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**THE  
CANDY**  
A Film and Digital Media Magazine



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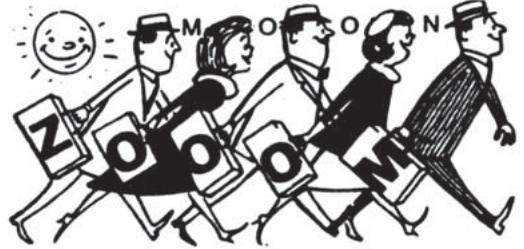
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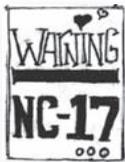


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Film, Digital Media, Electronic Music  
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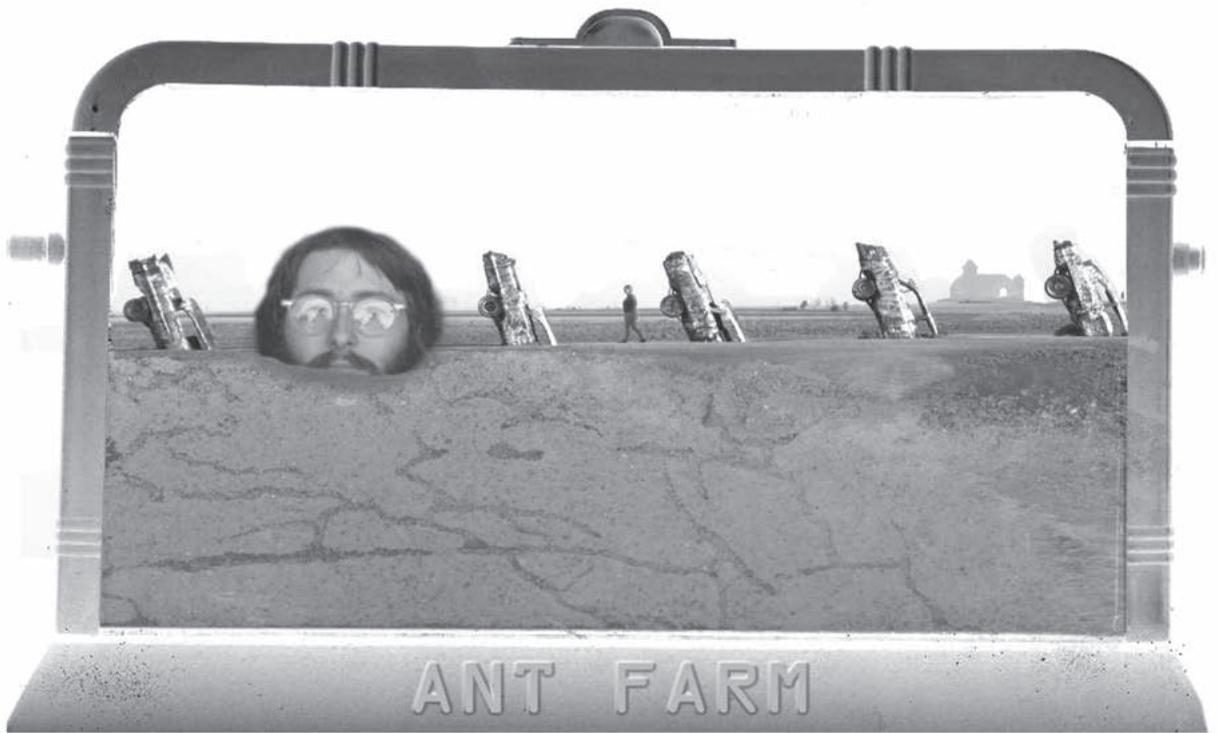
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Artwork by Jose M. Hernandez

## Ant Farm | Retrospect

By Jose M. Hernandez

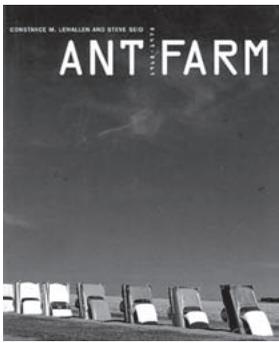
In 1978, a fire ripped through the San Francisco office of Antfarm: revolutionary architecture collective of Chip Lord, Douglas Michaels and Curtis Schriver. Twenty-six years later their work has been gathered and compiled by the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive as *Ant Farm 1968–1978*. The traveling installation arranges hundreds of illustrations, posters, sketchbooks and photos chronologically around the perimeter of the exhibit. Flat panel monitors display their video work. A 126-page visually-rich book and DVD were also produced to compliment the exhibition, which was featured in ArtForum last May.

Chip Lord, now chair of UCSC's department of Film and Digital Media, is often cited in UCSC film classes for his contribution to the video art movement of the 60's and 70's with the now famous pieces *Media Burn* and *Eternal Frame*. Other work includes inflatable structures, experimental dwellings and a series of pieces that embrace American automobile culture and the modern nomad such as *Cadillac Ranch*, a tribute to the evolution of the tail fin. A row of ten Cadillacs (covering the years 1949-1963) still protrude from the Amarillan soil in Texas at precisely 75 degrees. Though they are now covered in graffiti and rust,

their iconic power remains.

Chip recalled the antfarm experience in a lecture here at Kresge College last Spring. He said "we all wanted to be rock stars" referring to his eccentric partners and followers. He presented a chronological slideshow following the same timeline depicted in his book and the Berkeley exhibition. The only difference at this event was Chip's presence. This is one thing many of us in the film department take for granted. For the sake of brevity, we have left out the actual interview (sarcasm) and have provided here only a small illustration of the antfarm timeline. Eyecandy encourages all of its readers to buy the book, watch the DVD and go ahead and interview Chip yourself! He is surprisingly easy to approach and very friendly.

