WHERE MAN ONCE STOOD SUPREME--NOW RULE THE BEASTS!

PLANET OF THE APES

BATTLE IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE

- Plus--Our Continuing Adaptation of The Premier "APES" Movie--FIRST TIME IN COMICS FORM!

Special Photo Feature: INSIDE APE CITY
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A bit of monkeying-around by Tony Isabella

Hi.

Yeesh, it's not exactly the kind of high class, snappy come-on you expect in a Marvel magazine, but it's been a long day. By way of introduction, I'm the guy who, in the words of Roy Thomas (last issue's editorial-in-chief message), "has had the enjoyable task of steering the ship safely into port." Passing over the somewhat out of place nautical reference, the ship is, of course, the first—and every succeeding—issue of PLANET OF THE APES. A quick referral to our cover or contents page will confirm that it is indeed that magazine you are now reading.

Enjoyable task, yes. But that doesn't mean I didn't bump into the dock once or twice on the way in. I'm somewhat mildly perturbed, for example, over the fact that our exclusive interview with PLANET OF THE APES (the movie) co-writer Michael Wilson is lacking in one small detail. It does not feature a photograph of that worthy gentleman. The interview itself is dynamic...if it may be allowed a tiny smidgen of editorial pride...but it would have been nice to show you what Wilson looks like.

What happened is this: we scheduled the interviews for this very issue, confident in our ignorance that we'd be able to find a picture of Michael Wilson's face. Editorial

staffer Michele Wolfinman called all our regular photo sources and came up dry. No big problem. She's a resourceful lady. She called studion, writers' guilds, Wilson's agent, etc. Zilch. Faced with that old debbil Deadline and an article that's already typed up, we go to press...sans the photo. Fear not, though. If we get lucky and find Mr. Wilson, we'll print the picture next issue. But later...

Outside of this minor difficulty and speaking again with (I think) pardonable pride, this issue is a blockbuster. Doug Moench, Mike Ploog, George Tuska, and Mike Esposito have husted their collective and considerable posteriors to produce the two comic adventures which appear in this issue. Ed Lawrence and Gary Gianni, once again, construct the meaty, punchy articles on various phases of the Apes phenomenon. Like I said, pardonable pride. But I had a lot of help. You'll find the names listed on the contents page.

Marcia Gluster is, of course, our sultry sorceress of scintillating design. She lays out all the editorial matter, supervises our layout department (Barbara Altman and Nora Macnutt), and keeps after our slothful editor to make an occasional deadline or face her wrath. Len Grav, listed as "Production", is in actuality, her trigger man.

Chris Claremont is our Assistant Editor and does more jobs on this magazine than we could possibly list here. He occasionally does them right. The other editorial staff—Scott Edelman, David Anthony Kraft, Don McGregor, and Irene Vertoino—don't regularly work on this particular magazine, but all have made their sizeable proofreading skills available to us when we needed them. Impish Irene, for example, assisted with the text material in this issue, for which we thank her.

Finally, there's the afore-mentioned Michele Wolfinman. Michele keeps track of our growing photo morgue, orders new photos for us as they become necessary, and is a fine photographer in her own right. She's also married to Mary Wolfinman, but that's her problem.

That's the Marvel/Apex crew, bless 'em. They've poured a lot of effort into this project and they'd like to hear your comments and criticisms on these first two issues of PLANET OF THE APES. The address is:

PLANET OF THE APES
Marvel Magazine Group
575 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022

We'll be waiting.

—T.I.

HITS FROM THE HOUSE OF MARVEL

ITEM! With Marvel's ever-increasing magazine line, it has become virtually impossible to keep you faithfully informed. What's happening in all our titles? Sure, we manage to sneak in an announcement here and there, but we must admit we are all full of information even maintaining every new Bullpen Blockbuster. More, group. As of the publication you're now holding in your very own hands, we will be presenting a special news group page in every issue of the Marvel Magazine Group, including an editorial by Rozzally Roy Thomas, Marvel out WOLFPANMAN, or TONY THE TIGER (Gambit, specially written for the book it appears in). Of course, now you've got no excuse to miss any single issue. We expect these titles to skyrocket to new heights of success. How can they do less when they've got all of you supporting them? Hang in there, valued folks, the best is yet to come.

ITEM! Expansion is right! The Ark's handy dry on the first cover of PLANET OF THE APES and THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, and we have four new titles in the works. The first of these, our first front-cover magazine called PHOTO NEWS FEATURES. Itspromise image contains a powerful, penetrating story of Apeshold; the madman who planned an entire world into war. It features the pictures of并购, never before published anywhere. Look for it in April, 197I. Come September, you'll see the first issue of IRON FIST and NOSTALGIA ILLUSTRATED. The former stars the steel-sculpting Kang Fu here you're thrilled to be our color source, MARVEL, PREMIERE, and our summer KUNG FU SPECIAL. The latter is a new kind of publication whose sub-title says it all: "The Pleasures of the Fist." And, wading in the week's exciting MARVEL PREVIEW, which we'll introduce this time: a comic controversy. It's slated for October release. How new title? It is another wonder we've only since greater power break through.

ITEM! With all the expansion that word implies, you're probably wondering we're getting the talent to produce the magazines. Answer: sheer darn luck. Case in point:

Active ALAN LEMOND, Marvel's newest editorial wizard. Alan will be editing both PHOTO NEWS FEATURES and NOSTALGIA ILLUSTRATED for starts, with more projects in the works. As for IRON FIST, not only is Tony the Tiger editing the book, he's pitching in by writing virtually the entire first issue. How's that for dedication? P.S.: He couldn't have pulled it off if, however, without the considerable aid of Stan-Mike Care (RUGS MOENCH, FRANK MCLAUGHLIN, Dangerous DON PERL, and Mighty MIKE ESPOSITO), not to mention the Tiger's long suffering assistant, Cheerful CHRIS CLAREMON.

ITEM! Marvel's made another acquisition this month, one of the comics industry's only quadruple-threat men. He can write, pencil, ink, and letter—and does all of those on the world-renewed JOHNNY HAZARD newspaper strip. In his "spare" time, he still has enough energy to drive about a dozen pages a week for Marvel. You guessed it High-Rising FRANK RUBINO! Featured in the MARVEL SERVING drawing below has joined the Bullpen crew—with gusto!

ITEM! In the month he's been working for us, Frank has done two stories for DRACULA LIVES, an issue of our other ADVENTURES INTO HEAR (featuring MORTUS, THE LIVING VAMPIRE), and began work on his first issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA! And he's already working on a new pilot for MONSTERS UNLEASHED! Fast? He makes green lightning look slow by comparison! Welcome aboard, Frank!

ITEM! That's it for the news, troops. To be told you ever until news time, here is a list of Marvel news on sale:

VAMPIRE TALES #7: Morrons, the Living Vampire—trapped in the old West's most ghastly city, Gallows Bend! Plus a trio of terrific tales by Moench, Cheeky, Galley, and Graham.

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #4: Shin Chu, Master of Kong Fu, faces up to Manchu's deadliest assassin. Plot showdown! (For the greatest-battle between the master of the tiger and the master of the Shaolin) Oran Rous, special feature by David Carradine.

MONSTERS UNLEASHED #8: The Frankenstein monster stalks the city! And, by popular demand, the epic return of Gullows Jones, Warrior of Mars! And a host of fear-haunting features!

MONSTERS OF THE MOMBAS #3: Our special VAMPIRE issue with the launch on Nightmores from Blasmat to Count Yorga, Barry Alberta to Batea Legs, and a whole lot more. Exclusive: Inside Hammer Films!

THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #2: Sword-swinging Conan's greatest swordsmen. A perfect keepsake for the price of two! Thor's Colossus, King Rad, and the godlike warrior battling blackmark!

And that's only the beginning!
Terror on the Planet of the Apes

When a 100-megaton nuclear bomb explodes, the temperature at the center of the fireball is measured in millions of degrees. For a thirty-mile diameter around that fireball, everything ... ceases to exist. Adamantium steel runs like water, human flesh vaporizes into ash in an instant. And what the bomb does not destroy, the radiation does.

Once — before the bomb — there had been a mighty city here. Towering skyscrapers, massive road systems, millions of people ... life in all its myriad varieties.

Before the Bomb.

Now, this place is called, simply ... The Forbidden Zone. To go there is to die.

But Jason and Alexander have gone there. With Jason framed for a murder he didn't commit, they have no choice. The Law-Giver had gone to the Forbidden Zone on some mysterious mission ... and the Law-Giver was the only one who could clear Jason of the murder charge. Because the Law-Giver was an Ape, and Jason a human ... and this was a planet where Apes ruled Men.

The Law-Giver has gone to the Forbidden Zone. Jason and Alexander have followed. What they will find — survival or death — God only knows.
Chapter One

THE FORBIDDEN ZONE
OF FORGOTTEN HORRORS!

