

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 5/11/83 -- Vol. 1, No. 29

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

(Unless otherwise stated, all Lincroft meetings are on Wednesdays
in LZ 3A-206 at noon.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
5/18	CANTICLE FOR LIEBOWITZ by Walter Miller
6/7 (tue)	Video meeting
6/8	Video meeting
6/29	TALES FROM THE WHITE HART by A. C. Clarke

LZ's library and librarian Lance Larsen (576-2668) are in LZ 3C-219. Mark Leeper (576-2571) is chairperson. HO's library and librarian Mike Lukacs (949-4043) are in HO 4B-510. John Jetzt (834-3332) is HO-chairperson.

1. All right you literate and semi-literate. It is time we get back and discuss a genuine piece of written science fiction. This time it is CANTICLE FOR LIEBOWITZ by Walter Miller. The following is Evelyn's blurb for the novel:

A CANTICLE FOR LIEBOWITZ: Set in the two millenia following the Third World War and its consequences, this is the story of a monastery and its mission to save what it can of civilization. Interesting characters and philosophical questions make this the classic post-holocaust novel.

2. For this notice we already have for you: the ballot for books to be purchased for the library, a review of THE HUNGER, a number of reviews of SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, and a list of upcoming movies from the UNIX newsnet. Happy reading.

Mark Leeper
LZ 3E-215 x2571

*****Presorted*****
* Leeper, Evelyn C. *
* LZ 1D-216 *

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

A few weeks ago I wrote a review for this notice of a trailer for SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES. In it I said that I thought that Disney Studios was capable of making a really great fantasy film but the closest they had ever come was the funding of DRAGONSLAYER. I said at that time that the trailers made SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES look like it could be something special. Well, I guess I jumped the gun a little. I would have liked to use that lead for this review. Walt Disney Studios has made what may well be my favorite horror film of all time. Disney Studios, world-famous for children's films, made a horror film that had the parents in the theater shuddering. The nervous laughter, born of tension, was not coming from the children in the audience; it was coming from the adults. I recommend, incidentally, that parents think twice about taking younger children to see SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES -- it is that potent a horror story.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES is, of course, Ray Bradbury's tale of a sinister carnival coming to an Illinois town and destroying the townspeople by granting their secret dreams. I don't like Bradbury and early on I thought his lyrical quality damaged the effect of the film. I did not care for the saccharine prose and character names like "Jim Nightshade". But once the story started moving, I accepted it as I accept background music. It makes the film stylized, but as the film progressed it clearly added to the film's style.

The music is by James Horner and like the prose, it seems a little too light and sweet early on, then becomes very good. Special note should be made of Jonathan Pryce's acting as the evil Mr. Dark. There was talk at one point of giving the role to Christopher Lee. Lee is good but in his horror roles he has never been so darkly menacing as the intense Jonathan Pryce. The best part of Disney films has always been the villain, from the Devil of FANTASIA to the dragon-queen of SLEEPING BEAUTY, but Pryce is more convincingly evil than any villain ever presented in a Disney film. The photography, and the images of evil it creates together with the special effects, are also superb.

For years Disney Studios has claimed to be master fantasy makers on the basis of a few cartoons that have outlived their entertainment value. With films like SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES under the Disney banner, their reputation may well again become deserved.

THE HUNGER

a film review by Mark R. Leeper

Take a number of the stranger properties that vampires display in old horror films such as DRACULA'S DAUGHTER, SON OF DRACULA, HOUSE OF DRACULA, and HORROR OF DRACULA, get rid of Dracula and transplant them into a beautiful woman like Catherine Deneuve, transplant them all to a modern-day Manhattan and give the whole production of feel of horror film noir and you have a glossy but very empty film called THE HUNGER.

To start with the film matches up the unlikely pair of Deneuve and David Bowie as a pair of somethings approximating vampires. The film opens with them leathered up as punk rockers bringing two more rockers home for sex and a drink. The sex is quick and the drink is provided by the throats of the two guests. After dropping the empties in a convenient on-premises incinerator, Bowie discovers that blood no longer acts for him like an elixir of youth, and he begins to age years in a matter of a few hours. But there is a chance for him. Luckily a world-famous authority on aging who just published a best-seller on the subject of rapid aging works in Manhattan. Maybe expert Susan Sarandon has the knowledge to stop the rapid super-annuation of centuries-old vampires. Director Tony Scott has managed to pack vampirism, rapid aging, lesbianism, violence, punk rock, affluent society, immortality, people hit by trucks and nearly missed by taxis, zombies, classical music, an ancient Egyptian Catherine Deneuve, revenge, murder, and a roller-skating dance sequence into a 97-minute movie and have it all seem to roll around in a big, boring, empty movie.