During 2004 and 2005, *Ant Farm 1968–1978* will tour to the Santa Monica Museum of Art; University of Pennsylvania, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston; ZKM (Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie), Karlsruhe, Germany; and the Yale University School of Architecture Gallery. ☺



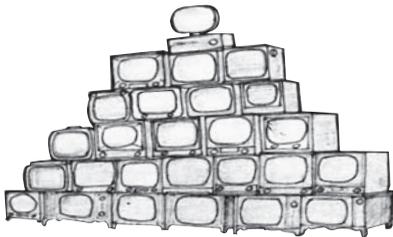
**Ant Farm 1968-1978:** This book explores the sweeping career of this inspired and inspiring visionary collective as its architectural project broadened to embrace a range of undertakings that challenge the visual architecture of image, icon, and power.



**Ant Farm Video:** Classics of video art from the 1970's by the notorious Art and Architecture group:

- Cadillac Ranch 1974/1994
- Media Burn
- Ant Farm's Dirty Dishes
- Inflatables Illustrated
- World's Longest Bridge
- Time Capsule 1972-1984
- OFF-AIR Australia

**Pillow 1970:** Installed in Point Reyes, California, Pillow is an example of inflatable architecture. The inflatable challenges received conceptions of architecture. The inflatable has no plan, no fixed section; the very descriptive tools of the architect's trade are denied. Ant Farm preferred the formless and the fluctuating.



# Wristcutters:

Projecting a New Way of Seeing

By Mandy Brown

How many colors are there in a field of grass to the crawling baby unaware of "Green?" How many rainbows can light create for the untutored eye?

## -Stan Brakhage, Metaphors on Vision

Imagine a film stock that can transform the language of color; a stock that can turn anything it captures into a hallucination. Croatian-born director, Goran Dukic uses such a film stock in his independent feature, *Wristcutters—A Love Story*. In this age of digital technology, when a film specialist like Kodak is buying out a digital development and research company like Chinon, Dukic finds a new use for this older technology: Infrared. The film is sensitive to light rays beyond human perception and is difficult to mimic digitally. Typically used for aerial crop and forest surveillance, Kodak has adapted infrared film into a 16mm motion picture format specifically for this project. It produces a world both realistic and dream-like, mirroring life, but distorting its color. *Wristcutters—A Love Story*, based on Israeli writer Etgar Keret's 1998 bestseller, Kneller's *Happy Campers*, takes place in an after-life reserved for suicides—an otherworldly reality appropriately depicted in infrared. Using this film stock as his eye, Dukic has transformed this dying medium into a new approach to visualization.

**EC:** How did you get into filmmaking?

**GD:** I started quite early actually. When I was in high school in Zagreb, I joined the cinema club where I made my first short films that were much more experimental. Then I continued to undergrad film school where I studied directing and started making more narrative shorts. Many of my short films won awards which led to my invitation to NYU as a guest lecturer. I had planned to come for two months and have stayed in the U.S. for years.

**EC:** How did this project get started?

**GD:** I first heard Etgar read his short story, "Kneller's Happy Campers" at a book reading in Venice. I thought it was the most unique, original story and felt that it would make a great movie. I was attracted to the alternate universe along with the idea behind the story that no matter where you go there you are. I went ahead and wrote the script without having the option to the story, which was perhaps a little risky. Fortunately, Etgar



*Goran Dukic's short films have won numerous awards in Europe and America. His film "Mirta Learns Statistics" has been voted by Croaitan film critics as one of the countries five best films ever. Wristcutters is his first feature film.*

felt that I understood his vision and gave me the option.

**EC:** Why did you decide to use infrared film?

**GD:** To date this particular stock had only been produced for aerial photography, camouflage detection, pollution monitoring, forest surveillance and ice reconnaissance. Color infrared 35mm film has also been used in a few motion pictures but only for select scenes as a special effect.

My first exposure to infrared was in photographs—they were like nothing I'd ever seen before so they stuck in my head. My producer Mikal had also shot a lot of B/W infrared photography which also looked amazing.

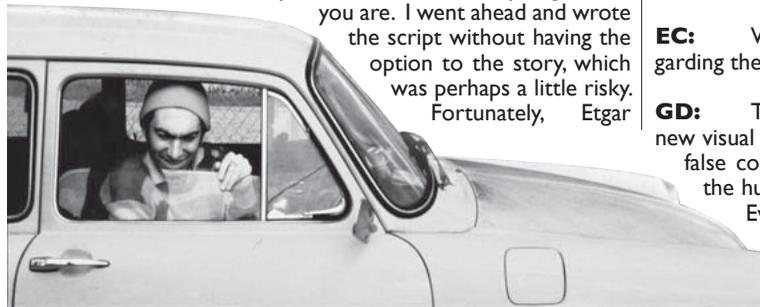
When I imagined a world like our own but somehow off-kilter to depict an afterlife for those who have committed suicide, I was convinced that color infrared would be the perfect medium.

**EC:** Was it difficult getting Kodak to make this special film stock for you?

**GD:** It was definitely difficult to get Kodak to produce the film stock for our movie. Super 16 color infrared has never existed so it had to be special ordered. They actually had to create special facilities in Rochester, New York to produce the stock. We finally convinced Kodak to make the stock not only because of Sundance's support of the script, but also because Kodak, who also loved the script, agreed that the film stock was a perfect complement to the story.

