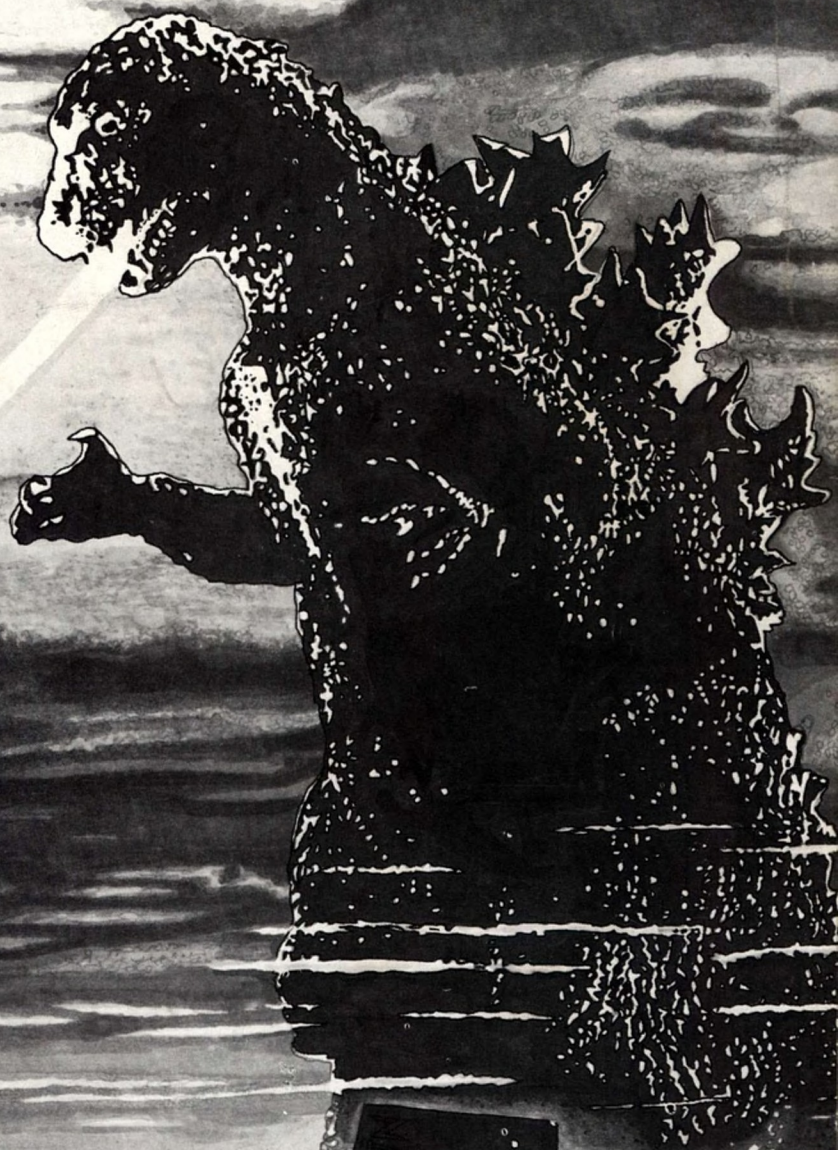


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## Planet Of The Apes

Bizarro! *Planet of the Apes*, produced by Arthur P. Jacobs, directed by Franklin J. Schaffner, and released by 20th Century Fox in 1967, is a uniquely different and vastly interesting tale. Is it ironic that this classic sci-fi film provokes thought, and reflects much *Twilight Zone* influence? Perhaps not, for Rod Serling is one of the screenwriters.

In 1972, Skipper George Taylor (Charlton Heston) with a team of astronauts take off from Cape Kennedy. Something goes wrong. They crash, and according to Taylor, these three survivors are approximately 2,000 years into the future, on an unknown planet orbiting around Orion. Taylor and friends meet two unsavory groups: the unfriendly, primitively-clothed, mute humans, and apes dressed in black, riding horseback, with automatic rifles and pistols adorning them.

In a not-so-pretty raid, the black astronaut is killed (later exhibited in the apes' Museum of Natural History), a second astronaut is wounded (later becomes a recipient of a lobotomy), and Taylor is shot in the neck (impairing his speech) and tossed into a cage with Nova, the mini-skirted mute (Linda Harrison) of a more scrumptious nature.

In this society, the gorillas are the dominating, violent beasts. The orangutans are intellectuals, stubborn in nature. The chimpanzees are pacifistic blue-collar workers. Here, man has no brain, simply because it is removed. The apes see to that!

