

The Definitive Science Fiction Television Encyclopedia

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5th Edition

PLANET OF THE APES



Like the film series, Planet of the Apes deals with Earth in the distant future where apes have become the rulers of the planet and men are inferior to them. Man's scientific knowledge has all but been lost and both apes and men live in a world not unlike mediaeval times. Like the first two films in the theatrical series, a pair of American astronauts pass through a time warp and land on the future version of the Earth where they become hunted by the apes who rule it.

In the TV series the two astronauts are Alan Viridon and Pete Burke. Their spaceship had been launched in the year 1980 and ended up returning to Earth in the year 3085, with the pair having only aged less than a day. Their spaceship crash-lands and they are able to salvage the ship's flight records. But, they have no means of playing them back. The pair immediately become hunted by the apes in charge-Dr. Zaius, head of the apes governing council and General Urko- the leader of the apes military, who makes capturing the astronauts a personal obsession.

Viridon and Burke are befriended by a chimpanzee named Galen (played by Roddy McDowell, who had appeared as a different ape in the feature films). The trio embark on a quest to try and find some means of playing back the astronauts' flight records- which may give them some clue how to return to their own time- and avoid being captured by Urko and his soldiers. In other words a variation of The Fugitive.

A less-successful spin-off of the films, which were adapted from a novel of the same name by Pierre Boulle. An animated spin-off of the TV spin-off of the film adaptation of the novel was "Beyond the Planet of the Apes", on NBC from September 1975 to September 1976. Roddy McDowell has starred in numerous science fiction shows including BATMAN and THE FANTASTIC JOURNEY. Mark Lenard is more famous for playing Mr. Spock's father Sarek, in STAR TREK and STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION. Roddy McDowell actually reprised his role as Galen from the Planet of the Apes films.

1974 adventure series based on the hugely successful film of the same name, with Ape star Roddy McDowell recreating his sympathetic role as the young chimp Galen. But though essentially aimed at providing action entertainment for a family audience, the series did retain some of the flavour of Pierre Boulle's original allegorical novel, making a few trenchant observations on man's morality, prejudices and fears through the creation of the ape society in which orang-utans were the ruling class, gorillas the muscle-headed enforcers and chimpanzees the intellectuals. This aspect of the series was not lost on the British critics who gave it their blessing.

It is the thoughtful chimp Galen who befriends the astronauts and becomes their ally in the flight from the gorilla leader Urko. The other leading ape is the orang-utan councillor Zaius who spends much of his time trying to moderate the excesses of Urko. Roddy McDowell and the other 'ape' actors endured gruelling three-and-a-half hour make-up sessions to achieve the distinctive simian look.

Planet of the Apes premiered in Britain in October 1974 for a run that included most of the ITV network, and the series was a great success, regularly pulling in audiences of up to 12 million. But in America it achieved a modest 27 per cent rating - three below the required minimum - and paymasters CBS abruptly halted production after just 14 of the scheduled 24 episodes, leaving the story hanging (literally) in mid-air. Repeat runs on Channel Four in 1993 and Bravo in 1996.

Loosely based on the series of successful films that began with Planet of the Apes, the TV series that bears the same name is not a continuation of the theatrical series (remember the world was destroyed in the second film) but rather a series based on the novel of the same name by Pierre Boulle.

CBS had ordered the series due to the rating success of the theatrical films when they had aired them. The TV series was not the ratings success that the films were and was cancelled after half a season. The following year NBC produced an animated TV series entitled Return to the Planet of the Apes that lasted one season. The

animated version featured three astronauts. Bill, Jeff and Judy, becoming stranded on the planet of the apes. Their apes were a bit more technologically advanced than they were in the films or live action TV series. The five films in the Planet of the Apes theatrical series are also included in this guide, as are the animated adventures. Both the theatrical movies and the five episode compilations are often run on independent TV stations one each weeknight as part of a Planet of the Apes theme week.

The series producer was Stan Hough, executive producer was Herbert Hirschman and the make up was created by Dan Striepeke. The series was run in the UK from the 13th October 1974 - 19th January 1975, on London Weekend Television.