**EC:** What are the problems you've been encountering, regarding the film stock?

**GD:** This film stock is truly a beast—it was like learning a new visual language and it requires a lot of special handling. The false colors along with its sensitivity to infrared rays, which the human eye cannot see, make this stock especially tricky. Everyone from the director of photography, the labs processing the film to Kodak have run into glitches. The first shipment of the film stock was accidentally



fogged during Kodak's production so they had to completely redo the order. It generally is more susceptible to scratching and can't be out of refrigeration for too long. We've worked through most of the problems but at first it was very challenging trying to understand all of the film's quirks.

We are trying to create an atmosphere that isn't gimmicky or visually assaulting but rather a controlled environment that is surreal but still believable. That requires immense testing because there is no guidebook for how to do that since the stock is traditionally used to create a hallucinatory effect

**EC:** What does infrared film convey that regular film can't?

**GD:** The world is turned into a bleak, yet colorful alternate reality — people become strangely handsome and ageless creatures — their faces pale and translucent, their lips yellow-green... an ideal look for people who don't age and who are already dead but in a sense still living.

The stock also produces false colors generally used for scientific purposes—greens appear blue, blues appear red. The stock literally shows the world the way we've never seen it before.

**EC:** You've been receiving support from a lot of different companies (like Panavision and Sundance). Do you think there is an eagerness to see this new film stock thrive?

**GD:** Companies overall are losing a lot of their business to video. Those who want to keep film alive, i.e., companies who sell film like Kodak and rent film equipment like Panavision along with film processing labs, most certainly want to see the film stock thrive. It's an opportunity for people to be reminded that while video can be a more cost efficient means of shooting, film has certain qualities that simply cannot be digitally replicated. In fact if we were to shoot on video and attempt to mimic the look in post, it would be infinitely more expensive than using film. One would have to digitally alter every single frame and in the end it would look artificial.

**EC:** How do you think people will react to Wristcutters?

**GD:** Our hope of course is that audiences will feel as though they've entered a new world, one that they've never seen before. I think, however, that they'll soon become acclimated and the story will take them through the journey rather than the film stock. I also believe that at the very least people will feel that the story, along with the treatment, are unique and groundbreaking.

**EC:** Do you think infrared will catch on and be the next wave in cinema?



**GD:** I'm not so sure. To be honest, infrared is simply too cost prohibitive for it to be mainstream—independent filmmakers don't have the financing to shoot on this stock which is significantly more expensive than normal film. I also think that the story really needs to warrant the treatment. If one were to use the film stock in a romantic comedy, it might look gimmicky. I'm sure that flashy music videos will continue to use the stock and perhaps it will be used in select sequences within films. The stock in our case is really the perfect medium to help us tell the story. ☺

For more information on Wristcutters—A Love Story and to view color infrared images, go to:  
[www.wristcutters.com](http://www.wristcutters.com)

# Did you Know...?

Fun Facts of the History of American Filmmaking

By Kati Harris



**What was the first motion picture of?**

- a. moving traffic on the street
- b. a man sneezing
- c. a horse galloping
- d. a woman smiling and waving at the camera

**What is a Nickelodeon? (after which the local Santa Cruz theater is named)**

- a. a device through which you could view a peepshow for a nickel
- b. a store in which everything in it cost a nickel
- c. a bubblegum machine
- d. a movie theater that showed movies for a nickel

**How did Hollywood become the capitol for the American film industry?**

- a. film executives visited there on vacation and liked it so much that they wanted to live and work there too
- b. the name was appealing to early filmmakers trying to find a promotable location to base out of
- c. fugitives were trying to escape the monopoly on film making in New York
- d. that's where the first movie camera was invented

**A**s a young film student of 14, I took it upon myself to answer many questions that had haunted me for years. What was the first movie and who made it? How did movies go from black and white to color? Today, as a much older film student of 24, I find that many of my peers, even for all of their studying and experience, still do not know the answers to these questions. The biggest source of the lack of information, in my view, is that few people, least of all college students, have the time or the desire to sit around studying any-

thing that they're not absolutely required to. I plan to rectify this by offering the answers to such inquiries in a format that is easily consumed.

I must disclaim that while my goal may be to provide historical information, I won't even pretend to tackle the entire history of film. I have narrowed my scope to the United States, namely Hollywood, and to the early years (roughly late 1880's to early 1920's). Even with all of these restrictions, I couldn't possibly cover everything there is to know, or even everything that is important. Instead what follows are some of the highlights. These are your cliff notes if you will. Perhaps your viewing of films that you have always cherished will change; or perhaps you will wow your friends and make them think that you're cool. Either way, I have found that a working knowledge of history is useful, albeit a limited one, whether you intend to make movies or merely watch them.

It all began in 1887 (for the purpose of this article). A scientific photographer named Eadweard Muybridge, who was known for taking multiple pictures in quick succession, visited the famous inventor Thomas Edison. He pitched his idea for a viewing apparatus that would combine his pictures with a soundtrack played from Edison's new and famous phonograph. While Edison thought Muybridge's apparatus to be impractical, he was inspired to take on the task of moving pictures himself.

Edison went right to work on this new idea, or rather he had his assistant William Kennedy Laurie Dickson do so. His efforts resulted in the first footage ever to be caught on film and reproduced for an audience in 1891. What was the first motion picture you might ask? It was in fact a sneeze. Edison requested his assistant Fred Ott to do something "funny"



Mary Pickford

for the camera and Fred obliged by sneezing in a comical manner. Officially, however, the date for the birth of movies has been decided by the International Federation of Film Archives to be 1895 when the Lumière Brothers came out with the Cinématographe. This is due to the definition of a movie to be the successful adaptation of a moving image to a projection device. Although Edison's Kinetoscope was an amazing feat and the first ever reproduction of a moving image, it was simply a peephole device and didn't have the necessary projection aspect. Incidentally, it is from the Cinématographe that we acquired the word cinema.

