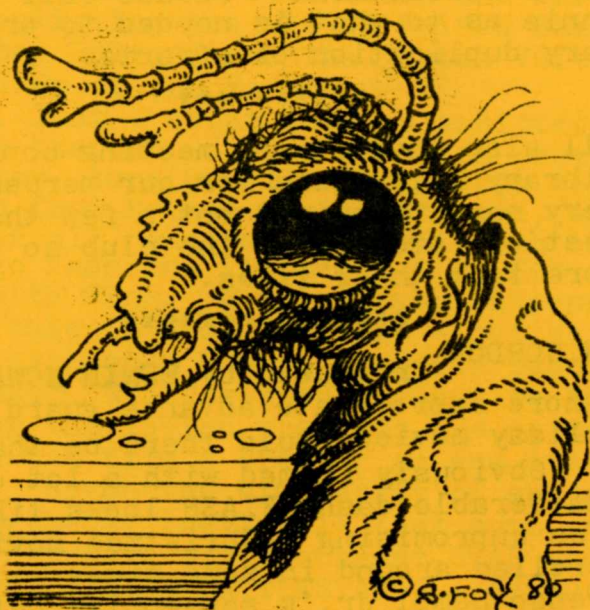


MEMPHEN

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MEMPHEN 4 - Perpetrated by Greg Bridges - 140 Eastview Dr. Memphis, TN 38111 USA(901458-1596), for the MID-SOUTH FANTASY ASSOCIATION. Available per the usual or membership in Msfa. If your label is attended by the dread Red Czech, contact must be made with FRANK JORDAN or myself. Msfa dues are only \$4/yr, checks made out to Frank Jordan, our treas. His address is 1922 Ezell #5, Memphis, TN 38111 (685-1049). As ever, So Available. 1980

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Our next meeting will be at JOHNNIE ANDERSON'S 1468 Volintine which is near N. Watkins and Volintine. Johnnie's phone number is 274-9401.

We will be showing "The Trouble with Tribbles" plus a short film courtesy MSCPLIC. The films will be at 7pm as usual. AS is our traditional wont, we would appreciate attending with some form of refreshment. Please call our good host Johnnie as to what is needed to prevent any unnecessary duplication of efforts.

I will also have at the meeting copies of the public library film lists for our perusal. They have a very many films and not a few that would be interest of interest to the club so we may select more from their files.

FLASH GORDON

reviewed by EDWIN HOWARD

What more appropriate advance guard for this year's holiday movies could there be than FLASH GORDON? Obviously filmed with a lot of cash and considerable dash, FLASH looks like a winner in as unpromising a Christmas movie season as has rolled around in some time.

Lorenzo Sempl Jr.'s screenplay retains the high fantastical comic strip style with just enough campy touches to appeal to adult audiences without confusing the kids or offending dyed-in-the-polyester Gordon devotees. Director Mike Hodges, whose experience has been mostly in TV commercials, puts those sharply punc-

tuated, quick-cutting techniques to good use in service of the script, with the result that most of the audience should be willing to buy both Gordon's jingoistic patriotism toward Earth and the cosmic Mephistopholean meanness of Ming the Merciless.

The story suggests that all the natural disasters we've been having on Earth lately are Ming the Merciless (Max von SYDOW) playing games. Dr. Hans Zarkov (Topol), scientist generally thought to be mad, suddenly all his predictions coming true. The Moon is out of orbit, and the only hope for Earth is to recruit a helper and counterattack. Trouble is, nobody will get into Zarkov's space ship with him until football star Flash Gordon (Sam Jones) and travel agent Dale Arden (Melody Anderson) crash land their plane into his greenhouse and are pressed into Zarkov's, and their country's, service.

On the planet Mongo, the "pathetic Earthlings" are quickly captured by Ming's minions, but revolution is in the air, and soon Flash and Zarkov are leading it, enlisting the aid of Prince Barin of Arboria (Timothy Dalton) and the jovial Vultan (Brian Blessed), leader of the Hawkmen.

Meanwhile, lust - or at least a sanitized comic strip version thereof - has reared its pretty head. Ming's daughter, Aura (Ornella Muti) lets her lascivious eye turn from Prince Barin to Flash, who's only human after all, and Dale is dolled up in mouth-watering Mongo fashions in preparation for a nite of pleasure with Ming. Nothing ever happens, you understand - this IS a comic strip - but next to torture, sex is clearly Mong's favorite pastime.

Danilo Donati, who designed the entire production, including the lavish costumes and sets, is at least as much the film's creator as are its writer and director. Given the similarity of subject matter, it was probably inevitable that some of the software and hardware would suggest STAR WARS and such of its ripoffs as BATTLESTAR G - Klytus (Peter Wyngarde), the chief of Ming's secret police, for example, appears to have had the same tailor as Darth Vader - but FLASH GORDON still has a visual style very much its own.

Sam Jones is more Flash than flesh - a true comic character - and Miss Anderson is similarly 2D as Dale, although she manages some delightfully spoofy ipostes in moments of crisis. Von Sydow is marvel-

FEAR AND LOATHING AND DOUGIE - Biff Conrad

I went to a con out here (Los Angeles) last week end and had probably the worst time I've ever had. It was called THE SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY & HORROR CONVENTION run by an ex-Gestapo agent named Doug Wright. Have you ever heard of a con having a black list that fills a whole notebook? This guy a real case. We stood in line for about an hour to get a one day ticket which is all he sold. You had to have a picture I.D. and it had to be checked by 3 different people against 3 different books to make sure you were acceptable to Dougie. Needless to say that pissed me off.

The staff of the con were really rude folks. you ask them a question about an event or how to get from one place to the next and they'd make some comment about people not having brains enough to look in a program book (which by the way they had hidden under a table in Registration. You practically had to beg to get one.)

There were also papers you had to sign in order to get into the con. The papers in effect signed your life away to the con and if you were in violation I think they took you out and had you shot.

I managed to get myself kicked out at 11 pm. I also proud to say I made it onto the blacklist.

(Biff is a former Southerner living in LA)

FLASH cont.-

ously menacing as Ming, and Blessed makes Vulture the film's most likeable character. ©1980 PRESS/

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