

# STARBURST

## ALIEN ART

RON COBB ON  
CREATING A MOVIE

## PLANET OF THE APES

HOW TV MADE A  
MONKEY OF A TOP  
MOVIE SERIES

## TV FANTASY

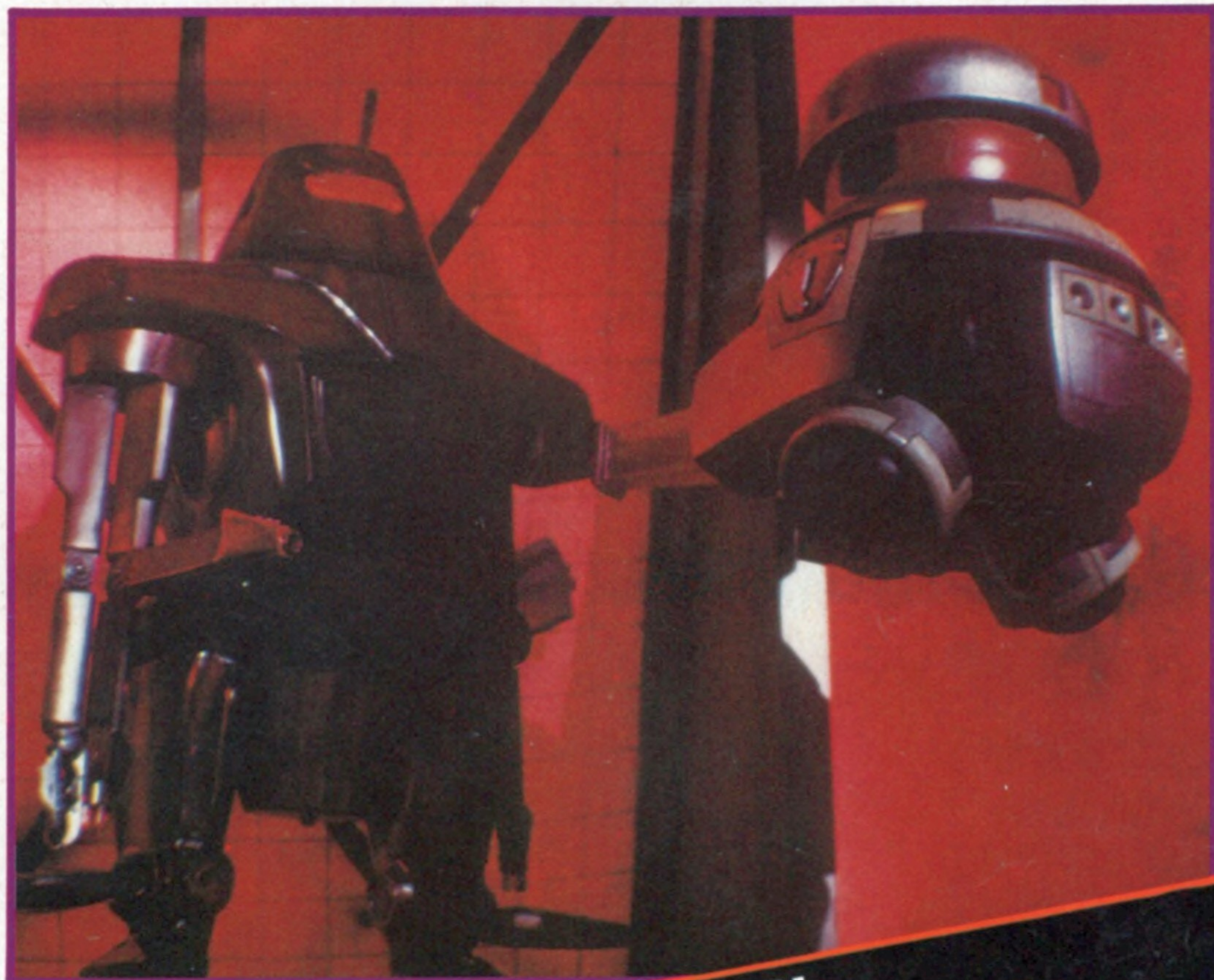
FROM CAPTAIN VIDEO  
TO THE OUTER LIMITS