Psychologist Zira (Kim Hunter), a chimpanzee, who is trying to prove her theory that man can be domesticated, takes a liking to Taylor. So does her fiancé, Dr. Cornelius (Roddy McDowall), an archaeologist. His theory that "man was here before the ape and was better" (which he later proves), contradicts the popular thought of the time, and because his findings were excavated in a place pronounced deadly, called "The Forbidden Zone" (...a taboo for apes), where no fresh water or vegetation abounds...where more of these dangerous speaking-humans might exist, Dr. Zalus (Maurice Evans), the chief philosopher/scientist dismissed the evidence.

One of the ancient scrolls handed down to them centuries ago by the "Lawgiver" reads, "Beware the beast man, for he is the Devil's pawn, a loathe among God's primates. He will kill for sport or lust or greed. Yea, he will murder his brother to possess his brother's land, Let him not breed in great numbers, for he will make a desert of his home and yours. Shun him, for he is the harbinger of death."

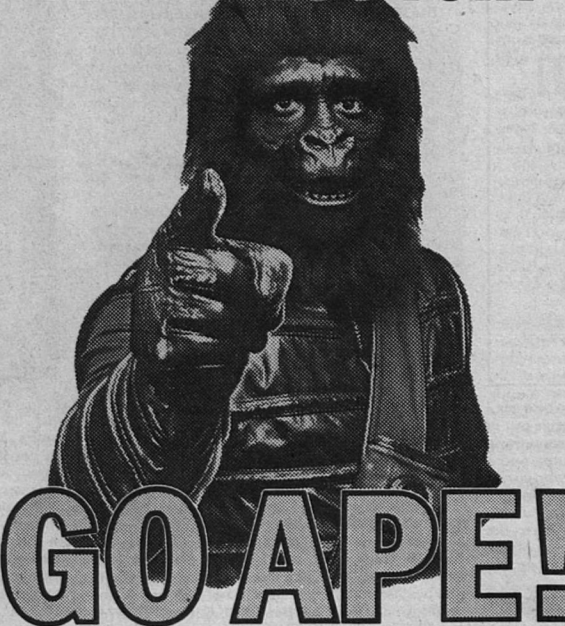
Later, Taylor finds the remnants of the Statue of Liberty, learning that he has been on planet Earth the whole time, and that man had blown it up. This ending makes this film all the more fascinating, with a good moral. *Planet Of The Apes* also starring James Whitmore, is truly remarkable, and needless to say, the make-up jobs are stupendous!

ED G. L.

## Beneath The Planet Of The Apes

Arthur P. Jacobs does it again with this 1970 satisfying sequel, directed by Ted Post and unit directed by John Wayne's stuntman, Chuck Roberson. Roddy McDowall does not play Cornelius this time, but Kim Hunter returns as Zira, now Cornelius' wife. Maurice Evans is back as Dr. Zalus.

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The story continues as Taylor (Charlton Heston) is swallowed up by an invisible pocket of space. Astronaut Brent (James Franciscus) in search of the missing Taylor, becomes the sole survivor of an aircraft wreck, where he meets the wandering Nova (Linda Harrison), and is led to the city of apes to view a rattle being raised by an eloquent and tough-looking gorilla, General Ursus (James Gregory — *Manchurian Candidate* with Frank Sinatra, *Sons Of Katie Elder* with John Wayne). "The only good human is a dead one" he yells. His campaign is to convince the apes that the "Forbidden Zone" should no longer be feared, but invaded, for there are probably more human inhabitants there.

In *Beneath The Planet Of The Apes*, man is no

longer dissected and killed. Ursus uses them for target practice. Also featured: Brent's discovery of what's left of Grand Central Station, N.Y., an encounter with mutants (one of them is the ever-hefty Victor Buono) who speak without moving their lips, who pray and sing praises to an atomic bomb, and who create optical illusions to thwart off their enemies, and a pleasantly surprising reunion with Taylor. Ursus and the apes, the mutants, the martyred Nova, and an unfortunate rivalry between Taylor and Brent, provide an action-packed climax with a nuclear holocaust resulting... a sorrowful ending for the good guys and us! *Beneath* is an excellent adventure and is now on video, as well as *Planet* and the three sequels that follow this one.

Ed S. Lousarianian

## Escape From The Planet of the Apes

Producer Arthur P. Jacobs has gone bananas! This sequel to a sequel was directed by Don Taylor, and although it was released by 20th Century Fox in 1971, the year this story is set is 1973 — the year in which three apes travel back in time, landing on Earth in an aircraft, thus escaping the destruction of planet Earth in their time.

The astroape trio: Dr. Cornelius (Roddy McDowall), his wife, Zira (Kim Hunter) and Dr. Milo (Sal Mineo — unbelievable!). Dr. Milo is strangled to death — an upsetting moment — he was a beloved doctor back home and it was he who repaired Taylor's aircraft and rescued Cornelius and Zira from the nuclear explosion.

*Escape* also starring William Windom, has a lot of laughs in it (like *Star Trek IV* when our heroes hit Earth in the 20th Century), but it also has a very sad ending.