Planet of the Ape's death at the hands of CBS after only 14 episodes of the proposed 24 is another of those regrettable commercial decisions that have so often blighted US and, to a lesser extent, British television. However, it seems unlikely that the proposed full season would have had a resolution, in the hope that a second batch of stories would be commissioned, so perhaps the hang-glider launch was no more disappointing an ending than what might have followed. We shall probably never know what this would have been, but what is clear from the 14 completed episodes is that Planet of the Ape's format was not being overtaxed by its producers. While the themes of pursuit, capture and escape are central to the show, these could have been better broken up. Instead, every other episode saw the humans helping someone - human or apes - and make new friends. Hardly the stuff of great imaginings given the show's potential.

Planet of the Apes was, and still is, an interesting show. At its best it was a well-paced, mildly thought-provoking drama - at its worst, it put its foot firmly in its mouth and then ran for the wire. However, even at its most graceless, the series still managed to maintain high production values, especially the always-excellent ape make-up by Dan Striepeke, and no little charm.

The TV series maintained the overall feel of the original movie, which undoubtedly helped create a strong sense of visual identity. Not only are the costumes faithful to their big-screen counter-parts but so is much of the ape architecture. Perhaps the one area in which there is a divergence from the films is in the over simplification of ape culture: its three-way fragmentation between chimps (the intellectuals), gorillas (the bruisers) and orang-utans (the lawgivers) offers far too many chances for an internecine conflict of a type that would surely have fatally weekend ape culture before it could ever have really got started. However, without these rifts much of the television shows' tension would have dissipated into just another version of the hunter and the hunted.

An entire planet of the apes was wiped off the TV screen after a scant fourteen episodes. Before the series was launched into network orbit, CBS executives believed the Planet of the Apes TV series couldn't miss. There had already been five successful Apes motion pictures made between 1968 and 1973. When the first movie aired on CBS in 1973, the film grabbed an astronomical 60 share in the ratings. That's when CBS decided to spin off a weekly series based on the popular films. Industry analysts predicted Planet of the Apes would be one of the biggest hits of the season. TV Guide said Planet of the Apes "won't monkey around."

The optimistic word-of-mouth was reassuring to star Ron Harper. He had already had several TV series shot out from under him (including 87th Precinct and Garrison's Gorillas). "Planet of the Apes was my fifth TV series," says Harper. "Just before the series aired, I did an interview and they said, 'Well, you've finally got one that's gonna go. It can't miss.' The motion pictures made something like 160 million dollars, and everybody expected the series to be a shoo-in. I thought we were going to be for at least a couple of years. It didn't work out that way. It was very disappointing."

The cinematic history of Planet of the Apes began in 1968. The first film, scripted by Michael Wilson and Rod Serling, starred Charlton Heston as an astronaut who crash-lands on a futuristic world where apes rule and men are mute, primitive animals. The film's surprise ending revealed that the planet was Earth, two thousand years in the future. Mankind had destroyed itself in a nuclear holocaust, and apes had risen to power.

Beneath the Planet of the Apes (1970) continued the saga with James Franciscus as an astronaut who encounters underground human mutants and their doomsday bomb. The film ends with the H-bomb destroying the world. However, box office receipts demanded another sequel, and Escape from the planet of the Apes (1971) had three superintelligent chimpanzees use Heston's spaceship to travel back to Earth, 1973. The chimps are eventually killed by paranoid humans, but they leave behind an offspring, Caesar. Caesar begins The Conquest of the Planet of the Apes (1972), inciting his fellow apes to rebel against mankind. The last and least successful sequel, Battle for the Planet of the Apes (1973), dealt with the apes fighting more mutants just after the ape takeover.

Actor Roddy McDowall, who had played the ape Cornelius in Planet and Escape, and Caesar in Conquest and Battle, eagerly signed up to play a new chimpanzee character, Galen, for the series. One important person missing from the TV series was Arthur P Jacobs, producer of the Apes motion pictures. He was preparing an

outline for the series when he died of a heart attack in 1973. Writers Anthony Wilson and Art Wallace were brought in to lay down the series concept. While the films had taken a misanthropic view and laced their cynicism with a satiric edge, the TV series was played softer. Instead of a weekly condemnation of mankind, the storyline gave humans the benefit of the doubt. If man were to ever regain control of his planet, perhaps he would be of a better, more tolerant breed.