In 1903 came the first signs of what we call movies today. The 10 minute long film by Edwin Porter entitled "The Great Train Robbery" was the first movie to edit scenes out of the sequence that they were shot in, and the first to use camera shots to tell the story rather than just recording a show. Not only that, but it was also the first Western. In 1905, the first small storefront theater opened and people could see "The Great Train Robbery" for only a nickel. Other entrepreneurs followed suit, attracted by the easy buck, and soon Nickelodeons were everywhere. Now we can see where Santa Cruz's beloved independent movie theater got its name, though unfortunately the price of admission is not quite as low as what the name would suggest.

At this point the business aspect of movies was still not established but a group of east coast-centered companies (including Edison's) soon changed that. In an attempt to pool their patents, protect their profits, and monopolize on the growing industry, they combined to form the first major studio called the Motion Picture Patents Company. These businessmen were able to make it literally impossible for anyone to make a movie without either going through them or using their products. Movie making became enormously expensive for the independent filmmaker and so the only alternative to quitting was to break the law. A stream of fugitives left New York to escape the tyranny of the MPPC and discovered Southern California to be perfectly suited to their needs as it was right next to Mexico in case they needed to flee the country. Soon, however, the draw to California became more than just a matter of convenience because in addition to its convenient location next to an escape route, it had plenty of sunshine, which was necessary previous to artificial lighting, and it offered a wide variety of climates all in a small radius.

While it might have began as a safe-haven, it didn't take long, for business men in Hollywood to turn this new territory into something not unlike the tyranny its founders had been attempting to escape. The "studio system", which began in the early 1920's, is most commonly referred to today as a "factory system" of production in which a studio owned every aspect of what it took to make a movie and have it seen by the public. Each major studio, of which there were five, had its own writers, directors, actors, sets, production crews, post-production crews, publicity department, distribution facilities, and even film-exhibiting theaters. In this way the studio had total control over every aspect of a movie to ensure the biggest profit. The studios involved were known as "The Big Five" and produced more than 90 percent of the fiction films in America. "The Big Five" consisted of the following: Warner Bros. Pictures, Paramount Pictures, RKO Pictures, MGM (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), and Fox Film Corporation. Aside from these giants, there were three other studios of note known as "The Little Three" including Universal Pictures, United Artists, and Columbia Pictures. They operated almost identically to the larger studios, lacking only their own theaters. Much like the oppression first felt in New York, other studios or independen-



Fred Ott

dents had very difficult time competing with the Big Five and existed in a shabbier part of town referred to as "Poverty Row". Interestingly enough, the Walt Disney Company fell into this category.

The other system that came into existence in the early 20's and had a major hand in shaping Hollywood cinema was the "Motion Picture Production Code". Backed by the Catholic Church and the Wall Street financiers who supported the studios, Hollywood's self-regulatory "Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association" (MPPDA) was founded in 1922, whose code would constrain Hollywood to a rigid set of mandates. Regulations of the code included censorship of language, references to sex, violence, and morality. It required no promiscuity, no venereal disease, no excessive violence or brutality, twin beds for married couples, no ridicule of ministers of religion, the prohibition of various words ("sex", "hell", and "damn"), and no clear depictions of rape, seduction, adultery or passionate, illicit sex. Sinful activity such as criminality or sex outside marriage could often be permitted IF it was punished or ended in misery. All films were to be submitted for approval and if a film was denied it was not to be exhibited in theaters and the studio would be fined \$25,000 (which would be worth roughly \$300,000 today). Many films were severely mutilated or censored to fit the code's requirements.

This set the scene for what we know as Hollywood cinema. Looking forward from this point, Hollywood film would face the addition of sound, then color, the challenge of the Second World War, the competition of television, the downfall of the Production Code, the introduction of foreign films, the creation of new genres, and of course, the dawn of digital media. With all of this taken into consideration, it is amazing to realize that the greatest output of feature films in the US occurred in the 1920s and 1930s. The average output was about 800 film releases per year, whereas today it is remarkable when production exceeds 500 films in a year. The knowledge that my grandparents had more choices for movies to see as children than I do now certainly gives me a different perspective. Now whether the new perspective you have gained from this article, assuming you have gained one, will be of any use to you is up to you. I only strive to provide one and hope that it is valuable. Ø

# GIANT MONSTERS,

Science, Military in the American Atomic Age

By Anthony Unatin



Earth vs. The Spider (1958)

After witnessing the use of nuclear weapons bring a dramatic end to World War II, Americans were profoundly ambivalent about their new ability to harness atomic power. While this new technology had been integral in ending the most widespread conflict in human history, questions about who would dictate its use in peacetime remained. Also, since atomic research was shrouded in military secrecy, there was public concern about the invisible and largely incomprehensible effects of nuclear fallout and radiation. Clear answers to these questions and concerns about atomic science were not forthcoming in the increasingly paranoid years of the Cold War, keeping Americans from embracing this technology completely.