## NIGEL KNEALE

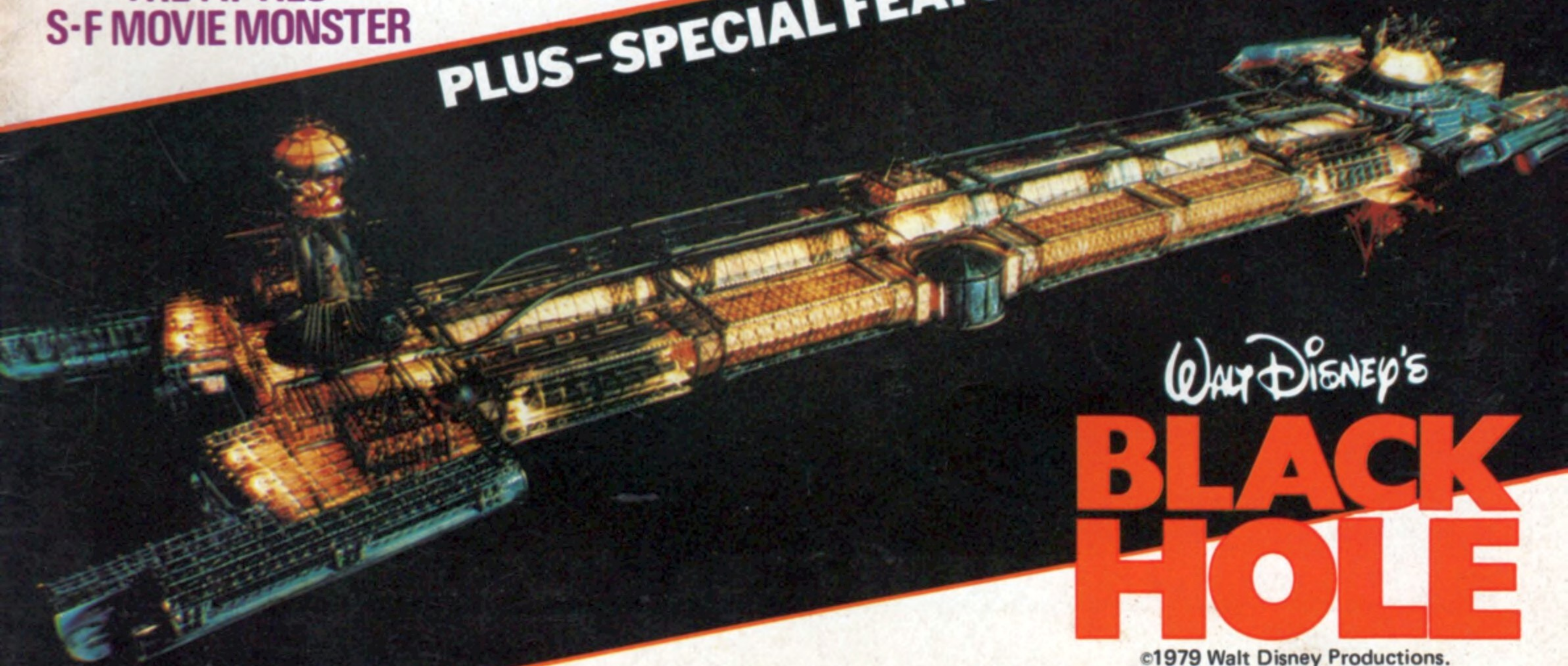
TV WRITER OF 1984  
AND QUATERMASS  
SPEAKS OUT