"I had to be careful not to repeat what the movies had done," says Art Wallace as he shaped the series. "I wanted an entirely different approach. I wrote the first script and laid out the characters for the other writers." Wallace developed a respect for the format as it took shape. "At first I thought the idea was kind of silly. But then Herb Hirschman [executive producer] and I felt this would be an interesting way to make comments on contemporary society. We were particularly concerned with commenting on racial violence. The apes were dealt with as if they were another race, separate but equal. The idea was that it was the white man getting stepped on. There was very little science fiction, although we added the gimmick of the astronaut trying to decipher the spaceship's computer disk and find a way back home."

Although he felt the series got off to a good start, "it gradually developed into hoke. The apes had to be realistic to be taken seriously, but they started to look silly. In terms of acting, what can you do with that ape makeup on? They also had the astronauts beating up the apes on a regular basis. In addition, the series had to be done relatively cheaply. It was too expensive for television." Wallace also felt the series was hurt by the casting. "Roddy McDowall was okay, but he was playing an ape. How much could he do? I felt that [Ron Harper and James Naughton] didn't have the charisma that the show needed. The whole show turned out to be a jinx for the network."

"Some people felt, and maybe they were right, that the series was a one-joke show," admits Ron Harper. "The first movie was a big hit because everyone was surprised by the concept. Once you're over the shock of, 'Man, those are talking apes!' it becomes progressively downhill. Unless you have really good stories, you lose the suspense and the humor. You can't keep toasting on that one situation."

Harper's character of Alan Virton had several goals: As a humanitarian, the astronaut was determined to reignite the self-esteem of the humans he encountered. His more personal quest was to find a civilization that could provide a way back home. Unlike Burke, who was a bachelor and resigned to his fate, Virton had a wife and son back home in 1988. "Virton was a confirmed optimist," notes Harper. "He felt that as long as he's alive, there's a chance he could build a spaceship. Or maybe a rescue expedition would find them. As long as he had that computer disk from the spaceship, he felt he could get home. So he kept plugging away. 'There are a lot of people like that, particularly actors!' he laughs. 'And I think that he did get home. It might have taken him ten years, but I think he made it.'"

One segment that stood out for Harper was "The Legary." Virton is held captive with a young mother and her son who remind him of his family. "That was an interesting idea. I had just been married [to actress Sally Stark], and there was a photograph Virton carried around of his wife and son. The photo was actually of my wife, Sally and the producer's son. But when we filmed "The Legacy," they had cast a blonde actress, Zina Bethune, as the mother. Sally had dark hair, and to reinforce the story's point, they had to reshoot the photograph with a blonde actress."

Although many fans of the Planet of the Apes movies were disappointed that the weekly series set its sights so low, on its own undemanding level, the series was a reasonably entertaining mixture of adventure and humor. Harper admits to having mixed feelings about the show's content. "Personally, I liked the more humanistic stories. In "The Good Seeds," we taught a farming family of apes about human values. They were saving all of the good corn and planting the bad corn. Virton explains, 'No, you plant the good seeds. This way the generations improve themselves.' It didn't take us long to realize that our young audience wasn't terribly interested in this. They wanted to see more action. They liked the fights with the sharks and the bulldogging off horses. While we weren't geared primarily as a children's show, we did have a mostly young audience. They were disappointed that there wasn't more actionadventure. We may have got too caught up in the humanistic-morality stories. It's a cliché to say 'Well, it was the writing,' but the truth is, if you analyze some of the stories, we had one basic plot: One of us gets captured by the apes; the other two have to rescue him. We took turns getting captured. They needed to break out of that. In that regard, the stories weren't that interesting."

Harper draws a parallel with his later series, *Land of the Lost*. The Saturday morning series featured a family trapped in a prehistoric world. Harper played Uncle Jack during the 1976-77 season. "Even though it was a Saturday morning show, the stories were more interesting than on Planet of the Apes. Our producer loved writing for it. He would spend weekends writing scripts. He experimented with ancient myths and fables, like the Flying Dutchman and Medusa. The stories were much more than getting captured every week." However, Harper found the working atmosphere on Apes more satisfying. "We had a lot of good actors on the show. The producer [Stan Hough] said he thought he'd cast the show perfectly. I wish we had run a little

longer run to bear that out. Roddy McDowall was wonderful.

