INTRODUCTION

A while back, I read a newspaper story about how monkeys are being trained to help paraplegics perform household chores. It really set me thinking. How much longer before apes become standard household items, like Cuisinarts or microwave ovens? And if they become our servants, how much longer will it be before they revolt and become our masters?

Welcome back to the Planet Of The Apes.

I know that it’s been a while since you’ve visited, and that there have been some pretty drastic changes since the last time you were here, but I hope you’ll stay along for the ride. I guarantee it will be a wild one.

Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’ve got to take care of some monkey business.

Charles Marshall
March 1990

(Charles Marshall is the creator of The Fugitive, published recently by Caliber Press. He is currently hard at work on a 4-issue mini-series, Ape City, detailing the Apes’ world across the Atlantic. M.C. Wyman is pencilling and the series is set for an August 1990 release. You’ll find a sneak preview elsewhere in this issue. Also is this issue, be sure to check out Jim Korkis’ special “History Of The Planet Of The Apes.”

Look for the next issue of Planet Of The Apes in early June.)
MONKEY BUSINESS
An Informal History Of Planet Of The Apes
by Jim Korkis

“Beware the beast man, for he is the devil’s pawn. Alone among God’s primates, he kills 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.”
That excerpt is from the Sacred Scrolls and is read to Colonel Taylor (played by Charlton Heston) before he rides off into the Forbidden Zone in the 1968 film Planet Of The Apes, and that philosophy was so fascinating to audiences that it spawned five feature films, two different television programs, dozens of novels, comics and magazines and countless dolls, toys and games.

From the apes who raised Tarzan to King Kong to President Reagan's best buddy Bonzo, people have been fascinated by simians. Whether or not Darwin was right about man being descended from the apes, there is a feeling that the ape family represents the ancient dark side of man: the bestial, thoughtless savagery that is only kept in check by the flimsy pretenses of civilization.

The Planet Of The Apes series pitted the almost medieval, physical society of the apes against the supposedly superior technological civilization of mankind and for the most part, the apes won. Through the use of allegory and satire, the series emphasized that those who were not tolerant would suffer dire consequences.

The series began in 1963 when the French science-fiction novel Le Planete Des Singes (The Monkey Planet) by Pierre Boule, author of The Bridge Over The River Kwai, was released. The novel told the story of two interstellar poets who discover a manuscript in a bottle floating among the stars.

The manuscript chronicles the adventures of a French journalist and astronaut from 26th Century Earth named Ulysee Merou who lands on a planet where intelligent apes rule and humans are pets or worse. As a talking, intelligent human, he poses a threat to this society and so he eventually escapes in his spaceship along with a human female from the planet. Returning to his beloved Paris, he is
shocked to discover at the airport that apes have begun to take over the Earth and so he escapes again to seek some planet where man rules. The star poets, who are two intelligent chimpanzees, are amused by this story about such an oddity as a supposedly intelligent human.

By the time this book was translated to a screenplay, only the basic premise and a handful of names (Zira, Cornelius, Zaius, Nova) remained the same. However, the novel did spark interest among film companies.

Arthur P. Jacobs, a producer who had been considering remaking King Kong, came across the novel and was intrigued. There had been two previous attempts by the King Brothers and Blake Edwards to
The captured Taylor on display in Ape City.

develop the property. The screenwriter for those projects was Rod Serling, best known for his intelligent and socially conscious scripts for the fabled Twilight Zone television series.

Serling contributed a revised script to Jacobs, who eventually brought in the formerly black-listed screenwriter Michael Wilson—who had worked, and been denied credit on, both Lawrence Of Arabia and The Bridge On The River Kwai—to add some satirical humor to the dialog. Obviously, Serling and Wilson's philosophies helped shape the final script's emphasis on tolerance. The final element to be added was the much lauded special make-up designed by John Chambers which was able to successfully create the illusion of real apes rather than actors in masks.

The first film was released shortly before Stanley Kubrick's masterpiece 2001: A Space Odyssey and the critical and financial success of the two films changed forever the world of science fiction. (The Apes films permitted 20th Century Fox to take a chance on a new science fiction film by George Lucas, Star Wars.)

The story begins in Planet Of The Apes (Director: Franklin J. Schaffner. Screenwriters: Rod Serling & Michael Wilson. 1968). After being in suspended animation for centuries—thanks to a time warp—a quartet of astronauts crash on a planet where talking, intelligent apes are the ruling class and mute humans are primitive savages. The sole female astronaut is dead on arrival because of faulty hibernatory equipment. After some initial exploration of the planet, one of the trio of men is shot by gorillas and stuffed, another lobotomized, and the third, named Taylor (and played by Charlton Heston), temporarily loses his power of speech and is held for gelding and study. Labelled “Bright Eyes,” Taylor captures the attention of two chimpanzee scientists, Zira and Cornelius (played by Kim Hunter and Roddy McDowall).

When he regains his ability to talk, Taylor challenges the ape society and with the assistance of Zira and Cornelius escapes on horseback with his new female mate, Nova, into an area known as the Forbidden Zone. While there, preliminary
excavation unearths evidence that man was once the ruler of the planet. This assumption is reinforced by the “shock” ending where Taylor finds the remains of the Statue of Liberty on the beach and must confront the fact that he has landed on the Earth of the future after a nuclear catastrophe has shifted the natural order.

Beginning right where the first film ended, *Beneath The Planet Of The Apes* (Director: Ted Post. Screenwriters: Paul Dehn & Mort Abrahams. 1970) shows Taylor proceeding further into the Forbidden Zone where he is confronted by unusual phenomena like an earthquake and a wall of flame. Taylor disappears.

