental version), "Daily Nightly"
Prologue with Mike Nesmith and Frank Zappa playing each other's parts; Zappa's "Mother People" is heard on soundtrack

THE FRODIS CAPER (aka MIJACOGE0)

An evil wizard is paralyzing the Earth's populace through the medium of television
Rip Taylor, Tony Giorgio, Bob Michaels, Rick Klein, Nyles Brown
Written by Micky Dolenz, Dave Evans, Jon Andersen; Directed by Micky Dolenz
Song: "Zor and Zam"
Epilogue with Tim Buckley performing "Song to a Siren"
Episode begins with Monkees waking up to Beatles' "Good Morning, Good Morning"

Related:

Head

In a stream-of-consciousness series of set pieces, the Monkees rebel against the constraints of their image and the corporate manipulations that created them, while also parodying movies and television in the process

Annette Funicello, Victor Mature, Frank Zappa, Toni Basil, Sonny Liston, Ray Nitschke, Logan Ramsey, Teri Garr, Percy Helton, Tim Carey, Abraham Sofaer, Vito Scotti, Carol Doda, Charles Macaulay, T.C. Jones, Charles Irving, William Bagdad, June Fairchild, I.J. Jefferson, Bob Rafelson, Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper
Written by Bob Rafelson, Jack Nicholson; Directed by Bob Rafelson
Songs: "Porpoise Song," "Circle Sky," "Can You Dig It?," "As We Go Along," "Daddy's Song," "Long Title - Do I Have to Do This All Over Again"

33 1/3 Revolutions Per Monkee

Similar to *Head*, various musical numbers comment upon and parody popular music and The Monkees' place in it
Brian Auger, Julie Driscoll, The Trinity, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Fats Domino, The Clara Ward Singers, The Buddy Miles Express, The Jaime Rogers Dancers, We Three, Jools, Paul Arnold and the Moon Express

Written by Jack Good, Art Fisher; Directed by Art Fisher
Songs: "I'm a Believer" (Dolenz/Julie Driscoll), "Do Not Ask For Love" (aka "Prithee"; Tork), "Goldilocks Sometime" (aka "Where Time Won't Fly; Jones), "Naked Persimmon" (aka "The Only Thing I Believe That's True"; Nesmith), "Darwin" (Group), "Wind Up Man" (Group), Rock & Roll Medley ("At the Hop" [Group w/Clara Ward Singers], "I'm Ready" [Fats Domino], "Whole Lotta Shakin'" [Jerry Lee Lewis], "Tutti Frutti" [Little Richard], "Shake Your Tailfeather" [Group], "Blue Monday" [Fats Domino], "Little Darlin'" [Group], "Down the Line" [Jerry Lee Lewis], "Long Tall Sally" [Little Richard]), "I Go Ape" (Group), "String for My Kite" (Jones), Bach's Toccata in D (Tork), "Listen to the Band" (Group), "California, Here I Come" (Group)



Photo by Henry Dittz

THE FRODIS CAPER

INTERVIEW: Henry Diltz, Monkee Photographer

TVC: *What was your background prior to The Monkees?*

HD: My background was that I was in a folk group just before The Monkees in the middle 60s. We were on Warner Bros. Records. We were called the Modern Folk Quartet, and we had sort of gotten together in a coffee house in Honolulu, and formed this group. And the group was made out of myself, Chip Douglas, who later became The Monkees' producer...

TVC: *Who later became Chip Douglas?*

HD: Right. Chip Hatlelid was his name, and then he became Douglas Hatlelid, and (then) Chip Douglas. All one and the same guy, and then Cyrus Faryar was the third fellow, and we came over here and picked up a fourth member - we changed a member, actually. We got Jerry Yester, whose brother was in The Association, and Jerry was in the Christy Minstrels and Easy Riders and a bunch of groups. So we were a folk group and we played The Troubador a lot.

TVC: *What instrument did you play?*

HD: I played the banjo. Five-string banjo. Pete Seeger-style; folk-style banjo. And we did folk songs kind of in a vocal harmony, four-part harmony thing, and so we got this record contract and did two albums with Warner Bros. and a bunch of singles. Then we went electric when a lot of the groups started going electric. As a folk group doing this sort of sophisticated harmony, a lot of our fellow musicians liked our group, so I became good friends with Stephen Stills and David Crosby, with Roger McGuinn; a bunch of those people from the folk days. Then we went electric around the time of the Buffalo Springfield and all those groups. We made a single for Phil Spector. It was called "This Could Be the Night." Brian Wilson came down and kept listening to it over and over, and was mesmerized by it. We thought "Great, we've finally made it." And then he never put it out. He never released it, until years later it came out on an English album called *Rare Masters*. But subsequently Rodney Bingenheimer used it for his theme song. It was Rodney on the Rock radio show. So I was singin' his theme song twice a week for quite a number of years. Finally, just recently, Brian Wilson recut the song for the Harry Nilsson tribute album, 'cause it was a Harry Nilsson song. So for years and years, every time I'd see Brian that was our thing in common. He'd say "Oh, yeah, you're the guy who sang 'This Could Be the Night.' Someday I'm gonna record that song," you know. So he finally did. It sounds just like us. So that was one claim to fame. The MFQ finally got on the Phil Spector boxed set that came out a year or so ago. Anyway, I took up photography as sort of a hobby on the road, and started photographing all my friends who were musicians. In fact, one of the first groups I photographed was The Buffalo Springfield. I just went along to a sound check one day just as a friend and had my camera. I was taking pictures of stuff in Redondo Beach; people on the beach, and then sort of incidentally took a group shot of them, and the magazine *Teen Set* called me up and said "We hear you have a picture of the Buffalo Springfield," so when I sold one to them I thought "Wow. This is terrific. This'll pay for the film, and-- This'll pay for this expensive hobby." So I sort of segued into taking music photos. Then the next thing that happened to me was that I went to New York to photograph the Lovin' Spoonful. My good friend Erick Jacobsen produced them, and he said "If you want to be a photographer, come out here and hang out for the summer with the boys, and go on the road, and we'll pay for all your expenses..." So I did, and I believe it was on the plane coming back from that or as soon as I got back to town, at any rate, I got this call from *Tiger Beat* magazine asking me if I would go down to this TV set and photograph this group for 'em, for their teenybopper magazine, and that turned out to be The Monkees. And the day I went down there, I discovered these guys that I actually sorta knew. I mean, I knew Mike Nesmith



Henry Diltz (lower left) with fellow MFQ members: (clockwise, from Henry) Chip Douglas, Jerry Yester, Cyrus Faryar.

from the Troubador. He was kind of a fan of our group, which is sorta how Chip got in there, too. And I'd seen Davy Jones around at a couple of parties, so I was aware of these guys. Peter Tork I'd seen around. They weren't *real* good friends, but they soon became good friends, because here I was down there with kinda long hair, and sort of roughly their age, and we became instant friends, because apparently they'd been besieged by these sort of older square type photographers. That's mostly what they were in those days. I tell this story, realizing now that I'm one of those old guys. But in those days they were more like the press kinda guys. You know, they'd say "Okay, boys. Put your heads together and do something *zany* for the camera," and they just hated that. They hated these guys that were sent down there all day. So when I appeared on the scene, we sorta had an instant brotherhood thing, a connection, and I very quickly became their photographer. When they needed pictures, they wanted me to take 'em. This was the second season, by the way, not the first season. It was in the second season, when they were getting a little more autonomy, and starting to want to do their own music and what not. It coincided (with) when my friend Chip from MFQ became their producer. So I'd go down there maybe three mornings a week. And of course, they'd show up at 5:30 or 6:00 for makeup and what not. I had musician's hours. I'd get down there around 9:00 maybe, and things would be just getting under way.

Usually I'd walk in, and you never knew what it would be, you know. Each week I'd walk in and it'd be some amazing setup. I remember one morning walking in and it was a harem scene. I mean, there was like a dozen beautiful maidens all done up in, you know, jewelry and veils and stuff, and the Monkees with turbans on sort of running around and a whole sort of Middle Eastern luau set-up. And I'd sort of walk in on these things. One other time it'd be outside, and there'd be all these hillbillies and cows and horses and chickens. So each week that I would go down there I would always be totally blown away by whatever the theme of their show was for that week. And my job was just to hang out, hang out with the guys and just photograph everything kind of in a candid way. Of course, when I worked for the magazines I was always urged to try to get color portraits. Color head shots is what they needed for covers and for full-page color stuff. So I developed this style of kind of crouching in among the light stands, where I'd be out of the way of the crew, and I had a big telephoto lens; and I'd sort of crouch there very quietly just take head shots the whole time. And that worked out real well. And then of course, in between times there'd be like a lot of down time. There'd be like half an hour, an hour between setups. So, I was friends with all of the guys, so hanging out with them was different for each guy. With Micky, usually I'd get there early in the morning, and Micky and I'd run up on the catwalk, way up high...

TVC: *I think I read about that.*

HD: Did you?

TVC: *In one of the books. Maybe it was in Micky's autobiography, it said he used to like to go up there...*

HD: Did he say what we did up there? (makes a pot-smoking gesture)

I don't know if you want to get into that.

TVC: *Given the subject matter, I don't think we'll be shocking anybody...*

HD: (laughs) No, I don't think so. And we all did it. All musicians did it. Micky and I'd usually go up there early in the morning and have a couple of tokes and look down on everything; look at all the little people running around like ants, and that was always a lot of fun. And subsequently, pretty much each Monkee, you know... except Mike wasn't too heavily into it. I know Peter would come up and say "Henry, I have a little piece of hash, and we could get a safety pin from Wardrobe and, you know, go out in the trailer..." So we'd stick the hash on the end of this safety pin and light it. A poor man's hash pipe, a safety pin from Wardrobe. But each Monkee had their own little dressing room. Actually, it got to where the producers, of course, knew that they were doin' it, and the producers were doin' it too, you know. They kind of encouraged it. Actually at one point, they built the Monkees a special room.

TVC: *The box.*

HD: The box, yeah. We called it the Frodis room. Micky developed this name, calling it "Frodis," for grass. He called it Frodis. And in fact, he wrote and directed one called THE FRODIS CAPER. It had to do with kidnapping a plant, so he called it the Frodis plant. And when all the little girls would scream, you know, and look up at the hotel window, Micky would go out and give the peace sign and yell "Frodis!" and they'd all go "Frodis!" and they didn't know what he meant. We thought that was great fun. So that was our code word, you know. And so they built that special room, with pillows and colored lights and stuff and then they'd at least know where the Monkees were when they needed



Photo by Henry Diltz

Actually, it's the boys, not the camera that's in soft focus here, thanks to an early set call.



Photo by Henry Diltz

Judging by his attire, it appears as though Peter is studying his lines for HILLBILLY HONEYMOON.

them for the next scene. And they'd come rolling out of there, you know, with their eyes kind of glazed, you know, and jump into the scene, and it was so hilarious. I would crank off roll after roll. Those guys would be out there carrying on and cutting up and ad libbing, which once again was encouraged. So that worked out fine.

TVC: *Since you say you came along in the second season, essentially, what were your impressions of The Monkees as an entity prior to that?*

HD: Uhm, I hadn't really heard that much about them. I think I was immersed in the world of the Lovin' Spoonful. I mean I certainly must have heard "Last Train to Clarksville" and what not, you know. I believe that I-- It seems to me that I remember reading an article about them on the plane flying back to L.A., and that must have been in '67, and I believe that's when I did Lovin' Spoonful, so I think it was after my sort of... part of the year in New York City, and I believe I was reading about them on the plane, and as soon as I got back to my house in L.A., like within a day or two, I got a call from Ralph Benner from *Tiger Beat*, asking me to go take pictures of The Monkees, and I thought "What a coincidence." I really enjoyed that life on the set. My photography is sort of fly-on-the-wall photography, is what I've come to call it. Actually, Paul McCartney called it that. He'd say "Henry, we want you to do that fly-on-the-wall thing you do," which of course just means candid photos. And being a musician, I basically liked to hang out, just hang out, kind of observe what was going on. It was kind of my excuse for hangin' out and just observing people. I'm very interested in people; human behavior and what not, so I like to sit and watch people, and it works out real good for me. Then I ended up goin' on tour with them on the summer... I always have to ask (Monkees scholar) Gary Strobl about these things. It might have been the '68 summer tour. It was the '67 season that I worked. But they had a plane and flew all over the United States, and I went along with them taking photos. I worked mostly for the magazines, *Tiger Beat*, *Monkees Spectacular*, *16 Magazine*; and I also worked for Screen Gems, like usually one day a week I'd work for Screen Gems, for The Monkees themselves. One day for *Tiger Beat*, then one day for *16 Magazine*, and it was wonderful. I mean, I was a bachelor living in Laurel Canyon, making a ton of money. Then I got married. So my impression of The Monkees was that I really hadn't known that much about them. It turned out then that all of my friends had auditioned for them, like Stephen Stills had gone down. You know, the famous story that he said "I'll send my roommate down," and that was Peter Tork. Also, I found subsequently that Jerry Yester, who sang in our group had been

auditioned, and they actually liked him a lot and had him sort of down as one of The Monkees, but he wanted the other Monkees to be MFQ. He wanted us to be-- He said, "Well, I'll only do it if you use my group for the other guys," which would have been interesting, because we were a diverse group of guys.

TVC: *Once you got into it, did you pay any attention to the final product; the show itself and the albums? As a musician and an observer, what were your all-around impressions of The Monkees' output.*

HD: Well, I hung out with them in the studio a lot, because my good friend Chip was producing them. In fact, I played on a couple of things. I played banjo on something. I don't even know what it was. I think it was banjo, or maybe it was clarinet or tambourine or something. I can't remember. I did small parts on a lot of people's records, you know.

TVC: *Are you credited on them?*

HD: Yeah, I am on one of them. Once again, Gary could tell me which one it is. But I hung out down there a lot. Once again, I took photos that-- a lot of the times I'd be hired by the magazines and I'd have to give them all the film. So I'm left here in the end with maybe a couple of hundred rolls and a bunch of slides, but I probably shot a couple of thousand; so I have some percentage of what I shot, but not the greater portion. That all went to the magazines. Micheal Ochs Archives owns it all now.