This is not to say that the movie is a total waste. The concept of the updating of vampires to modern society, showing how a few of the traditional properties of vampires (most are ignored) fit into today's society deserves some points. The acting of the film is acceptable, though the shots are obviously set up for Deneuve to have a stand-in (or a lie-in) for the nude scenes. The director creates a mood of dark malevolence under chic facades. But for mood, THE HUNGER is only a pale shadow of last year's CAT PEOPLE. At its eeriest, this film create images no more frightening than what might find in an episode of DARK SHADOWS. To have done so little with so much license makes the current SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES all the more impressive for having been done within the slightly expanded restrictions of a Disney film.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES
Comments from the Net

>From hogpc!houxm!ihnp4!ihlts!ryl Mon May 2 14:51:33 1983
Subject: Something Wicked This Way Comes (non-spoiler review)
Newsgroups: net.movies

The title is self-referential. A disappointing film in many ways. Much of the dialogue is stilted and artificial; the special effects are strictly second-rate; some significant characters appear only long enough to declare their significance and then disappear for the rest of the movie (notably the lightning-rod man).

Some of the scenes are very irrational, which gives the movie a some-what dream-like quality, although I doubt it was intentional. The leading characters are mostly one-dimensional cliches, and the ending is a sloppy sentimental scene where love and friendship wins over evil and death. Pardon me while I barf.

Not in the least bit frightening, the movie does have just enough gore that you probably won't want to let small children see it (despite the Walt Disney tag).

Stay away from this one.

Bob "Two-dollar Matinee" Lied
...ihnp4!ihlts!ryl BTL-Indian Hill

>From hogpc!houxm!ihnp4!ixn5c!inuxc!ralph Tue May 3 13:44:36 1983
Subject: Something Wicked - Review
Newsgroups: net.movies

Something Wicked This Way Comes is a screen adaptation of Ray Bradbury's novel by the same name. Surprisingly, Ray Bradbury wrote the screenplay too, and as a result the movie follows the book very well.

The story is a classic good vs. evil confrontation, but it is filled with symbolism on several different levels. There are comments on power, the corruption of fantasies, human will, morality, loyalty, love, and a host of others all woven in and around a relatively simple main plot line. If you don't enjoy thinking about movies, you probably won't enjoy this much for it is not a simple story.

The photography and scene setting are excellent. The look and feel *is* Anywhere, U.S.A. The acting by the main characters is quite good. Jason Robards provides an excellent portrait of an aging middle-aged man who "finds himself" through the course of the film. The two boys do a good job of being boys (not as easy as it sounds), and the actor who portrays Mr. Dark is sophisticated evil personified. The special effects are mild by today's standards and support, rather than overpower, the human actors.

If you enjoyed Bradbury's book, this is a must. Otherwise be guided by the types of films you enjoy. This is a literary work, not an action or adventure film, and although the title sounds like the sequel to Halloween XX, it is not a scary film. Don't go with your brain in idle, you'll be disappointed.

Ralph Keyser
inuxc!ralph

>From hogpc!houxm!mhuxa!mhuxj!mhuxt!eagle!harpo!utah-cs!sask!firby Tue May 3 17:05:19 1983
Subject: Something Wicked This Way Comes
Newsgroups: net.movies

I had the chance to see this movie over the weekend and WHAT A LETDOWN!!!
For months I've been reading about what a great job they've been doing on the film but I couldn't see too much of it. The one scene I really wanted to see wasn't even there! But apart from that, what was wrong with the movie? Only 2 things: the kids couldn't act well enough to support the script, and the director couldn't quite capture the pure evil of the carnival. The movie simply was not scary or suspenseful enough. And I suspect that if you haven't read the book (and if you haven't, shame on you!) some parts of the story might not make sense.

However, that is the fault of the casting and the director, not the script. Bradbury provided an absolutely beautiful script, very subtle and understated. With more competent help, this movie could have been a jewel.

Can I say anything good about this movie? Yes indeed. For anyone familiar with Bradbury's writing, this movie provides one dream come true. The set of Green Town, Illinois is more than perfect. It is truly Bradbury's Green Town come to life, and it is a joy to see. One hopes they'll put it to good use and film Dandelion Wine in it.

There are 2 good scenes in the movie: the confrontation between Mr. Hallows and Mr. Dark in the library, and the spider scene. This may in fact be one of the all time great spider scenes of the century. But even these are not enough to save the whole film. I came out of the movie feeling very sad. This could have been a great movie with very little effort. As it is, it is barely good. Bradbury deserved better.

joanne

>From hogpc!houxm!npoiv!npois!hou5f!ariel!vax135!cornell!jts (Jim Sasaki) Wed May 4 13:50:2
Subject: Something Wicked This Way Comes
Newsgroups: net.movies

Something Wicked This Way Comes is definitely not an action/adventure/horror movie, and if you go in expecting one, you won't like it. Both the novel and the movie were written by Ray Bradbury and deal with good vs. evil in human terms but through mystic fantasy so that while the real topics are pain, death, regret, vanity, and so on, the plot involves two young boys and their discovery of the evil, sophisticated Mr. Dark and his Pandemonium Carnival.