He gave Jim Naughton and me our own directors' chairs. When mine arrived, my name was misspelled as Rin. Roddy had done it as a gag." Despite the rigorous makeup ritual McDowall had endured for the feature films, he was anxious to reprise his ape role for television. "I was surprised that he agreed to do the series," comments Harper. "It took him three and a half hours in that makeup chair. He couldn't sleep while they applied it because he had to keep his face set in a certain way. So he listened to classical music. After four or five episodes, though, his face looked like raw hamburger because of the rubber appliance. He had to take a week off to heal his skin."

Harper's relationship with James Naughton was more casual. "Jim and I worked very hard together on the show, but we weren't as close as we could have been. There was a funny moment when we had to sneak into a gorilla guard house. Jim was supposed to whisper, 'No noise.' So Jim knocks out a gorilla with a judo chop and yells at the top of his lungs, 'No noise!' I cracked up and fell to the floor. I said, 'Jim, I think you've just defeated the purpose of your line!'"

Visually, Planet of the Apes rarely inspired a sense of the fantastic. One notable exception was in the first episode, "Escape from Tomorrow." A hunted villager is caught in a fierce gust of wind as the sounds of a roaring engine bear down on him. The unseen spaceship makes a splintering crash nearby. The first glimpse of the smoking spaceship, sprawled in the middle of a mountain valley, is stunning. "To the young people in the audience, it was probably fascinating," admits Harper, "but in reality, the spaceship wasn't much of anything. It was a wooden, hollow shell. The scenes with us at the controls were shot on a soundstage. What looked impressive was the way they dug that burning burrow behind the spaceship to make it look like it took it about half a mile to land."

Booth Colman had the recurring role of the great ape sage, Dr. Zaius, the orangutan who presided over Ape City. His duty was to make certain that his ape culture didn't discover that mankind had once ruled the planet. Colman recalls, "When they asked me if I would feel claustrophobic in the makeup, I said that Lon Chaney's spirit would look down and protect me. I got the laugh-and the part!" Colman found a startling coincidence as he prepared for the role. "Maurice Evans had played Dr. Zaius in the motion pictures. I had been in his Broadway company in Hamlet during 1944-45. He was a wonderful actor and coincidentally, I wore the same ape costume he had worn in the features. It had been carefully preserved at the studio. I found an old British lotto ticket in an inner pocket and returned it to Maurice by mail. He was living in England and wrote back, wishing me luck with the series and hoping that they had washed and ironed everything for me!"

To prepare for the role, Colman first went to the nearby zoo to study ape behavior. "I tried to develop a personality for Zaius that would be believable. I saw him as an extraordinary elder, high in the council. He was all-knowing and decided what was best for everyone. He had an arrogance of authority and a one-track mind of determination." Like Roddy McDowall and Mark Lenard (Urko the gorilla), Colman had to undergo the rigors of makeup. "I left home at 4 a.m. to be in makeup man Frank Westmore's chair by 5:30 a.m. I had to be ready for shooting by 8:30. At the end of the day, my solidified mask was carefully removed and used on an atmosphere extra the next day."

Colman enjoyed working on Planet of the Apes, but he was not impressed with the way the series evolved. "The first feature had an originality and eeriness. They also had the advantage of shock. A TV series couldn't maintain that without highly ingenious stories. I would have gone after a writer like Ray Bradbury, who has a creative ability for the weird and unworldly. I preferred stories that said something and had a point of view rather than the usual claptrap. The props, costumes and actors were superior; the material was decidedly inferior. It was rushed into production before stories could be properly prepared. It was just as quickly and mistakenly canceled. It could have built a solid audience under other circumstances." Director Ralph Senensky, who directed the segment "The Tyrant," says, "Originally, the series was about the relationship between the two cultures. The tyranny of the apes over the humans. That's what played best on the series. The minute you had the apes wrangling with each other or talking, it got dreadfully boring. It's also hard to do anything like Planet of the Apes on a seven-day schedule."