TVC: *Did you like the show and the albums that resulted?*

HD: Oh, yeah. I liked the music. I loved the show. I mean, it was especially fun to see the finished product on TV, because I was there while they filmed all of that stuff, so it was one of those things where I would watch it from a different perspective than most people, because I knew what was happening right off camera, and I knew what was happening right before that scene was shot, and I could see the look in Micky's eye and know right where he was at. Because each show was really a terrific adventure. It was just such a fun time. Just being young guys, and being the center of attention as they were, and being taken care of real well by the crew and what not. I mean there'd be days when we'd go out to Columbia Ranch for the outdoor scenes, like the western episodes and what not, the hillbilly episode... It seemed like about once a month we'd be out there at the Columbia Ranch in the Valley, and at lunch time, and in between the scenes or when they'd be doing a closeup of Mike for an hour, we'd run around and climb up in these false front buildings, you know, and climb all around in there. Just kind of explore and adventure; had a lot of fun. And then there'd be the extras on each show, and once in awhile there'd be sort of a bunch of pretty girls, and you could kind of hang out with them,



Photo by Henry Diltz

Mike abandons ship on the set of HITTING THE HIGH SEAS after his stomach stages a mutiny.

or some interesting character actors. Monte Landis was in a lot of them, and he was such an incredible guy; so funny. And I loved going down each week to see what part Monte Landis was gonna play. He'd be the magician, or he'd be the devil, or he'd be some English colonel, and each time it was some fabulous character that he played so well. And also, Micky was a neighbor of mine in Laurel Canyon; he was just down the hill from me, down Lookout Mountain. He lived down at the bottom right on Horseshoe Canyon. So I spent quite a lot of time over at his house hanging out with him. We were actually very good friends. I took many photos. I took photos of his little girl, Ami, when she was like a year old. Little Ami Bluebell, who's now blossomed into a beautiful young actress. I took a lot of shots of parties at his house, and him working on his gyrocopter that he built there at his house. And then, at one point, Micky got into filming, 16mm. He had a Beaulieu 16mm sound camera, and he got the idea to go down to the Grand Prix in Mexico City, and he invited me to go with him. So it was Micky and I and a couple of girls that were kind of friends of the Monkees. One of them turned out to be Davy's wife, Linda,

eventually; another girl, Susan. There were girls that we all knew real well; part of "the gang," actually. So we went down there. It was funny, he went down there totally anonymously, but after a day of being in Mexico City, every time you'd hear the radio, you'd hear "Los Monkees! Los Monkees!," everything was "Los Monkees!" A big crowd would gather at the Grand Prix racetrack. Micky filmed everything. I remember one day going up to Mama Cass's house. Mama Cass was very much of a social catalyst in those days. She had a picnic one day, and David Crosby was there with Joni Mitchell, his protégé at the time. Eric Clapton was there. He kinda was a long-haired guy, kinda real quiet, you know; a few other friends, and Micky Dolenz. I have a couple of shots somewhere of Joni and David and Eric sittin' there under the trees playing music, and Micky wandering around the yard filming with his camera; and what was he filming, but-- At one point, he was down on his knees filming *his french fries*. I mean he was doing closeups of the french fries and the ketchup, you know, with his macro lens, and right behind him, here's Eric and Joni and David jamming together. I don't know if he ever filmed any of that,



Photo by Henry Diltz

Eric Clapton hangs out on the set of *French Fries - the Movie*.



Photo by Henry Diltz

even.

TVC: *Is there any particular photo from that period that makes you the most proud or that was a standout accomplishment?*

HD: I don't know. I mean, I have some favorite photos. One photo, Micky was fooling around one day and the forklift driver lifted him up in the air on the forklift. He wanted to step out onto the top of this sort of telephone pole that was imbedded in the ground. The forklift driver lifted him up, set him up and he stood on top of the pole. Then, when he stepped back onto the forklift to go down, I took a picture of him standing there. As he was standing on the forklift with kind of the wind blowing a little and right next to him on the forklift it said "Champ," it was the name of the forklift, and he was standing and he just looked like a young champ. That's one of my favorite photos, Micky the young champ, there.

TVC: *What would you say is the weirdest one you've shot?*

HD: Geez, I'm trying to think... Oh, I know one. We filmed a Kool-Aid commercial at some amusement park, somewhere. A closed-down amusement park. Micky was dressed up like a gypsy fortune-teller, which was kind of a turban and veils, lipstick and earrings, and this whole thing. And at one point, he went into the men's room, and I followed him into the men's room, and he's kind of standing there, you know, taking a pee dressed up like a lady, and he turned and gave me this look, you know, all dressed up in this lipstick. And I took a picture of him outside in front of this sign that said "MEN," you know, men's room. That was kind of fun. You know, one of the most fun episodes was the pirate adventure (HITTING THE HIGH SEAS), where we spent several days, anyway two or three days out on this boat out off Redondo Beach.

TVC: *Mike basically sat that one out, didn't he?*

HD: Yeah. First morning, we went out, we got on this boat, and

within half an hour-- I have pictures of a small boat pulling alongside, and them holding the boat close and Mike climbing in. He got seasick. He just couldn't see spending the whole day out there on this rocking vessel, you know. So they had to write him out of the script, I guess. But I remember that happening. "Where's Mike going?" "Oh, he doesn't feel well, you know. He's gettin' out of here." But that was a lot of fun. Micky and I found a little private area at the rear of the boat, the stern. And there was a little area there behind this sort of engine compartment that was very private, and none of the crew went back that far. They were all up in the front end filming. So we'd spend a lot of time sort of relaxing. Micky is famous for taking these little naps, you know. He'd go back there and I remember shooting photos of the flag a lot, and the seagulls, and Micky taking a nap.

TVC: *Of the four, were any more photogenic than others, or more cooperative?*

HD: Davy was the one that was the-- I don't know what word to use... the cutest, the handsomest, you know. I mean there were always girls who, you know, Peter was their favorite. A lot of girls liked Peter. Micky was a big favorite, you know. And then there were always the Mike fans, too, the "Texas prairie chicken" girls; and they all certainly had their fans. But Mike was married, and he was sort of the older, quieter one. He had the dry humor, so a lot of people-- He had his own set of fans, but I suppose Davy was sort of the best looking in a sort of a commercial Hollywood sense. He was very easy to photograph. Also, being an actor, and having been photographed a lot, he knew how to relax and look at the camera, whereas someone like Peter, who was just a musician, didn't. Peter would usually make a face or something, you know. But Davy knew how to direct his gaze towards the lens, so there was a lot of demand for



Photo by Henry Diltz

head shots of him. And then Micky, Micky was almost the most popular because he was kind of the most outgoing and the funniest, you know. The most sort of-- the Monkee qualities. I remember the directors-- There was always a different director, too, and that was interesting. There was one guy that, everytime he'd call the Monkees, he'd say "May we have the young thespians?" You know, "May we have thespians on the set, please?" Another one called them "the simians." "May we have the simians?"

TVC: *What was it like touring with The Monkees?*

HD: Well, first of all, on the plane was a lot of fun. You know, they had their own plane. It wasn't one of these brand new sorta jet jobs, but it was a big plane and all the friends were along. It was quite an entourage of friends and helpers and, you know, tour people. All the Monkees had a couple of their friends along. The little band of travelers and checking into the hotels and all that. Now, at each hotel there'd be quite a crowd of little teenyboppers outside, you know, and in those days it was... I mean in the 60s, they all sort of wore pink and yellow and chartreuse and purple, and it was very colorful. I remember looking out the window and looking down at the groups of girls calling up, and they always had these very pretty colors, very bright colors.

TVC: *Must've looked like an enormous Easter basket.*

HD: Yeah, mm-hmm. But there were no real mob scenes. I mean, they were respectful and kept their distance. There were a few security guys along. I remember one swimming pool that we all kind of hung out in for a day or two. I think it was in Dallas. And, you know, there were girls outside the swimming pool area, but they weren't able to get in. So we were isolated for the most part. The Monkees were happy to meet fans. I mean, they would go out to the fence and sign autographs at the airports. I remember we went shopping once at Neiman-Marcus in Dallas, I think, and Jan (Berry) from Jan & Dean was along that day. So different friends would come and join the tour for a few days. And a whole bunch of us went shopping at Neiman-Marcus. That was a lot of fun. There were no incidents. Basically, it was... this merry little band of travelers, you know. We were



Photo by Henry Diltz



Photo by Henry Diltz

all good friends, so it was kind of exciting to be going to new places together. I do remember that in Chicago we bumped into the Buffalo Springfield who were staying in the same hotel as we were. So immediately there was a lot of camaraderie there, and in fact the next day, we all had a day off, both groups, and so some of the Monkees and some of the Buffalo Springfield used The Monkees' plane to fly up to an Indian reservation in Wisconsin, I believe it was. It was a kind of a fair or an event going on. I remember Stephen (Stills) and Peter and Davy Jones, Micky, a couple of the other Buffalo Springfield, and we went on The Monkees' plane; flew up there.

TVC: *Did it get crazy around the concerts?*

HD: Yeah, but you know, there's always a lot of security. We were always backstage; kind of whisked in early for the sound check, and then we'd just stay there, so we didn't see much of that. I used to go walk around outside and look at all the kids lining up and stuff. We were always isolated enough- I mean, I wish there were some stories, but there aren't really. They were pretty young kids, you know, young girls. But I do remember the Monkees goin' out every once in awhile. Micky and I went out to take photographs one morning, with Stephen Stills, and we walked around the streets, and there were a few fans that came up and talked, but we never did get mobbed or anything. The mob scenes were around the concerts, of course, but like I said, we'd come in the back way early and then leave by limo or van or something...

TVC: *"Davy has left the building."*

HD: Yeah. They'd leave right away, so there wouldn't be any problems.

TVC: *From your perspective, how have the four guys changed since that time?*

HD: Well, Mike has changed the most, although he was always the

serious, business-minded one. But he's the full-on executive of a corporation, now. Our old friend Chip was in town and tried to call him one time and just go by and see him, and the famous line, which we repeat very often, he says "Well, Chip. You know, I'd like to meet with you, buddy, but I need at least six weeks lead time." And he wanted to say "Can I come over this afternoon and say hello?" and the guy says "six week lead time." I've actually worked for Mike quite a bit lately. I've taken photos for his solo albums. You know, I worked on *Television Parts*. Our group sang on one of the last episodes. We sang "Laura." We were wearing white suits and we sang the song (sings) "Laura, da da da, da da da..." At one point, I raise this clarinet to play it. Phony, you know, you can't play clarinet like that, anyway. And bubbles come out of it with girls' faces in the bubbles. But I was the still photographer on *Television Parts*. He's a terrific guy to work for. Quiet, he's very much in charge. Anyway, Mike has become this big important executive. I've been to see him there in his office. He does have a lot of decisions to make. He's got a lot of important executives working *under* him, so his time is very much in demand, you know from his own big corporation and productions. Peter probably in one way is the least changed, because he's sort of still an itinerant musician, you know, trying to get a group together and play a little club. I mean, he does, of course. He has a new album out, too. Davy went back to what he did, which was kind of show biz stuff, and playing in *Oliver* and different things, and doing parts on TV shows. He just was in *Grease*, and now Micky's taken over, now Micky's in *Grease*.

TVC: *How would you sum up the Monkees experience from your perspective, and what do you foresee for them in the future?*

HD: Well, I sum it up by saying it was a lot of fun. I mean, I was there to take pictures, and that was fun for me, and something that I do very easily and naturally. The Monkees themselves were all encouraged to sort of let it all hang out and be

themselves, you know. There were no restraints put on them by their producers or anybody. The more crazy they acted, the better. Everybody was pretty much themselves, and really, except for in the shows, I mean obviously they had to work, learn their lines, and be in front of the camera; but even that seemed like a lot of fun. It was kind of a lark. I mean, in the studios they worked hard, but once again that's playing music, which was fun. It was a wonderful time, as far as I could see. I mean, there was always something going on. And then they each had their little circle of friends. There was always something happening, and if one was in a bad mood, you could always turn to any of the other three to hang out with. And I think, in the future, they hope to do-- I mean, Micky and Davy do a lot of things together. Peter's doing stuff by himself. I know now that Rhino has the rights to The Monkees, they're trying to get them to do some kind of project; a record and/or a movie, you know, or some TV thing. I don't really know what the inside plans are, but I do know that they're talking about it and hoping for something. I think in '96, which is some kind of anniversary...

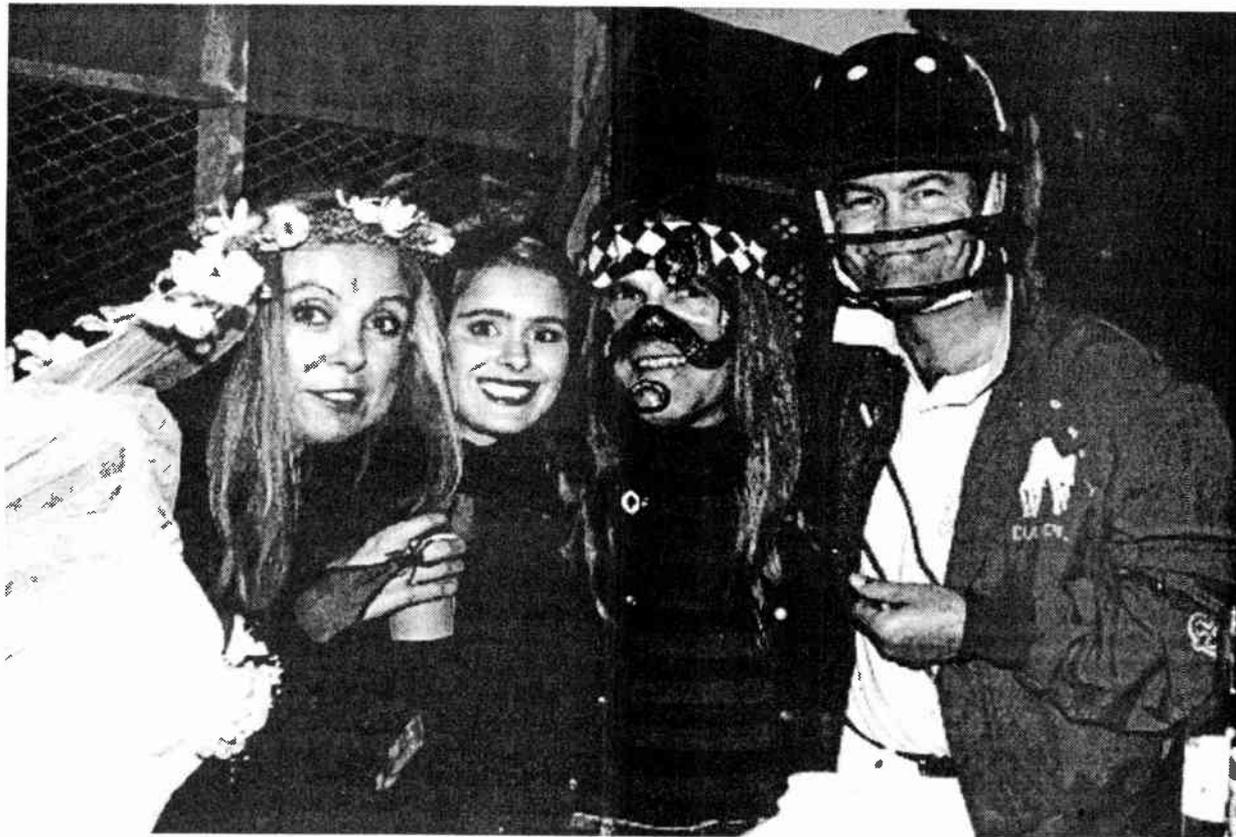
TVC: *The 30th anniversary of their debut.*

HD: Yeah. But I think Mike is the one that's the busy guy. He's a big executive guy. I know they just did a (Pizza Hut) commercial with Ringo Starr.

