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Summer '78

COMING ATTRACTIONS

JAWS II, with Roy Scheider. Watch out for the pregnant shark.

BIG WEDNESDAY. John Milius' ode to surfing and coming of age in the Sixties.

THE SWARM. Lots of bees.

CAPRICORN ONE. Dirty work on the moon.

HOOPER (formerly *Hollywood Stuntman*). Burt Reynolds and Sally Field and lots of action.

FOUL PLAY. Chevy Chase's major motion picture debut, with Goldie Hawn.

THE CHEAP DETECTIVE. Peter Falk in another raincoat.

GREASE. John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John as Fifties sweethearts. Dancing and singing, too.

CONVOY. Kris Kristofferson and Ali McGraw, trucks and CBs.

REVENGE OF THE PINK PANTHER. If we're lucky this will be the last of this overworked series.

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE. All about modern fraternities and sororities, starring John Belushi.

HEAVEN CAN WAIT. Warren Beatty and Julie Christie in a remake of *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*.

THE BAD NEWS BEARS GO TO JAPAN. Maybe they'll stay there. This one stars Tony Curtis.

WHO'LL STOP THE RAIN (formerly *Dog Soldiers*). Tuesday Weld & Nick Nolte deal drugs.

THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY. Gary Busey as the rock and roll legend.

THE EYES OF LAURA MARS (formerly *Eyes*). Jon Peter's second effort, this one with Faye Dunaway instead of Barbra.

AMSTERDAM KILL. Robert Mitchum. Need we say more?

DAMIEN — OMEN II. William Holden stars in this first of three sequels about a little devil.

THE DRIVER. Ryan O'Neal.

INTERNATIONAL VELVET. Tatum O'Neal, remaking Elizabeth Taylor's early triumph, *National Velvet*.

CORVETTE SUMMER. Starring Mark Hamill and Annie Potts. A boy, a girl and a car.

JENNIFER. A thriller/diller from American International.

HIGHBALLIN'. Peter Fonda, Jerry Reed and trucks.

OUR WINNING SEASON. Scott Jacoby as a high school track star.

THE NORSEMEN. Lee Majors and Mel Ferrer as Vikings discovering America.

MATILDA. Elliott Gould, Robert Mitchum and a boxing kangaroo.

MOVIE, MOVIE. Starring George C. Scott.

exactly like *Bambi* but without the spots. There is even a friendly rabbit. Movements are jerky, expressions corny, and the entire film looks as if it might be a senior film project by a slightly gifted high school student.

J.S.

THE MEDUSA TOUCH, starring Richard Burton, Lee Remick and Lino Ventura; written by John Briley, based on the book by Peter Van Greenway; directed by Jack Gold.

At one point in this lurid flick we see movies-within-a-movie in which people — real people (I hope) — demonstrate their telekinetic powers: a man shatters a pane of glass several feet from him, a woman moves objects on a table without touching them. These films are included, no doubt, to lend a hint of authenticity to this silly story, but they only serve to point out succinctly that the genuine babysteps taken in the study of psychic phenomena are vastly more engrossing and mysterious than this leaping, wild-eyed melodrama.

The wild eyes belong to Richard Burton, the man with telekinesis who's hell-bent on destruction. Maybe he's even possessed by the devil. We never know for sure, and don't much care. The tale is told in flashback while Burton lies on a hospital bed, near death from having his head bashed in, but with *A Brain That Will Not Die*. Lee Remick plays a psychiatrist as if she were a scarecrow, and only Lino Ventura — who plays a French exchange police inspector working in London — brings any credibility to this flashy trash.

Director Gold, when not giving us closeups of Burton's mad eyes, slams us with all the familiar tricks of the genre: shadows appear menacingly, cars screech too close, a cackling ghoul leaps from a doorway... but all perpetrated by good guys, pumping up

our adrenalin with no payoff. The payoff, if it can be called that, is the destruction (by telekinesis, of course) of Minster Cathedral (which looks a lot like Westminster Abbey), and it's about as convincing as falling papier maché can be.

The Medusa Touch isn't nearly so awful as *The Fury*; there is some continuity of plot and the first hour is almost intriguing, but that's faint praise.

If I had telekinetic powers, I'd move someone to make an intelligent film about this fascinating subject without drowning us in a swamp of witchcraft and B-movie hokum.

Don't hold your breath.

J.S.

I WANNA HOLD YOUR HAND, starring Nancy Allen, Bobby DiCicco, Marc McClure, Susan Kendall Newman, Theresa Saldana and Wendie Jo Sperber; written by Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale; directed by Zemeckis.

Four teenage girls and two teenage boys from New Jersey drive to New York City in 1964, when the Beatles taped the first Ed Sullivan show and stayed at the Plaza Hotel. Saldana wants to take pictures of the Beatles; Allen is along for a pre-elopement adventure; Newman (the weakest portrayal of the lot) is a reluctant participant because she hates the Beatles; and Sperber is simply in love with Paul McCartney. The boys are there because of the girls. It's all very good-humored and sweet with no hint of condescension, and Zemeckis succeeds in capturing a sense of the absolute urgency surrounding Beatle fans.

Much of this movie is technically awkward and obviously contrived. Why use an actor as Ed Sullivan in the beginning and a tape of the real Ed Sullivan later? Why use speaking voices that don't really sound like