Film makers of the 1950s addressed this ambivalence with a long list of films that showcased the ability of American institutions to contain the threat of atomic science run amok. These were the giant atomic monster movies, a science fiction sub-genre that used the audience's fear and sense of wonder to draw them into the theater. All of these films owe their basic narrative structure to *Them!* (1954) in which an entomologist, in cooperation with the army, destroys giant ants created through the unintended consequences of atomic bomb testing. This basic plot, made novel each time by a host of different creatures, was seen in many films from the '50s up to the present day, but the undisputed king of these B-grade giant atomic monster movies was director Bert I. Gordon. Gordon's filmography includes such gems as *The Amazing Colossal Man* (1957), *War of the Colossal Beast* (1958), *Earth vs. The Spider* (1958), *Village of the Giants* (1965), *Food of the Gods* (1976), and *Empire of the Ants* (1977), all of which feature a huge monster as a threat, with atomic energy as the cause of the unnatural growth.

Gordon's *Beginning of the End* (1957) centers around colossal locusts inadvertently created by a government scientist, Dr. Ed Wainwright (Peter Graves). The locusts eventually overcome the U.S. military and invade Chicago, only to be quelled when Wainwright formulates a plan to stop them just before the military is going to destroy the locusts, and Chicago, with a nuclear weapon. Nuclear power as both the creator of monsters and the potential destroyer of both monsters and humanity is clearly

illustrated here. The ambivalence of the spectator towards atomic energy is addressed through the plot, as well as the national establishments who have access to that energy, the scientific and military hierarchies.

Beginning of the End and other giant atomic monster movies clearly reflected a popular desire to see the effects of nuclear radiation conquered visually on screen. J.P. Telotte describes this in *Science Fiction Film*;

"...the various mutant and monster films of the 1950s and 1960s amply attest to the troubled attitudes toward science and technology in our culture. In an age that has come to be identified with its unleashing of the atom and the great power associated with that development, American science fiction films, as well as those of Japan and England, repeatedly play out for us "what-if" scenarios, fantasies of the consequences of that unleashing - few of them reassuring." (98 - 99)

These films create visual conquest to address anxieties about how nuclear energy would change what was natural and safe in post-war America. Science fiction as a genre comments on collective hopes and fears concerning new technologies, and giant atomic monster movies address a certain technology in particular: nuclear power. Specific and reliable knowledge about nuclear power was scarce to non-existent among the American populace. Anxiety ran high and film makers were eager to exploit this anxiety for dramatic effect.

This anxiety was legitimate, as the government had been experimenting with radiation for years without informing the public. This often had catastrophic results, such as when the Hanford Nuclear Site in Washington state released acute doses of radioactive materials into the surrounding area from 1944 to 1957 as a side effect of plutonium production. This led to a much higher risk of thyroid disease in the population living around the site, who ingested the radionuclide particles through food produced in the area. Despite public concern, information about the site was not released until 1986. Americans were wise to be concerned about the dangers of atomic energy, which was a silent and invisible threat to public health. However, it had also been an integral part in defeating the Japanese in World War II and was also the main crux of American defense during the Cold War with the Soviet Union, political realities which underlined the American perception of nuclear power as both necessary and dangerous.

Because of this new political era, America's national attitude concerning scientists changed drastically after World War II. In the 1930s and 40s, science fiction films archetypically portrayed the scientist as the "mad scientist," defined by Andrew Tudor in his *Monsters and Mad Scientists*, "The scientist who is obsessed with, and consumed by, his work, and who seeks and seems to have mastered the 'secret of life itself.'" (29) Before World War II, scientists in film and other media had been depicted as loners, separated from any national allegiance. This showed a general lack of trust in scientists on the part of the moviegoing public. Scientists in Pre-World War II cinema voluntarily separate themselves from the rest of the world for the sake of knowledge, an act which is viewed as at best naïve

*At the climax of the giant atomic monster movie, only one solution is possible; the military must hold off the monster long enough for the scientist to figure out a way to destroy it.*

and aloof, and at worst an attempt to harbor blatantly evil desires for individual power. However, this view of scientists changes with the end of World War II, described by Per Schelde in *Androids, Humanoids, and Other Science Fiction Monsters*;

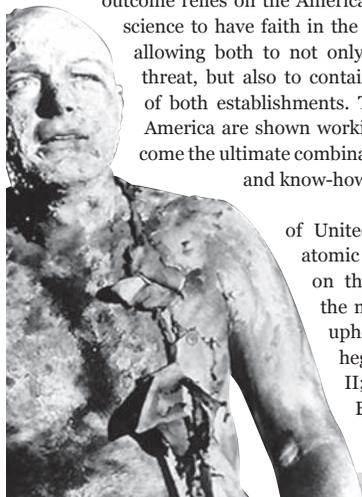
“The United States dropped the first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and scientists became, for many people, war heroes. Hot war turned to cold, yet scientists were still employed by the government and the military to develop more deadly and efficient nuclear weapons faster than the Russians, and to get Americans on the moon and into space first. When the Cold War was at its iciest, belief in the American Way and in American technology and know-how spawned trust in the basic decency of science and scientists.” (38)

With the end of the war in 1945 and the emergence of a new political landscape, scientists were drawn into the American fold. After atomic scientists created the bombs that ended the war (and ostensibly were preventing another conflict with Russia), Americans began to see science as upholding the economic and political potential of the entire nation instead of seeking power for its own sake.

It is the military who must be called in to contain the creatures released by atomic experimentation. The armed forces act as a contrasting spectacle to the giant monster. A sea of tiny army grunts are balanced against one gigantic grasshopper, emphasizing at once the enormous numbers representing American military power and the incredible environmental danger posed by radiation. Eventually however, the spectacular mass of soldiers gives way to the unstoppable onslaught of nature gone mad. No longer contained by the army, the atomic threat goes on a rampage through human civilization, usually represented by an urban cityscape.