TVC: *Really? All four of them?*

HD: No. It was the three (Dolenz, Jones, & Tork)... and Ringo. They did it up in Vancouver. Hopefully... they can get back together again, because there's new generations of kids out there that would really love to see 'em. That old Monkee energy was terrific.

Anyone interested in purchasing photos from Henry; either ones appearing in this issue or others from his collection, may contact him at: P.O. Box 2492, Toluca Lake, CA 91610



Henry (wearing the snake) hangs out at a 1993 Halloween party with Ami Dolenz and her folks, Samantha and Micky.





The New Monkees - 13 episodes, Syndicated

Credits:

Producer - Marlon Staggs
 Developed by Matthew Fassberg, Victor Fresco

Regular cast:

Larry Saltis
 Dino Kovas
 Jared Chandler
 Marty Ross
 Helen - Linnie Godfrey
 Rita - Bess Motta
 Manford - Gordon Oas-Heim



It's really not hard to compile a substantial list of high quality, highly respected television programs, despite the widespread notion that most TV programming is drivel. Even the most snobbish of critics will recognize the contributions to the culture of such offerings as *I Love Lucy*, *Playhouse 90*, *The Honeymooners*, *The Fugitive*, *The Twilight Zone*, etc. In fact, most of what is dismissed as drivel is rarely more than simply uninspired. It's actually somewhat difficult to come up with shows that are truly bad in an objective sense, as opposed to merely not being one's taste or failing at what they set out to do, whether it be to make us laugh, cry, or shudder. Nevertheless, if one is looking for an example of truly awful, jaw-dropping, I-can't-believe-anyone-actually-wrote-

this-and-though ht-it-was-worth-airing bad television, one need look no further than *The New Monkees*.

The Monkees revival of the late 80s produced the desire on the part of Monkees creators Bob Rafelson and Bert Schneider, along with more recently acquired partner Steve Blauner (who, as head of Screen Gems, had given the go-ahead for the original show), to attempt to make lightning strike twice. Incorporating Blauner's presence into the team that had made up Raybert Productions, "Straybert" was born, and launched another major talent search,

eventually presenting four unknown youngsters to the world as The New Monkees. Unlike the original group, whose early musical ventures had been mostly directed in non-rock directions, three of the four newcomers were established rock musicians. The "Davy" of the new group, Larry Saltis, with the long blonde locks, became the primary lead singer; Dino (real name: Konstantinos) Kovas, the pompadoured drummer who took over the goofball role from Micky Dolenz, was fresh from Snakeout, described by him as a "surfabilly" band; Jared



Back Porch Video: The original Wayne and Garth???

Chandler, an aspiring actor whose persona was more along the lines of a surfer dude than an echo of anything from the original group echoed the plight of Micky Dolenz when, though he played blues harmonica and some guitar, was given a crash course in the bass guitar for his role in the show; and Marty Ross, the eldest (by how much is something of a mystery; Dino recalls that they finally gave up trying to figure it out), approximating the more mature influence of Nesmith, and who was the lead vocalist on virtually all of the tunes not featuring Larry.

As Jared Chandler recalls:

"What happened was we actually turned out to have, like, kind of a neat little group of people. Marty and Larry are just wonderful songwriters, and Dino's a really good drummer; and I'd always written really bad poetry. So we recorded a lot of really cool stuff at SIR on Santa Monica. We had this recording studio for couple of months, with a basketball court, and we used to just go there and make music. Depends on your definition of music... According to Warner Bros., the stuff we were doing on our own was really dark and just a little too hardcore. So we ended up getting one of our songs on the album, which was 'Corner of My Eye,' and that was actually a mutation of a song that Larry and I had written. That

song was originally a song called 'I'll Take You Away.' It became 'Corner of My Eye.' We ended up changing it. But we did a lot of songs. Quite a few; somewhere in the 20s. Then we ended up just doing songs that Warner Bros. Records already owned the rights to, like out of their catalogue. We did our own arrangements of them, but it was never close to what we wanted to do musically. We did the best we could with what we were given.

"'Affection' is a song that Marty wrote with a buddy. That actually was a song that The Wigs (Marty's band) had done. So there's *two* originals on there. One by Larry and one by Marty." (For more on how 'Affection' became a New Monkees song, see the interview with Marty Ross that follows this article)

One description of the original group is that it consisted of essentially two actors and two musicians. In that respect, there was an echo of the past in the new quartet. Chandler, who had previously appeared in the feature *In the Mood* (a brief role as a Western Union messenger), was auditioned in part as a result of his involvement in an improv class, the teacher of which, Bill Hudnut, was hired to direct the *New Monkees* screen tests. Hudnut then put the cast through an intensive period of training similar to what James Frawley had done with the original group. Dino Kovas and eventual *New Monkees* supporting player Steve (nicknamed "Stiv") Hrnjak had hosted their own public access show on cable TV in Detroit, a la *Wayne's World* (though preceding the SNL sketch), called *Back Porch Video*. In *NEW MONKEE MAIL*, Hrnjak actually filled in for Dino, who was out for a week and a half with pneumonia, even taking over the drumming duties on the video for "I Don't Know," in which Hrnjak's identity is concealed by an oversized



"You mean you're actually gonna call us that?"

fish head. (This same episode features the Del Rubio Triplets, who have since become something of a cult act) Even Marty had appeared on camera with his band, The Wigs, in the film *My Chauffeur*, for which they wrote and performed several songs.

According to Jared, the boys clicked pretty well from the start:

"Dino and I were big rockabilly fans, which basically our hair denoted, so we hit it off right away. Larry was kind of naive, and pretty much by the time we were done he still was, but he was a year younger than us and probably a hemisphere less experienced than most of us as far as life goes. But we all really hit it off. And Marty, he was just a crack-up, basically. He's just a wild dude. He'd been playing in bands in L.A. for about ten years. In press accounts, we always said he was 27 or something. He was like 30."

Too young to have been in the original wave of Monkee fans, Dino Kovas nevertheless appreciated them in his own way:

"Me and a group of friends, we used to pretend we were The Monkees. We used to go to his house after school and throw on

The Monkees' *Headquarters* and pretend we were playing. I was Davy Jones at the time, strictly because I was shorter and not... I definitely wasn't the cutest one."

In order to capture concert scenes for some of the music videos that would be used on the show, Los Angeles radio station KROQ (home to original Monkees booster DJ Rodney Bingenheimer) announced the video shoot, held at the Beverly Theater in Beverly Hills, and enticed listeners to attend and be in the video. Several hundred people showed up.

The original Monkees were not too keen on the idea of a *New Monkees* series, though it's unlikely

that they were significantly more "offended" by it than anyone else who simply felt that it was pointless. Actually, the objections weren't to the concept so much as to the name. Legal issues involving trademarks aside, it's one thing to do *The New Avengers* (even had they replaced Patrick Macnee), because in the end, John Steed is a fictional character, no matter how closely identified the actor is to the role. The Monkees, on the other hand, didn't consist of Michael Nesmith as "Dave" (or, thank God, "Wool Hat"), Peter Tork as "Rex," Davy Jones as "Skippy," and Micky Dolenz as "Jimmy," or any such thing; alter-egos in which other actors may later be cast. Dolenz,



Dino Wood, Jr. Frolics between takes of TEST TUBE TUBE.

Jones, Nesmith, and Tork brought their own personas to the characters they played, differences in off-screen personalities and lifestyles notwithstanding. Had Straybert utilized the same format and called it something like... oh, *The Heights*, for instance, there wouldn't have been the kind of resentment that occurred, even to the point of some Monkee fans urging a boycott of the new group/show. Even so, such reaction became a moot point given the fate of the new project.

The performers were hardly blind to the issue of the name:

"We always wanted to change our names," says Jared. "In fact, we

were actually under the impression that they were trumping us as The New Monkees, and it was, you know, from the people who brought you the original show, and then, when we were chosen, we were gonna change our name and become The Haircuts, which was, like, a name that was thrown around, and it never happened. And that was, I think, a little disappointing to us, 'cause we hated being the 'new' anything. We were our own selves. We called ourselves Los Monos Nuevos, which is The New Monkees in Spanish. People would say, 'Are you in a band?' and we'd say, 'Yeah, in Los Monos Nuevos.'

"We tried to do the best we could with it, but we were stigmatized to begin with. And then the original Monkees were, you know, they were out there saying negative things about us, which you really can't blame... Because here we were raining on their parade, you know, their reunion."

In a memorable encounter, Dino met Micky Dolenz, who was signing autographs at the Detroit Auto Show where the Monkeemobile was being displayed.

The meeting occurred in early 1987, between the time the pilot was filmed and the broadcast debut of the show. Also at this time, there was a legal struggle over the use of the Monkees name.

"That kind of depressed me. I had a friend who was a DJ who was going to announce Micky, and I said 'Hey, Mike, can you get me in, so I don't have to wait in line? So he got me up front, and I walked up, and I had my hair down. My incognito look... and I didn't think anybody would say anything. Granted, I think I was the only 20-year old male there, you know, waiting in line. I walked right up to him and I said 'Hi, how are you doing?' and he looked up at me and



The tough get going when HELEN GOES SHOPPING.

said 'Hi.' And I go 'My name's Dino. I'm one of the new guys,' and he looked at me and went 'Oh.' I said 'Can I speak with you?' And he goes 'Yeah. Step right down and...' Blah blah blah. So he takes me into this room and I'm in awe because here I am next to Micky Dolenz, you know. And this guy was some kind of hero of mine, right? I totally opened up to him and I said 'Look, man. I just want you to know, I'm not tryin' to replace you. *We're* not trying to replace you.' And he's like 'Yeah, yeah. I know, I know.' But it's like the whole concept... He said to me it's like putting ears on somebody and having a new (Mr.) Spock."

In preparation for the anticipated interest in the project, the producers arranged a mock press conference. The idea was to give the boys a dry run at facing a curious and potentially hostile media, and to gauge their ability to handle it. With series personnel posing as reporters, The New Monkees weren't aware that the press conference was a phoney, though they began to suspect

something was amiss when the standard questions eventually segued into some that were nothing short of bizarre. (A list of these questions accompanies this feature)

The series, sponsored by Coca-Cola (a New Monkees Coke commercial seen in theaters during the summer of '87 was later reworked with Whitney Houston), is set inside a huge mansion (portrayed on-camera by a model), probably inspired by the Beatles' residence in *Yellow Submarine*, that looks from the outside like an enormous "boom box" portable stereo. The interior is a cartoonish hodgepodge of shapes, colors, corridors leading who-knows-where, and rooms containing who-knows-what. Locations seen or referred to with some regularity are an alligator pit, a laboratory where Jared tinkers, and a 50s-style diner complete with a waitress named Rita; in addition to the living room, which is outfitted with a sofa that looks like it's made of bricks and a coffee table that doubles as a fish tank. There is also a butler named Manford (played

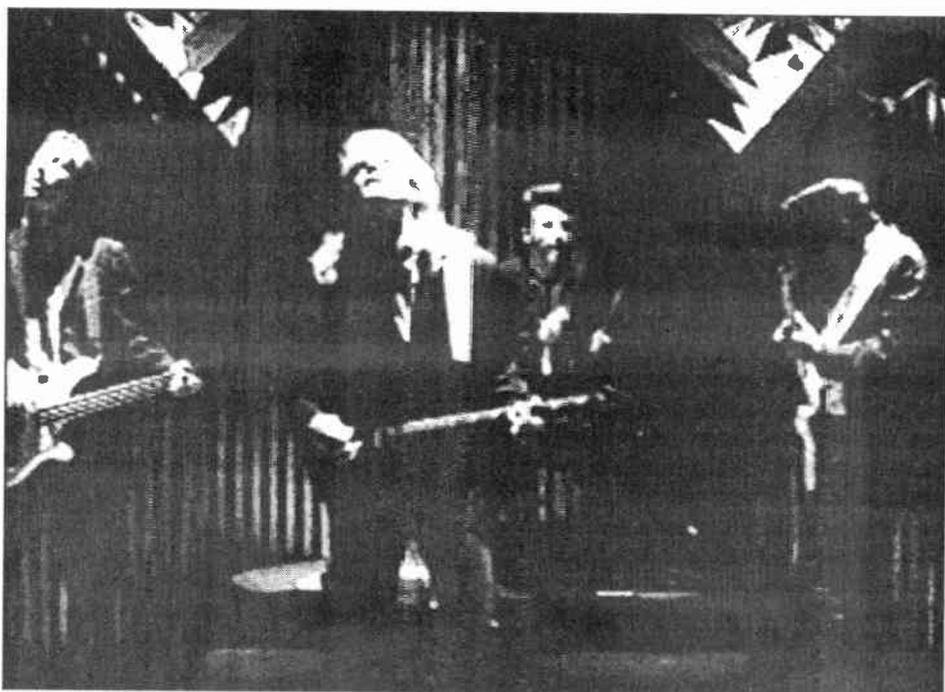
by non-Brit Gordon Oas-Heim doing a stilted approximation of a Cockney dialect) and a computer named Helen who is manifested on video terminals as an upside down set of lips (a la the opening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*).