Although Planet had the ideal opportunity for drawing social parallels with twentieth century Earth, Senensky feels that "it kind of copped out. It became more of an adventure series. Their options seemed to have gotten a little screwed up. They set up a premise that didn't leave them much room to maneuver. In hindsight, wouldn't it have been more interesting if they had looked at the Civil War in the 1800s for story material? They could have used those parallels about slavery in the series. The white population are the slaves and the gentry are the apes. That's what the first movie was about. That's what got lost in the series." Nevertheless, the director enjoyed his stint. "Roddy was marvelous. He was very dedicated to the show. Because of the glue and rubber used in the masks, there was no way he could work a 14 to 18 hour day. Twelve hours was his maximum." Senensky also had respect for the producers, including the late Stan Hough. "Stan was a marvelous producer. The main thing with Stan was to get the job done. When you work in TV, a

lot of it is getting it committed to film. It's something of an artistic assembly line. You don't wait around until you get the inspiration. Looking back on Planet of the Apes, it was a terribly ambitious project for the economics and scheduling of series television."

"The makeup factor killed the show," notes writer Arthur Brown, Jr. "It was a doomed series. Anytime you translate from the motion picture screen to television, you lose a certain punch." Browne recalls the plight of the actors who played gorillas on the show. "Most of the exteriors were shot at the Fox ranch at Malibu. The temperatures were hitting over 100 degrees. Apes were falling down and passing out from the heat." Tom McDonough, a gorilla stand-in and extra, admits, "The makeup was miserable. We carried umbrellas for shade. It was especially hard for me because I have blue eyes, requiring me to wear contact lenses to make my eyes brown. With the dust kicked up by the horses, it was terrible. The makeup took three and a half hours to apply. Your head was completely enclosed in hair, rubber and glue. We had to drink through straws."

Assistant director Bill Derwin adds, "Planet was physically the toughest TV series ever made. How the actors and extras playing the apes handled it, I'll never know. Imagine what it would be like to be even slightly claustrophobic and to wear heavy, hot, scratchy uniforms. And to work at the Fox ranch where it always seemed to be 110 degrees. You're on a horse you can't ride, and you have to hit your marks and remember your dialogue. Most of them could manage, but for those who couldn't, it was impossible to fake it. A couple of actors literally fell apart. They ripped off their makeup and tore off their uniforms."

Veteran stuntman George Robotham pleads guilty. Robotham had tackled everything from dangerous explosions to underwater stunts, but he could not face the demands of being a gorilla. "In a mishmash of 5,000 fights and 5,000 falls in my career, Planet of the Apes is one show I don't want to remember," he says. "I spent two hours with that makeup on my face. Paul Stader was the stunt coordinator, and I went to Paul and said, 'Paul, I don't need this crap. Let somebody else do it. See you later!' The makeup was miserable." Art Wallace got a kick out of watching apes milling around the studio, and recalls, "Right across the street Mel Brooks was making the film Young Frankenstein. One guy in an ape costume was standing by the building when Mel walked outside. The ape went up to Mel and said, 'Hey, Mel! Remember me? We worked on such and such a show.' Mel just looked at him and said, 'Are you working now?' I thought that was funny."

What wasn't funny was how quickly Planet of the Apes got skewered by the network after months of hype. Originally scheduled to play Tuesday evenings, the series was shifted to Friday nights. The premiere episode grabbed a 34 share. It was a decent showing, but hardly comparable to the 46 share scored by its competitor on NBC, Sanford and Son. From then on, the ratings dipped. Although the series ranked as the second most popular show with the 2-11 age group, it was not getting a wide enough audience. A month after its premiere, CBS began making noises about scuttling the show.

TV Guide reported that Planet's biggest disappointment was its inability to attract older viewers. According to Art Wallace, CBS programming wizard Fred Silverman hailed the first episode of Planet as "the best first episode of a TV series I've ever seen." He was considerably less enthusiastic when he was quoted by TV Guide that fall. "Of people 50 and over, apparently only four are watching," Silverman noted sarcastically. "Two old ladies in Iowa and a couple who own a zoo."

In addition, the president of CBS, William Paley, didn't want the series on his network to begin with. The decision to end the series was swift, and after four months on the air, Planet of the Apes silently vanished. Bill Derwin felt that the series may have stepped on some toes. "Some people thought the series was racist. The power and cruelty of the apes was toned down. The series soon became Planet of the Benevolent Apes."