## KRONOS

A LOOK BACK AT  
THE FIFTIES  
S-F MOVIE MONSTER



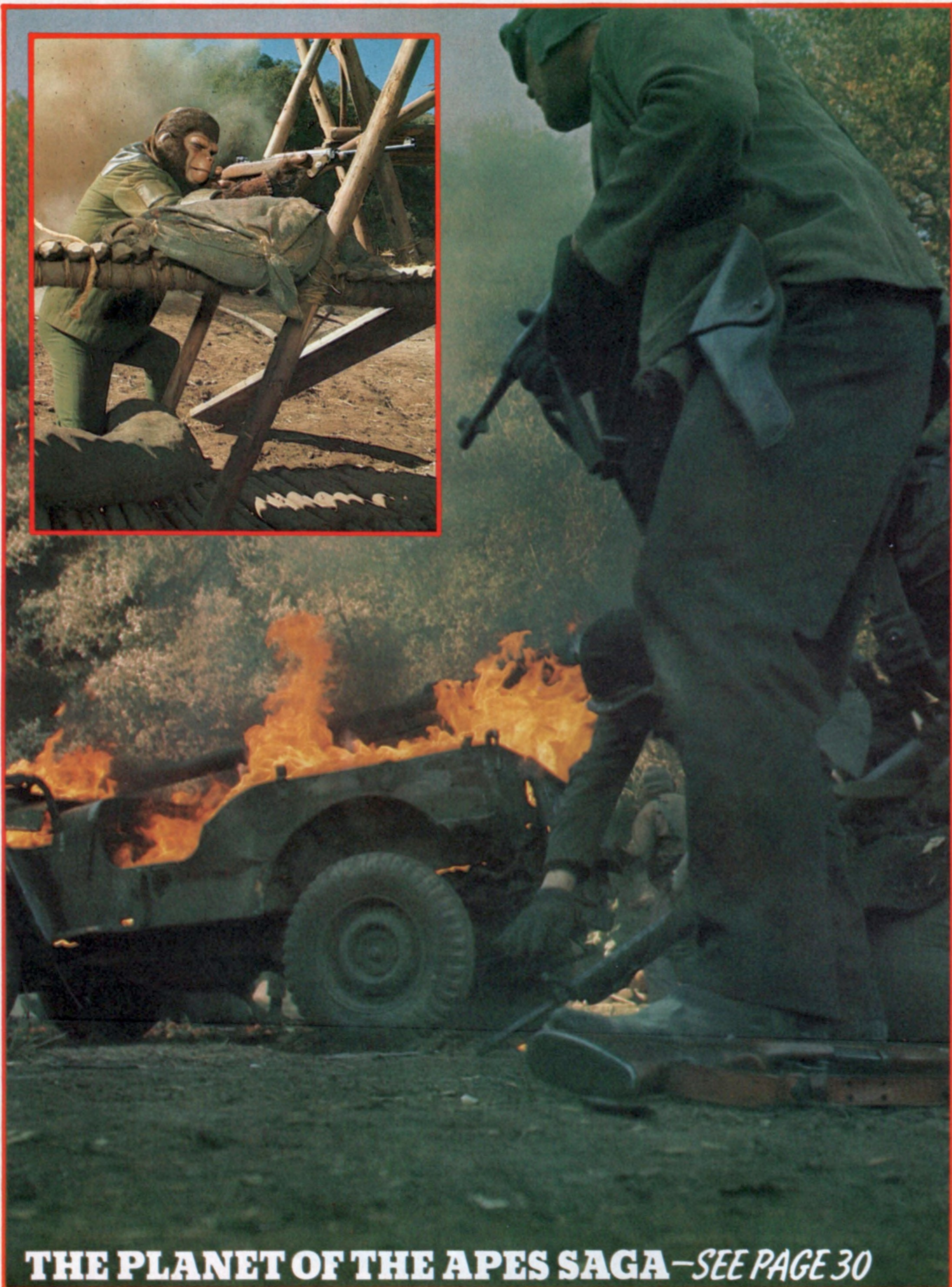
PLUS-SPECIAL FEATURE ON



WALT DISNEY'S  
**BLACK  
HOLE**

©1979 Walt Disney Productions.





**THE PLANET OF THE APES SAGA—SEE PAGE 30**



# STARBURST

SCIENCE FANTASY IN TELEVISION, CINEMA AND GRAPHICS

Volume 2, Number 4

Edited and designed by Dez Skinn

Associate Editor: Alan McKenzie  
Art Editor: Paul Harwood  
Art Assistance: Steve Mackney  
Production: John Kelly  
Advertising: Top Team Ltd  
Distribution: Comag

Writers this issue:  
John Brosnan  
Tony Crawley  
Phil Edwards  
John Fleming  
Tise Vahimagi

Publisher: Stan Lee

**W**e've some good news, some bad news, and some more good news this month. Here's the first bit of good news! This issue we celebrate completing our second year of publication on *Starburst*! (Remember how I said in issue one's editorial that we intended to be around for a long time?)

Now the bad news: In order to keep the cover price within *everybody's* reach we've had to sacrifice 6 pages of our colour — we're down from 14 to 8 glossy colour pages.

Now the other bit of *good* news: To make up for losing six colour pages, we've added 14 black and white pages! That's right. If *Starburst 16* feels thicker, you know why... it *is* thicker. From 48 pages to 56.

I remember once being told it's fatal in publishing to draw attention to any shortcomings by admitting them, but we figure we owe you an explanation. So here it is.

We preferred the smaller — but more colourful — look. It would be easy to pass the change off by baffling you with unknowns, paper cost increases, labour charges, and so on. But instead, because you've all proven such a sincere, loyal audience, here is the sincere truth.

**DISTRIBUTION.** That's the key to success. No matter how good a mag is, unless it actually reaches the shops it just can't sell — no one knows it exists. And that applies to *any* magazine.

We constantly receive letters from you saying you can't *find* *Starburst*. Why? Poor distribution. But it's not one's fault. Unless someone makes the newsagent aware of the mag, he isn't likely to order it from his wholesaler. And unless someone makes the wholesaler aware of the mag, he isn't going to order it from the distributor. And unless someone orders it from the distributor, he isn't going to order it from us — the publishers.

We shout, we scream, we fight. But we're at the wrong end! It really is down to you, the reader. Only if you place an order with your newsagent, instead of spending time and money searching all around town, can you help us — and yourselves. You know the mag exists, your local newsagent/Smith's/Menzies/whoever maybe doesn't. So tell them about us! Tell them our distributor is Comag of West Drayton. Tell them to order it.

They'll be glad you did, because if they *know* it exists, and *know* you want it — they'll get it. And probably a few extra copies too, so someone else will thank you for your trouble when he/she discovers we exist.

Listen, you're always telling us how much you like *Starburst*, so go tell your newsagent too! We're still Britain's number one and only science fiction media mag, so let's try to keep it that way, huh?

And if you still have problems getting hold of *Starburst*, write to me about it.

Who knows, one day we might have a hundred pages for 50p!

Best wishes,

*Dez Skinn*

Dez Skinn/Editor.

## Ron Cobb on Alien .....4

Concept artist on *Alien*, Ron Cobb, talks to *Starburst* about his design work on *Dark Star*, *Star Wars*, the unfilmed *Dune* and, of course, *Alien*.

## Gerry Anderson's UFO .....10

*Starburst* examines Gerry Anderson's first foray into live action after almost twenty years of puppet shows and talks to some of the people involved in the production of the series.

## The Starburst Interview: Nigel Kneale .....14

Nigel Kneale is generally acknowledged as one of Britain's top fantasy screen writers. Kneale speaks out about his early *Quatermass* series, their mishandling by Hammer Films and his latest offering for Thames Television entitled *Quatermass*.

## Things to Come .....20

Our regular monthly look at what is new and what is upcoming in the worlds science fiction and fantasy on television and in the cinema.

## The Black Hole .....24

**The Black Hole** is a landmark film for Walt Disney Studios, their first film made with an adult audience in mind. We present a special preview of this new movie by Alan Murdoch.

## The Saga of the Planet of the Apes .....30

One of the great success stories of the last ten years, the *Planet of the Apes* series consisted of five feature films, a live-action tv series and a cartoon tv series. *Starburst* looks at the progress of the Apes over the last ten years.