The night air is muggy, heavily oppressive... and abruptly cracked by strident shouts of alarm. Opaque shadows shudder and dissipate under the lurid glare of flickering torches...

...and two friends flee for their lives. One, because he is human... and has just escaped from jail...

You head east--and rouse the police barracks on your way!

The rest of us will comb this immediate sector...!

...and the other, because he is a chimp, and has engineered his friend's escape.

Move it, Jason--we've got to reach that alley before they spot us!

The night slides into a terror of breath-bated silence, then the swelling rise of desultory voices... the encroachment of amber light skimming the ground... and--

JAM YOUR SPINE INTO THE WALL, ALEXANDER...

THAT ONE'S GOT HIS EYES ON THIS ALLEY... AND HE DEFINITELY LOOKS--

"SUSPICIOUS."

Story: DOUG MOENCH  Art: MIKE PLOOG
A CHIMP?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HIDING BACK HERE?

WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE ESCAPED HUMAN CALLED--

JASON...

YOUR TIMING COULDN'T BE ANY BETTER IF YOU'D REHEarsed IT.

AND IT'S NOT GOING TO GET ANY BETTER IF WE DON'T MOVE NOW. WE'VE GOT TO FIND THE LAWGIVER AND GET THIS WHOLE THING STRAIGHTENED OUT!

I DON'T KNOW, JASE... WE DON'T EVEN KNOW FOR CERTAIN WHERE THE LAWGIVER IS. WE'RE JUST GUESSING THAT HE WENT INTO THE FORBIDDEN ZONE...

XAVIER--?! THAT INEPT BUMBLER IS NOTHING BUT A PUPPET IN BRUTUS' HANDS!

OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN IT WAS BRUTUS WHO MURDERED HIS WIFE AND PINNED THE BLAME ON ME?

MAYBE WE SHOULD STICK AROUND HERE AND TRY TO CONVINCE XAVIER OF YOUR INNOCENCE...

WHAT'S ALL THAT SHOUTING DOWN THERE?

WHO'S THERE?!

IT'S THE ESCAPED HUMAN-- GET HIM!!

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT.

COME ON, JASE--HE'LL HAVE THE WHOLE VILLAGE SWARMING AFTER US IN NO TIME!
Scurrying with the desperate speed of panic, the two unlikely fugitives swiftly leave the adobe village behind them—and splash into a thick perimeter of fringing jungle...

I can climb by myself, Alex.

Curse those gorillas and their powerful legs—!

Hiding in this tree might be our only hope. Let me give you a mano...

They're right behind us and gaining all the time!

What do we do now?

Here they come...

Don't even so much as breathe on a single leaf.

Comb every blade of grass in the whole jungle...?

But, his back chewed by rough bark, he manages to stifle it...

Curling tendrils of smoke slither into Jason's eyes. He feels the urge to cough...

We might as well head back to the village... pick up the search in the morning...

We'd never find them in all this darkness and jungle...

You're right, Tyrinius...

They could be anywhere and we'd never even know it.
That was close... but by morning we'll be deep into the forbidden zone!

Will we, Jase...?

The more we run, the more guilty we look.

We've got to live by the laws... and appeal to Xavier...

Are you crazy, Alex?! An appeal to Xavier is an appeal for death!

Look, Jase--the Lawgiver delegated Xavier to govern in his absence. He must have known what he was doing!

All we have to do is get to Xavier in private and explain the situation...

Before or after he takes one look at us and screams for Brutus?

Y'know... you're pretty sarcastic for a human...

...but have you considered the possibility of leading Xavier to Brutus' secret encampment... and crushing it before his renegade movement gathers any more power...?

All right, Alex--we'll try it your way first. But if it doesn't work...

Good, no sense in biting off a chunk of the forbidden zone we can't chew.

That's easy for you to say...

Your ancestors were born in trees.

Now let's get some sleep.
Morning spills cheerful sunlight on ape and human alike. But two such specimens furtively enter the bustling adobe village... wishing, perhaps for a cover of clouds...

Looks like we're in luck, Alex...

At least there's a sizable crowd for us to get lost in...

Uh, Jase... I've been thinking...

Maybe it's not such a good idea to show our faces here...

...at least not in broad daylight.

What?! This was your idea, Alex--and you can just go climb another tree if you think I'm going to back out now.

So come on if you're coming! I'm going to slip into this crowd... it looks like it's moving in the general direction of Xavier's quarters.

Just relax and act inconspicuous.

Maybe so, Jason... but I wouldn't want to--

No one in the crowd even knows who we are.

They're certainly not big on wasting time, are they...

Bet on it.
WONDER HOW LONG IT'LL BE BEFORE THEY GET AROUND TO DOING ME JUSTICE IN A PORTRAIT LIKE THAT...

TAKE IT EASY, THAT DRAWING'S SO CRUELE IT COULD PASS FOR ALMOST ANY HUMAN.

NOW COME ON BEFORE THE CROWD LEAVES US BEHIND...

SAY, JASE... IT SEEMS THIS ISN'T SO MUCH A CROWD AS IT IS A PROCESSION...

YEAH... AND THE PROCEEDINGS SURE LOOK INTERESTING. BUT WE'D BETTER FIND A DIFFERENT PLACE TO WATCH...

...UNLESS WE WANT TO BE SPOTTED BY--

"--BRUTUS AND HIS FUNERAL GUARDS."

THANK YOU MINISTER OF THE SECOND LIFE. YOUR KIND WORDS HAVE EASED THE BURDEN OF MY GRIEF...

...BUT IT IS STILL WITH A HEAVY HEART THAT I PLACE THIS SINGLE SPRIG -- THIS SYMBOL OF LOVE UPON THE BIER OF MY BELOVED ZENA.

SHE WAS A KIND AND GENTLE APE... BELOVED WIFE OF OUR NOBLE PEACE OFFICER BRUTUS...

I SHALL MOURN HER DEATH THROUGHOUT ETERNITY...

...A CONSTANT SOURCE OF COMFORT AND SOLOACE TO HER HUSBAND...

HER MEMORY SHALL BE CHERISHED FOREVER...

...MY PROFOUND SORROW INCREASING WITH THE PASSAGE OF EACH ENDLESS DAY...
THAT LOUSY FAKER---!
HE'S ABOUT AS BEREAVED
AS A MONKEY IN A
BANANA TREE!

QUIET, JASE---
OR THEY'LL HEAR
YOU...

--AND IT'S A CINCH BRUTUS
WON'T MAKE ANY PRETTY
SPEECHES OVER OUR
CORPSES.

--AND THAT IS WHY
I SAY TO YOU, FELLOW
CITIZENS OF PEACE...

...THAT THIS MUST
NOT HAPPEN
AGAIN.

FURTHERMORE, I PLEDGE TO
YOU THAT THE CRIMINAL HUMAN
RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS
ATROCITY SHALL BE BROUGHT
TO IMMEDIATE JUSTICE---

--AND SUMMARILY EXECUTED TO
PREVENT A
RECURRENCE OF THIS HEINOUS
INCIDENT!

AND AS YOUR PEACE
OFFICER, I PLEDGE
TO YOU THAT IT WILL
NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.

THAT DIRTY
HYPOCRITE!
HE CALLS
THAT A
EULOGY ?!

HE'S USING HIS WIFE'S
FUNERAL AS A PLATFORM
FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL
HATRED ---!

--HAVE ALL WITNESSED
AN ALARMING TENDENCY
TOWARD INCREASED
VIOLENCE AMONG THE
HUMAN POPULACE...

AND I SWEAR TO YOU
TODAY THAT I SHALL
CURB THIS TENDENCY---
JUST AS SURELY AS
THE FACT THAT MY WIFE
LIES DEAD...SLAIN
BY A HUMAN !

NOT SO
LOUD, JASON...
YOU'RE A DIRTY, FILTHY LIAR AND YOU KNOW IT!!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MURDERED YOUR WIFE IN COLD BLOOD--AND YOU WANT TO GET ME BECAUSE I SAW IT!!

WHAT--??!

IT'S HIM--
IT'S THE HUMAN FUGITIVE!

JASON--
GET DOWN! DON'T BE A FOOL--!

YOU'RE NOTHING BUT SCUM, BRUTUS! AS PEACE OFFICER, YOU VOW LAW AND ORDER-- BUT AS THE SECRET LEADER OF THE RENEGADE GORILLAS, YOU MURDER YOUR OWN WIFE!

WHY DON'T YOU ARREST YOURSELF?!!

GUARDS!!
GUARDS!!

APPREHEND THE FUGITIVE HUMAN AT ONCE!! AND SHOOT TO KILL!!

THERE HE IS-- ON THE ROOF!!
AND YOU, XAVIER—YOU PITIFUL MORON—CAN'T YOU SEE WHAT BRUTUS IS DOING? CAN'T YOU SEE THE HATRED HE'S STIRRING UP?!

