

'Lagoon,' 'Blues,' head editor's worst list



'ELLO SAILOR! WANT TO BUY US DRINKS?—Brooke Shields (left) and Christopher Atkins bare strikingly natural poses for "The Blue Lagoon," the worst film of 1980.

Harry Medved and Randy Dreyfus, authors of "The Fifty Worst Films of All Time," said, "Sitting through a genuinely wretched film can leave you with dizziness in the head, a bad taste in the mouth, agitation in the stomach, and even a rumbling in the bowels."

With that in mind, I must say that I've never been sicker in my life than while watching the films released this year.

Here, then, is my list for the worst films released in 1980.

'Can't Stop The Music'—A cast of nymphomaniacs (including Village Idiots-I mean People) star in what was billed as "the movie musical event of the '80s." It turns out to be the musical fiasco of the century. And in the same century that brought us "Grease" and "At Long Last Love," that's really saying something! Poor direction (by comedienne Nancy Walker), bad acting, and laughable dialogue lead to a horror film

'The Blues Brothers'—Could you make a comedy without a script, with the two lead actors wearing sunglasses throughout the nearly two and a half hours of film, and with \$30 million? Well, director John ("Animal House") Landis couldn't.

Faced with a "Hey, let's put on a show!" plot and a script that's as funny as lung cancer, Landis searched for a savior. He asked himself a simple question. "What do teenagers like other than the Blues Brothers?" Suddenly it struck him (right in the face, no doubt). Cars. "Let's have a huge car chase. That always pleases them," he probably said.

Being Universal, they naturally said, "Yes," to the idea. So, car upon car was used. Was a script used? Not from the looks of it. The chase wasn't really bad, it just displayed what the movie really needed. Which was characters. No matter

said, "A comic without eyes is like a dancer without feet."

Maybe British playwright Tom Stoppard will write the sequel, "Jake and Elwood are dead."

'Friday the 13th'—This film touchingly displays how sexually active teenagers can be murdered in various fashions. This box office smash manages to break every law of human nature in one scene. After decapitating the murderer with a machete, our sweet and innocent virgin smiles. Show me a person who smiles after a beheading, and I'll show you the next murderer.

'Oh God, Book II'—Another sequel bites the dust as all of the spark and originality of the original have parted. George Burns is back as the man upstairs, but for some reason he hires Gilbert Cates to produce, direct and write (with FOUR other people) the show. As anyone in Hollywood can tell you, Gilbert Cates (like Randal "Blue Lagoon" Kleiser) can't direct to save Brooke Shields' soul.

'Wholly Moses'—After the success of Monty Python's "Life of Brian," Columbia Pictures tried to duplicate its success with its own religious comedy, "Wholly Moses!" Despite the cast (Dudley Moore, Dom DeLuise, Madeline Kahn, Laraine Newman, and Richard Pryor) the film is the "Life of Brian" without the life. It just wasn't funny, period.

'Xanadu'—Roller disco lives (or dies) in this fantasy-musical of a muse (Olivia Newton-John), one of the eight daughters of Zeus, who is sent to earth to inspire a painter (Michael Beck) and a musician (Gene Kelly) to complete their life's dreams.

The strange casting and slim plot are bad enough, but it's the awful songs by the musical group ELO that put this musical over the top. What muse could have inspired this?



MACHO MOVIE—The Village People stare into the camera in a scene from their fiasco, "Can't Stop The Music," otherwise known as "Can't Stand The Music."

that would have made Alfred Hitchcock scream. Please, Brian De Palma, no homages! **'The Blue Lagoon'**—This was, by far, the easiest choice. It proves three things. Brooke Shields can't act to save her soul, director Randal ("Grease") Kleiser can't direct to save Shields' soul, and if you make a movie about teenage sex, it will make money. The flip side of "Lord of the Flies," this joke of a movie spews two young children onto a deserted island (where's Gilligan when we need him?) and lets them grow up without any adult influence.

Rather than turn toward violence, the children (Brooke Shields and Christopher Atkins) turn toward sex, the way nature would want it. This makes "The Blue Lagoon" as dramatic as watching two guppies mate.

To put it simply, "The Blue Lagoon" shows how a dull story can be turned into a really boring one. It's truly a sleeper.

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WHO'S ON SECOND?—Attempting to be another Abbott and Costello, Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi fail miserably due to lack of script (Who's the screenwriter?).

'Foxes'—The moral flip-side of "Blue Lagoon," this pretentious art film stars Jodie Foster as the leader of a foursome who slip in and out of beds and hangovers as often as most people blink their eyes. "Foxes" will be remembered for having the most hateable characters in film history, as every human in it is either stupid or a nymphomaniac—or both.

Every person is going nowhere and it doesn't look as if anyone wants to go anywhere. ALL parents are neurotic. ALL kids are helpless victims. EVERYTHING is hopeless. NOTHING is fun in this movie. "Foxes" is a hopeless movie about hopeless characters and has the distinction of telling three lies every minute.

'Times Square'—A loud, obnoxious punk rock film in which the whole purpose is to sell an album. Every sleazy character in New York City is portrayed as a happy-go-lucky person. The most dangerous mile in the nation is turned into Meridian, Idaho. Aaargh!



RUNNING CHOREOGRAPHY—Olivia Newton-John is chased by very stupid looking dancers in "Xanadu." Note the slightly imperfect synchronization (Which step first?).

Special Achievement Awards

Every year, the movie industry pats itself on the back by handing out Academy Awards. These little statues are supposed to represent the best that Hollywood offered over the past year.

If the industry only pays attention to what it has done well, it never really will learn from its mistakes. That is, until a disaster occurs, as in the case of "Heaven's Gate" in which United Artists let Michael ("The Deer Hunter") Cimino go four times over-budget on his new film simply because "The Deer Hunter" won five "Oscars."

At the "Heaven's Gate" premiere the film put its audience to sleep. If the studio paid attention to big-budget fiascos such as "1941," "Black Hole," "Hurricane," "Barry Lyndon," or "New York, New York," it would not let a director go hog wild on the budget.

Here are awards for special achievements in films released last year:

The Mediocre Movie of the Year

"The Jazz Singer" wins it hands down by presenting no new ideas, no new plot devices, no new characters, mediocre acting, mediocre directing, mediocre screenplay, mediocre photography and mediocre advertising. All in all, "The Jazz Singer" was the most "usual" movie released last year.

Worst film

"The Blue Lagoon" edges "Can't Stop (I mean Stop) the Music" for the top prize. Dull characters, dull plot, dull movie. See article.

Worst Actor

Steve Guttenberg wins the award for his fumbling portrayal in "Can't Stop the Music." Despite strong competition from his comrades The Village People, Guttenberg wins with dishonor because of his ability to overemphasize every word.

Co-starring with Bruce Jenner, Guttenberg has all the charm of a dog playing an aspiring young composer who wants to write songs that can be sung by Puerto Rican Indians. A performance worthy of the sound-track album.

Worst Director

Working with a brilliant script, two brilliant actors (George C. Scott and Marlon Brando), and a story that has great possibilities, somehow director John G. Alvidson turns "The Formula" into a piece of mass confusion.