## Starburst SF Classics: Kronos .....41

Richard Holliss takes a look back to 1957 and the sf movie by *Forbidden Planet's* Irving Block, *Kronos*.

## Book World .....46

*Starburst* reviews some of the many science fiction and fantasy books that are currently available.

## A History of TV Science Fiction .....48

After our highly successful overview of science fiction in the cinema way back in *Starburst 3*, Tise Vahimagi covers the progress of sf on tv from *Captain Video* to *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* in the first part of a two-part feature.

Published monthly by Marvel Comics Ltd., Jadwin House, 205-211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5. All photographic material is copyright of BBC, NBC, ABC, CBS, ITC, IBA, Columbia, Scotia-American, Rank, Twentieth Century-Fox, United Artists, Warner Brothers, Paramount, Oppidan, Walt Disney, Toei Studios, CIC, EMI, MGM, and MCA-Universal and appears with their kind permission. All remaining content is copyright of Marvel Comics Ltd., 1979. All rights reserved. All Advertising to Top Team Productions Ltd., 97 Fleet Street, London EC4, 01-353 4992. Concept by Dez Skinn. Printed in the United Kingdom.





# PLANET OF THE APES



ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR AND SUCCESSFUL FANTASY MOVIES OF THE 1960s ENDED UP AS A FIVE-PART SERIES, 13-EPIISODE TV SHOW AND AN EVEN SHORTER ANIMATED KIDDIE TV SERIES — A SAD FINALE TO A BRILLIANT CONCEPT. PHIL EDWARDS TAKES A LOOK BACK AT WHAT ALL THE FUSS WAS ABOUT.

In 1968, Warner/Seven Arts sold the film rights to Pierre Boulle's novel, *Monkey Planet*, to Twentieth Century-Fox, because the proposed production budget ran to a staggering twelve million dollars. Warner/Seven Arts had optioned the film rights from the three-man team of producer Arthur P. Jacobs, screenwriter Rod Serling and director Blake Edwards. Fox were keen to acquire a major science fiction property to follow the success of their *Fantastic Voyage*, released the previous year. The resulting film, *Planet of the Apes*, netted fifteen million dollars in American and Canadian first-run rentals and went on to spawn four sequels, a spin-off television series, a cartoon series and a whole host of merchandised items from comic books to ape masks, toys and games.

After Fox took on the project (and producer Jacobs) they hired Michael Wilson to work on Serling's script in an effort to bring the lavish budget down to more realistic proportions. No longer did the Apes wear suits, drive cars or hang

**A group of Astronauts land on a world where Apes hunt humans.**

out in Simian night-clubs. They became an odd mixture of futuristic medical experimenters, carrying out lobotomies and vivisection on the less-intelligent humans, though they lived in cave-like houses, rode horses and used primitive rifles. By altering the depiction of the Ape society, the producer was able to budget the film at the more realistic figure of five million dollars.

Briefly, the first *Planet of the Apes* film tells the story of four astronauts, three men and one woman, who crash-land their space ship on a hostile planet. The woman dies on impact, her suspended animation chamber breaking open too soon, causing her to age to a wizened mummy in a matter of seconds. The three men escape from the ship only to discover that they have landed on a world where the advanced Apes hunt humans, who are a lower, non-lingual form of life, as vermin. The astronauts become the quarry of these terrible huntsmen. One of them is killed outright, the other two are captured and one of these, Taylor (*Charlton Heston*) is singled out by two Ape scientists, Dr Zira and Cornelius (*Kim Hunter* and *Roddy McDowall*) for medical experimentation.

But Taylor soon escapes, taking with him a female human, Nova (*Linda*



Top: A cover painting from Marvel's *Planet of the Apes* comic. Above: A dramatic scene from *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*.



Harrison). They head towards the Forbidden Zone, pursued by Dr Zaius (*Maurice Evans*), the head of the organ-utan scientist class, and Zira and Cornelius. It is here on a desolate beach that Taylor learns the secret of the Planet of the Apes. Half-buried in the sand is the remains of the Statue of Liberty — Taylor's ship has flown through a time gate and, in one of the most potent images in all science fiction cinema, is presented with the future of Earth.

Jacob's choice of director, Franklyn J. Schaffner, proved a wise one. Schaffner is best known for his big budget features like *Patton*, *Papillon* and the recently-released (though less-than-successful) *Boys from Brazil*. Schaffner brought a rare dignity to the film, extracting strong performances from his actors, as well as keeping the special effects in control and to a minimum.