CAN'T YOU SEE HE WANTS TO EXTERMINATE THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE?!

WH—WHAT IS HAPPENING? WHAT SHALL I DO?...

FOLLOW ME, XAVIER—BEFORE THIS Mob GETS OUT OF CONTROL!

THAT'S RIGHT, XAVIER—SLINK AWAY AND HIDE!! YOU'RE JUST AS GUILTY AS BRUTUS!!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU FOOLS?! HE'S JUST STANDING THERE!!!

HIT HIM!!

BRING HIM DOWN!!

JASON—GET DOWN BEFORE YOU GET YOURSELF KILLED!!

I'VE GOT HIM NOW...

...AND THIS ONE WON'T—

--MISS--

THUTCH!

?!?
YOU'RE LUCKY THIS THING DIDN'T SKEWER YOUR HEART TO YOUR SPINE!

DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME, ALEX... EVERYTHING JUST WENT... RED...

...DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS... DOING...

I TOLD YOU, I TOLD YOU...!

...WE'RE GONNA SLIDE OUR LITTLE TAILS OUT OF HERE--!

HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, ALEX... BUT I'VE GOT A FEELING IT'S ALREADY--

--TOO LATE!

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF!

COME ON-- YOU CAN CRY OVER SPILT BLOOD LATER...!

THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND US!!

THIS WAY-- HURRY!

AND IN FRONT OF US, ALEX...

HALT-- IN THE NAME OF PEACE OFFICER BRUTUS!!

YEAH... GUESS IT DOES LOOK LIKE WE'RE TRAPPED, AND GUESS WHAT? IT'S YOUR TURN TO COME UP WITH A BRIGHT IDEA.

I'VE ONLY GOT ONE, ALEX-- AND WHILE IT MIGHT NOT BE BRIGHT, AT LEAST IT'S DIRECT...
CHARGE THEM!!

LOOK OUT REIN YOUR HORSE--!!

THEY'RE RUSHING US!!

...AND ASSUMING CONTROL OF THEIR MOUNTS.

I'VE GOT TO ADMIT...

...IT CERTAINLY WAS DIRECT!

WHICH MEANS IT'S MY TURN FOR THE NEXT BRIGHT IDEA...

BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE-- AS JASON AND ALEXANDER LAUNCH THEMSELVES FORWARD, SLAMMING INTO THE STUNNED POLICE OFFICERS...

YOU REMEMBER MY IDEA TO LEAD XAVIER TO BRUTUS' HIDDEN CAMP...?

IF WE CAN GET THE POLICE TO CHASE US... AND LEAD THEM TO THE CAMP--

HOW'S THAT?

I GET THE IDEA, ALEX. BRIGHT. VERY BRIGHT.
AND SO THEY RIDE... FOR LONG, GRUELING HOURS...

HOLD UP FOR A MINUTE, ALEX. WE'RE WELL OUT OF RANGE OF THEIR CROSSES.

...AND WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE THEM.

THE HUMAN MUST BE BADLY INJURED FOR THEM TO KEEP ROLLING LIKE THAT.

THUNDERING AT FULL SPEED TOWARD THE RENEGADE ENCAMPMENT, JASON AND ALEXANDER PASS BELOW AN UNSEEN SENTRY... WHO EMITS A SHRIEK BIRD CALL JUST AS THE PURSUING POLICE OFFICERS APPROACH...

SHRIE-FET!

BUT FORTUNATELY FOR THE TWO FUGITIVES, THE POSITIONING OF THE RENEGADE SENTRY SYSTEM HAS NOT ANTICIPATED THE APPROACH OF INTRUDERS GALLOPING AT FULL SPEED...

COME ON, ALEX-- GALLOP LIKE THE THUNDER AND MOVE LIKE THE LIGHTNING!

...AND CONSEQUENTLY, THE GORILLA INSURRECTIONISTS ARE SCARCELY ROLLED FROM THEIR TREEHOUSE BARRACKS BEFORE JASON AND ALEXANDER HAVE ALREADY PLOWED THROUGH THE CLEARING...
The pursuing peace officers, however, are not quite so fortunate...

They are slaughtered.

It is a grimly ironic scene of bloodshed and debauchery which explores through this late-afternoon glade, as the lawgiver's appointed peace officer, Brutus had commanded these three police guards...

...and as the secret leader of the Ape Insurrectionist movement, Brutus similarly commands these hooded gorilla terrorists.

It backfired, Alex--our plan backfired!!

Duck, Jake--that's Brutus entering the clearing now!

They killed them!

Two factions sharing a common leader--one mercilessly butchered by the other...

Aaaaieeee!!

--unfortunate, but of course quite necessary. The location of our headquarters must be kept secret if we are to continue advancing the cause of ape dominance...

You did well. In fact, this incident may be turned to our benefit... once the citizens of the village learn that it was the fugitives who led these gorillas to the slaughter!

Hail Brutus!!

All hail Brutus!
STINKING MURDERERS! I WATCHED MY PARENTS' HOUSE BURN TO THE GROUND!

NOW WE'LL SEE HOW BRUTUS LIKES A TASTE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE!

C'MON, JASE... THEY'RE HOLLERING BLOODY MURDER ALREADY!

IT'S THAT HUMAN JASON-- IT'S GOT TO BE. I WANT HALF THE FORCE TO STAY HERE AND DEAL WITH THE FIRES...

THE REST WILL COME WITH ME!
THE FORBIDDEN ZONE: A SPRAWLING LANDSCAPE OF CHARRED, TWISTED RUBBLE AND RUIN... SMOTHERED BY AN OMNIOUS BLANKET OF CLINGING PURPLE MIST...

I DON'T LIKE IT, JASON...

THE OLD MARKERS ARE STILL STANDING, JASON... WARNING OF MONSTERS AND WORSE HORRORS...

IF THE LAWGIVER MADE IT, WE CAN MAKE IT...

BUT IT'S A CINCH THE HORSES WON'T BE ANY GOOD ON THIS TERRAIN.

MY LUNGS ARE ALREADY KILLING ME.

YOU LIKE BRUTUS' BRAND OF JUSTICE ANY BETTER, ALEX?

IT ONLY LOOKS LIKE DEATH DOWN THERE... GOING BACK TO THE VILLAGE IS DEATH.

I'M WONDERING IF OUR LEGS WILL BE ANY GOOD ON THIS TERRAIN.
THE WAY WE RODE THOSE HORSES, WE MUST'VE LEFT SOME MIGHTY DEEP TRACKS...

Y'KNOW... SOMETHING JUST OCCURRED TO ME...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, BRUTUS WOULD NEVER FOLLOW US HERE!

WHILE, AT THE CREST OF THE PALISADE...

IT'S THEM, ALL RIGHT... AND THEY'VE ABANDONED THEIR HORSES.

FOLLOW THEM--WHILE I RETURN TO THE VILLAGE TO ORGANIZE A GROUP OF POLICE!

--A LOT OF JUNK AROUND HERE.

PRE-CATAclySM ARTIFACTS, ALEX. THE SCIENTISTS MIGHT LEARN A GREAT DEAL ABOUT OUR PAST IF THEY WEREN'T SO AFRAID OF THIS PLACE...

HA! HAIL BRUTUS!

HEY... WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I DON'T KNOW...

BUT IT'S THE ONLY BUILDING WE'VE COME ACROSS THAT ISN'T COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED. LOOKS INTERESTING...
SURE IS CREEPY, HUH, JASE?

Yeah, too quiet.

Hey--take a look at that over there.

Sure is ugly with all those sharp angles on the buildings.

Must be the way the forbidden zone looked before the cataclysm...

Well, the lawgiver certainly wasn't in there, but where do we find--

Hey--!

Did you see that?

Sure?

Are you...

I don't know. Something weird--it flitted behind that building before I could get a good look, but I saw it--!

Of course I'm sure!

THEN WE'RE... NOT ALONE...?

Guess not.

Inside...

War Museum.

Inside...

What's this stuff?

Come on--it was over this way...

Y'got me, Alex...
... BUT THIS THING OBVIOUSLY FITS INTO THIS SLOT...

AND...

BLAM!

YIKES!!

WELL... I'LL... BE...

JASON... DO YOU SUPPOSE THIS COULD BE THE PLACE THE LANGIVER HAS LECTURED ABOUT...

... THE PLACE CALLED 'HELL'... WHERE EVIL INSTRUMENTS CAUSE GREAT EXPLOSIONS AND DEATH...

NAH. WE'RE STILL ALIVE, AREN'T WE?

GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT!

SAYYY...

THEN, EXITING THE MUSTY, ARCHAIC BUILDING...

WHAT THE-?!

LOOKS LIKE YOUR EYES WEREN'T KIDDING YOU, JASE... WE'RE NOT ALONE-!!