Despite the variety of story opportunities that the mansion would seem to have been intended to present, the effect is actually claustrophobic. The series is pretty much beyond salvation by the time they finally begin to venture outside the mansion (LARRY LEAVES). Not that there can be any excuse for the pitiful quality of the writing, but the marginal superiority of LARRY LEAVES and MEET THE POPE, where the boys interact more with the "real" world, demonstrates that such storylines offer *some* unavoidable opportunities for passable humor. Unfortunately, the formula of the series was essentially one of bringing a few zany characters into the world of The New Monkees, which merely adds to the chaos. It wasn't long before the writers pretty much threw in the towel and tried

to turn the show into less of a sitcom and more *Saturday Night Live* (one of the really bad *SNL*'s, that is), with vignettes such as "Dino's Kitchen," wherein Dino offers tips on food preparation using body parts as utensils, which comes off like a skit from the last night of summer camp; or "Portholes of Progress," wherein the boys stick their heads into holes in a wall and try to make funny comments about the cheesy video effects that appear around their noggins (anybody remember *You're in the Picture?*). According to Marty, the discomfort induced by "Portholes of Progress" nearly drove the guys to quit the series.

One supplementary feature, a series of commercial parodies by Walter Williams, works reasonably well. These include "Musical Chairs Restaurant," where one's dinner date can vanish with the ringing of a bell; "Trendy's," a drive-through clothing store; and "The Fast Food Driving School," where drivers are versed in the art of balancing various food and beverage items while commuting. While none of these are hilarious, it's easy to see them holding their own alongside similar parodies appearing on *SNL*.

There were fewer than a handful of guest performers of note on the show. Russell Johnson, of *Gilligan's Island* fame, appears as The Professor to help the NMs out of a bind in ALL



"Carlene"

MY MARTYS, one of the best episodes in the series, minimal praise though it be. Veteran comic actor Billy Beck appears briefly in the same episode, as well as in TEST TUBE TUBE. His appearances give him the dubious distinction of being the only actor to appear in both the original *Monkees* (THE DEVIL AND PETER TORK) and *The New Monkees*. Boxer Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini appears in MEET THE POPE as a street huckster. (There is an almost subliminal reference in this

scene; in a close shot of Marty, across the street behind him is a storefront sign reading "WIGS")

In spite of their mishandling, The New Monkees nevertheless attracted their share of fans, primarily young girls who, like the fans of the originals, were more motivated by their physical attraction to the stars than by any critical appreciation of the show itself. Whereas Davy Jones once had a girl mail herself to him in a box, Chandler recalls an instance when "Larry had two twins show up at his front door."

As for Jared himself, "I got a fan letter from an old girlfriend that I had lost touch with. That was really bizarre. It was kind of a 'fatal attraction' letter. It was a little scary."

Dino recalls an incident at the NATPE (National Association of Television Producers and Executives) convention in New Orleans where the show was being offered:

"Nobody had seen anything yet, except we had done this pilot. And all these girls and young people were kind of wanting autographs from us. And me and Marty said 'This is wacky. We haven't done anything and all these people are just...' I remember this girl comes up and she goes 'Can I have you guys' autograph?' And Marty goes 'Do you know who we are?' And she's like, 'Uh...' He goes 'Do you know our



Russell Johnson takes a career break in ALL MY MARTYS.

names? Do you know what we've done?' I'll never forget that little incident."

The tragedy of it all is that, despite the fact that *The New Monkees* had "bad idea" written all over it (in big, bold neon letters), the performers are actually quite likeable, and the viewer has to be embarrassed for them. Marty in particular displays a gift for comedy, most notably in *ALL MY MARTYS*, in which he is more-or-less showcased.

What salvages the show, if such a thing is possible, is that The New Monkees, the band, are as good as *The New Monkees*, the show, is bad (actually, nobody's *that* good). The band's sound falls somewhere between the Michael Stanley Band, a working class rock & roll group from the midwest with something of a cult following, and the 60s sound of Paul Revere & The Raiders (as opposed to the original Monkees). *The New Monkees* album, released by Warner Records, is heads above the largely over-produced and generally uninspired collection of songs put out by the reunited Monkees (minus Nesmith) on their reunion album *Pool It* which was released the same year. The New Monkees music videos are well done and imaginative, featuring a blend of live performance (though studio tracks are dubbed over them) and conceptual pieces featuring stock footage and generally clever visuals and effects. Some of the videos incorporate action derived from the plots (if they may be called such), but in any case they are always a welcome respite from what passes for

the script. Promotional appearances such as the aforementioned Coke commercial and a performance on *Solid Gold* (on the bill with The Jets, Miami Sound Machine, and Sherman Hemsley) failed to generate enough support to overcome all that weighed against them. Had The New Monkees been given another name, then first promoted musically, it is almost certain that they would have been successful enough for a quality show to have been crafted around them without the perceived necessity of

daughter, Chelsea. Despite the fleeting existence of The New Monkees as an entity, Marty retains the sobering memory of a fan letter he received from a girl in Philadelphia who had been literally on the verge of suicide when she heard "Affection," the meatiest of The New Monkees' songs in terms of lyrical content. The song prompted her to call a suicide-prevention hotline and get help. She wrote to Marty to thank him.

After a couple of minor film roles (*Feds*, *Teen Witch*), Jared followed in

his father's footsteps and joined the Army.

Ironically, this led to even greater exposure as an actor, as he obtained work as military advisor on feature films, including the Danny Glover-Willem Dafoe vehicle, *Flight of the Intruder*, which featured Jared in the substantial supporting role of "Razor," the ne'er-do-well young pilot whose most memorable scene involves him vomiting into a cab ("You got room in here for a six pack and a pizza?"). Subsequent jobs/roles have included *Forever Young*, the insertion team radio man in *Clear and Present Danger* (re-uniting him with Dafoe),

and the upcoming Disney feature, *Dumbo Drop*.

"It was a hard mold to break. I was at airborne school, which is where you learn to become a paratrooper. It's basically three weeks of abuse, physical and mental. I'm standing in ranks, and this soldier next to me, this is about three days into the course, looks at me and goes, 'Did you used to be one of The New Monkees?' And I went (rolls his eyes) 'Ohhhh, yeah, yeah. And he



The album.

encumbering them with the baggage of the Monkees name.

Following the cancellation of the series, the guys began to drift apart and return to their own separate interests. After a brief return to The Wigs, Marty began to concentrate more on recording, producing demos for alternative acts, and writing. He has also scored a number of television projects, and become a family man. He and his wife, Doreen (an executive with BMI), have a young



remembered me because his brother's name was Jared, and I was the only other Jared he'd ever heard of, and then he saw me in *Surfing* magazine. So I was planted in this kid's head, but unfortunately by, like, the end of the week the entire company of 500 soldiers knew that I was one of The New Monkees. Then they found out I was in some movies and rented them at the base video store, and I started doing a lot of pushups for that. They started calling me 'Hollywood.'"

Lately, Jared, now in the Army Reserve, has also been developing his skills as a writer, for which he cites writer/director John Milius (*Apocalypse Now*, *Conan the Barbarian*, *Flight of the Intruder*) as having given him a great deal of help and advice.

Following *The New Monkees*, Dino had a few roles on shows such as *In Living Color* and *The Unnaturals*, a short-lived series on the almost-as-short-lived cable comedy network Ha!, which was ultimately absorbed into what is now Comedy

Central. Dino recalls appearing with, and in one sketch punching, comic Denis Leary in an episode of *The Unnaturals*. More recently, Dino's time has been split between working at Chicago's Hard Rock Cafe, doing another cable TV show, *Polarity Video*, and attending the prestigious Columbia film school in Chicago. Eventually, he plans to return to Los Angeles to pursue his film career, with emphasis on production rather than acting.

"Two really good things... happened," Dino muses, regarding his experience as New Monkee. "I gained a lot of experience in a field that I'm really pursuing only now. Number two is Blauner. He's kinda like my father now."

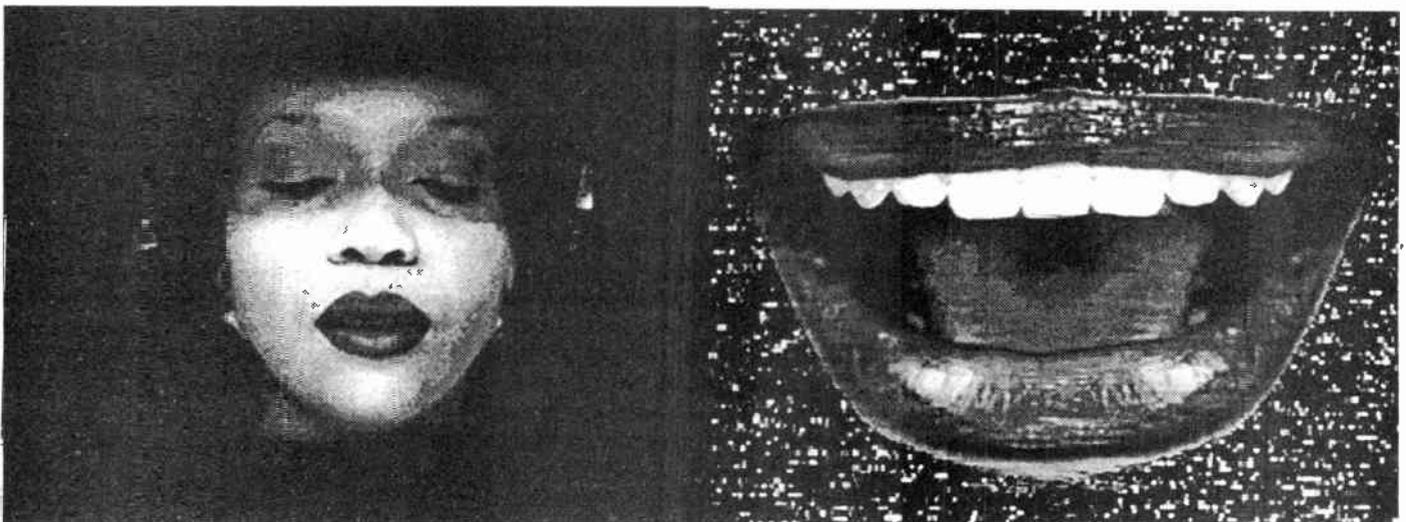
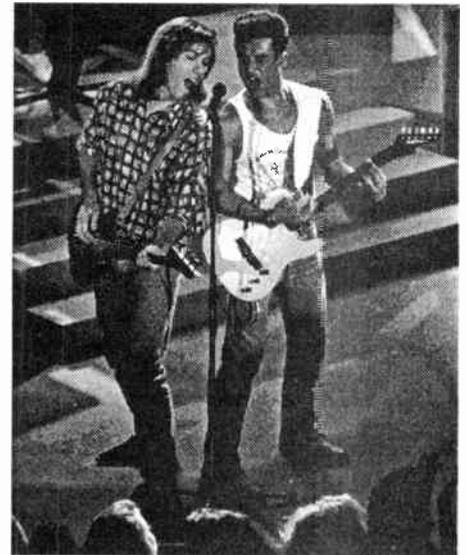
Larry collaborated with Marty for a brief time writing songs, before eventually returning to the Midwest, where he presumably continues his music career. Unfortunately, TVC was unable to contact him in time for input into this article.

Undoubtedly the most prominent of the *New Monkees* veterans is "co-developer" and occasional writer Victor Fresco, who has gone on to have major successes with the hit NBC comedies *ALF* and *Mad About You*. One can only marvel at the gulf that separates the these shows from *The New Monkees*. It's easy to imagine a scenario wherein assignments are being doled out and some executive says, "This guy Fresco, what's he done? *The New Monkees*? Give him the show with the puppet." But of course, that's how careers are made.

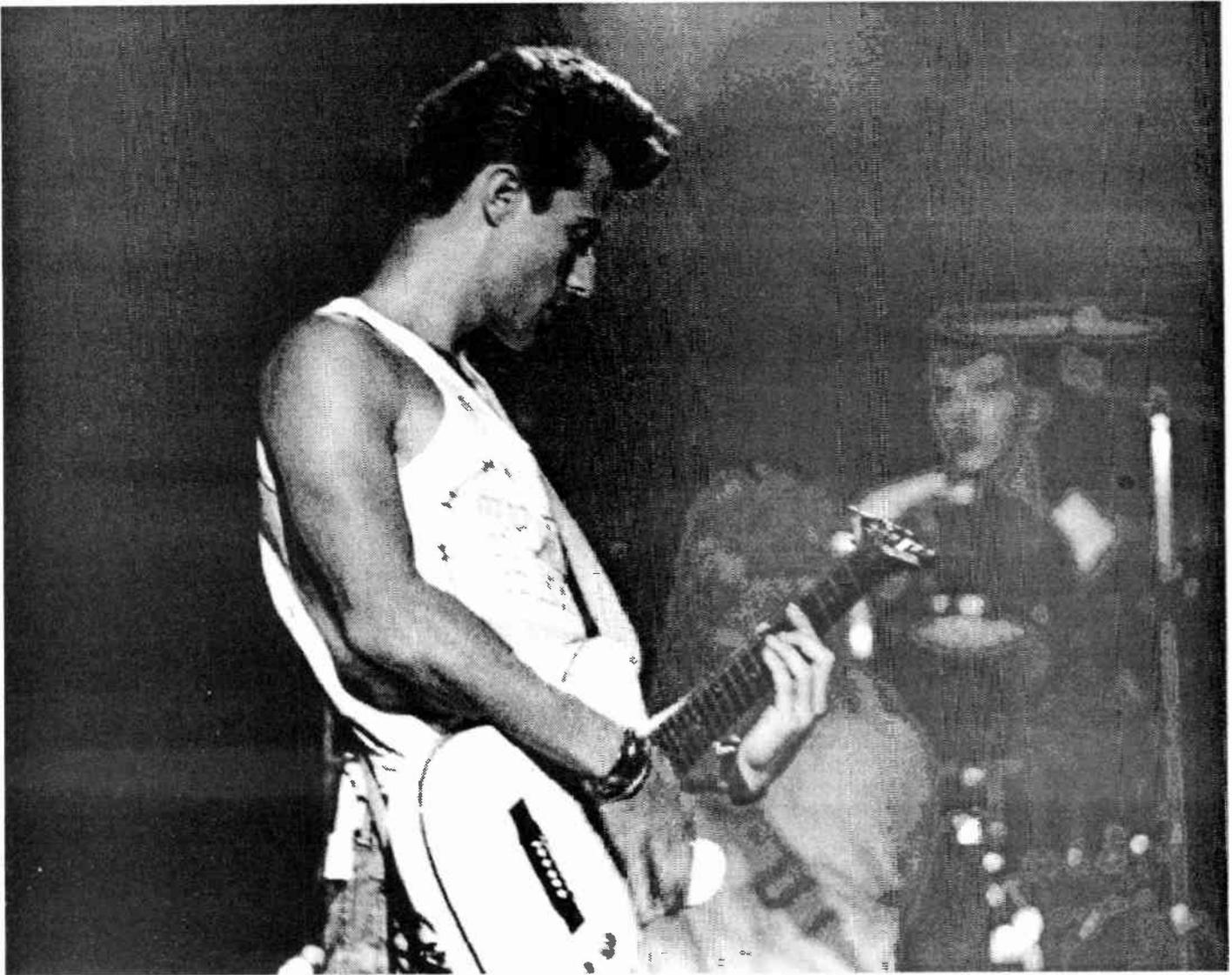
It's not uncommon for revived television shows to fail. Yet few, if any, had failure so indelibly written on them as *The New Monkees*. In that regard, they overachieved.