The Ape village was constructed inexpensively in what was then a relatively new process, sculpted from quick-drying polyurethane foam sprayed onto wire frames from a compressed air gun. The substance, though much stronger than either plastic or papier mache, is ex-



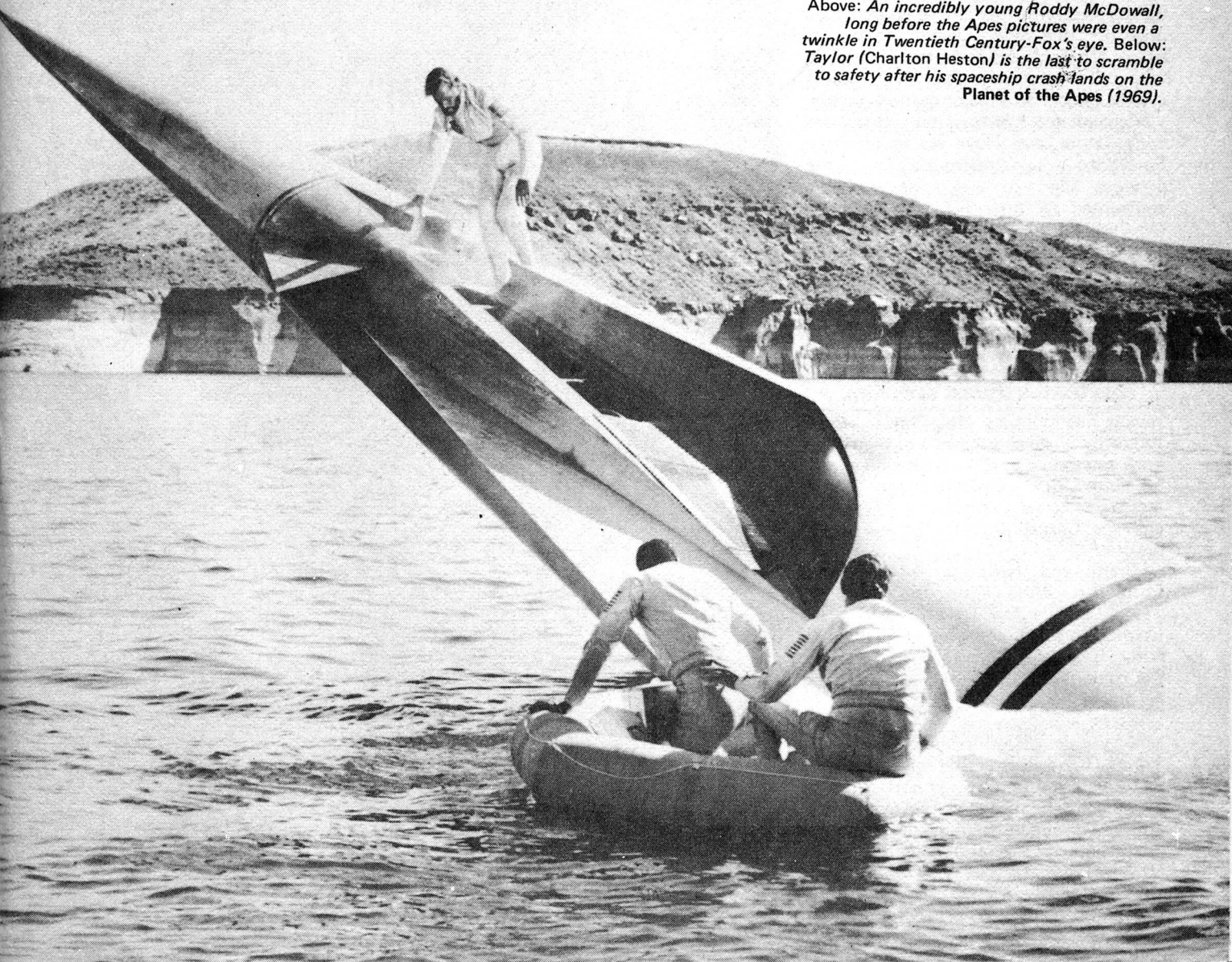
tremely light.

Perhaps the most famous single element of *Planet of the Apes* is the Academy Award winning makeup design of John Chambers, reputed to have cost almost one million dollars of the film's budget. It was vital that the Ape makeup be completely believable as it was on screen almost constantly, often in close-ups. Chambers experimented, developing a blend of latex and porous paint which allowed the actors' skin to breathe. In the early stages of production, the makeup took six hours to apply by a team of artists trained by Chambers. Further refinements allowed the time to be reduced to around three and a half hours.

The film was beautifully photographed by Academy Award winner, Leon Shamroy, and the special opticals, most notably employed in the closing Statue of Liberty scene, were created by L. B. Abbott, Arthur Cruikshank (who worked on Disney's *The Black Hole*) and Emil Kosa Jr.

*Planet of the Apes* (1968) only scratched the surface of Ape society, the structure of which would be further developed in the sequels. The military are

*Above: An incredibly young Roddy McDowall, long before the Apes pictures were even a twinkle in Twentieth Century-Fox's eye. Below: Taylor (Charlton Heston) is the last to scramble to safety after his spaceship crash-lands on the Planet of the Apes (1969).*





gorillas, the top scientists are orangutans and the rest of the group are chimpanzees. The society is ruled by a council of elder representatives from each group, though as later films would show, the gorillas would appear to be the most powerful group.

The movie is marred only by a couple of cheap gags. One has three orangutans striking the "hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil" pose. This was shot by Schaffner as a joke to be included in the daily "rushes" and no more. However, Fox executives were so struck by the image of the scene that they demanded it be left in the final cut. Another has Zira saying, quite seriously, "Human see, human do!" to the imprisoned Taylor.

---

#### ***Planet of the Apes* opened to lukewarm reviews.**

---

Completed after fifty-nine days of shooting, ***Planet of the Apes*** opened to lukewarm reviews by the critics, but ecstatic praise from the public.