At the climax of the giant atomic monster movie, only one solution is possible; the military must hold off the monster long enough for the scientist to figure out a way to destroy it. This final outcome relies on the American military and American science to have faith in the other's competency, thus allowing both to not only save the nation from a threat, but also to contain the destructive aspects of both establishments. The brawn and brains of America are shown working together and thus become the ultimate combination of American stamina and know-how.

The ultimate victory of United States forces in giant atomic monster movies is based on the cooperation of two of the major establishments that upheld American national hegemony after World War II; science and the military. Because the American populace was ambivalent to the new roles that



The Amazing Colossal Man



Produced and Directed by BERT I. GORDON • Screen Play by Fred Freiberger and Lester Gorn • An AB-PT Picture • Distributed by Republic Pictures Corporation

both establishments played in the post-war era of atomic science, giant atomic monster movies played to that ambivalence. They reassured audiences that even though scientists and military personnel might not always be able to perfectly handle the myriad dangers related to nuclear energy, the two groups would work in tandem to contain and eliminate any threat. These films showed audiences that the combination of American science and military prowess would eventually find a way to deal with any danger that might occur as an accidental side effect of the new national way of life in the atomic age. This is one of the reasons giant atomic monster movies were so popular, they allayed doubts about the national leaders' competency in using new technologies precisely at a time when those technologies were the most dangerous, and the most lucrative, they had ever been. The presentation of a strong military force and ingenious scientists defending America by working together to contain the destructive properties of atomic energy assuaged fears about everything involved. These films played an integral part in instilling and upholding faith that American scientists and military personnel would form a cohesive leadership that would bring America safely into a bright, but nervous, atomic age. ☉

# What the FCC?

By Jose M. Hernandez



**H**ow many heavily-armed U.S. Marshals does it take to unscrew a perfectly-good pirate radio station? At least 6, according to Santa Cruz Indy Media 's September 29th coverage of the FCC's bust at Free Radio Santa Cruz (a block down the street from the author's house). In total there were at least 16 agents, marshals and local police present at the raid. This bold display of authority (and fully-automatic rifles) had many local activists up in arms, literally slashing tires and tormenting the miserable bastards who were sent to do the dirty work. But this wasn't the FCC's only local appearance in recent times.

The FCC's "Localism Task Force" hearing was held in Monterey July 21st as part of a campaign to solicit comments from the public on the quality of local broadcast coverage. The airwaves belong to the public. Every television and radio broadcaster must serve the 'public interest' and it is the responsibility of the FCC to define and enforce that standard. Santa Cruz Free Radio was present at the hearing along with hundreds of other activists waiting for their two minute opportunity to address the FCC directly.

A woman from Salinas pointed out the disproportionately low amount of local programming available en Español. There is no local broadcast television news in Spanish! Another Salinas man pointed out that he was unable to attain a low power FM license for a group of non-profit organizations that he works with also in Salinas. Another man brought to attention that there is a huge Filipino community that has been almost completely ignored by the local media.

This was the only west coast hearing out of a total of six nation-wide. The needs and interests of the entire west coast region were at stake and in many ways compromised due to a tiny venue and ticketing confusion. Many local broadcasters not only covered the event for local and national syndication, but also presented arguments about the supposed "quality" of their local coverage. I too was present at the hearing, trying to understand the FCC's role in my own social and political reality. Ironically, the Bush appointed FCC chairman Michael Powell was not there. Fortunately, the FCC does provide a streaming video of the hearing online so Powell can go back and watch from the comfort of his own home. It was Powell who created the LTF in August of 2003 to:

"Evaluate how broadcasters are serving their local communities. Broadcasters must serve the public interest, and the Commission has consistently interpreted this to require broadcast licensees to air programming that is responsive to the interests and needs of their communities."

- Chairman Michael K. Powell

So why you ask, does Michael Powell care about local public interests? The answer is he simply does not. As many of our readers are probably already aware, media ownership has been on an increasingly rapid trend of consolidation over the last couple decades from several dozen companies down to about 5 or 6 inter-vested mega-corporations: an oligopoly.

Many feel that the consolidation of media ownership has had a detrimental effect on the quality of content. ClearChannel for example, has consumed over 1200 radio stations since the last loosening of restrictions, the 1996 Telecommunications act. ClearChannel stations are often completely generic and fill-in-the-blank automated. By this I mean that the content is exactly the same from one town to the next, downloaded from a satellite with the pre-recorded station name inserted to make it feel "local". Several speakers at the FCC hearing cited an incident in which a small community could not be alerted of a toxic spillage because there was no physical body at the



radio station to pick up the phone. This is just one small and direct example of how a local interest is trumped and endangered by careless profitability. Often these things are not so obvious.

The Localism Task Force was created as a tool of legitimization for a new era in media ownership deregulation (IMHO). This was supposed to be Powell's legacy – the broadest policy sweep in favor of consolidation in FCC history. His new media ownership rules were rejected by the courts on June 3rd and sent back for revision – just in time for the fourth LTF hearing in Monterey. An overwhelming majority of those present at the Monterey hearing expressed their concerns that media consolidation does not serve the public interest of any region or locality. Instead, it threatens our civil liberties while serving the private interests of a small group of very wealthy individuals.

I'd like to point out to our readers that the FCC as an organization is not just some evil political tool of the Bush regime, it has rules to follow set forth by congress. According to the FCC website, "The FCC is directed by five Commissioners appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for 5-year terms. The President designates one of the Commissioners to serve as Chairperson. Only three Commissioners may be members of the same political party. None of them can have a financial interest in any Commission-related business." That said, only three out of the five commissioners are Bush-approved. While Powell is in the drivers seat, commissioner Kathleen Abernathy(R) is in charge of "public interest" issues (though her experience is mostly private sector) and commissioner Kevin Martin(R) "served on the Bush-Cheney Transition Team and was Deputy General Counsel for the Bush campaign" according to the FCC website.