It's not a movie that tries to scare you by tossing monsters into your lap; they want to scare you by having you look at the bleaker side of human nature

and human mortality. If those subjects never disturb you, then you probably won't find the movie at all frightening, otherwise scenes like the one in the library will definitely chill you.

Other aspects of the movie: Robards and Price are very good as the father and Mr Dark respectively; the cinematography is fine, and the special effects are good but not overpowering. The dialogue is sometimes forced, however, and the first part of the movie is a bit slow.

If you like Bradbury, you almost certainly should see this film. If not, go read the Martian Chronicles, and if you like it, see Something Wicked This Way Comes for another view of Bradbury.

>From hogpc!houxm!houxz!hocda!spanky!ihnp4!ixn5c!inexc!fred Tue May 3 17:38:20 1983
Subject: Wicked
Newsgroups: net.movies

I went and saw "Something Wicked This Way Cometh" last weekend. While is not a super film it definitely is very good. The photography is great, the plot line (yes a real plot!) runs at several levels at the same time. There is genuine acting talent being demonstrated, and the special effects are used to enhance not overpower the film. It is certainly the best film the Disney people have made in a long long time.

Fred
American Bell-Indy

>From hogpc!houxm!houxz!hocda!spanky!burl!we13!ihnp4!ixn5c!inexc!pur-ee!uiucdcs!uicsl!wombat
Subject: Re: Something Wicked This Way Comes - (nf)
Newsgroups: net.movies

#R:sask:-24300:uicsl:7600005:000:757
uicsl!wombat May 5 09:28:00 1983

I think firby's review is fairly accurate -- the sets were good, Mr. Dark was great, the script had the same sort of feel as the book, but the carnival just didn't exude enough evilness. One thing that got me was the scene showing the whole area around Green Town, with mountains in the background. Mountains? In Illinois? (Yeah, I know there's hills way down in southern Ill., but Green Town is supposedly modeled on Bradbury's home town of Waukegan.) That's what they get for filming in Vermont. If you like yucky spider scenes, this movie is for you. The rest of the film could have been better, but it was still worth seeing. Maybe it's just hard to put across the chilling stuff from the book in a movie.

Wombat
pur-ee!uiucdcs!uicsl!wombat

Stayin' Alive (July 15) - The hero of "Saturday Night Fever" has converted his dancing talent to a job in a Broadway chorus line. This musical is directed by Sylvester Stallone(!?)

Jaws III (July 22) - More sharks, but in 3-D this time.

Brainstorm (July 29) - A science-fiction thriller.

Krull (July 29) - Big-budget sword-and-sorcery.

Cujo (Aug 12) - An adaptation of the Stephen King book about why you shouldn't have dogs.

rick floyd

uucp: (seismo | allegra)!rochester!rick

arpa: rick@rochester (requires host tables > 12-Apr-83)

SUMMER MOVIES
from the Net

>From hogpc!houti!ariel!vax135!floyd!harpo!seismo!rochester!rick Mon May 9 04:19:46 1983
Subject: summer releases
Newsgroups: net.movies

Brace yourselves, Celluloid fans. It's time for the summer releases from Hollywood. To help prepare you for the onslot, here is a list of the "major" films scheduled for release this summer, sorted by release date.

[This information is abstracted from an article in the May 8th Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. The facts are theirs. Snide comments are often mine.]

Blue Thunder (May 13) - Futuristic, heavily armed helicopters in the skies over Los Angeles. Will this do for helicopters what "Jaws" did for sharks?

Breathless (May 13) - Richard Gere and Valery Kaprisky in a reportedly steamy remake of Jean-Luc Godard's 1961 tragic romance.

Space Hunter (May 20) - Purported to be an attempt to make a good 3-D film. A futuristic saga with a "Road Warrior" look.

Return of the Jedi (May 25) - And the "other" is...

Psycho II (June 3) - Anyone for a shower?

War Games (June 3) - A teenage computer wiz hooks into our defense system. Awarded the closing spot at the Cannes Film Festival (the last film to hold that post was about an alien trying to phone home).

Trading Places (June 10) - A new comedy from Eddie Murphy.

The Man With Two Brains (June 10) - A comedy spinoff of dumb horror movies, with Steve Martin (who should know...).

Octopussy (June 17) - Roger Moore as James Bond. The title says it all...

Superman III (June 17) - The Man of Steel meets Richard Pryor.

The Twilight Zone (June 24) - A homage anthology of "Twilight Zone" stories. Produced (and partially directed) by Steven Spielberg.

Porky's II (June 24) - If it follows after "Porky's", it will be a mindless, tasteless, juvenile sex comedy.

Yellowbeard (June 24) - Marty Feldman and Monty Python in a pirate slapstick comedy.

The Survivor (June 24) - Walter Matthau and Robin Williams comedy.

Stroker Ace (July 1) - This summer's car-chase entry from Burt Reynolds.