With this smash hit on their hands, it was only natural that Fox should plan a sequel. ***Beneath the Planet of the Apes*** (1970) went into production the following year, scripted by ex-film critic Paul Dehn. Dehn was instructed to wrap up the saga with this film as Fox planned only this one sequel. Dehn and his co-writer Mort Abrahams turned in a script with one of the most down-beat endings ever accorded to a major motion picture.

***Beneath the Planet of the Apes*** opens with Taylor and Nova riding into the Forbidden Zone, repeated from the previous film. As they ride they are confronted by a wall of flame, which vanishes as quickly as it appears. As Taylor dismounts and walks towards the place where it had been he disappears completely. And simultaneously another spaceship crashes. Out of it crawls Brent (*James Franciscus*), the only survivor of a

---

#### **Roddy McDowall was unavailable for the second apes film.**

---

rescue mission sent after Taylor. He is found by Nova and the two of them head back towards Ape City, where they meet up with Zira. (Unfortunately, Roddy McDowall was unavailable for this picture and the Cornelius character was wisely omitted).

Brent and Nova set off for the Forbidden Zone again in search of Taylor, pursued by Dr Zaius and Ursus (*James Gregory*), the general of the Ape army. It is Ursus' hope to finally disprove the rumour that humans had once ruled his planet.

Brent and Nova discover an entrance leading underground to the ruins of New York's Grand Central Station—a beautiful matte painting by L. B. Abbott. Without warning Brent becomes possessed and attacks Nova, almost killing her. They are intercepted by several humans and taken







to the subterranean lair of the mutant survivors of the Third World War. These human mutants appear normal, although their main form of communication is telepathy.

Brent is locked up with the already imprisoned Taylor and, controlled by the mutants, the two are made to fight in a violent and bloody confrontation. Managing to break the control they escape to witness a macabre sight. The mutants are praying to the last remaining atomic bomb, intoning a weird litany that culminates with them peeling off their human masks and revealing their horrific, atomically-scarred faces. Suddenly the apes arrive on the scene and an all-out battle ensues. Nova and Brent are killed

### ***Beneath the Planet of the Apes*** was a fast, tough film.

and Taylor, his stomach shot out, reaches the controls and detonates the bomb, finally obliterating the planet.

*Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, like its forerunner, was accorded high production values, and was directed in a fast, tough style by Ted Post. Once again, John Chambers supervised the makeup, also designing the post-nuclear mutants' makeup.

Post married his film to the ending of *Planet of the Apes* so seamlessly that the two movies can be run one after the other as a three hour feature with no appreciable jump.

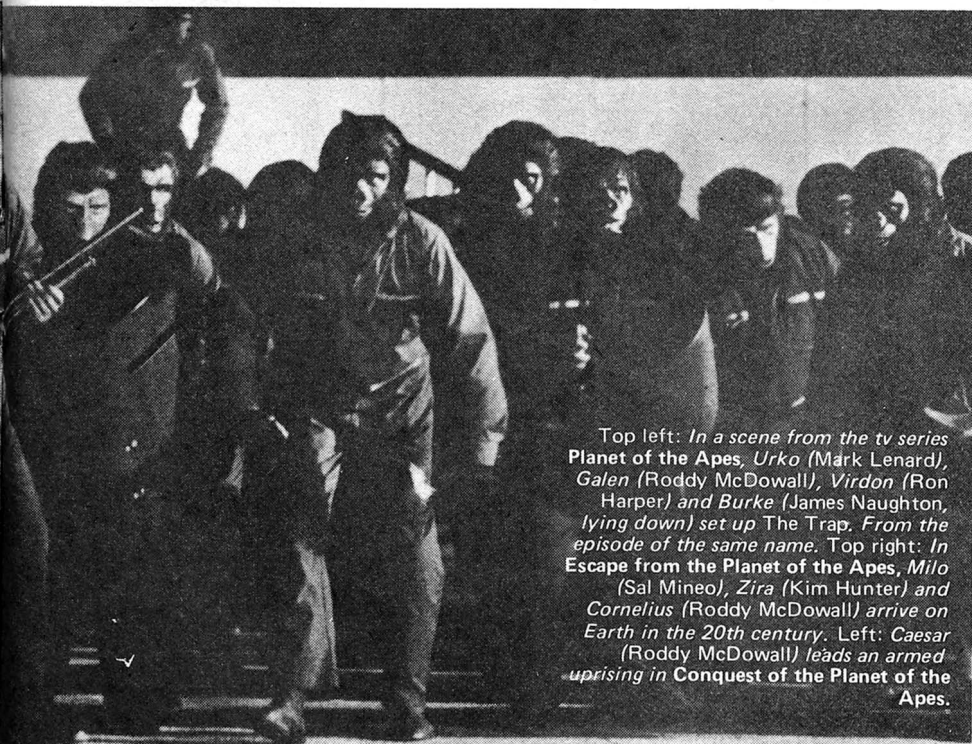
With *Planet of the Apes* continuing to reap in the profits world-wide and its sequel also making the cash registers overflow, Fox realised they had made a mistake in asking writer Paul Dehn to terminate the series. They hired him once again to script a third film. The result was *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* (1971), considered by many to be the best of the series.

The film opens with a panic stricken

### ***The third Apes film contains*** many comic scenes.

Zira and Cornelius aware that when it becomes known that Earth was once ruled by humans Ape society will crumble. Finding Brent's crashed spaceship they repair it and escape with another ape, Milo (*Sal Mineo*), into space and time and find themselves in California of 1974. The government is astonished that apes have returned in place of the astronauts.