On the other end of the spectrum (no pun intended) are commissioners Michael Copps (D) and Johnathan Adelstein (D). These two were both present at the hearing along with Abernathy, who opened the hearing defending Powell's right to an unpopular position, "I want to hear from everyone – I don't think anyone has a monopoly on the truth." Later, Copps delivered a resonant speech, criticizing the FCC's consolidation decision asking "how many or maybe better, how few companies should be allowed to control our media? How does the public interest fare in a consolidated environment?" Copps stressed the urgency of the situation, stating that "few priorities our country confronts have such long term importance to our democracy as how America communicates and converses with itself and how this process has been allowed to deteriorate in recent years."

Some of our local station owners would like us to think that running public service announcements at two in the morning or making us suffer through happy-chummy news casts of garlic festivals and home videos of someone's cat using a toilet is serving the "public interest". Clearly, the public interest has been confused with what the public is assumed to be interested in. A matter of definition is at stake here and the misuse of language has diluted our rights as citizens into our roles as consumers. There is a fundamental difference between the two which has resulted in mis-prioritization. The shift from citizen to consumer can easily be quantified in FCC public documents and speeches, which often use the term "consumer, where once citizen was once the norm. Just weeks ago, Powell said "consumer" on several occasions at the consumer electronics show (CES) in Las Vegas where he scratches the backs of electronics manufacturers and media giants (not to mention hookers) on an annual basis. A simple change of language is quite possibly characteristic of a paradigm shift in communications policy – for the worse.

This summer, Digital Right Management (DRM) laws will take effect in the United States with similar laws being passed in Europe and other in regions, requiring all digital receivers and recorders to recognize an embedded "broadcast flag" in signals. This flag is intended to restrict how we view, record and share our content – how annoying. The passage of this kind of legislation is largely due to concentrated lobbying efforts of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). Congress is responsible for the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) which has laid legal ground for the flag. The FCC works with major electronics manufacturers to mandate the introduction of the hardware. Unfortunately, there is not much we can actively do at this point to avoid the flag except for one obvious thing – don't buy it. If you are going to get a new TV, get it now before the law goes into full effect.

The broadcast license renewal process is something that the FCC invites us all to participate in. All radio stations licenses in California expire on December 1st 2005. All television stations are up for renewal on December 1st 2006. In the past, this process involved comprehensive reviews on a much more frequent basis. The process has been rolled back to the point that each station fills out a one-page form and sends in a \$300 check. As commissioner Copps said "they don't call it postcard renewal for nothing". This trend needs to be reversed. You may file a formal petition or an informal comment for or against any station that you are affected by. An informal comment can be as simple as an email. The deadline is one month prior to each of those dates, so keep an eye on the calendar or complain often. Don't expect local broadcasters to inform you of the approach of these dates and make sure to let the FCC know that you are a concerned citizen who has a right to public resources, not a consumer to be bought and sold and told what to do. Free Radio Santa Cruz may have been operating illegally, but they represented something much bigger than a frequency conflict – a threat to the consumer paradigm and our right to self-representation and free communication.

"The people who bring us reality TV shouldn't expect us to be so naive. The ultimate reality show isn't how many bugs someone can eat on a deserted island. It's the fight on media democracy and over the future of the public airwaves."

-FCC Commissioner Michael Copps. Ø



# Pacific Rim Festival

By Amy Williams



The theme for this year's Pacific Rim Film Festival is "When Strangers Meet." This seems to be an appropriate theme for a festival which brings films from all over the Pacific Rim and around its borders to a small liberal Californian community. Countries such as India, Taiwan, Japan, and Columbia all debuted films in Santa Cruz at the festival. The festival is able to bring different cultures and types of people together.

On a local level strangers are being brought together to organize and run the festival. One organizer explains that the grass roots base and levels of volunteerism are the reason the festival has continued to thrive. Businesses are working with the organizers to provide funding. Even within the organizers a diverse group of people are connected, from professor to film critic to member of the community. All films are a chance to connect with a stranger. The organizers facilitate this by providing speakers to discuss the films and answering any lingering questions about the film or culture from which it came.

What draws an audience to these types of films and this festival? In Santa Cruz there is a high level of acceptance and a desire to learn. Some audience members came to the films with an expectation to leave more culturally knowledgeable. While some had a free afternoon and wandered in due to the low cost, nothing. The organizers feel that keeping the festival free is one of the most important concepts. It gets rid of an excuse not to go. If the festival is free than why not wander in and check it out. No matter how bad it is, you didn't waste any money and can feel free to leave without a guilty conscience. Keeping the festival free is made possible by



a number of different businesses. The main reason the festival has continued is due to the aid provided by George Ow and his family.

The cultures are the main point of the festival. The organizer are hoping to show Santa Cruz different cultures especially those which have little chance of contact with Americans otherwise. Without this festival I doubt many of us would have had the opportunity or taken the time to see the lifestyle of monks in an exiled Tibetan monastery or female sexuality through the eyes of an Indian queen. The themes of the films give us ideas about themes that are relevant to these cultures. While a film may be fiction, the underlying themes are real. In addition to learning about specific cultural aspects

of a place the audience is able to travel around the globe visually. The beauty or lack of each country is apparent in each film

Throughout the whole of the festival the audience is bombarded by images from around the globe. Bullets whiz past your head showing the war in Afghanistan. Imelda Marcos attempts to explain her extravagant lifestyle and wardrobe, including over three thousand pairs of shoes. An actor attempts to leave the realm of reality in order to join the world of fantasy and carry out the dream of peace and unity set by Bolivar. An ancient Indian palace is brought back to life as one of its inhabitants undergoes a sexual transformation. The beauty, poverty, and occasional chaotic existence of individual countries

appears before you. It is as though you are accessing a piece of a culture and a country that is a secret to other parts of the country and world.