A final thought from Jared Chandler:

"I was quoted in *Us* magazine, and I kept this because this kind of summed up the experience for me: 'If you were 19 years old, moved to Hollywood, and somebody offered you a record deal and a TV show, would you turn it down?'"



Lynnne Godfrey during and after her transformation into Helen.



Theme song: "Turn It Up" by Joe Curiale

PILOT (unaired)

The search for those who would be New Monkees is conducted, culminating in the selection and video transformation of Larry, Marty, Dino, and Jared

Guest cast and credits unavailable

Song: "One of the Boys"

WEATHER THE STORM

The boys are introduced via screen test excerpts; Helen and Manfred set up the series premise; and a small storm cloud attaches itself to Dino while the boys are searching the mansion to find the recording studio

Jodi Russell

Written by Victor Fresco; Directed by E. Von Kelso

Songs: "I Don't Know," "What I Want"

ALL MY MARTYS

A massive power surge causes a photocopier to duplicate Marty Russell Johnson, Billy Beck, Stevie Starling

Written by R.B. Armstrong, J.S. Bate; Directed by Bob Radler

Songs: "A Clone of My Own," "What I Want"

TEST TUBE TUBE

After getting a whiff of an unknown chemical, Dino undergoes a personality change into a "TV mom"

Billy Beck, Charlie Brill

Written by Rob Fresco; Directed by E. Van Kelso

Songs: "Turn It Up," "What I Want"

Vignettes: "Fabletown," "Dreamtime"

MINSTER BOB

A pair of Sumo wrestlers with musical aspirations move in next door, and Larry's uncle shows up, having gone from muffler repairman to televangelist

Glen Chin, Wayne Morton, Mindy Sterling, Professor Toro Tanaka

Written by Rob Fresco; Directed by Bob Radler

Songs: "Burning Desire," "Corner of My Eye," "Whatever It Takes"

A RUFF DAY

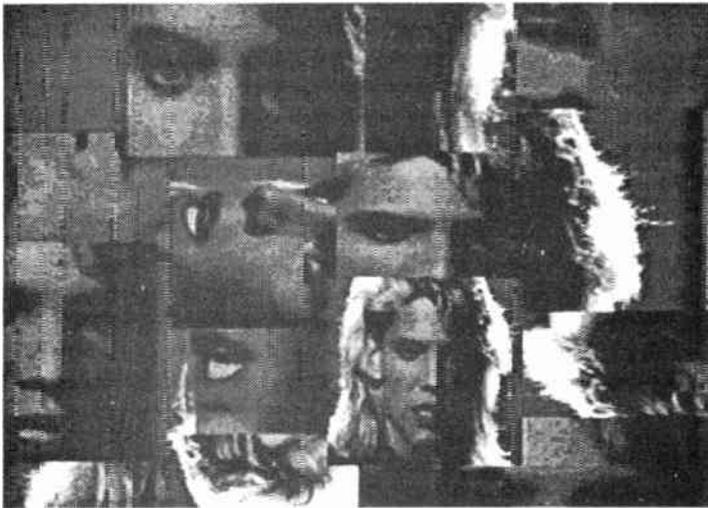
Jared accidentally transfers his mind into the body of his new dog

Carrie Abelson

Written by R.B. Armstrong, J.S. Bate, Rob Fresco

Songs: "What I Want," "Affection," "Boy Inside the Man"

Vignette: "Dino's Kitchen"



"Do It Again"

DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL

Dino and Larry are transported into an evil parallel universe
 Starr Andreoff, Helen Siff
 Written by Julianne Norman, Victor Fresco, Steven M. Martin
 Songs: "The Way She Moves," "Carlene," "Turn It Up"
 Vignette: "Portholes of Progress"

NEW MONKEE MAIL

The boys answer "fan mail"
 Steve Hrnjak, The Del Rubio Triplets
 Songs: "I Don't Know," "Corner of My Eye" (performance)
 Vignettes: "Dino's Kitchen," "Portholes of Progress," "Fabletown,"
 "The New Words With Stiv Hrnjak Show"

LARRY LEAVES

Larry walks out on the show in search of a girlfriend from the "real world"
 Felice Schacter, Jim Piper, Tony Simotes, Jack Roth, Marisa DeSimone
 Written by Victor Fresco, Paul Tassie, Walter Williams; Directed by Victor Fresco
 Songs: "Burning Desire," "What I Want"
 Vignettes: "Fast Food Driving School," "Fabletown"

THE KING OF SPACE AND TIME

Ignoring personalized warnings for him to stay out, Jared enters a mysterious room in the mansion and finds himself in a video world where he controls reality with a click of the remote
 Steve Hrnjak, Courtney Gebhart, Jack Roth
 Written by Rob Fresco, Louis E. Angelo, Paul Tassie, Steven M. Martin, Charles Jevremovic, Lisa Monroe; Directed by Victor Fresco
 Songs: "Corner of My Eye," "Do It Again," "Looking for My Western Girl," "Affection"
 Vignettes: "Portholes of Progress," "The New Words With Stiv Hrnjak Show," "Dreamtime," "Fabletown"
 Incorporates footage from *It Came From Beneath the Sea*

MEET THE POPE

After a visit from the Pope, the boys realize that he has left behind his electric guitar, and they try to return it to him
 Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini, Billy Braver, Marty Parker, John Lyons, Mark Lasky, Phil Proctor (voice), Martha Crawford (voice)
 Written by Rob and Victor Fresco, Walter Williams; Directed by Bob Radler
 Songs: "Whatever It Takes," "The Way She Moves"
 Vignettes: "Dino's Kitchen," "Musical Chairs Restaurant"

HELEN GOES SHOPPING

Helen becomes a home shopping channel shopaholic and uses the boys' credit cards to feed her obsession
 Cal Gibson, Kelly Brock, Chuck Kovacic
 Written by Bob DeMaio, Rob Fresco, Paul Tassie; Directed by George Bloom
 Songs: "Do It Again," "Affection" (acoustic version)
 Vignette: "Fabletown"

THE GAME OF GAMES

The New Monkees compete on a game show with unusually high stakes, where they lose everything
 Wayne Morton, Chuck Kovack, Cathleen Masters, Steve Hrnjak
 Written by Matthew Fassberg, Walter Williams, Charles Jevremovic, Lisa Monroe; Directed by Rocky Schenck
 Songs: "Burning Desire," "Carlene," "What I Want"
 Vignettes: "Trendy's," "Dreamtime"

MY THREE SONS

When the show's soundtrack is lost, a substitute Spanish soundtrack is used (with English subtitles) that makes Jared and Helen the parents of the other three boys
 Guest cast and credits unavailable





A New Monkees rehearsal. Note Marty's T-shirt, which he had custom-made, with Dino's head plastered over Micky Dolenz's on a Monkees anniversary tour design.

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INTERVIEW: MARTY ROSS

Editor's Note:

It's really funny how these things can happen. Of the four New Monkees, the only one I was able to get a line on through SAG membership was Jared Chandler, who had lost touch with the other three. I exhausted every lead I had, but none panned out. I resigned myself to only having input from one of the four for the article. Then, in late May, I got a call from Jared, informing me that he'd just happened to have run into Marty the day before, and he gave me Marty's number. Marty, as it happened, had Dino's number, and Dino, oddly enough, had been in touch with Larry, though I was unable to make contact with Mr. Saltis prior to going to press.

But about Marty; from our first contact, Marty was convinced that my interest in the show was proof that I was "not a well man." Nevertheless, he agreed to meet with me, and we spent a rollicking (overstated perhaps, but it's not a word I often get to use in casual conversation) two hours or so going over the New Monkees pheno (it didn't last long enough to become a full-fledged phenomenon). The interview was actually a multi-media presentation, featuring clips from the show and footage of Marty's band, The Wigs (W-I-G-S), followed by some Beatles videos to cleanse the palate. Virtually from the time I entered Marty's front door, we were discussing the show, so unfortunately not all was captured on tape. This largely accounts for the one or two places which lack a smooth transition.

Marty Ross: not just an interview, an adventure...

(On the acoustic version of "Affection":)

MR: I think I remember I walked into the office one day, and I said "I'd like to do 'Affection' acoustically. I think the ratings were really sucking on the show. It kinda looked like the writing was on the wall.

TVC: *As opposed to in the script...*

MR: As opposed to putting money in the script. We wouldn't dare want to put any more money in the script. Wanna make sure we're gonna do 13 and go out. Don't want to get any more money. We couldn't possibly conceive that this could actually... be successful. We've done everything we possibly can. We're paying only \$2,000 per script. Let's see... We've called it *The New Monkees*... Uhm... Well, it was such a good album. We almost screwed up there... So, I said what I wanted to do was to do a video of it on acoustic guitar; something like a big warehouse or airplane hangar. And the next I knew, "We got a great idea. We're gonna do an acoustic version of 'Affection' and we're gonna put you in an airplane hangar or old warehouse, and we'll have the shot come up to you." See, it's kind of one of those risky things to say, because you don't want to come off sounding like it was all your idea. I think in *that* particular instance, with that video, which I was very proud of...

TVC: *I liked it a lot.*

MR: The video shot's really cool. It's just a static camera shot that just came and rolled on a dolly right to my face.* I liked that. There were some good memories about the show. I still have a lot of like... these weird ideas about people that I'd meet sometimes and ask me "Which one were you?"

TVC: *Tell 'em Zeppo.*

MR: Yeah, well the original Monkees, now... the guys, which are now just like "The Monkees." I'm one of about the only three or four guys that call them the original and The New Monkees. It's just "The Monkees." And I think that's good, because you



"Affection" unplugged.

see they have that, and like "Which one are you?" and "Which one do you play?" are not questions that I need to put up with any more, 'cause nobody's gonna be asking when, if they do this Rhino thing with the new movie, "Which one of you are you playing?" They won't be referring to me. And so I like that. I like the fact that nobody's going to be playing "Marty."

TVC: *What significance did the original Monkees play in your life, if any?*

MR: I remember "Last Train to Clarksville"; the excitement of that. I was just a kid, but it seemed like there was this excitement, that there was this buzz going on about this show that was going to be coming on TV and this band already had a number 1 hit, and nobody'd ever seen them. That was a big deal.

TVC: *At the risk of blowing your carefully cultivated mystique, how old are you?*

MR: I'm 37. But at the time, when I walked into my audition... I had a manager who said "Tell 'em you're twenty... five. Twenty-four!" He said this to me, and I was walking in here at the New Monkees audition on the Columbia lot, which I really thought "this has got to be a joke." I don't know why my manager, who's supposed to be managing this band I'm in, is taking me over to this lot to do this. I'd done a movie called *My Chauffeur*. And it had Deborah Foreman and Sam Jones, E.G. Marshall; it was about a female limousine driver. I sang a song in it. Nine songs in the film by our band, The Wigs. (leans toward the tape recorder and speaks directly to it) W-I-G-S. And they liked it, so they asked me to come over there and audition for it, myself and the drummer. Bobby Tews. T-E-W-S.

TVC: *Thanks, I would have come back for that later.*

MR: Yeah, I know. It's been awhile, but I can still take a panel discussion. So I walked in there and I saw the original-- on the trailer, on the side of the trailer, I saw the original Monkees logo and written in marker on top of it "New." And I thought "Oh, boy." This is just what I need to be doing right in the middle of-- I'm signing a contract over at Epic Records, and it's really weird because I'm doing this New Monkees thing, this audition. For what reason, I do not know.

TVC: *Had you heard about the fact that this was happening?*

MR: Yeah. Oh, sure. Everybody knew it was happening. It was a big deal. And now, they were, like, calling in people, 'cause they had just done a cattle call in New York. Five thousand screaming people or whatever. It was a big deal. And MTV was really plugging it. It was "a chance to become a real Monkee," and then doing that thing, and that kind of started to backfire... 'cause they thought it was a joke, "They're not gonna really make a show, are they?" So, here I was, I walk in there and I was kind of just... really angry, and I didn't really want to do this, 'cause I was doing something else. And I just heard this guy that was before me, literally behind the wall, going-- about this long... (sings, in an a nasal voice) "Cheer up, sleeteeepy Jeeean, oh--" And the door opened. He walked down the steps. (in a Michael Palin voice) "Thank you! Next!" And I walked in there, and I saw this lady, and she was looking very angry at me, and just... As casting people do; it's the only power they have. It's yes or no. The first question was "How much did you like The Monkees?" And I said all's I remember is the girls going crazy for 'em. And I was kind of a Beatles fan, and I was

kind of offended slightly by them. I kind of felt... I didn't like them that much. I liked their music and stuff. I didn't watch the show all that much. I liked *Batman* better. Then they asked me for my age, and I told them-- I thought I said 26 or 27 or 25 or 24 or something. I think I said four years' difference. My manager said-- it's the last thing he said. There was a note written on my hand with a number. I think it said 25... or 26, something like that. I think it was four years' difference than what I really was. They kept on taking the auditions, getting down to 50, down to 30, down to 15, down to-- I had a particularly interesting story, because they cast Jared and Dino and Larry first. And then there was myself and another guy who, out of the 80 guys that they picked out of the 6,000 that had auditioned, I had befriended. (laughs controllably) And so, all of a sudden this guy and myself are, like, now friends and now its down to this. "Boy, this is fun, eh? Still get to see ya." Then we're down to 16. We go back to this thing. "Hey, it's nice to see ya." Then we're down to 7 or 8 guys, and it's like, you know, we're starting to get a little... a little weird around the collar. Matt Fassberg called me up and said "Well, you're not a Monkee, but you're not *not* a Monkee." I said "What the hell does that mean?"

TVC: *You were a pseudo-Monkee.*

MR: I think at that point, they didn't really expect it to get going like it did. It had such a big interest. And we were getting fan mail "To Whoever is The New Monkees."

TVC: *What was the gist of the fan mail?*

MR: "Who are you?"