"I wasn't surprised by the cancellation, though naturally I was disappointed," says Booth Colman. "I had hopes of a long run. I got no formal notice from the studio that we were over, but their long faces told me the tale. With the right stories and time slot, it could have lasted. Universal studios, after all, got a lot of mileage from a couple of monsters in a cape and neck screws!"

"Two episodes before the end, we were waiting for word from CBS to pick us up," recalls Ron Harper. "It didn't happen. I asked Stan Hough 'What are we going to do?' He said, 'I'm going to make several more episodes. Maybe they'll change their minds.' We shot two more episodes. On a Monday morning, Stan called Jim and me in and said, 'This is going to be the last episode.' So Jim and I took our stunt friends out to a fourhour lunch!"

Although a dud by American ratings standards, all 14 episodes were run in England the following year. The series was a smash. It also proved popular in other foreign countries. In 1980, Fox studios released ten episodes in the form of TV movies for syndication. Although the series' cancellation was a disappointment to Harper, he can chuckle over the series' afterlife. Occasionally, he's invited to return to the Planet of the Apes, but in a more leisurely form. "I was invited to a telethon in Australia with Mickey Dolenz of The Monkees a few years ago. Planet of the Apes had just started running down there. When I got off the plane in Sydney, I

was greeted by a guy dressed up like an ape! It's very nice that people still remember the show."

CAST NOTES

Roddy McDowall (Galen): Born 1928. The English-born McDowall was already a child actor when his family moved to America in 1940. He made the transition to adult star, including appearances in the films *Cleopatra* (1963), *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972) and the *Fright Night* Films in the 1980s. He's also a noted photographer.

Ron Harper (Virdon): Born 1935. One of Harper's most memorable TV series was the World War II action show *Garrison's Gorillas* (1967-68). He went into daytime TV (*Love of Life*, *Capital*) in the 1970s and continues making guest appearances on prime-time TV.

James Naughton (Burke): Born 1945. A successful Broadway actor, Naughton was one of the stars of the acclaimed 1992 *Brooklyn Bridge* series.

Mark Lenard (Urko): Born 1927. Well known as Mr. Spock's father on *Star Trek* and as a regular on TV's *Here Come the Brides* (1968-70). Lenard is active on stage and does TV commercial voice work.

Booth Colman (Dr. Zaius): Born 1923. This Oregon-born actor received his education at the University of Washington. A veteran actor with hundreds of TV credits, every winter he appears in Michigan to do the play *A Christmas Carol*.

WR. Art Wallace, Robert Hamner, Robert W. Lenski, Anthony Lawrence, Barry Oringer, Edward J. Lasko, David P. Lewis, L. Booker Bradshaw, Richard Collins and Walter Black.

DIR. Arnold Leven, John Meredyth Lucas, Bernard McEveety, Ralph Senensky, Don McDougall, Alf Kjellin, Jack Starrett and Don Weiss.

EPISODES: 14 **YEAR MADE:** 1974 **COUNTRY:** US **SEASONS:** 1

A 20TH CENTURY FOX TELEVISION PRODUCTION FOR CBS

CREATOR: PIERRE BOULLE

TYPE OF SHOW: EARTH FUTURE

FORMAT: SERIES

LENGTH (MINS): 60 **STILL IN PRODUCTION:** No **B/W:** No **COLOUR:** Yes **LANG:** English

SEASON BREAKDOWN: (1) 14

DATE OF PREMIER: 13/09/1974

AIR DATE OF LAST EPISODE: 20/12/1974

SEASON DATE BREAKDOWN:

FILMS: PLANET OF THE APES (1968), BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES (1970), ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES (1971), CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES (1972), BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES (1973).

Galen RODDY MCDOWALL, Alan Virdon RON HARPER, Peter Burke JAMES NAUGHTON, General Urko MARK LENARD, Dr. Zaius BOOTH COLMAN.

Books Based on this series.