... THESE JUST MIGHT COME IN HANDY... ONCE WE SHAKE THE COBWEBS OFF.
EASY, JASON-- YOU CAN PUT YOUR SWORD DOWN... THEY DON'T LOOK LIKE THEY'RE ABOUT TO ATTACK...

IN FACT, THEY SEEM TO BE AFRAID OF US.

URG

YEAH, THEY ARE TIMID, MUST'VE BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT US...

WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY ARE?

I DON'T KNOW. THEY'VE GOT THE FEATURES OF BOTH APES AND HUMANS...

SAY, YOU DON'T SUPPOSE...

URG

NO, COULDN'T BE.

THEY SURE SCATTERED FAST ENOUGH. LET'S FOLLOW THIS LAST ONE BEFORE HE SLIPS AWAY...

WAIT A MINUTE. DO YOU HEAR THAT?

YEAH, IT'S A LONG SHOT-- BUT MAYBE HE'LL LEAD US TO THE LAW-GIVER...
TELL ME, JASE--
TELL ME I DON'T SEE IT--!!

LURCHING, GRINDING, CRUNCHING RUBBLE AND ROCK,
THE THING JERKS FORWARD... LIKE A LEGLESS CRAB SCRABBLING IN PURSUIT OF FOOD...

WHRR-ANK

THE SHAGGY BIPED FREEZES IN SHOCK...

THEN BOLTS IN STARK TERROR.

URRRG!

SNAKT!!

AN OBSCENE PREHENSILE LIME SPROUTS FROM THE ROOF OF THE THING, SWIVELS FORWARD... AND DANGLES MENACINGLY--

METALLIC TEETH MESH IN GRATING DISSONANCE...

CRRRR

URRAG! URRRG!

THEN, WITH ALMOST SMUG DISDAIN, THE THING CLANKS AND LURCHES AWAY.

IT'S A MONSTER, ALEX!

...AND THE EXTRUDING PREHENSILE CLAW LIFTS ITS HELPLESS CATCH ABOVE THE GROUND...

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS.
IF YOU'D PAY ATTENTION IN CLASS, YOU'D KNOW THAT WAS A PRE-HOLOCAUST MACHINE.
YOU DIDN'T ACT SO SMART WHEN YOU FIRST SAW IT.

I WAS STARTLED, THAT'S ALL.

BESIDES, MACHINES CAN BE WORSE THAN MONSTERS.

THEN WHY ARE WE FOLLOWING IT?

URG URG!

WRAP-AH!

BECAUSE IT'S BOUND TO LEAD US SOMEWHERE...

LIKE INTO THAT TUNNEL FOR INSTANCE.

WELL, I SUPPOSE IF WE'VE COME THIS FAR...

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, JASE, IF THE LAWGIVER BRAVED THIS CRAZY FORBIDDEN ZONE...

"WHY SHOULDN'T WE FIND IT SO FORBIDDING?"

BECAUSE IT'S DAMN SPOOKY -- THAT'S WHY!

--THEY STOP... AND STARE, APPALLED AT THE SIGHT BELOW THEM...

CAUTIOUSLY, THEY ADVANCE DOWN THE TORTUOUS RAMP. THEY ARE AWARE OF HEAT AND BIZARRE SOUNDS... AND THEN, ROUNING A CORNER...
IT IS A SIGHT FORGED IN FERTILE HELL, A SCENE OF LIVID TORMENT AND BLEAK DESPAIR...

HEAT TO PARCH THE THROAT AND SEAR THE LUNGS WITH CHAFING BRIT AND ASHEN PUNGENCY...

SOUNDS TO PIERCE THE EARS AND DROWN THE MIND IN A CACOPHONY OF SLUGGISH CADENCE...

YOU THERE--
QUIT STRAGGLING!

YOU HEARD ME--
ON YOUR FEET AND MOVE SHARPLY!

CHANK
I said, get up, you stupid beast!!

...then spurts away to flee...

FTASH!
UR-RRG!

The furry creature tastes the lash once...

--For all of a dozen paces...

SPLAZZ

"...before being reduced to a smoldering heap of grue!"

It's madness, Alex!

What are they?!

The creator have pity on you, Jason... they're your ancestors...

MUTANTS
SO...
TWO MORE WHO WISH TO ASSIST IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GREAT WAR-MACHINE, NO DOUBT...

...AS SLAVES TO THE INHERITORS!

DON'T BET ON IT, MUSH-FACE!

NO! WAIT!! STOP!!

HURRY, JASON--THEY HEARD HIS SHOUTS!

AWRG--G-G!!

SHRAK!

SHUK SREEE!

ALL-RIGHT--LET'S GO BEFORE THEY TURN US INTO SMOKE-PUDDLES.

WE MADE IT. THEY SEEM PRETTY SLOGGISH, JASE--WE MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE NOW.

I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU THIS WAY, ALEX....BUT THE GRASS ISN'T ALL THAT GREEN OUT HERE EITHER--!

THERE THEY ARE!

IN THE NAME OF BRUTUS AND THE DIVINE CAUSE OF APE DOMINANCE--

--SLAY THEM!!

NEXT ISSUE: SPAWN OF THE MUTANT-PIT!
by Ed Lawrence

You can’t just go to Burbank and shoot crowd scenes when you need a city of apes in PLANET OF THE APES. You can’t rent a city, neither. You have to create a city from scratch. Yet it mustn’t look like the backlot of a studio, or, worse, the interior of a sound stage. The difficulties can be immense—and all for a few shots to establish that civilized apes have an incipient housing problem.

PLANET OF THE APES was a very complex production and, like everything else in the film, the apes’ city went through many different stages before it was actually built.

At first, the script called for the “Planet” to be just like present-day Earth. The astronauts, landing outside of a great city, would have eventually found themselves in the equivalent of New York City. Everything would have appeared identical ... except that all the citizens of the city would have been apes. The humans on the Planet would have been treated as animals. The final phase of the film turned out to have this same idea, but with an average city used as a location the effect would have been very different.

During this early stage of production, it was established that apes would have all the scientific devices we use today. Automobiles, helicopters, jet planes and traffic lights would all have been seen in operation within their city. The buildings themselves would have been full of devices such as automatic elevators, and television monitors. But this phase did not last long, for a variety of reasons.

To be successful, the apes of the film had to be LIKE humans but different enough to suggest they are some other species. So the city was turned into a very harsh, drab environment, with the apes living in a simple, antiquated style, like cavemen.
humans, but very DIFFERENT in some ways. Like their appearance. They had to appear to be almost SATIRES on humanity. And if the apes themselves, had to be satirical in appearance, then their cities would have to be designed to share their appearance.

So while an average film could have saved production costs by filming on location, this would not be true for PLANET OF THE APES. Just the appearances of the performers would have caused many problems. Location scenes would have to have been filmed either very early in the mornings, or at other times when crowds wouldn't have hampered the film. Location shooting, the boon of modern movies, would have proven to be an expensive and colossal pain in the budget for the

The idea of the "everyday city" began to disappear. The inspiration from this point in pre-production work seems to come not from advanced, modern designs, but from the most primitive of structures.

The Fox artists started studying ancient cliff dwellings, partially carved from solid stone in mountainsides. The designs were completed on paper, and moved away from the mountainsides. After all, apes had started out as tree-dwelling animals, and would naturally seek to live out in open areas.

Feelings of various levels were injected by designing houses with different slopes, and varying forms of foundations. Studio heads, seeing the first of these "crazy-quilt" cities on paper, instructed their artists to let their minds run wild. AND THEY DID!

All buildings, from private dwellings to important government museums and scientific centers, were designed with the same outward appearance. Each had a starting framework of squares, or rectangles, or other simple geometric shapes. Windows were of the same general shape as the entire structure. Any "chimneys" were part of the roof, that side of the building just extended to be a little taller. These designs were taken and changed, until it appeared that wax models had been made and partially MELTED. The apes' city began to take on a definite, individualized "look." It was unique and surrealistic in appearance, like nothing that had ever been designed before.

"Bridges" were designed to connect all the buildings. These were winding or straight ledges, up above ground level. Both decorative and functional, the city was much improved by their addition.

Interiors of buildings were fairly simple. Room were large, though not well-lit. Originally, the furnishings were designed as separate pieces, but ultimately they were reworked so that they almost seemed to spring from the floors and walls. Independent tables and chairs were altered to look like the same irregular patterns that formed the whole houses. A good example of this are the beds in the dissection room, and the tables of the main courtroom. In earlier sketches they can easily be seen to be separate structures, whereas in later versions they appear to be sprouting from the rooms themselves.

The technology, too, kept changing. In some of the early storyboards, even AFTER the general appearance...
of the ape city was designed, clumps of streetlamps can be seen. Obviously part of the landscapes, they are also curiously out of place. Which is why they were ultimately removed. The final reasoning was that, if the ape's society was one run on the idea that progress was evil (humans killed the Earth of years ago with scientific warfare, so both humans and progress were something to be avoided), then their lifestyle would reflect this philosophy. Buildings would be designed to hide any hint that, somewhere within them, machines were operating. Like the ape populace, the cities would have to appear primitive on the outside; satirical shadows of modern, scientific reality.