TVC: *I would think that most of the incentive to write would be on the part of those who would want you to just die for having profaned the memory of the group.*

MR: Sure. Before the show came out, we had so much hate mail, it was incredible. I think they kept a lot of it away from us, but we were barraged with it. (As for actual fan mail:) I mean, we're talking about... Oh, I don't know. A thousand pieces. Let's see, Larry was getting about a thousand pieces a week. I was getting about 550, 500 a week. (Marty emphasizes that these figures should be considered accurate only in terms of the Larry-to-other-guys ratio) I think everybody else was getting about 500 a week, and Larry was getting twice as many; as it was supposed to be, as he was projected as being...

TVC: *Well, he played Davy.*

MR: (laughs) There it is. He is Davy. (laughs louder) That's right. And I'm Mike Nesmith.

TVC: *I don't guess they ever tried to call you, I don't know, like "Baseball Cap" or anything, did they? (Marty is wearing one)*

MR: No. (more laughs)

TVC: *Or "Kilt?" (in the show's opening credits and several promotional photos, Marty is seen wearing one) Where did that come from, by the way?*

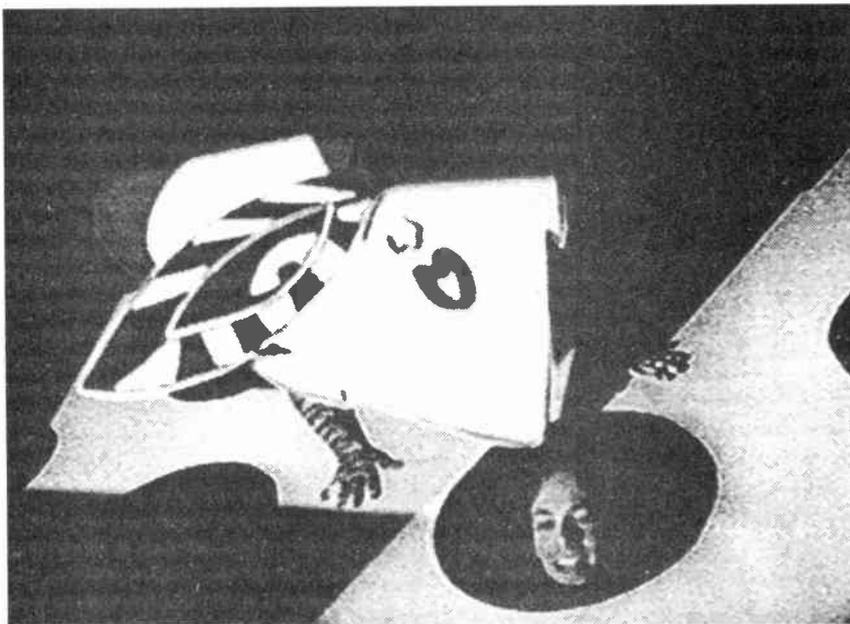
MR: The kilt?

TVC: *Yeah.*

MR: (thinking back) I... I swear it was a drinking party.

TVC: *Did it originate from you or from some Wardrobe person?*

MR: Somebody asked me... "What styles of things do you like--" I mean, imagine being barraged with questions every day about what you like to do. You know. Lately, peace and quiet's been really fun, because it's so rare. I think one of the times I said... I had some Scottish blood in my family, and I'd always wanted to try a kilt. And so they tried me on in the kilt and it just went nuts from there. I was always in a kilt. But then I started-- I liked wearing it, because you know what? It was actually the nicest article of clothing that I had. I mean, it cost them a mint to go and have it custom made. And then they were making custom ones on the set. And they were just great. And I'd go out and wear them. I



"Burning Desire"

was way ahead of Lollapalooza, Guns & Roses, all those guys. Hey, I was right there way ahead of them. But I guess the Scots were way ahead of me.

TVC: *Tell me about the improv work you did in preparation for the show.*

MR: Six months with Bill Hudnut.

TVC: *Jared was in his class.*

MR: He did an improv class, but we spent every day behind the Melrose Theatre, which is right down there by the Citroen fix-it place; there's a theatre called the Melrose Theatre just off of Melrose, right near Cahuenga. And everyday, for... God, it seemed an eternity, we'd go there and we'd work on improv. At first we were at the ABC Theatre, and then he went private with us. We had classes. It was... God, I forgot about that, how intensive it was. Seemed to me we had to be there pretty much all day. It just seemed like an eternity to do improv classes. We were there for a long time. They wanted to whip us up into being a good working unit, which we weren't by the time the show started, but we *were* by the time the show ended. If they had started the show at the time the show ended and let us loose with *any* material, we were funny. We were getting pretty hilarious. We were having a lot of fun. They just started going "That's too funny, cut!" "We'll have not any laughter on the set!"

TVC: *You had mentioned before how they didn't really let you do any improv; they always wanted you to stick to the script. As abominable as the scripts were, they wanted you to stick to them. And there's a moment in, I think it's MINISTER BOB, it's the one with the Sumo wrestlers (Marty begins to laugh, I hope for the right reason). There's that moment where you have that line, and I thought "It was either give this delivery or cringe as he said it," but where you look at the camera and go "I hope they don't make ka-ka." Was that look... behind it you're pleading...*

MR: Yeah, that's exactly what it was.

TVC: *"Weep for me."*

MR: I'm glad that that came out, because I was just... "Get damage control in here. We have Defcon 4. We have no humor here. We have run out of humor."

TVC: *Did you get any sense that you were expected to be some sort of... mentor, mature influence on the others?*

MR: I never thought of it that way. I mean, the guys were young and all that, but I was a musician, so I didn't know I was supposed to be grown up. And not only that, I actually... At a certain point, I was supposed to be kind of like that. I had been playing in bands, and Dino had been playing in a band, and Larry had his brother and him in a band, and Jared hadn't played in a band. We were also expected to just suddenly get together and play, which we made a tape, and... The four-track we recorded that was really us, that was just us in a gymnasium playing. They wanted to have something within two weeks, and the head of A&R is coming from Warner Bros. and I'm thinking to myself "Aaaagh! We aren't a real band. We're not really going to be like a real band," because, contrary to the wrongness of record companies sometimes, you just can't throw people together and have magic happen. Most of the great hybrid bands are guys that ended up schooling together and being in bands and playing clubs and going through the trials and tribulations in going up the ladder... You can't just jump the step. I think Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band are one of the very few cases where they did one club tour and it's been stadiums ever since. Just basically going straight, right to the big time. And I think most other bands-- You know the Beatles spent years in dives in Germany. Most bands like, most popular bands now, you know... Pearl Jam and all these guys; they've been together for six, seven years. And here I am. Got two weeks. We had two weeks to get a band together that's going to sound like a million-selling album. So, actually when they came back, I think the comments were that there was too much of me in the

mix. There was a reason for that. I was a more accomplished player than anybody else, which I don't think anybody else would have said that that wasn't true. It wasn't "the band sound," though. Now all of a sudden the music was completely forgotten and also other peoples' music started coming in. People at Warner Bros. were sending us tapes everyday, by messenger, of songs to see if we liked them, if we could sing them, if we could do them, and also putting us in touch with writers so that we could co-write and put some music on the record. They're working very diligently at doing that, and they do it very well. It takes no stretch of the imagination to say that Warner Bros. would have to be the finest record company. Other departments, I'm not sure about, I don't know them. But I know that the record company's a great organization. I loved the people there. I liked them, but they're a rather big company.

TVC: *Aren't they.*

MR: Yes, it's a rather big company, so I thought it was rather strange when I was continuing receiving tapes, I'd get a call from the record company saying my A&R representative's there, nameless... Did I get the tape, and have I listened to it? Says "what do you think of it?" I said "Well, I haven't listened to it yet." "Well, listen to it, because we like the songs. But we don't know what we're gonna be doing with the artist." I said "Well, what's the story?" "Well, it's just like there's this artist that we don't know what to do with. We like the songs, but you know... These came across the table and I just love this stuff." "Okay." (The tape in question was one Marty had submitted two years or so earlier) It was just a couple of songs that a friend of mine had written that I had done in a band that I was in, The Wigs. W-I-G-S. His name was Ken Brown and he wrote "Affection," which ended up being on the (New) Monkees record. So I said "Of course I'd love to do this song. That's *me* singing on it." It didn't even occur to them that they were sending me stuff that I was on. And I thought "That's a big record company." They didn't know about the band, though. They asked me could we make it sound like that. I said "Why don't you sign the damn band?" In any case-- How old did I say I was?

TVC: *At which point?*

MR: I'm not sure. I think I'm 34 now. (laughs) I like that. Like four years difference from wherever, so I'm somewhere in the middle, 35, 36.

TVC: *What was your opinion of the musical talent of the other guys?*

MR: Well, Larry was 19, or 18, and Jared's 19-- I mean they're all 18, 19, 20, 21 years old. And I'm twenty... 24. Insert number. So I could not be a fair judge of them, because I'd just gotten out of a band that was incredibly, really really right at the top of its form, and I left them for this. And I'm looking at the band and I'm going "Wow. This band was really good." I loved it. And then I'm sitting there a month later, sitting there with guys who'd never really played with a band for that much period of time. A couple of years, maybe. But we didn't have the kind of experience that, like, when you could get together with guys and just start jamming... I mean, we did actually pretty well. The band sounded a lot better than I would have thought. Larry's a great guitar player, good singer. Jared was a good all-around musician, and Dino was the best Keith Moon drummer alive.

TVC: *In terms of his drumming or hotel bills?*

MR: (laughs) Well, that was a whole other subject, which made me sore too. You see, when they signed up Jared, Larry, and Dino, by reason that they had to start paying them SAG (Screen Actors Guild), since they were coming from more than 100 miles' distance or something like that, they had to pay them a per diem and a rental car and a place to live, whereas I was living--

TVC: *So, being local, you're screwed.*

MR: I was SCREWED! I was starving! Those guys. I'd go over to their house and they'd have, like, their per diem. They had rental cars and a place to stay. I remember the same year that we

went to the NATPE, the National Association of Television Producers and Executives, who decide what shows (are aired) and everybody does the big displays.

TVC: *Jared told me about that. It was in New Orleans.*

MR: Right. Yeah, and they were... (breaks off and laughs) Oh, I remember that. I think it was one of the people came over from the new *Star Trek* that was going to be coming on, *The Next Generation*. We walked over to their set and we thought it was-- Wow, it was so impressive, because Paramount had dumped so much money into it. And our set was kind of like a whole menagerie of different shows, you know; *Hollywood Squares* and all this stuff; I don't know, *Dick Cavett*... a bunch of different shows. And our show was playing on this jukebox. They made a laserdisc of the pilot show.

TVC: *This would be the unaired pilot.*

MR: Yes. It's the best show. It had to be in order to sell the show.

TVC: *Sort of raises the question of bait-and-switch.*

MR: That's right. Bait-and-switch. And so the guy that came up, the commander, not commander, but second-in-command...

TVC: *Jonathan Frakes?*

MR: Yes, that's him. Came over to our place and said "I'm with the *Star Trek* thing. But you know what I think? I think you guys are gonna do really well, and I think our show's gonna bomb." And we walked over there and we were, like, looking at it, going "Who in the hell would ever think of doing a *Star Trek*? You can't redo *Star Trek*."

TVC: *Seven years later...*

MR: Right. Didn't quite pan out for our tag team. I don't know if I even answered what you asked.

TVC: *I don't even know what I asked... To what degree, when you were actually doing the show, did you know that it was as awful as it was? Or did you?*

MR: I at first didn't know, until they started airing, because you see, the way that the show was looking to me was that I was out there acting and learning lines and doing parts and figuring how shows were... As much as I'd had as much experience about going in and doing the music part of it, I had little or none about doing a TV show. It just either felt like it was funny or not-- There was nobody laughing on the set, but then they're supposed to be quiet. When I saw the shows finally come on, I was kind of-- after the initial thrill of seeing myself on television, you know, I'm actually airing... it's so wild, it's like it's really not... it's really not too good.

TVC: *As I told Jared, it looked like it was probably a lot of fun to do, as opposed to being fun to watch.*

MR: Oh, God. How much more fun could you have? Suddenly they're paying you to be yourself and go out and have fun and be filmed and get recognized and be on television. I had a great time. The first night the show aired on channel 5 on Tuesdays at 7:30, locally; the next day, we all went to a place on Hollywood Boulevard, into a restaurant, sat down, and the first thing that happened, after we'd just got out of the car to walk in, "Hey, you guys are The New Monkees!" It was a couple of girls and I thought, "Already it's happened..." We thought that the show was going to be better than it was, because we had been involved in the creation of the show right from the beginning. Obviously, there had been a lot of people doing things for the show before it got to be where the cast formed, but at that point they didn't know who the hell the show was. But by the time the show got to be where it was, and we started it, to when we started filming, there was considerable time. We had spent a lot of time preparing, doing publicity, doing different kinds of promotions for the show, and never imagined that something that we'd worked so hard to do would come out so mediocre. So



it became kind of a disappointment because it's much, kind of like having a lot of people see you get fired from your job... but it's not your fault, because your job description wasn't really told to you when you accepted the position.

TVC: *Right. Did you ever try to take a little more control in terms of the scripts, maybe do some writing of your own material?*

MR: I was so busy that I couldn't-- Literally, I was too busy. I would get on the set at 6:00 in the morning, and I had to be there (for make-up, costumes) by 5:30. And most of my call times were at 6:00. Sometimes they were at 10:00, sometimes they weren't, but most of the time they were between 6:00 and 7:00, and we wouldn't get out of there most of the time until 5:00 or 6:00 in the afternoon. Mostly after that, I'd have to go and sing for the record, or we'd have to shoot a video for the album. If we were done with the vocal, then we'd do a video. Then we'd do several different kinds of videos. We did three or four videos per song. So writing was completely out of my department. I was a puppet on the end of a string. I just couldn't operate myself. I was just literally trying to catch up with being there. The stress really showed up on all of us, though. I had an intestinal attack on the set during the filming of a video... "Carlene," the video with-- We had an African-American woman dancing, and it was a black and white video; very weird video. But during the filming of that, I was out for, like, an hour and a half. I could not stand up.

TVC: *I know Dino was out for awhile with pneumonia.*

MR: Pneumonia. And it was all just the stress. (Jared recalls that when the four were sent to a doctor, upon examination he informed them that the last time he had seen such severe stress in a group of young men was when he'd examined soldiers returning from the Vietnam War) On the "Affection" video, with the colored boxes, Dino's not seen anywhere, and that's the reason you're seeing faces (gestures, alluding to the video, in which photos of the boys' faces are held up in front of the performers' faces), and on the one with the Del Rubio sisters, that's where Larry-- Larry is very rarely in that. He's in some of the scenes, but there was a scene where... Actually, I think I was the only guy from the band in there. Now that I think about it, it's the one with the couch-- If you look carefully on the couch, when the Del Rubio sisters are twirling around singing on guitars, and we're trapped on the couch and roped up, they had us disguised because they had a guy in a Larry wig...