Each film allows its audience to experience these cultures in various genres. The Pacific Rim Film Festival includes comedies, melodramas, suspenseful mysteries, documentaries and more. Sometimes the lines blur and the movie creates its own genre. "September Tapes," produced by a Santa Cruz native, attempts to fake a documentary. By bringing in different types of movies, rather than trying to force cultures on people through only documentaries the festival attempts to reach a wide range of people.

It appears that one of the shortcomings of the festival involved the after-film discussions. One member of the steering committee recognized that the audience felt there were not enough discussions. With only a select few of the films having discussions the audience craved more. Perhaps adding more will keep larger audiences interested in the various cultures, which is the whole purpose of the festival.

The Pacific Rim Film Festival was able to achieve its goal. These different films bring people of various

backgrounds together where they can learn about new cultures. I know I learned about some of the different countries which had films at the festival. Prior to this festival I had no knowledge of who Imelda Marcos was let alone why she was both loved and hated. All I knew about monasteries were what the stereotypes had taught me over the years. And when I thought of India I thought of women in veils, definitely not of sexual liberation. While this film had its shortcomings, very few I might add, I think

it was done beautifully and should definitely continue as a fixture in this community. I hope to attend it again in the future. ☺



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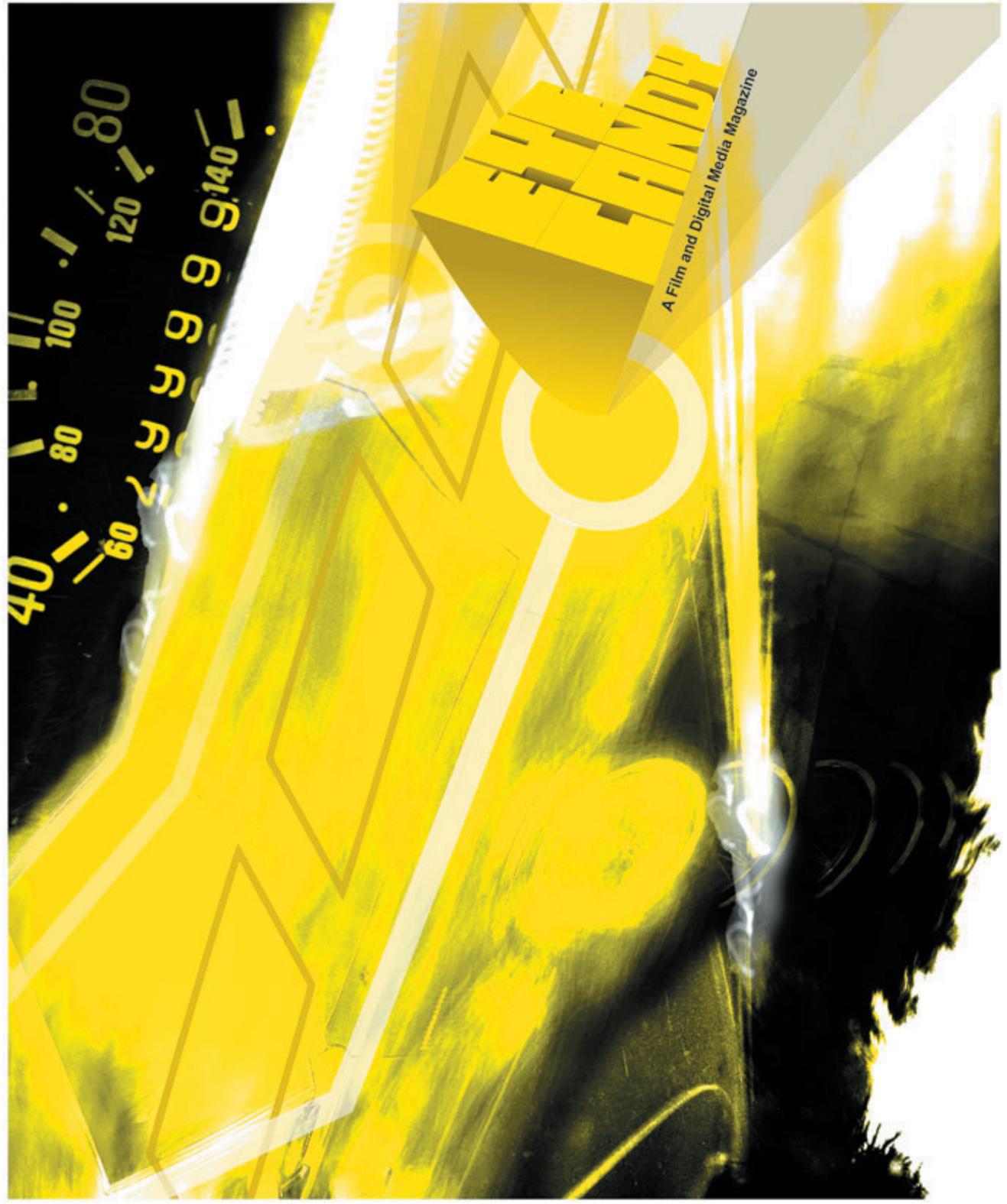
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