From models to actual-size, finished buildings, was an intricate operation. Construction took place on Fox's backlot, in the shadows of California mountains.

The area was landscaped with odd-looking plants, and the area of the city was cleared. Foundations were made of wooden beams and wires, and the surfaces of the houses were completed in plaster, chemical foams that hardened into a cement-like consistency, and fiberglass. On the outskirts of the city, some buildings were built a little smaller than the other houses. This is known as building in "forced perspective," and is common to save time and construction costs. Hardly a movie set is made that doesn't have SOME part of it built deliberately out of proportion.

Up in the hills surrounding the city, even smaller buildings were completed. These were included to give the impression of the city continuing for a much greater distance than it actually did. All the buildings were spray-painted a light shade.
of brown, to further the illusion they were made from stone. Glass windows were positioned inside of certain of the structures, and the "stone" bridges were carefully worked into the buildings themselves.

Although most of the buildings were completed just to be seen on camera, there were certain ledges and sections that had to be reinforced so that they could take the weight of actors. During various scenes in the film, apes could be seen scampering along from building to building. And, in one scene, Charlton Heston was hoisted high into the air, in a net supported on a connecting "bridge."

Landscaping completed the picture. Along with shrubbery, entire trees from exotic climates were replanted in the hills surrounding the apes' city. The small piece of land that was the site of the "Lawgiver" statue received very careful attention.

To a prospector coming out of the mountains, the city of the apes would have been a bewildering sight. Even in the glare of the California sun, the apes' city looked solid, and real. It could have been a genuine city, standing through centuries of ape civilization, yet somehow unnoticed by native Californians till PLANET OF THE APES.
Lesson From The Lawgiver #1

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Simian Genesis

A review of Pierre Boulle's classic novel, Planet of the Apes.

by Gary Gerani

"The book was better!"

This one sentence has incited more movie directors to violence than any other word, phrase, thought, sentence fragment—you name it—ever uttered anywhere, by anyone, critic or layman. It has destroyed friendships, split marriages asunder, triggered group homicides and studio suicides, curdled milk, and even—depending on the temperament and sobriety (or lack of it) of the persons involved—inspired hand-to-hand physical conflict! It is considered one of the penultimate critical put-downs of a film—being as it is, in effect, says that the director's conception of the film was faulty to begin with, and his execution even worse—and it is one of those murderous little phrases that is used more often than not by everyone, everywhere; it is even, on occasion, deserved.

The problem, you see, stems from the reality that one is dealing with two completely different media: one, books, dealing with the written word, with images created from an effective manipulation of those words. The other medium, cinema, deals exclusively in visual images. Words—dialogue—are more often than not subordinate, and sometimes unnecessary, to the audience's understanding of what the film is all about, and what the director is trying to say (the classic example here, of course, is Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, which contains only 40 minutes of spoken dialogue throughout its 2½-hour running time).

Of course, SPACE ODYSSEY had an advantage over roughly 60% of its cinematic brethren: it was an original screenplay based on an original idea. Sure, there was a novel, 2001, written by Arthur C. Clarke (Kubrick's co-screenwriter and author of the short story which gave Kubrick the idea to make the film), but this novel came after the fact; it was a novelization based on the screenplay. Most film scripts go the other way: they are adapted from an existing literary property, a book, a play, a poem, a short story—something that's been published.

Which brings us, rather circuitously, back to our problem (remember the problem; I mean, we only mentioned it a paragraph ago). Which is: how do you adapt an existing literary property into a viable piece of cinema—essentially, a good movie—and get away with it. (Getting away with it being defined as having people not say: "The book was better!")

Most of the time, you don't.

What has this to do with PLANET OF THE APES, one asks, the book or the film? Well, being as this magazine is titled PLANET OF THE APES, and this article is about Pierre Boulle's novel of the same name, it has a lot to do with it. Because, there are a great many people who saw the original film, who came away impressed and—perhaps—even a little awed; and yet, when they got
home and thought about what they’d just seen, looked
at one another and murmured: “The book was better.”
What they meant, really, was that the book was different.

Y’see, the written word, by its very nature, reaches
the reader on a far more basic level than most films. It
suggests, rather than dramatizes, and allows the reader
to draw on his own creative imagination to flesh out
the characters and situations. It is a medium that appeals
primarily to the reader’s emotions.

Film, on the other hand, is hampered by the fact
that it is, when all is said and done, nothing more than
moving pictures—with the emphasis on pictures. It is
a two-dimensional medium—it has length and width,
but no depth. It is not real. The audience watches images
recorded at some time in the distant past; images,
further, that have been manipulated by the director
and the film editor to evoke certain, programmed responses
from said audience. Cinema may be beautiful and evocative
and awe-inspiring and enlightening—any favorable adjective
one can think of—but it is not organic. Live theater is
organic—it is real people experiencing ‘real’ emotions
within the reality of the play they are performing—and
literature is organic—because the reader is both audience
and participant.

So, when people say that they thought the book was
better, they really mean that the book satisfied them in
different, more complete, ways than the film did. And
the reverse can also be true: when people say that the
film was better than the book.

Now (finally) we come to Pierre Boulle’s novel, *Planet
of the Apes*.

It begins casually, with the introduction of a pair of
interstellar poets, Jinn and Phyllis, vacationing out in
the cosmos in their stellar yacht—a vast, spiderweb
starsail craft that Arthur Clarke would have been proud
of (a starsail craft being one which uses the power of
the solar wind caught on an incredibly vast ‘sail’ for
propulsion, very much like an aquatic sailboat uses the
terrestrial wind). The calm routine of their voyage is
soon broken, however, by the discovery of a bottle
floating in deep space, a bottle which—as all such bottles
should—contains a message. This is the actual start of
the novel, as Jinn and Phyllis relate the story of one
Ulysee Merou, a journalist/astronaut from 26th-century
Earth, who was a member of the first French interstellar
mission to the giant star Betelgeuse.

The message relates the story of a man who finds
himself in a nightmare, a man who finds himself on a
planet of intelligent apes, a planet where apes rule and man is no more than a dumb beast.

This Planet of the Apes is structured much like our own Earth. The apes are divided into three basic classes: Orangutans, Chimpanzees and Gorillas. The apes have elections, drive cars, build cities; they even dress up in tuxedos for formal dinners. Humans, being the lower—animal—species, are treated accordingly; they are primitive, functionally mindless, useful prey in hunts, useful subjects for medical experimentation—in short, the situation here between Apes and Humankind is the exact reverse of what it is on Earth.

After some adventures, Merou finally succeeds in gaining the confidence of two Chimpanzees, Zira and Cornelius; and, with the discovery that he is a human who can think and talk, Merou becomes something of a curiosity. He aids the apes in their investigations into simian history and eventually discovers that this planet was once like Earth, savage apes ruled by intelligent humans; over the aeons, however, the situation slowly reversed itself—apes were brought out of the jungles, brought into the homes, genetically engineered to make them bigger and stronger and smarter—eventually becoming such an integral, necessary part of the human society that they began to dominate it.

Until the arrival of an intelligent human. A man who could mate with a savage human and produce intelligent offspring. Realizing the somewhat delicate position he is in, Merou escapes from the planet in the Terran starship with his savage human mate, Nova, and heads back for the Earth. He lands just outside his beloved Paris—having been away over four thousand years real time (only a few years ship time)—a car rolls out from the terminal to greet them, Merou happy to be home. And then Nova screams.

For the driver of the car is an ape. And the general officer seated in the back is a gorilla.

Full circle.

Merou lifts off from Paris immediately, on a desperate quest through the stars of the Milky Way for a planet where Man ruled. This bottle is his last cry for help.

And Phyllis looks at Jinn, Jinn at Phyllis. And she wrinkles her delicate chimpanzee's nose at her husband. This bottle must be some sort of cosmic practical joke; whoever heard of intelligent humans, anyway? Especially humans intelligent enough to fly a starship. I mean, really?

End of book.

Not quite like the movie, huh? For example, the Planet of the Apes in Boule's novel is a planet orbiting the star Betelgeuse, some 300 light years from Earth; the astronauts' flight there is painstakingly detailed and the reader has no doubt that Ulysee Merou has, indeed, landed on a totally alien planet. The Arthur P. Jacobs/Rod Serling/Franklin Shaftner film, on the other hand, has the astronauts thinking they are on a planet orbiting Betelgeuse—when, in reality, they are on Earth, an Earth ravaged by a brutal nuclear war. (How they got there is irrelevant, all one needs to know for the full enjoyment of the film is that they are there.)