TVC: *Jared had told me that Stiv Hrnjak filled in for Dino (at this, Marty's face lights up and he begins to laugh almost spasmodically) wearing a fish head.*

MR: In that scene, yeah. That's true... Stiv... (he can barely speak the name without laughing) Yes!

TVC: *Recall him with great affection, do you?*

MR: Oh, he was hilarious. I mean he was a guy that came out with Dino, was just (does a kind of Art Carney-as-Ed Norton voice) "Heey" kinda guy. "Hey, how's it goin'?" "Hey, Ralph." So I thought, you know, this guy's on our show. Now he's appearing every week. There was a sense of... If the show had only been... had a better group of people. I think everybody on the video end and the music end held their ends. It was imaginative. Some of it was corny, some of it was bad, some of it was really good. But it was always changing. The show's format completely remained the same as far as the quality level of the writing that was accepted. "We'll set this amount, and then we'll rest on the music." I always felt that some of the writing could have been really good, because there were some lines that we had that were really funny that we, like, went nuts with. There was lots of times when... I had taken a cigarette during ALL MY MARTYS... No, when Jared got turned into a dog (A RUFF DAY). I forgot about this scene. At the end of this scene, I'd started with one frame on one camera shot, and walked back and forth and took a pack of cigarettes, and they said (in the scene) "Marty, you're not smoking, are you? You shouldn't be smoking. It's bad for you." And I took the cigarette. Let's see if I do it-- If I do it, it'll be a real trick. (Marty stands, takes a cigarette, and attempts to fling it into his mouth from arm's length) I take it and... I used to be able to do it, it's just-- from this point and it was like a quick toss and it'd go straight into my mouth. I worked on it, to try to be cool. So I learned that at, like 20 years old, so... this being *four years later*...

TVC: *F-O-U-R*

MR: (laughs) Capital. Uh, I thought that I could still do the trick. So we filmed this one thing. And I had literally tossed in about a pack and a half. And they said we're going to another camera shot. You've gotta do the same thing now. And I'd eaten them. The line was "Who smokes 'em?" But what had happened to me was, after an hour of doing this, and then spitting them out, I had gotten enough nicotine and tobacco in my mouth that I was so zippo, that I was completely, like I was (demonstrates a very shaky walk) "Something's wrong with me." I'm shaking so badly on the set. I'm walking around like an old man. And everybody's laughing at it, and I'm going "Quick! Let's get the film going! I'll try it shaking!" This took me maybe an hour and a half to get that last shot in. I ate two, three packs of cigarettes in the course of an hour and a half. I thought "Well, that's the last time I try a stunt. I need a stunt double from now on."

TVC: *"Bring in the cigarette stunt guy."*

MR: Cigarette stunt guy. We did a lot of things that were pretty funny. There were some videos... (suddenly, Marty is struck with a thought that results in an almost Luciferian grin and cackle). I had a point, I've gotta show it to you (he rises and moves to his video rack and cues up a tape as we continue to talk). It was just my cruel sense in the New Monkees videos that... I thought that if the scene called for it, I'd... I'd hurt people (more laughter, on both our parts).

TVC: *Okay.*

MR: Well, Jared was one of my... (victims)

TVC: *Maybe that's why he remembers you so affectionately as "wild man," "crazy bastard," "crack-up."*

MR: He said that?

TVC: *Oh, yeah.*

MR: Jared was... Jared was a good guy. (looking at the tape) Let's see, where do I hurt Jared at? Oh, I mean, it's like really amazing. It's amazing because I did it to Larry, I did it to Jared... (laughs more frequently as the tape nears the cue point) It's funny because I think that the most hilarious moments in the show...

TVC: *Involved pain.*



Marty "stooges" Larry in a video for "Whatever it Takes" shot in Super 8.



A taste role for Jared in DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL.

MR: Well, it's funny, because if you see it, it goes right by you, and you don't really notice it. Trying to squeeze laughter out of this stuff...

TVC: *That brings up some interesting metaphoric images, but perhaps we shouldn't get into those.*

MR: There you go! I'm having fun now. There (finds the spot in the "What I Want" video he's been searching for). I'm gonna go up to Jared like this and I'm gonna take a pool ball and *kung* (in the video, he and Jared lean across a pool table staring each other in the face. Marty casually picks up a cueball and raps Jared smack in the middle of his forehead. We laugh.) I really hit him! And she almost cracks up. Here we go. (A slow motion replay shows Jared wincing in pain; Larry, in the background, looks shocked and then begins to laugh; and the girl who's the centerpiece of the number is on the verge of losing her composure as the video cuts to another shot. I, of course, laugh hysterically. Marty then cues up another example of his Stooze-like abuse of his fellow performers. In this one, "Whatever It Takes," there is a shot of him, with his arm around Larry as they both smile directly into the camera. Marty points at the camera, then brings the finger back, and in a smooth motion pokes Larry right in the eye. By now, we're having a really good time.) See, you've been laughing. We've been watching New Monkees things, and a rare sound. If you go in and you actually get into the material, you'll find some funniness happening.

TVC: *Subtext.*

MR: Yeah. (laughs) Subtext. That's right. Jared was the hilarious one though, because Larry's reaction was like "Oh, my God. He really hit him with the cueball."

TVC: *He never mentioned that.*

MR: He probably doesn't want--

TVC: *Maybe there was some brain damage.*

MR: I think there was a-- the evil Larry, and the..

TVC: *Parallel universe?*

MR: Parallel universe (DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL), where Jared and I become evil, and I become like a Quasimodo-like character and Jared is like-- (a kind of deranged Marlon Brando).

TVC: *Actually, you looked a little bit like Ford Sterling with the beard.*

MR: Initially I was sitting there getting excited in one of the scenes and I was chewing on Jared's arm. During the scene, I kept chewing on Jared's arm on every take, and Jared looks at me going "F---, man! You're chewing the hell out of me!" It's a

good scene.

TVC: *It works!*

MR: It works. Oh, there was one where... With Dino (stops to laugh) Oh, there are so many things, if this comes out and they read this stuff...

TVC: *Well, I suspect there's a statute of limitations...*

MR: (leans toward the recorder and speaks to it directly) There's other things that if it happened, and it wasn't supposed to be happening to you guys, then there's a reason why it did. I had fun while you guys were doing shoots; rearranged your rooms a couple of times, did some things to your shoes, and made your clothes smell a little bit weird...

TVC: *So you're 'fessing up now, huh?*

MR: Well, there was one time when Dino was wearing a jacket, and like, I don't think he ever really knew it, but... I found some dog s--- out in the parking lot and put it in the pocket of his coat.

TVC: *(laughing) And then asked him if he had change for a dollar or something, I suppose.*

MR: Nah, I didn't say anything about it, 'cause I knew it was gonna be really-- but it smelled. They didn't know where it was, so it was "I don't know, just get rid of this jacket" and I'm sitting there going

"Oh, my God." If he did reach in for something... (turning uncharacteristically serious) Something that happened that's a recollection that I have that's really cool, which kind of tied in for the whole thing, and how we were misfits and how we didn't quite fit in as being really real Monkees and yet not being accepted as new ones either, was one day when we were looking for some... They were looking for us to play some sort of... classical era thing. For a painting they were going to do of us, and they wanted us to dress like it, and we got this one shirt in that was a white ruffled shirt with a ruffled (collar) at the top, and it was like white velvet, and it looked so small, so we were wondering how in the world it ever came over, because we'd ordered it from Costumes. And on the back it said "Davy Jones," and it was one of the shirts that he had used on the show. (possibly this is the one he wears while dueling with Theo Marcuse in ROYAL FLUSH) And we thought "Well, none of us fit in this," 'cause it was really tiny. So we thought how odd it was that we had the ghost of The Monkees, like, on our set with this Davy Jones shirt. So I think we hung it up and put it somewhere. I don't know what ever happened to it, but I know it was a cool thing, 'cause some Monkee fanatic would go nuts over an article of clothing actually worn in the show.

TVC: *Yeah.*

MR: That stuff's all in Costumes still. It's not like they took it home with them. We did, we took our own clothes home. Most of the clothes I had, I still have, 'cause I got Reeboks, like 50 pairs of them, all at once. You don't wear them out that quickly.

(On an encounter with the original Monkees:)

MR: We were recording "Turn It Up" for the album. We were at Cherokee Studios over here, right here on Fairfax and La Brea, right across from the newsstand. Fairfax and Melrose. Fairfax and La Brea, that'd be a tough trick.

TVC: *Well, after the next quake...*

MR: There you go. And so, we had a drum set. There was only one drum set available, so we used this drum set. And they said "You know, we have to get this drum set to the next--" We were called The Barbarians, I think. That was our nickname, 'cause nobody really goes into those studios with their real name. (Mimicking a fan) "Are the Rolling Stones here?" You know, they're called something. They're called The Wood Panels or something like that, you know, some silly name. So, anyway, we were The Barbarians, I think, and what's really strange is that The Monkees were there, too. Somebody had booked The New Monkees and The Monkees at the same studio. Not only that,

but there was only one drum set. It had come from a rental outfit, and they had screwed up the order, because they didn't know there was a difference between New Monkees and Monkees, which was written on the order slips. They said "Well, it must be the same order," so they sent one drum set. So here we are. We don't really care, legally, what we're supposed to do with those guys, but they're kind of in a bind, 'cause they've got a lawsuit against us, 'cause they don't really want to be seen around us, because they're fighting to use the name, 'cause these other people that own the name want to use this name to propel the new show and their (original Monkees) whole career's on the line. And in danger, they feel, because it could be taken, we could literally replace them, and their living. You know, that's how they make their money; it's how they make their living. So it was kind of like "You're taking away what I do." So here we are with the drum set that they're supposed to use, and they're not recording because they've got to use it. So finally we're sitting there, and it's like there's this big area that's like a living room area, but has a couple of pinball machines, a coffee machine, a couch and something like that. And we're all milling around looking as if everybody has leprosy, 'cause we see them and they see us, and we're in the same room, I mean no farther away than I'm talking to you, and there's Peter. And I'm standing there, three feet away from them looking the other way, and he's looking the other way, and we're like both talking about us and what record-- what we're gonna do with the songs. Obviously, not even listening, but only listening to what the other people are saying, so it was a complete non-conversation on both sides. 'Cause we're both listening to each other and what we're saying. It was very interesting, 'cause we hadn't met them. We go up at the end, and we're both going out-- It was incredible. I think that-- now that I've seen what happened, I think that somehow, I don't know how this could have happened, but I think somehow that this was arranged. I don't know how or why anybody wanted to rearrange... 'cause I think it was probably in the producer's best interest to have us, like, be friendly to each other. It certainly wasn't in The Monkees' interest.

TVC: *Well, either way, whether you guys hug or punch each other out, it's going to be a publicity agent's dream come true.*

MR: Yeah, sure. I never thought about it that much, but what is the coincidence of this happening in Los Angeles, which has more studios than anywhere in the world? The two bands... The Hatfields and the McCoys are here and they've both booked at the same picnic. And they both brought one basket (between them). So we're walking out to the hallway, and they're standing there talking about something and we've gotta walk right by them. Dino comes up and goes "Come on, let's walk right by them. We don't gotta be intimidated by them." And we walked by them, and I looked at 'em and said "Hello. Hello." and they looked at us and went "Hello. Hi. Hello. Hi. How's it goin'?" And we walked past them and we stood there and we went "Don't you think we ought to say something a little bit more than this?" I mean, is this as perfunctory as it's gonna get? Are we gonna go in there and say "Hey, look. You know, we wish we weren't called The New Monkees. We really wish

we weren't. We're doing a TV show and it's an awful lot like your concept, and we're sorry. And it wasn't your concept; the guys that own this show are doing it. We hope that you guys can--"? We wanted to say all those things, but how were we going to say it to them? So we're standing outside the studio on the sidewalk, and they file out too, but they don't leave either. We're about ten feet away from each other, and they're talking all to each other and we're all talking to each other. Just standing there. "Should we go over there and tell 'em?" We just didn't. That was it. We just couldn't go over there and say hello. I felt extremely guilty. I felt horrible. You know. It was only in a name, but the name kept us so far apart from ever becoming, you know, close. 'Cause the wealth of knowledge that they could have given me as advice for what I'm gonna go through at that point, when I was recording the record and going through that... Had things gone the way they went for them, it would have been invaluable. Since it didn't go, for me that information would have probably been less used. But they had a number one record before their show even got on the air. Our record wasn't even released until the show was out. It was a little different. It was a *lot* different, but there were some similarities. But that one night, when we were there, it was completely fascinating to see us-- Now that I think about it in a not so thrown together kind of way, this had to have been contrived. Somebody contrived that situation. It's just-- I've never thought about it before, until right now, I'm talking to you about it. Just-- One drum set, same studio, in Los Angeles, the same day. Whoever did that, I'd like to talk to the person.

TVC: *You told me about a time when you were spotted at the Monkeemobile.*

MR: That was awhile back at the Monkees thing (the day of the multi-platinum award at the Hard Rock Cafe). I just drove by... My daughter goes to preschool in Beverly Hills, so I take Beverly Drive, and I came back one morning from her preschool and I saw the Monkeemobile parked outside and I thought "Geez, I've never really looked at it that close." I thought, "I'll just take a look at it," 'cause it's a Pontiac GTO or something like that. So I drove around the block, came around, parked right in back of it, right in the red around this curb. It was parked right in front of the Hard Rock. And I looked in it. And I was standing there looking, and two girls literally looked at me and both at the same time. "It's Marty Ross!" I turned around and I felt, all of a sudden, that old feeling again, like I was in-- just like "It's a Nazi!" You know?

TVC: *"Get him!"*

MR: I felt like I was in a prisoner of war camp or something, 'cause I felt naturally-- turned around like I was saying "Hey, it's okay. It's their thing. It's all right. I'm not here to, like, try to pounce on them..." They said "Could I have a picture of you with the Monkeemobile?" I said "Fine," took a picture with them. And for that brief instance that happened two months ago, I was completely way back to where they still are. But I've gone in a different-- I'm not "Marty Ross from The New Monkees" anymore. But I was for an instant. It was very bizarre to be right back at the Hard Rock, with the three guys there inside. It's ironic for them that I can walk in and be a Monkee and leave and go have my life but they can't. They've got the car and everything attached to them; they've got their whole past clinging onto them and their future with it.