Apparently, another spaceship was launched to find out what happened to Taylor’s ship because astronaut Brent (played by James Franciscus) lands on the planet to search for the crew of Taylor’s ship. He finds the inarticulate Nova who takes him back to the ape village to meet with Zira and Cornelius. Brent and Nova are captured, escape and eventually discover an ancient subway entrance leading to the underground ruins of New York where there are scarred mutant humans who communicate telepathically and have the power to create illusions.

These mutants religiously worship a bomb, the infamous Alpha-Omega bomb which was designed to destroy the entire planet. In an effort to locate more food, militaristic gorillas also uncover this hidden civilization and a battle ensues where the mutants and all the humans (Brent, Nova and Taylor) are killed.

However, Taylor with his last dying effort is able to detonate the bomb, destroying the entire planet.

(Trivia buffs take note: *Beneath The Planet Of The Apes* is the only Apes movie that doesn’t feature Roddy McDowall. Busy with other projects, his role as Cornelius is played by another actor in ape make-up.)

In *Escape From The Planet Of The Apes* (Director: Don Taylor. Screenwriter: Paul...
The streets of Ape City.

Dehn. 1971), just before Taylor blew up the planet, Zira, Cornelius and Dr. Milo (Sal Mineo in his last role) get Taylor's spaceship working and leave the world of 3955 to journey back to 1973 where they land off the coast of Los Angeles. Pretending to be mute, they are put in the L. A. Zoo but reveal themselves when Dr. Milo is killed by a gorilla.

Befriended by two psychiatrists (played by Bradford Dillman and Natalie Trundy, also known as Mrs. Arthur P. Jacobs) they are forced to testify before a Senate committee who determine that to save the future world from ape domination, the chimpanzees need to be sterilized. Zira is pregnant so she and Cornelius decide to escape and find refuge in a traveling circus where the baby is born. They name the child Milo in honor of their dead scientist friend.

After switching the child with a normal chimp, Zira and Cornelius continue to flee the government forces who eventually trap them aboard a freighter in L. A. Harbor and kill all three of them. Of course, the baby Milo is safe at the circus with the circus's owner, Armando (played by Ricardo Montalban).

In Conquest Of The Planet Of The Apes (Director: J. Lee Thompson. Screenwriter: Paul Dehn. 1972), it is revealed that in 1983 a plague killed every dog and cat in the world and so apes became the new household pets. People found that apes could be trained to do menial labor and so they became more than pets, they became slaves, working in jobs as waiters, messengers and janitors.

In 1991, Armando brings the adult Milo to a city to distribute circus leaflets and they witness a policeman's brutality to an ape. In anger, Milo cries out, revealing that he can talk. Milo escapes, hiding with a group of apes who are being sent for behavioral conditioning.

Governor Breck (Don Murray) has Armando arrested. Rather than reveal
where Milo is hiding, Armando commits suicide. Milo gains the confidence of the other apes being trained and takes the name Caesar when he is auctioned off to Breck. Working secretly with the apes who are hiding knives and clubs, Caesar leads a bloody rebellion that the apes win, leaving the city destroyed.

_Battle For The Planets Of The Apes_ (Director: J. Lee Thompson. Screenwriters: Paul Dehn, John William Corington and Joyce Hooper Corlington. 1973) is narrated in flashback by the Lawgiver who is speaking to students in the year 2670. The story continues as Caesar has established Ape City, hoping apes and humans can live peacefully together. However, the militant gorillas led by Aldo (Claude Akins) want to kill all humans, so to gain an edge, Caesar, the orangutan scientist Virgil and the human McDonald travel to the vaults beneath the Forbidden City to find tapes that Zira and Cornelius made during the Senate committee investigations.

An atomic war occurred after the initial ape rebellion and vengeful human mutants now live under the city. They unsuccessfully attack the travelers from Ape City and eventually attack Ape City where they are defeated by the gorilla army. Aldo then challenges Caesar for the leadership of the apes and dies. Caesar declares that in the future humans, apes and mutants need to live as equals, and that hope is reinforced by the fact that the Lawgiver's pupils are both apes and humans.

A divergent storyline occurs in the thirteen episode television series _Planet Of The Apes_ (1974). Three astronauts in a USAF space capsule encounter a radioactive turbulence and are thrust from 1988 to Earth in the year 3085. One astronaut dies in the crash landing but the other two, Alan Virdon and Pete Burke, are captured by intelligent apes.

An intellectual chimpanzee, Galen, helps the astronauts escape but during the escape one of the ape leaders is accidentally killed and the three fugitives are hunted as murderers.

(Episodes from the short-lived television series were re-edited into five "movies" that are occasionally run late at night or during special "Planet Of The Apes Week" on various independent stations.)

_Return To The Planet Of The Apes_ (1975) was an animated series developed by Doug Wildey, the man primarily responsible for the ever-popular _Jonny Quest_. Bill Hudson and his young friends Jeff Carter and Judy Franklin have their spaceship hurled through a space warp and crash about two thousand years in the future on a planet ruled by apes. Cornelius and Zira are present but as young chimpanzee counterparts to the human teenagers. The 13 episodes revolved around natural dangers on this new world rather than focusing on the ape-human conflicts of earlier versions.


Now, more than a decade later, Malibu Graphics has chosen to again explore this dark world where the familiar is now strange, where the Earth is an alien landscape and where the beast is king. Man in his arrogance has destroyed paradise and what remains has been inherited by a frightening mirror image of man that lives by the credo: "The only good human is a dead human!"

Jim Korkis is a long time science fiction film fan who in 1973 was working as a tour guide and tram driver at the L. A. Zoo. He never met Zira and Cornelius but a decade later he performed as Harry the Gorilla for over two hundred performances at Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park in Southern California.
100 Years After The Death Of Caesar, Ape City Rises Again In All New Adventures Based On The Classic Science Fiction Film, PLANET OF THE APES!