After Milo is killed by a gorilla, it is discovered that Zira is pregnant. The world becomes enamoured of the talking intelligent apes and they are accepted into the highest circles. This gives director Don Taylor and writer Dehn a chance for some truly comic sequences, played brilliantly by Kim Hunter and Roddy McDowall. However it isn't long before the government begins to worry about the future of the world, realising that they have a chance to change the future



Top left: In a scene from the tv series *Planet of the Apes*, Urko (Mark Lenard), Galen (Roddy McDowall), Viridon (Ron Harper) and Burke (James Naughton, lying down) set up The Trap. From the episode of the same name. Top right: In *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*, Milo (Sal Mineo), Zira (Kim Hunter) and Cornelius (Roddy McDowall) arrive on Earth in the 20th century. Left: Caesar (Roddy McDowall) leads an armed uprising in *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes*.



by destroying the two apes.

In a terrifying scene, Zira and Cornelius are mercilessly hunted down and killed. Zira's newborn son is also apparently killed but in an epilogue we see that she has substituted an ordinary baby chip for her child and the real baby is in the care of circus owner Armado (Ricardo Montalban). The film closes with the baby chimp, cradled in Armado's arms crying "Mama, mama".

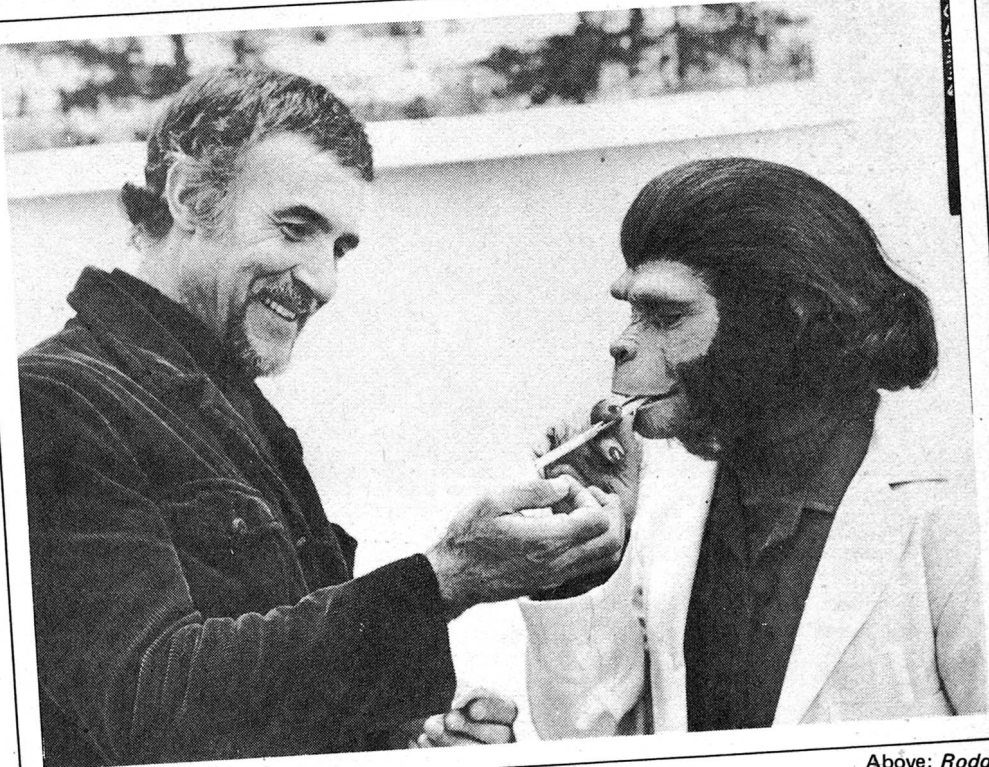
Don Taylor plays the film as an allegory and apart from the tragic ending,

**Conquest was originally planned as the last Apes film in the series.**

the feature has a beautifully judged tone of satirical whimsy.

Once again, the Apes were a box-office success. The first film was reissued to another generation of viewers. Fox realised that the demand for further adventures had only marginally diminished and that there was still considerable box-office mileage in the Apes concept. Dehn was asked to write another movie, this time tying up as much of the mythology as possible which had started in the first three films.