SABLE

Sable - 7 episodes, ABC

Based on the comic book *Jon Sable, Freelance*, published by First Comics

Series created by Gary Sherman

Regular Cast:

Jon Sable/Nicholas Flemming - Lewis Van Bergen
Eden Kendall - René Russo
Joe "Cheesecake" Tyson - Ken Page
Myke Blackmon - Holly Fulger
Cynthia - Marge Kotlisky

In 1961, the long-standing preeminence in the comic book market of National Periodicals, more popularly known as DC, was finally challenged following roughly a quarter-century of dominance by characters such as Superman and Batman (Fawcett's Captain Marvel had made a major impact in the 40s, including adaptation as a highly-regarded theatrical serial, but the character ultimately fell victim to a court judgment when he was found to be too derivative of Superman, and the various Captain Marvel titles ceased publication in 1953). Upstart Marvel Comics (no relation) which had evolved from the popular Timely Comics of the 40s that introduced such characters as Captain America, The Sub-Mariner, and the Human Torch, forever changed the depiction of super-heroes with the introduction of *The Fantastic Four* and, a little later, Spider-Man (introduced in

Amazing Fantasy). Other comic genres (romance, war, western, etc.) would continue to chug along under various banners (Archie, Harvey, Charlton, Classic Comics Illustrated, and the largely media tie-in output of Dell and Gold Key), but the super-hero market seemed to be effectively locked up by Marvel and DC. There was an impressive attempt to steal their thunder in 1975 with the introduction of Seaboard's Atlas line, which acquired the talents of a combination of established figures, such as superstar illustrator Neal Adams and seminal Marvel



artist Steve Ditko (creator of Spider-Man and Doctor Strange). These noteworthies were brought into the Atlas fold along with some up-and-comers including Howard Chaykin (later a contributing writer on TV's *The Flash*), but the venture failed, and none of the titles lasted beyond four issues.

Then, in the early 80s, as the readers of the "Marvel Age" reached maturity, many of them set out to participate in the very medium that had captured their imaginations, and a new generation of comic artists and writers was born. The characters introduced by this "new breed" have increasingly found their way into the larger public consciousness in such feature films as *The Rocketeer*, *The Mask*, *The Crow*, and, of course, the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (less well-known are the *Turtles* follow-ups, *Adolescent Radioactive Black Belt Hamsters* and *Naive Inter-Dimensional Commando Koalas*). Among the first of what would eventually blossom into a full-fledged avalanche of independent comic companies was First Comics. Although not experiencing the success of the aforementioned properties, First's *Jon Sable, Freelance* beat them all to the dramatization punch in the 1987 series *Sable*, which aired briefly on ABC.

Jon Sable was the creation of Mike Grell, an artist/writer who had made an initial splash at DC with his *Warlord*, which seemed to be a sort of hybrid of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan and John Carter of Mars, though also owing a debt to the popularity of Robert E. Howard's Conan the Barbarian. Grell's visual style was clearly in the tradition of (or a ripoff of, depending upon your philosophy regarding such matters) Neal Adams, whose work had made a substantial impact during the twilight

of Marvel's original *X-Men* and in an acclaimed and controversial (at the time) series of drug abuse-themed stories in DC's *Green Lantern-Green Arrow* (Grell would later inherit a *Green Arrow* title himself). Even Grell's trademark signature resembles that of Adams.

As a follow-up to the success of *Warlord* and the even more John Carteresque *Starslayer*, Grell created



Sable, dressed for action and wearing his "battlemask," is flanked by his closest allies, Eden Kendall (René Russo) and "Cheesecake" (Ken Page).

a new, contemporary hero for the fledgling First Comics in *Jon Sable, Freelance*. Sable was an Olympic pentathlete at the 1972 Munich Olympics. He met and fell in love with a beautiful blonde gymnast representing Kenya. Following disappointing finishes in the competition, which were marred by the terrorist attack on the Israelis, Sable followed his new love to her

home country and settled down with her, working as a professional hunter offering safaris-for-hire. His joy was increased with the birth of a son and, later, a daughter. The joy was short-lived, however, for after Sable assisted a game warden in shutting down a group of poachers, the leader of the poaching ring ordered Sable murdered. At the time of the attack, Sable was working elsewhere, and returned to find that his wife and children had been viciously murdered. Upon finding his loved ones slain, Sable vowed revenge, and used the ashes of his family home to draw upon his face the "battlemask" that would become his trademark as he sought his revenge. Sable methodically stalked and ruthlessly killed the men that had murdered his loved ones, leading to a final showdown with the white-haired man who had ordered the attack. Although the man fell to his apparent death, he survived to face Sable in a second showdown some years later. In the meantime, Sable became a mercenary in Rhodesia, battling terrorists. Though supporting the efforts by the black majority to govern themselves, when the Zimbabwe government was formed he was rejected as a symbol of their oppression.

Sable returned to New York and wrote a book telling the story of his life. It was rejected by agent after agent, including a woman named Eden Kendall. Eden, however, contacted Sable because of some elements within his story. In the book, Sable recounted how he used to weave imaginary tales for his children of a group of leprechauns that inhabited Central Park, and their friendship with an amiable wino. Eden felt that these characters and their stories provided the basis for a marketable series of children's books. Though initially appalled at the idea,

financial practicality won out and Sable agreed to pen the fantasies under the pseudonym B.B. Flemm. A female illustrator, Myke Blackmon, was hired to do the artwork, and the books became the sensation of the literary world. Sable's contract, however, required his cooperation in promoting the works, however, so he was forced to give physical form to Flemm, which he did by donning a curly blonde wig, matching mustache, and a hip set of eyeglasses. The success of the books provided Sable the income to set himself up in a penthouse featuring an elaborate gym that allowed him to maintain his top physical condition. To counter the mild-mannered Flemm, Sable began the cathartic procedure of shopping himself out through classified ads as a protector-for-hire, righter of wrongs, etc. For these escapades, he again donned his battlemask. He became a popular figure, even taking his act on the road for international adventures. Throughout it all, only Eden and Myke were aware of the link between troubleshooter Jon Sable and popular children's author B.B. Flemm.

Which brings us to ABC's *Sable*. When reading the comics, it is hard not to imagine them being adapted for motion pictures or television. It was, therefore, no doubt welcome news to fans of the comic to see that it was being turned into a weekly adventure series. The essential players were all there, plus some supplementary ones. Lewis Van Bergen filled the title role of Sable, whose alter-ego was renamed Nicholas Flemming for the series; Eden Kendall, Sable's agent, was portrayed by Rene Russo; and Holly Fulger was on hand as illustrator Myke Blackmon. In addition, TV's Sable was assisted by a wisecracking blind computer whiz named Joe Tyson (Ken Page), nicknamed "Cheesecake" after his favorite indulgence. Cheesecake, also an aspiring standup comedian, is revealed to have been a Vietnam war buddy of Sable's, and WATCHDOGS finds them reminiscing about the wartime incident that led to Cheesecake's blindness. Rounding out the regular cast was Marge Kotlisky as Cynthia, Sable's secretary. The series was set, and shot on location, in Chicago.

Going into the project, Mike

Grell was optimistic that his character would be successful in his new medium, due in part to a contract provision he eluded to in a *Comics Scene* interview to the effect that "the characters cannot be changed materially from what they are in the comic book." Interestingly, rock star Gene Simmons (of KISS), himself a comic fan, was set to play the role and at least a few scenes were filmed. In fact, Grell credits Simmons' interest in getting the pilot made. After screening the footage, however, it was decided that Simmons wasn't quite right for the part, a decision Grell concurs with. It was at this point that Van Bergen was cast. Grell also stated that, to his knowledge, the producers were basing their vision of the character on the first 24 issues of the comic. Significantly, he also pointed out that he "had difficulties with some of the approaches they were taking."

So what went wrong? Why did such a can't-miss action formula go so astray as to be cancelled after just seven episodes? No small amount of blame should be placed on a marketplace in which quality takes a back seat to the short attention span. How many classic series struggled for far longer than *Sable* was around, only to eventually find their audiences and go on to years of success, or at least enough of a run to entrench themselves into the public consciousness and often make significant comebacks? Still, in all likelihood this is not sufficient explanation for the demise of *Sable*.

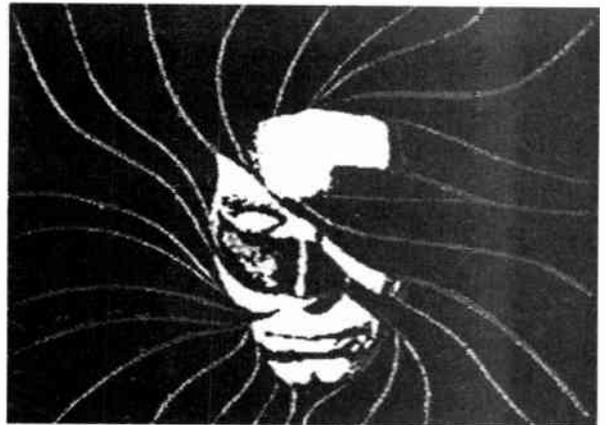
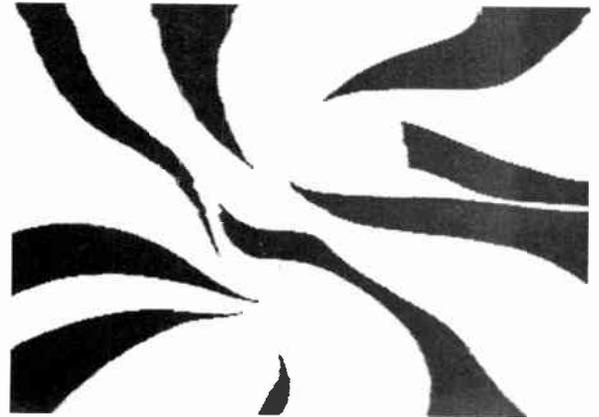
To begin with, the leading man was hardly a household name. Secondly, the decision was made to follow the lead of the comic and jump right into the current adventures of the character before revealing the story behind the man. The character's origin in the comic was delayed until issue #3, and then told over the span of four issues. Although the television series began to give hints as to Sable's background as early as the first episode (TOY GUN), no clear picture of the man ever emerged. Consequently, there was never the powerful motivational hook that might have connected audiences to the character; a critical omission. The nature of the comic book market is different than that of television, where

a TV series must quickly find an audience so as to garner ratings acceptable to the network. The comic also had the luxury of good will because of the track record of its creator, Mike Grell. Without giving the television audience an understanding of who Jon Sable really was and what motivated him, he just wasn't that interesting.

The third strike may have been that, whereas Grell's Jon Sable is clearly exhilarated by his adventures, in spite of the tragic way in which he was propelled into them, ABC's *Sable* is rarely upbeat about anything, generally neurotic, and his adventures feel more like therapy (perhaps this explains why the battlemask was changed from a distinctive design to something closer to a Rorschach test) or, worse, penance. The televised Sable makes Robert Loggia's *T.H.E. Cat* (profiled in our first issue) look positively giddy. He has apparently sworn off of using a gun (though the hunting knife he carries has even nastier connotations than mere gunplay), though when things get really hairy, he does pull it out. Although the comic violence obviously had to be toned down, the difference in the television and comic versions of the character are evident in an exchange at the end of the pilot, when Sable has cornered the slimeball of the hour. He tells the man "I'd even feel bad about killing you." Mike Grell's Jon Sable would say or feel nothing of the kind. He'd mete out justice and get a good night's sleep. The impression left by the series, therefore, is something of a downer, which is more than enough to kill what is billed as an action-adventure program.

In the final episode, MOB, Sable actually swears off of his profession. Of course, he comes to his senses so as to foil another villain, but apparently he forgot to let the network know about his change of heart, because they went ahead and cancelled the show anyway.

This opening sequence was about the most exciting thing to be found in ABC's *Sable*.



TOY GUN (11/7/87)

A wealthy toy manufacturer is given one week to commit suicide or else his granddaughter, who has been kidnapped, will be murdered
John Harkins, Tony Lincoln, Lara Flynn Boyle, Alex Ross, Tim Halliman, Tony Mockus Jr., Juan Ramirez, Will Zahn

Written and directed by Gary Sherman

HUNT (11/14/87)

The son of a man Sable killed in his past uses a reporter and an imprisoned FBI agent to set up his planned revenge

Tom Amandes, Tom White, Joe Greco, Tony Lincoln, David Hull

Written by Steve Feke, Allan R. Folson, Gary Sherman; Directed by Ron Rapiel

EVANGELIST (11/21/87)

The suicide of a woman who placed an ad for his help leads Sable to a baby-selling ring

Bessie Anne Collins, Zelda Rubinstein, Ned Schmidtke, Chelcie Ross, Melanie Wheeler, Lisa Kelly, James Andelin, Bradley Warden

Written by Jim Trombetta; Directed by Robert Becker

SERIAL KILLER (12/5/87)

A psychopath brings his cross-country murder spree to Chicago, where he lures Sable into a game of catch-me-if-you-can

Kathryn Dowling, J. Stephen Sinclair, Richard Pickren, Del Close, Stacy Carroll

Written by Judy Burns, Michael Halperin, Steve Feke, Gary Sherman; Directed by Gary Sherman

COPYCAT (12/12/87)

A hitman poses as Sable to carry out his contract killings

P.J. Brown, Yvonne Suhor, Patrick Billingsley, Dick Sollenberger, Vinnie Guastafarro, Joyce Hazard, Melva Williams, Tom Cramer, Chick Gerken, Al Nuti, Barb Wallace, Neil Flynn

Written by Arthur David Weingarten, Steve Feke, Gary Sherman; Directed by Robert Becker

WATCHDOGS (12/19/87)

Cheesecake becomes the target of a neighborhood patrol group that has evolved into a band of racist thugs

Jack McLaughlin-Gray, Neil Gray Giuntoli, Dick Cusack, Fern Parsons, Marc Grapey, Sam Sanders, Tony Mockus Jr., Jay Roberts, Michael Skewes, Kim Nguyen, Roz Varon

Written by Steve Feke, Gary Sherman; Directed by Kees Van Oostrum

MOB (1/2/88)

Sable comes to the aid of an old friend who is on a mobster's hit list after the gangster's warehouse is robbed

Joe Guzaldo, Mike Bacarella, J. Tucker Smith, Greg Noonan, Barbara Woods, Nathan Davis, Barbara Alyn Woods, Tom Towles, Jack Kandel, Miguel Nino, David Jonson

Written by Steve Feke, Ron Koziol; Directed by Gary Sherman



The Sable cast: Ken Page (foreground center, moving clockwise:), Marge Kotlisky, René Russo, Lewis Van Bergen, Holly Fulger.

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