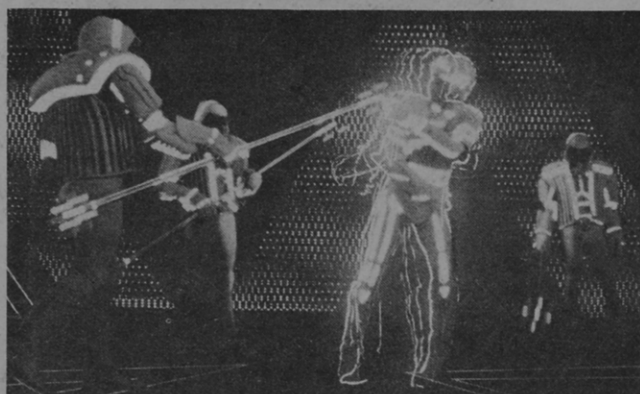


Flynn (Jeff Bridges) zapped by video game guards in 'Tron'.



Surf entrepreneur Gerry Lopez meets hunky Arnold Schwarzenegger in 'Conan the Barbarian'. Eat here or takeaway?

Film

The Thing
Director: John Carpenter

The early 50s was the dawning of modern cinematic sci-fi, with what almost amounted to an obsession with the theme of invaders from outer space — a genre which neatly mirrored America's uneasiness about the more immediate political threat of the Soviet government. Two key films were Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and the Howard Hawks/Christian Nyby *The Thing*: the first was updated by Philip Kaufman a few years ago and now the director of *Halloween* and *Escape from New York City* has offered a new reading of the latter for the 80s.

Censorship and technical expertise limited the realism of the originals but, when read with a contemporary political subtext, this was not too troublesome. However Carpenter has so much high-tech at his call when it comes to gut-wrenching horror that scenes not directly involving the monster seem to flag in pace. And not only are wider political implications ignored, but the inter-relationships and tensions between the isolated group of humans are not explored as deeply as they might have been.

So, in spite of the director's visual flair in the exotic Antarctic setting and some stunning special effects, *The Thing* doesn't really make an impact as a total film. Kurt Russell may have achieved all his goals in *Escape from New York City*, but in this film, he doesn't seem to know where he is as we leave the snowy wastes for the closing credits.

Union City
Director: Mark Reichert

Reichert's film starts off from a deliriously bizarre premise as Dennis Lipscomb is driven to murder, insanity and suicide because somebody has been furtively whipping away his milk bottles. Why, Stanley Graham's paranoia in *Bad Blood* seems mild by comparison!

Visually the film is ravishing and almost fetishistic in its recreation of a glossy, ultra-technicolour, 1953 middle America. The director presents objects and settings with an obsessive attention that one might expect from a Borowczyk and considering Debbie Harry's lifeless performance, one can see the perfect justification for this approach. And, even though it is more than a little disjointed as a narrative thriller, as an almost abstract set of film noir images it works very well indeed.

The Return of the Soldier
Director: Alan Bridges

Britain's entry to this year's Cannes festival has worthy credentials — taken from a Rebecca West novel, directed by the same man who made *The Hireling*, with a quartet of first-class players in Alan Bates, Julie Christie, Glenda Jackson and Ann-Margret.

Bates is a young captain returning from the front in 1916 with shellshock and suffering from amnesia which has eradicated the

last 15 years of his life. It's an extremely moving piece of cinema which Bridges has brought off with a firm sense of style and an ironic edge that keeps it from slipping into a ponderous literacy that the theme might invite.

The performances are exemplary and contribute a good deal to the success of the film: Ann-Margret, like Meryl Streep in *French Lieutenant's Woman*, proves she can play British with the best of them and even Glenda Jackson has relinquished some of those androgynous mannerisms that have marred most of her recent screen appearances.

Deliverance
Director: John Boorman

With London currently enjoying reissues of the complete prints of James Ivory's *Wild Party* and Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West*, New Zealand is having the opportunity to see what is arguably Boorman's best film with all the censor's excisions reinstated.

Deliverance has worn well over a decade, a fast-paced saga of four buddies taking a last weekend canoe trip down a condemned river before a newly built dam turns it into a huge lifeless lake.