Then there are the characters. Ulysee Merou, reporter, becomes Colonel Taylor, astronaut, in the film. Merou is an astonishingly level-headed person who keeps his cool under the most far-fetched circumstances. (One can argue that Merou's background as a reporter has prepared him for even the most bizarre of experiences, giving him the psychic fortitude to withstand the myriad shocks he experiences on the Planet of the Apes; but this is somewhat of a weak rationalization for such a solid character.)

Taylor, on the other hand, is a rough-'n'-tough cynic of the old school. A man who believes in nothing but himself, a man who is living proof of Robert Heinlein's dictum that Mankind is the meanest, deadliest species of intelligent predator ever created. But, at the same time, Taylor is a vulnerable man, a man who is shocked—and a little frightened—by what he finds on this Planet of the Apes, a man who is nearly shattered when he discovers that this nightmare world is really Earth and that his kind made it a wasteland. Partly due to the script, partly due to Charlton Heston's performance, Taylor comes across as a very real, dynamic character, one who more than helps the film maintain its lightning pace.

In one of the final scenes of the film, PLANET OF THE APES, Dr. Zaius confronts Drs. Zira and Cornelius.
Boule tries very hard to instil believable personalities into his simian characters, and he succeeds to a large degree, especially with Zira. But the Apes present a different edge to the personality problem, as they seem to possess a built-in aesthetic flaw: Boule succeeds so well in projecting the intense 'humanism' of the simians that the reader often finds himself forgetting that they are, indeed, simians, and not humans; a state of affairs which can confuse even the best of readers if he—or she—isn't careful. Ironically, one could almost say that if the reader hasn't seen the film, PLANET OF THE APES—with its visually established simian characters—then one is faced with the problem of deciphering who's-who among the literary ape cast (this points out the classic conflict between book and film: a book can take you deep inside a being's head, but a film can tell you—far better than any literary description—what he looks like).

As characters, Zira and Cornelius survive the transition from paper to celluloid rather well, and Dr. Zaius comes off much better on the screen than in the novel, where he is portrayed as a fumbling, senile upholder of the status quo. That Zaius would have been no match at all for Taylor, while Merou would have been easy meat for Maurice Evans' dynamic, cunning Zaius.

All well and good, the human characters are changed to fit the new storyline of the film, but the simian characters remain essentially the same. The trouble is, this points up another problem the film's producers ran up against with their adaptation. The problem of believability. On a printed page one can get away with describing a planet ruled by apes—a planet ruled by anything!—because the planet is only real inside the reader's mind. The screen is something else again; there, the producers have to trick the audience into suspending their disbelief and entering into the reality of the film (again, Stanley Kubrick did this in SPACE ODYSSEY with the ApeMen seen in 'The Dawn of Man' segment, a feat of cinematic and make-up brilliance that had ace technical people in Hollywood wondering where he got all those magnificent trained apes—never realizing that they were actors in costume). Faced with a similar—though infinitely more difficult problem (as the apes in PLANET OF THE APES had to act as intelligent beings, as rational and—if one will forgive the expression—human as ourselves; Kubrick's ApeMen were just that, ApeMen, nothing more), the producers of PLANET OF THE APES did the best they know how. And pulled it off.

And yet, though the make-ups and the costumes—and, indeed, the physical playing of the three simian leads (Roddy McDowell, Kim Stanley and Maurice Evans).
who didn’t move anything at all like people—were quite believable, there seemed to be an element of doubt present in the minds of some of the audience: a realization that it was, indeed, Roddy McDowell or Maurice Evans underneath that simian face. It’s a problem that plagues every science-fiction film that involves extensive physical applications—and it must be noted in all fairness that PLANET OF THE APES succeeded in establishing its unreal/reality to a degree rarely seen in films to date—making the audience forget that there is a human actor wearing all those hot, heavy applications.

And there was a major difference between the book and the film in that Boule’s novel was as much a fantasy as it was science-fiction, whereas the film was a hard-core science-fiction/adventure film. Therefore, in the interests of keeping the film moving at the best possible speed—while holding onto the essential flavor of the book—certain scenes had to be sacrificed: such as the apes applauding with hands and feet after Merou’s vindication speech, or scenes of human animals undergoing experimental surgery and having eerie, racial memory flashback/hallucinations to the days when they ruled, not the apes.

So, what is one left with after this cacophonous potpourri? Well, there is the realization that Boule’s novel, if filmed literally, would have been a thoroughly bizarre, dream-like fantasy with genuinely fascinating science-fiction concepts, some dark, mysterious scenes and an incredibly otherworldly ambience throughout.

And there is the realization that cinema is a compromise. Especially when adapting material from one medium to another. Sure, it only took Alexi Tolstoi a few chapters to describe hundreds of thousands of men clashing at the Battle of Borodino, but to film the scene literally—as the Russians did in their epic Mos-Film adaptation of War and Peace—would involve more money than most film studios make in a year, let alone budget for a single picture. (The Russian War and Peace, incidentally, cost over $100,000,000 to film; that’s right, one-hundred-million dollars; few capitalist companies could even afford budgets one-tenth that figure in these inflationary times.) Sure it would be nice to film PLANET OF THE APES exactly as Pierre Boule wrote it. But would that be a cinematically viable project; would audiences be interested in it; in short, would it sell?

You’re a producer. You want your film to succeed, both artistically and commercially. So you become a juggler, balancing artistic demands against commercial ones, trying to produce the best film you can.

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Michael Wilson: The Other "APES" Writer

An exclusive interview with the co-author of the original "Planet of the Apes" movies.

BY DAVID JOHNSON

In the crackling long-distance telephone line, controversial Academy Award-winning writer Michael Wilson, sounding somewhat like an erudite Gabby Hayes, is startled that I've called to ask him some questions about his participation in the making of PLANET OF THE APES. (Wilson's agent in Hollywood was supposed to have phoned ahead and explained that I'd be calling. His agent gave me Wilson's private number in Ojai, California.)

"Well, what is it you wanted to know?" Wilson keeps asking. And I keep repeating that I have a few questions to ask him. Finally, Wilson says: "Well, I need time to think about it. It's been such a long time since I wrote the script. Can you call me back at five this afternoon?"

Promptly at five, I telephone Wilson again and the writer comes on the line and adds right into an explanation.

Wilson's second professional writing assignment was doing scripts for William Boyd's HOPALONG CASSIDY.
The first screenplay was written by Rod Serling. This, as it turned out, was a straight science-fiction story about an ape culture on another planet in another solar system. I altered all of that to make it a satire. A satire, really, on the human race. Because it turned out the apes — those civilized apes — had descended from humans on our own earth and the astronauts had inadvertently returned to our planet only to find out that earth had been wiped out by a nuclear bomb and, therefore, the dominant species we had evolved was the apes who had descended from and imitated the culture of man which had preceded it. Which accounts for the satire of the story. Which is what I did to it.

You'd not written anything in the science-fiction genre before?
I had never done one before, no. And I didn't consider this story in that category either.

What I felt it needed was satire. It was too straight and too serious the way it was done before I came on. Do you think the humor was the key to its success?
It certainly contributed to it. No question.

Well, what was its special appeal to audiences?
As I said, it was not straight science-fiction. It was more about the human predicament than it was about apes. I think this is the key point.

Did you work closely with Arthur Jacobs (the film's producer) on the project?

Oh yes, with him and his associate producer, Mort Abrahams, and with the director Franklin Schaffner. For story conferences, it was the three of us together.

Were you commuting then?
Yes. Oh's been my home for 10 years. Forgive me, I'm a transplanted New Yorker. Where is Ota? In the desert?
No. It's a little town up in Ventura County, within 10 miles of the coast. Not far from Santa Barbara, if you know where that is. I'm here with my family — although my daughters are grown now. I like it here to work and I commute to Hollywood whenever a story conference is needed.

I know Arthur Jacobs had been a publicist with his own p.r. firm. This was his first production, wasn't it?
Oh no. He had a couple of films before that. One that did not do well financially was DR. DOLITTLE (a multi-million dollar musical starring Rex Harrison). It was very costly and a bomb at the box office. But PLANET OF THE APES shot his prestige right back up again.

Had Charlton Heston already been cast in the leading role by Taylor the astronaut?
Heston had been interested. But he said, 'Show me a script first.' He wanted to read it before he'd seal the deal. After Heston read what I had done with it, he agreed to sign on.

Approximately how long did you work on the script?
Oh, about five months. Were there any budgetary considerations you had to keep in mind?
Well, the initial creation of the apes' make-up and costumes was quite expensive. They worked long and hard on those things until they got exactly what was wanted. It was all quite costly. (A laugh) Naturally, for all the sequels they used the same stuff.