Planet Of The Apes - Escape To Tomorrow	George Alec Effinger	1975
Planet Of The Apes - Journey Into Terror	George Alec Effinger	1975
Planet Of The Apes - Lord Of The Apes	George Alec Effinger	1976
Planet Of The Apes - Man The Fugitive	George Alec Effinger	1974

RELATED SHOWS:

BATMAN (1966)

FANTASTIC JOURNEY, THE

1 - 1 *ESCAPE FROM TOMORROW*

Astronauts Alan Virdon and Peter Burke crash land on a strange planet. After being rescued by a friendly human, Virdon and Burke discover this planet is ruled by intelligent apes. To their horror, they discover that they are back on Earth in the year 3085. Meanwhile ape leader Dr. Zaius learns of the presence of the spacemen and wants them captured and questioned, much to the chagrin of General Urko, who wishes them dead. To protect his interests, Zaius sends his young assistant Galen with Urko to retrieve the humans. The apes capture the humans and they are taken before the council. Zaius orders them confined for questioning, but Urko conspires to free the humans, and then kill them as escaping prisoners. However, Galen learns of this and foils Urko's plan, allowing the humans to escape. Galen is arrested and accused of murdering one of the guards. The humans must rescue Galen before retrieving a magnetic disc, which could hold the key to returning to their time, from their ship before the apes destroy it.

Wr Art Wallace

Dir Don Weis

1 - 2 *THE GLADIATORS*

Burke, Virdon and Galen come across two humans fighting and get involved, but lose the magnetic disc. To recover it, they must approach the nearby village, where the ape prefect pits humans in a series of gladiatorial games.

Wr Art Wallace

Dir Don McDougall

1 - 3 *THE TRAP*

In a ruined city, Burke and Urko are trapped underground and must reluctantly work together to escape, while Alan and Galen must deal with Urko's gorilla patrol in the streets above.

Wr Edward J. Lakso

Dir Arnold Laven

1 - 4 *THE GOOD SEEDS*

Burke and Virdon have to seek the help of a gorilla farmer and his family when Galen breaks his leg.

Wr Robert W. Lenski

Dir Don Weis

1 - 5 *THE LEGACY*

Burke and Virdon search for an underground computer in the ruined city of Oakland, but their plans go awry when Alan is captured and Urko uses a young boy and a woman to get information from the astronaut.

Wr Robert Hamner

Dir Bernard McEveety

1 - 6 *TOMORROW'S TIDE*

An ape who runs a fishing business plans to use Virdon and Burke as slaves after he captures them.

Wr Robert W. Lenski

Dir Don McDougall

1 - 7 *THE SURGEON*

Galen must use all his charm to try and persuade his ex-girlfriend, a female ape surgeon named Kira, to operate on Virdon using a forbidden human anatomy book, after the astronaut is shot.

Wr Barry Oringer

Dir Arnold Laven

1 - 8 *THE DECEPTION*

When the guys try to track down the apes who are framing humans for crimes in a small community, Fauna, a blind female ape, falls in love with Burke while believing him to be a chimpanzee.

Wr Anthony Lawrence (II), Ken Spears, Joe Ruby

Dir Don McDougall

1 - 9 *THE HORSE RACE*

Virdon decides to take part in a dangerous horse race even though he runs the risk of being captured by Urko.

Wr David P. Lewis, Booker Bradshaw

Dir Jack Starrett

1 - 10 *THE INTERROGATION*

Burke undergoes a horrific interrogation after being captured whilst Virdon and Galen mount a rescue attempt.

Wr Richard Collins

Dir Alf Kjellin

1 - 11 *THE TYRANT*

Aboro, a despot, is making community life a misery; Burke, Virdon, and Galen decide to rob him of his powers.

Wr Walter Black

Dir Ralph Senensky

1 - 12 *THE CURE*

Thanks to their advanced medical knowledge, Burke and Virdon are able to help a village struck with malaria, but risk discovery.

Wr Edward J. Lakso

Dir Bernard McEveety

1 - 13 *THE LIBERATOR*

Burke and Virdon are captured by a bunch of humans determined to hand them over to the Apes.

Wr Howard Dimsdale

Dir Arnold Laven

1 - 14 *UP ABOVE THE WORLD SO HIGH*

Burke and Virdon join forces with Leuric, a human attempting to fly by building himself a hang glider.

Wr Shimon Wincelberg, Arthur Browne Jr.

Dir John Meredyth Lucas