Bradford Dillman (*Big Valley*, *Bug*, *The Enforcer* with Clint Eastwood) and his lovely partner (Natalie Trundy) are the good doctors. Jason Evers (*The Brain That Wouldn't Die*, *The Green Berets* with John Wayne) and Albert Salmi (many westerns, *The Brothers Karamazov* with Yul Brynner) are the interrogators of Cornelius and Zira.

The U.S. Commission wants to alter the future (ape rule and end of world) by pulling a "Herod" and killing the newborn chimpanzee (yes, Zira is pregnant).

Kind circus man, Armando (Ricardo Montalban) takes good care of the apes but the authorities come around and make life difficult.

Cornelius and Zira are brutally murdered, and the wrong baby chimp as well. (Armando and Zira switched chimps at his circus beforehand). Cornelius and Zira's son lives... and talks. Smart move by Zira (and producer Jacobs — gives him an excuse to make another sequel!) This film is not great, but it's worth watching just to see Kim Hunter as Zira. She's loveable and steals the show.

E. G. L.

## Conquest of the Planet of the Apes

Oh, brother! producer A.P. Jacobs and 20th Century Fox should have ended the series after the second, or at least after the third sequel. It's not the worst movie we've seen, but one can only take so much of these creatures! *Conquest* does not inhibit our imagination or intellect as do the first two or

three, but it "brings out the ape in all of us." It's violent. The quote just mentioned was used by Don Murray, who plays the Governor. This movie isn't necessarily for "Creationists." Howbeit, this 1972 adventure is intriguing, featuring Gordon Jump (WKRP) as the auctioneer. In North America, 1991, almost 20 years after the death of Cornelius and Zira, cats and dogs have died of the plagues, and as Armando (Ricardo Montalban for the 2nd time) explains to Caesar (son of Cornelius and Zira) who has grown up in his circus, man's pets have become larger and larger, from cats to apes. Furthermore, because apes are so intelligent and therefore easy to train, man has made slaves of them.

Another sad moment is when Armando is mentally tortured by government officials to admit that Caesar (Roddy McDowall — he plays the son of Cornelius this time) is the talking chimpanzee, the one who should have been killed. Armando breaks away and runs for the door. Unfortunately it wasn't a door, it was a window... and Armando flies through it, plunging to his death many stories below. Caesar weeps terribly.

The good guy in this film is McDonald (Hari Rhodes), the black aid to the governor who saves Caesar from electrocution at the hands of the government officials. Enjoy a good half-hour of non-stop action when Caesar gathers all the apes in town and leads a revolt against the humans. The apes are the victors and Caesar shouts and proclaims, "Tonight, the birth of the Planet of the Apes has begun!" The apes go wild. Man is subservient, Frank Capra Jr. is the associate producer and J. Lee Thompson directs this atrocity.

Ed G. Lousararian

### ***Battle for the Planet of the Apes***

Too much monkey business! This is the last and most unimportant episode of the "Apes" series; produced by A.P. Jacobs, and directed by J. Lee Thompson. Frank Capra Jr. lends one more hand as associate producer. To start off this apeumentary, it is 2670 A.D. in North America and the "Lawgiver" (John Huston — sound casting!) so often referred to in the first two adventures tells us that after the ape revolution, man had killed itself with atomic destruction. The story he is about to tell us is of Caesar 12 years after the disaster.

After the revolution, apes can speak. Remember McDonald, the black aid to the governor in *Conquest*? Well, he must have died, because we don't see him in *Battle*. However, his brother lives. We'll call him McDonald, as do the apes. Caesar (Roddy McDowall), McDonald (Austin Stoker), and wiseman Virgil (Paul Williams — better actor than singer) go into the radiated city (now called the "Forbidden City") searching the archives for the recorded tapes of Cornelius and Zira's hearings during their visit in 1973. When Caesar hears the destiny of man and ape, and of the end of the world, he tries to promote peace among all creatures. This is difficult to accomplish when the savage mutants attack the apes, and when his general, Aldo (Claude Akins) rebels against him, kills his son, attacks the armory station guarded by good ape, Mandemus (Lew Ayres), and tries to kill all the humans in the village as well as the mutants.

One good thing about this movie is that it explains the mutants we were trying to figure out in *Beneath* they were the descendents of the mutants in Caesar's generation — mutilated, malformed survivors of the atomic bomb — the end product of atomic radiation. After a tremendous battle, for which this movie is named, and after solving some major problems at home, Caesar does get to make his dream come true — man is set free and lives with ape in harmony

Ed G. Lousararian

***Venus In Furs***. 1967. Produced by Lou Campa, Directed by Joe Marzano, released thru Cam-Scope Productions. With Elinore Shepwild, Jean Fern, Al Campa.

Apparently this is about the submissive fantasies of a ladies shoe salesman, but it's hard to be