**Conquest of the Planet of the Apes** (1972), directed by Englishman J. Lee



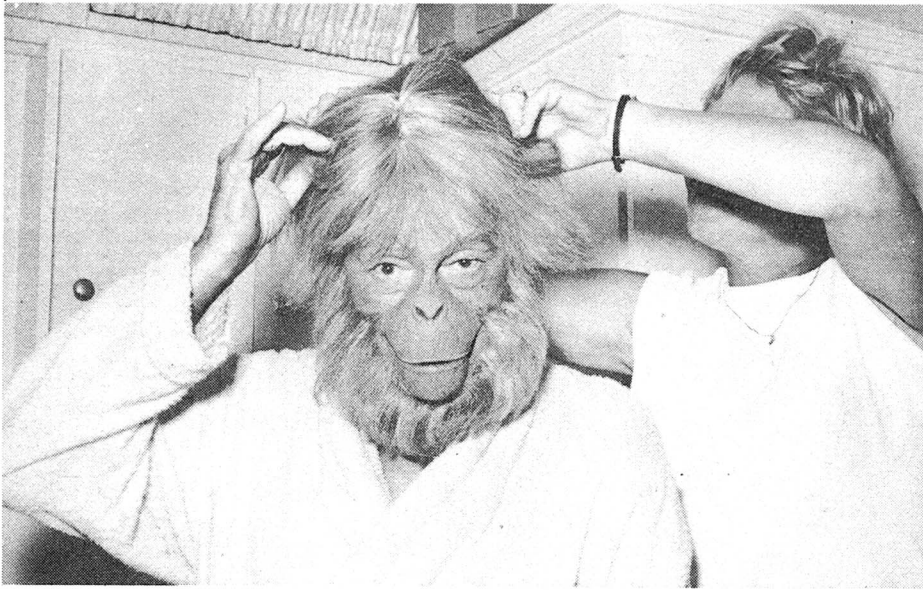
Above: Roddy McDowall enjoys a cigarette. Below: a group of militant gorillas voice their opinions in *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1970)







Above: The Council of Elders sit in judgement of Taylor (Charlton Heston) in *Planet of the Apes* (1968). Below: Maurice Evans is made up for his role as Dr Zaius in the first film of the series, *Planet of the Apes*. Bottom: A group of Apes seem puzzled by some high-powered reading material. *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973).



Thompson (*Cape Fear*, *Guns of Navarone* etc), is the most violent of the Apes series. It is also the most uncompromising in its presentation of a future world, ruled by a ruthless dictator, Governor Breck (*Don Murray*). Breck's world is a police state, twenty years on from *Escape from Planet of the Apes*. He fears that the child of the talking apes still lives and is not reassured by the disease that has spread through the world, killing off all

#### ***Conquest* tried to put across an allegorical message.**

domestic pets. Humans demanding animal company turn to apes, first as pets, then as slaves. Apes are conditioned with fire and electricity to be completely compliant to their human masters. But society is disrupted when a revolution is instigated by Caesar (*Roddy McDowall* again), the son of Cornelius and Zira, who has been brought to the city by Armado.

The film seemed to be trying to put across an allegorical racial message, but somewhere along the line the message

became garbled and is hardly apparent.

By the time of *Conquest*, John Chambers acted only in an advisory capacity on the film, the actual makeup being supervised by Donald Striepke who had worked as Chambers' assistant on *Escape*.

Young jazz musician Tom Scott, best known for his work with singer Joni Mitchell and as composer of the original theme for the tv series *Starsky and Hutch* turned in an appropriately discordant score, which further added to the violent mood of the film.

Box office returns were down on this film. The public appeared to be tiring of the concept. But even though the take was less, Fox still felt that they could squeeze one more feature from the formula and bring the story the full

#### ***Battle* brought the series the full circle.**

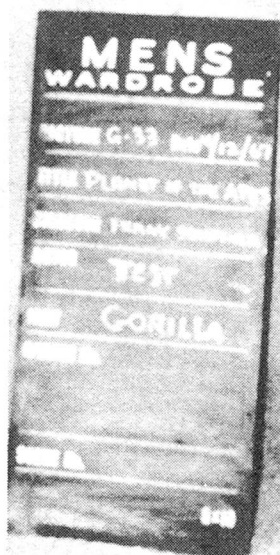
circle to the beginning of the first feature of the series.

*Battle for the Planet of the Apes*, made in 1973 and written by John William Corrington and Joyce Hooper Corrington, was also directed by J. Lee Thompson. It tells the story of the world following a nuclear holocaust, a result of a war between apes and humans. The world is divided into three factions: the peaceful chimps, led by Caesar, the militant gorillas, led by Aldo (*Claude Atkins*) and the mutant humans who live in the ruins of civilisation, which presumably became the Forbidden Zone as the years passed. Aldo allies himself with the leader of the mutants, Kolp (*Severan Darden*), in an all-out attack on Ape City. Like the earlier Thompson film, *Battle* is strong on physical violence, though by this time the series was





Right: An extra poses for a test photo of the makeup and costume for the gorillas in *Planet of the Apes* (1968). Below: Taylor (Charlton Heston) in a scene from the second film of the series *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970).



considered to be aimed more towards the young market. Once again it seemed the movie was trying to impart some kind of message, although with the confused and confusing plot it is difficult to understand what the message was.

The *Monthly Film Bulletin* perhaps summed up the film best when it described the political content: "Some-

### **The sets and masks from the films were used in the tv series.**

where beneath the routine action and adventure, a small voice still appears to be whispering something about present-day racial intolerance, although the juxtaposition of black and white humans with good chimpanzees and bad gorillas ensures that the message is muffled."

Fox tried to get yet more mileage from the sets and masks by using them in a thirteen episode television series in 1974. Even more than the final films in the series, it was aimed at a pre-teen market and as is so often the case with children's shows, the producers underestimated the intelligence of their audience.

Following the demise of the television

### **The cartoon series died a well-deserved death.**

series, a limited animation version of the idea was produced, only to die a well-deserved death within a few episodes.

Despite the somewhat sad end of the Apes series, the five feature films remain unique in film history. They presented a consistently high record of production values—technical credits almost always being of the highest order. And through screenings on British television, the Saga of the Planet of the Apes is being introduced to a whole new generation of Apes fans.