The other factor — we wanted to find an architectural style for the ape culture which would look quite unlike anything people had ever known in America and yet didn't seem futuristic or phoney or anything.
I came up with a suggestion. There's a Spanish architect named Antonio Guadi, who is considered a great man in Spain and has some marvelous architecture there. His architecture suggests a kind of arboreal past; some of the columns of his buildings seem like giant trunks of trees. I took this to the art director and he agreed that this was inspirational. So the city of the apes in the picture was built in that fashion. Which suggested that these people were — well, trees were nostalgic to them for having lived in them at one time. (A laugh)

Did you sense the film would be the smash it was?
Yes, I did. I mean, I sensed it as soon as the picture was completed and before any footage was seen by anybody except the people directly involved with the production. I knew we had a hit on our hands.

After the decision was made to do a sequel — or series — was there any talk of you doing the script or scripts?
Oh yeah. They were offered to me but I was always busy on something else. I also felt I had done my duty to the apes. (A laugh) I felt that that was enough.

Mr. Wilson, I need a few biographical facts. Where were you born?
Oklahoma. McCuller. Where the state prison is. Not inside but within the shadow of its walls.

And what about your schooling?
I was brought up a Catholic boy. Went to parochial schools in Oklahoma, in California — San Francisco. Finally grew up to manhood in Berkeley. Where I went to the University of California at Berkeley.

And when did you graduate from college?
It's all I ever wanted to do when I was in college.

Were you an English major?
I was a Philosophy major, point of fact. But after I graduated I decided I wanted to make a go of it as a writer. I began as a short story writer. Eventually came to Hollywood. After considerable difficulties, broke in.

Wilson won an Academy Award for his screenplay for George Stevens, A PLACE IN THE SUN.

Dr. Zira (Kim Hunter), Astronaut Taylor's true friend on this mad simian world.

What was your first screen credit?
My first job was a dog at Columbia called THE MEN IN HER LIFE starring Loretta Young as a ballerina. Which had 16 writers on it, I was the 17th. The producer was a guy named Gregory Ratoff. A great character actor and quite a funny guy. But they wouldn't come up with any more money for him to pay a writer. They had men of great prestige working on it — Ben Hecht and John Van Druten. I was a nobody. Finally, they said, 'No more money for you, Gregory.' So he had to pay me out of his own pocket. One hundred dollars a week, Gregory was a gambler and a race track tout. He often took my 100 and spent it on the horses and I never saw it. But I reworked the whole screenplay one day ahead of camera for five weeks and I got my first credit out of it.

So were you put under contract?
No. (A laugh) I went back to unemployment. Well, what happened then?
The war was about to begin. My only job was writing scripts for Hopalong Cassidy for (producer) Harry Sherman. I wrote three 'Hoppy's' for William Boyd. That was six weeks of work for each script. Then I joined the Marine Corps and was away for three years. That was that until after the war.

When I came back I had the good fortune of being under contract to a new company called Liberty Films composed of three prominent directors: William Wyler, George Stevens and Frank Capra.

For them I did — not necessarily in this order — FRIENDLY PERSUASION, which was filmed nine years after I wrote it. Another one that hasn't been put on film to this day is LOOK, HOMeward, ANGEL that Thomas Wolfe novel. For reasons too complicated to explain to you on the phone. I did A PLACE IN THE SUN for George Stevens.

You won the Academy Award for that?
Right. That was with Gary Brown. And you did FIVE FINGERS?
Yes. I did that at Fox.
Joe Mankiewicz directed it. I thought he'd done the script too.

Not true. That was a solo credit of mine. It was a wonderful script. Thank you.

(Michael Wilson became a controversial figure during...
the McCarthy era of the early 1950s. He was an unfriendly witness before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

In 1952, a clause was inserted into the Screen Writers Guild contract giving a producer the right to eliminate credit for a writer who had been an unfriendly witness or had refused to appear before any governmental committees investigating communism or who had declined to submit a statement that the writer was a member of the Communist Party or submitted a statement saying that he was a member.

Wilson had originally written the screenplay for FRIENDLY PERSUASION for William Wyler in 1946. Wyler, with financing from Allied Artists, filmed the property in the mid-1950s. When AA became involved, they assigned Jessamyn West, the author of the original book, and two other writers to work on the screenplay. Writers Guild arbitration over who should get screen credit resulted in credit going to Wilson. But AA exercised the little known clause mentioned above and sent the film out with a credit merely saying: "From the book by Jessamyn West."

In 1957, Wilson won a Writers Guild award for his screenplay even though his name did not appear on the screen.

The then Paris-based Wilson worked on THE BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER KWAI; he received no screen credit for this film either. But the question of how important a contribution he made to LAWRENCE OF ARABIA ended up before an arbitration committee, composed of screen writers of long experience and high standing in the industry.

The inquiry lasted many months and the committee examined all versions of the script and other relevant documents. In its adjudication, the committee held that Wilson was entitled to equal credit with Robert Bolt. (Bolt, apparently, was wholly responsible for the dialogue and Wilson for much of the film's "form.") According to Guild rules, a writer who contributes at least one-third of the script should be entitled to a screenplay credit. Therefore, the Guild presented Wilson with a duplicate award for LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (which had already been presented to Bolt in 1962.)

Is the blacklisting a subject you would rather pass on? (A bit testily) Look, I'm running out of time. Besides which you can't get all that into your magazine. Your readers are not going to be interested in the blacklist.

Well, what did you think of the glossy treatment the subject received in THE WAY WE WERE (the Streisand-Redford vehicle)?

As a wise friend of mine said, "It should've been called The Way We Weren't. I didn't think it was a bad picture. But it was just so damn superficial. It should have said something. You didn't know what the hell it was all about."

I read in the Hollywood trade papers that you are doing a script for Robert Wise called THE OLD MAN.

Right. I'm still working on it. It's about John Brown and his raid on Harper's Ferry. It'll probably be released in 1976 because it's right in tune with America's Bicentennial celebration.

(The editor and staff of this magazine wish to thank Mr. Wilson for being so generous with his time in consenting this interview.)

In the early-sixties, after a long, drawn-out controversy, Wilson was awarded a Writer's Guild award for the work he did on the screenplay of the Oscar-winning film, LAWRENCE OF ARABIA.
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And the Law-Giver said:
"BEWARE THE BEAST, MAN!"
For Man was the great destroyer. He alone among God's primates killed his own kind. Killed for sport. Or whim. Or profit.
Man found this Earth a paradise, and made of it, a desolate wasteland.
Beware Man. Destroy him . . . lest he destroy you.
Such was the Law of the Ape.

Enter the Man, Taylor.
An astronaut from a far-distant world. A world where Man ruled, and Apes were dumb. On his Earth, Taylor was one of the elite, a hero.
Here, he is merely one of the hunted.
I still can't shake the notion that I actually heard the human speak--

That'll be the day! Next you'll be saying you saw a human carrying a rifle--hunting us--!
ALL RIGHT—SO MY EARS WERE PLAYING TRICKS ON ME! YOU ACT AS THOUGH I COMMITTED A SIN!

AND YOU ACT AS THOUGH YOU DIDN'T KNOW VERY WELL THAT ATTRIBUTING INTELLIGENCE TO A HUMAN—

--IS A SIN--

--A VERY SERIOUS ONE!

OH MY GOD--I REMEMBER NOW--

THE HUNT--!

MY THROAT--CAN'T TALK--

WHERE AM I--?

--IN WHICH THE HUMANS OF THIS PLANET WERE THE PREY--
--AND THE PREDATORS WERE--

--APES--GORILLAS WITH RIFLES--!

SMILE NOW--

THIS IS INSANE--AND I CAN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT IT--

MY THROAT'S BEEN RIPPED OPEN--

IF I LOSE MUCH MORE BLOOD--

--I'LL--
Uh-oh, doctor, here comes that busybody Zira again!

As usual... after every hunt!

Which one was wearing the strange clothes, Dr. Galen?
The male on the table!

Will he live?

How should I know? The beast has lost a lot of blood!

Why can't I ever find anything when I need it? There's no probe here--find one!

Yes, sir!

This surgery room is dirty, doctor!

You don't sound happy in your work!

Why should I be--when I'm nothing more than a vet in this laboratory?

These animals are dirty, doctor! They stink--and they carry communicable diseases! Why aren't they cleaned up before they're brought here?
WHICH REMINDS ME—YOU PROMISED TO SPEAK TO DR. ZAIUS ABOUT GETTING ME A PROMOTION!

I DID! BUT YOU KNOW HOW HE LOOKS DOWN HIS NOSE AT CHIMPANZEEES!

BUT THE QUOTA SYSTEM'S BEEN ABDOLISHED! YOU MADE IT! WHY CAN'T I?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MADE IT? I'M AN ANIMAL PSYCHOLOGIST AND NOTHING MORE! WE DON'T HAVE ANY REAL AUTHORITY!

YOU DO PRETTY WELL WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING SPACE AND EQUIPMENT!

THAT'S BECAUSE DR. ZAIUS REALIZES OUR WORK HAS VALUE!

HMPH!

THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC BRAIN SURGERY ARE BEING LAID IN OUR WORK—IN STUDIES OF THE CEREBRAL FUNCTIONS OF THESE ANIMALS!

THEY'RE STILL DIRTY AND THEIR BITE IS SEPTIC!

JUST TAKE A LOOK AT MY HAND—!

LOUSY BEASTS!
NURSE--HOLD THE BEAST'S HEAD STILL WHILE I--

--PROBE HIS THROAT WOUND!

HE'S PASSED OUT AGAIN!

THESE BEAST CAN'T TOLERATE THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF PAIN--

WELL, THAT'S ALL I CAN DO! I DON'T KNOW WHETHER HIS LARYNX WILL REPAIR ITSELF OR NOT!

YOU MIGHT AS WELL RETURN THEM TO THEIR--

"...CAGES!"

OH, SIMMER DOWN, WHY DON'T YOU!

PLAY WITH YOUR BLOCKS-- OR EAT A BANANA-- LIKE THE REST OF THE ANIMALS!

60
GOOD MORNING, DR. ZIRA!

NO CHANGE! THE MINUTE YOU COME NEAR HIM HE GOES INTO HIS ACT! SEE FOR YOURSELF!

DON'T GO SO CLOSE TO HIM, DOCTOR--YOU COULD GET HURT--!

DON'T BE SILLY! HE'S PERFECTLY TAME!

They're all tame until they take a chunk out of you!

GOOD MORNING, JULIUS! HOW'S OUR PATIENT TODAY?

SEE? HE KEEPS PRETENDING HE CAN TALK!
DID YOU SEE THAT? IT'S REMARKABLE!

Huh?

HE GOT ANGRY AT YOU--TRIED TO FORM WORDS!

WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY--HUMAN SEE, HUMAN DO!

NOW WHAT'S HE DOING?

HE SEEMS TO WANT SOMETHING!

I'D BE CAREFUL IF I WERE YOU, DOCTOR--

GET BACK, YOU MANGY BEAST!

WHAT DID I TELL YOU, DOCTOR--YOU JUST CAN'T TRUST THEM!

TRY THAT AGAIN AND I'LL BREAK YOUR PAW!

I'M NOT QUITE CONVINCED OF THAT, JULIUS--
IN FACT, I'M CONVINCED OF JUST THE--

G-GOOD MORNING, YOUR EXCELLENCY!

WHAT'S THAT--?

OH-- DR. ZAIUS! I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD COME!

BRIGHT EYES, SHOW HIM! GO AHEAD-- DO YOUR TRICK FOR DR. ZAIUS!

I'M WAITING, ZIRA!

SPEAK! GO ON-- SPEAK AGAIN--!

HE'S OVER HERE!

THERE! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? DOESN'T IT LOOK AS THOUGH HE'S TALKING?!

YES-- AMUSING! A MAN WHO ACTS LIKE AN APE!
DR. ZAIUS--I COULD SWEAR HE'S TRYING TO ANSWER YOU--!

YES, HE DOES SHOW A CERTAIN GIFT FOR MIMICRY!

I WONDER HOW HE'D SCORE ON A HOPKINS MANUAL DEXTERITY TEST--?

AN ANIMAL?

HE'S MOVING HIS FINGERS!

OF COURSE! HE SAW ZIRA MOVING HERS!

BUT PERHAPS HE UNDERSTOOD--

LOOK!

MAN HAS NO UNDERSTANDING, DR. ZIRA! HE CAN BE TAUGHT A FEW SIMPLE TRICKS NOTHING MORE!

I BEG TO DISAGREE! ACCORDING TO MY EXPERIMENTS--

A WORD TO THE WISE, DR. ZIRA--EXPERIMENTAL BRAIN SURGERY ON THESE CREATURES IS ONE THING--

I'M ALL FOR IT!

BUT YOUR BEHAVIORAL STUDIES ARE ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY!
TO SUGGEST THAT WE CAN LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT SIMIAN NATURE FROM A STUDY OF MAN IS NONSENSE! BECAUSE, MEN ARE A NUISANCE!

THE SOONER THEY'RE EXTERMINATED--THE BETTER!

IT'S A QUESTION OF SIMIAN SURVIVAL!

DON'T FORGET IT, DR. ZIRA!

YES, SIR!

IS THIS THE ONE YOU WANTED, DOCTOR?

YES, THANK YOU!

BRIGHT EYES--I'VE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU--
PUT HER IN WITH HIM, GUARD!

NOW, BRIGHT EYES-- YOUR CAGE WON'T SEEM SO--

--LONELY!

HAVE FUN, BRIGHT EYES--

UNLESS YOU PREFER TO TAKE ALL YOUR EXERCISE IN THE--

"--COMPUND!!"

DO YOU HAVE TO WORK TONIGHT?

NO!

NEITHER DO I!
DO YOU HAVE TO DO THAT IN PUBLIC?

WHAT'S SO PUBLIC? THE ONLY THINGS AROUND ARE THE BEASTS IN THE COMPOUND--AND THE GORILLAS GUARDING THEM!

CORNELIUS--!

NEVER MIND THAT NOW! THAT'S BRIGHT EYES--THE ONE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT!

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT HIM?

HELLO, BRIGHT EYES! HOW'S OUR THROAT COMING ALONG?

SO HE'S SCRATCHING IN THE DIRT! WHAT'S SO REMARKABLE ABOUT THAT?

REMEMBERS WHAT?

THE BLOOD TRANSFUSION--SHE REMEMBERS IT!

OH COME ON, ZIRA--YOU KNOW THEY CAN'T--

LOOK AT THE FEMALE--SHE REMEMBERS!
SOMETHING'S BOTHERING HIM! HE'S BEEN PRYING AROUND THE LAB FOR THE PAST TWO DAYS--

HELLO, DR. ZIRA!

GOOD MORNING, DR. ZAIUS! YOU KNOW DR. CORNELIUS, MY FIANCE--

OH, YES--THE YOUNG APE WITH A SHOVEL! I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE PLANNING ANOTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION!

YES, SIR--IF THE ACADEMY APPROVES--

YOU UNDERSTAND THE PROJECT WILL REQUIRE MY SUPPORT, OF COURSE!

I HOPE I CAN COUNT ON IT, SIR!

A FRIENDLY WARNING, CORNELIUS--

CANT WRITE--
—WHEN YOU'RE DIGGING FOR ARTIFACTS... DON'T BURY YOUR REPUTATION!

GUARDS--!

SPUNCH!

THEY'VE STARTED TO FIGHT AGAIN-- THE STUPID BEASTS!

WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN--?!

YOU'D THINK ONE TASTE OF THE WHIP WOULD BE ENOUGH!

BUT NO-- YOU CAN'T EVEN POUND SENSE INTO THESE BEASTS!

YEAH, BUT MAYBE THIS ONE'LL SIMMER DOWN AFTER HE'S--

SHWARK!

YEEEEEE!

WUDD!
FELT SOME REAL HEAT!

STOP--I YOU'VE HURT HIM!

GET THEM OUT OF THERE!

WE'RE TAKING THEM INSIDE--!

SSSSZZZ!

STOP IT AT ONCE!

CORNELIUS, IF YOU HAVE SOME TIME TODAY, I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS THIS EXPEDITION OF YOURS IN GREATER DETAIL!

CERTAINLY SIR! I'LL GET MY NOTES AND COME RIGHT OVER TO YOUR OFFICE!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THESE ANIMAL PSYCHOLOGISTS! WHAT'S DR. ZIRA TRYING TO PROVE--?

THAT MAN CAN BE DOMESTICATED!

HAW! THAT'S RICH, EH, DR. ZAIUS?

YES--IT IS AN AMUSING NOTION!
WELL, I'VE GOT ANOTHER HUNT TO ORGANIZE! BE SEEING YOU, DR. ZAIUS!

GOOD HUNTING!

I CAN...
THOSE FOOLES AND THEIR TORCHES--!
I'M SORRY BRIGHT EYES! COME HERE-- I'VE GOT SOME OINTMENT--

I'M TELLING YOU, JULIUS-- IT'S AS THOUGH HE UNDERSTANDS EVERY WORD I SAY!

JUST BE CAREFUL, DR. ZIRA--

OH--!

I TOLD YOU WHAT YOU'D GET IF YOU TRIED THAT!

DROP THOSE THINGS, YOU STUPID BEAST!

JULIUS, DON'T! IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW!
IT MATTERS AS LONG AS I'M THE KEEPER OF THESE PENS!

WUMP!

THAT OUGHT TO TEACH THE FLEA-RIDDEN ANIMAL!

NATURAL BORN THIEVES, AIN'T THEY?
My name is Taylor.

Get me a collar and leash! I'm taking him to the infirmary!

But he's vicious, besides, it's against the rules.

Do as I say--!

You wouldn't hurt me, would you-- Taylor?

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