Tied in with the ecological theme (neatly mirrored in Boorman's touching vignettes of the rural community at the outset of the film and the meal scene at the old folks home when Jon Voigt and Ned Beatty have weathered their ordeal) is what one would have called in less enlightened times, a man's adventure story.

And it is precisely this in so far as the film cuts into our society's concept of masculinity which is questioned and literally assaulted during the course of the film as Beatty is humiliated and raped by two mountain men and Voigt struggles with his conscience in the use of violence.

And now what about reissuing *Point Blank*, Boorman's first American film which was also hacked by the censor, and *Leo the Last* which never ever made it here in the first place ...
William Dart

FORTHCOMING FILMS

Tron ... space invaders comes alive in Disney's latest pseudo-cartoon, most of the artwork done by computer. Apparently a visual stunner. Starts Dec 10.

Pirate Movie ... adaption of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, starring Kristy McNichol as a girl who meets up with a band of pirates. Swash-buckling musical, so the makers say. Reviewers talk of turkeys. Starts Dec 10.

Conan The Barbarian ... another cartoon character brought to life, played by muscleman Arnold Schwarzenegger. Special effects men and set designers steal the show. Very heroic and blood-thirsty. Directed by John Milius. Starts Dec 10.

E.T. ... stands for 'Extra-Terrestrial', a cute visitor from another planet, destined to be this year's pet. Already a smash in the USA, Steven Spielberg directs. Starts Dec 3.

Neighbours ... John Belushi's last role, teaming up again with Dan Aykroyd in a comedy about people who live next door to each

other. Starts Nov 12.
Summer Lovers ... love triangle set in the Greek Islands, starring Peter Gallagher (*The Idolmaker*), Daryl Hannah and Valerie Quennessen. By director of *Blue Lagoon*. Starts Dec 10.
Corp ... yet another American holiday camp comedy. Need we say more? Starts Auckland Dec 3.

Two rival James Bond films are currently in production. *Never Say Never Again* is a remake of *Thunderball*, with Sean Connery playing the suave secret agent. Irvin Kershner directs ... also filming is *Octopussy*, with Roger Moore taking the lead in his sixth Bond film. Moore is reported to be collecting \$4 million for his efforts ... it's confirmed — ET

the fastest drawing film in history. At the height of the US summer it was taking in \$3.5 million a day ... after the death of two children during the shooting of *Twilight Zone*, production of the film has stopped. It's not known if shooting will recommence. Meanwhile, director John Landis and several production personnel have been served with civil citations for breach of child labour laws ... *Porky's: The Next Day* is now in production ... playing the lead villain in *Superman III* is comedian Richard Pryor. Christopher Reeve and Margot Kidder again take the roles of Superman and Lois Lane and Richard Lester directs again ... the producers of *Superman* intend to follow it up with *Supergirl* and, what they're billing as 'the greatest

living legend of all time'. *Santa Claus* ... Milos Forman is to direct the screen version of Peter Shaeffer's play *Amadeus* ... while producer/director Peter Bogdanovich is working in his memoirs of his relationship with Dorothy Stratten, the Playmate of the Year murdered by her husband. Bob Fosse is directing a film based on the same material. Titled *Star '80*, Mariel Hemingway plays Stratten and Cliff Robertson takes the role of Hugh Hefner ... new Monty Python film now shooting is *The Meaning of Life*. Film features the full Python team of Eric Idle, Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Terry Jones and Michael Pallin. The film was also scripted by the six ... Robert Stigwood is producer of the film

version of *Evita*. Ken Russell takes the director's chair and David Essex stars ... Paul Mazursky's *Tempest*, a reworking of the Shakespeare play, stars John Cassavettes, Gena Rowlands and Susan Sarandon ... *An Officer and a Gentleman*, with Richard Gere and Debra Winger, directed by Taylor Hadiford (*The Idolmaker*) is receiving rave reviews ... Neil Young's *Human Highway*, a film with Dean Stockwell, Denis Hopper and Neil himself in lead roles, has been released ... Douglas Adams' *The Hitch-Hikers' Guide To The Galaxy*, is to be filmed ... Sam Pillsbury's *The Scarecrow* getting good reviews in the UK. NME's Monty Smith calls it 'a deeply satisfying evocation of youthful fears and humours'.

DOUBLE BROWN BECAUSE...

“It tastes great”

