

Newsagents: Please display with Starburst Summer Special '90

BRITAIN'S PREMIER SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE • No 143 • £1.70

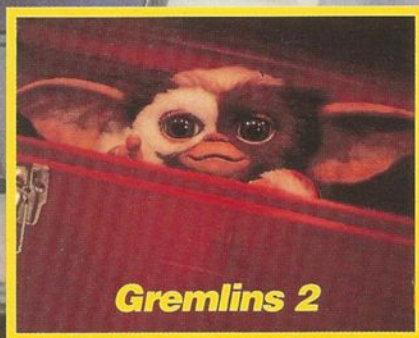
CAN \$ 4.75 US \$3.95

STARBURST

Doc and Marty return in

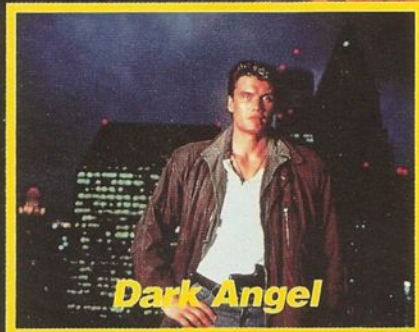
BACK TO THE FUTURE III PART III

Jim Henson's
Creature shop magic
with WITCHES



Gremlins 2

Comedy and Horror
owning a VAMPIRE
MOTORCYCLE



Dark Angel

Dolph Lundgren
on an alien hunt in
DARK ANGEL



ISSN 0955-114X

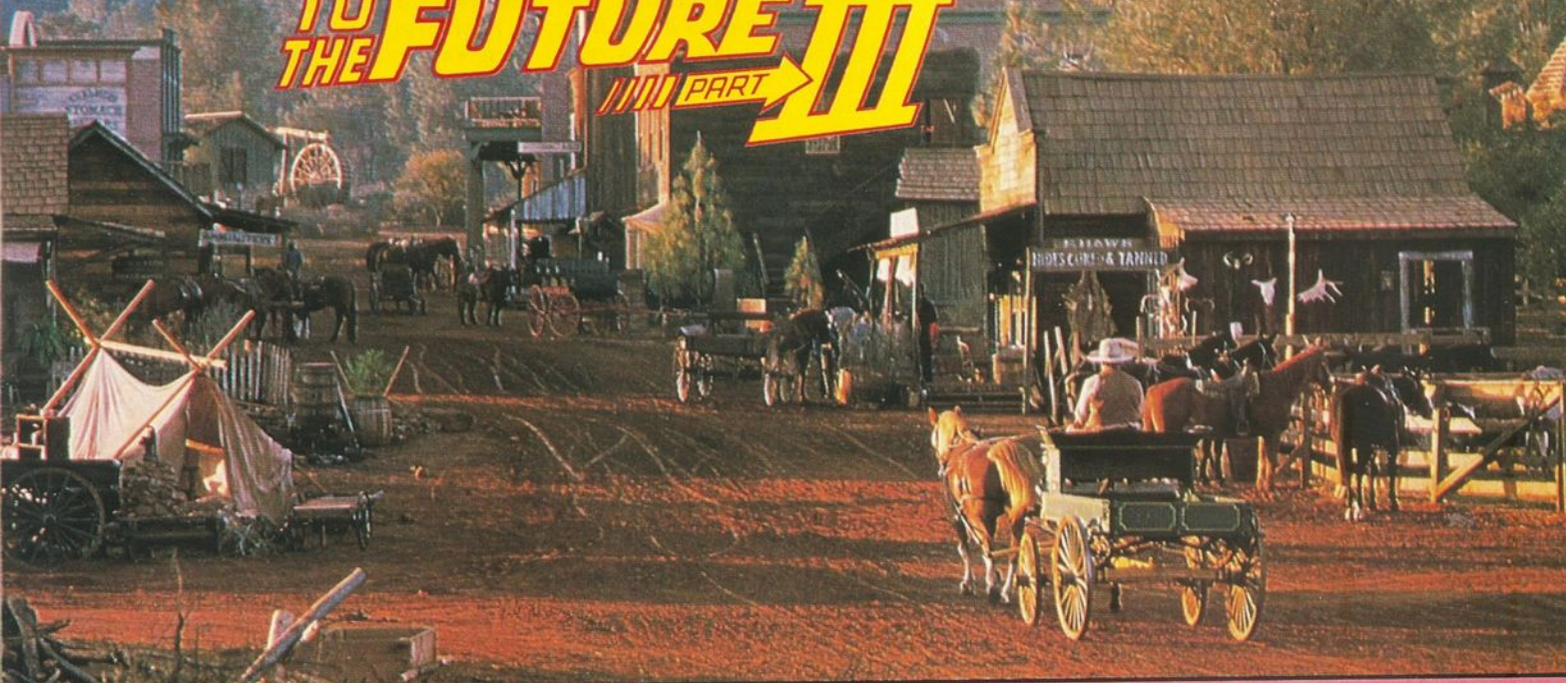


SCIENCE FICTION ★ FANTASY ★ HORROR ★ CINEMA ★ TV ★ VIDEO ★ BOOKS



BACK TO THE FUTURE III

PART III



Hill Valley in 1885 is the setting for the third instalment of *Back to the Future*

When Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale were writing the script for *Back to the Future Part II*, they ran into a problem - they had too much material to fit into the framework of a two hour movie. Feeling that their story would suffer if they tried to cut out some of the action, they made a good news/bad news call to the executives of Universal Pictures.

“THE bad news,” they explained, “is that we can’t make *Back to the Future Part II* for the summer of 1989. The good news is that we’ll have *Part II* for Thanksgiving of ‘89 and *Back to the Future Part III* for the summer of 1990.”

“I think,” recalls Bob Gale, “when we made that call, they thought we were kidding. They weren’t...”

“Being able to complete the saga of Marty and Doc in *Part III* was one of the reasons I was excited about doing the sequels,” says Bob Zemeckis. “When you hook all three movies together, they work as a complete trilogy. We knew we were taking a risk in leaving some questions unanswered at the end of *Part II*, but everything is totally wrapped up in *Part III*. That’s one of the reasons we always planned to release *Part III* six months after *Part II* opened. We didn’t feel it was fair to

make audiences wait an entire year.”

In order to accomplish their ambitious plan, the film makers undertook the unique challenge of making two films back to back. After a grueling five months in production for *Back to the Future Part II*, the cast and crew packed their bags and began what would turn out to be another five and a half months of filming for *Part III*.

Back To The Beginning

Admittedly a fan of the Western genre, Bob Zemeckis insists that the reason for setting *Back to the Future Part III* in 1885 was not simply his excuse to ‘bring back the Western’, “In fact,” says the director, “*Back to the Future III* isn’t a Western. It’s a film about Time travel. We’re taking a 1980s kid whose sole knowledge of the West is based on what he’s seen on television in Clint Eastwood movies, and actually sticking him in the 1880s, which brings an entirely new dimension to the genre. Given what we’ve done in the first two films, this was the only logical place the trilogy could go.

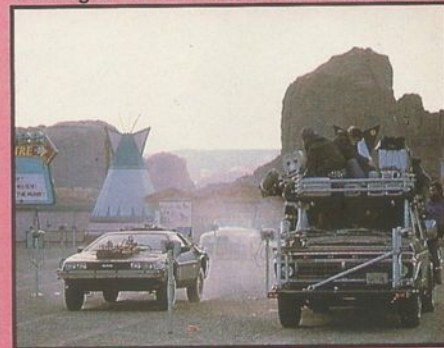
“In addition to Marty and Doc, one of the main characters in the *Back to the Future* saga is the town of Hill Valley. We’ve seen it in all it’s different permutations, including the Future, so it only seemed logical to Bob Gale and me to trace the characters and their hometown back to their roots.

“We chose 1885 because if you go back much further in California history, say, to the 1700s there would only be some Indians and maybe a few Spanish guys running around.”

1955 - Marty and the Doc research the past



Filming in the constructed Drive-in cinema



Monument Valley provides the backdrop



Not much to work with. "The time period we chose is a piece of America's mythology," adds Bob Gale. "It was an era of discovery, and of the growth of a people in search of a dream."

Michael J Fox agrees that the time period blends perfectly into the scheme of the **Back to the Future** story. "These characters lend themselves well to that motif. The ideals that made the Western an endearing genre have always been at the heart of the **Back to the Future** stories, encompassing the fast paced action, the romance and the danger. Inasmuch as **Back to the Future** appeals to the kid in everyone, I think that the idea of being a cowboy invokes that same spirit. Hopefully, we've been able to combine the ingredients of what people have always loved about Westerns, and what they've come to love about the **Back to the Future** movies."

The 'Birth' of Hill Valley

While Zemeckis and his cast and crew were busy at work filming **Part II**, production designer Rick Carter set out to create the town of Hill Valley circa 1885. The film makers wanted to depict a town which was still in its infancy, but would grow to become the Hill Valley audiences have become familiar with. They decided against using the Universal Studios' town square, the site of Hill Valley in the previous films. "The problem of trying to create the Old West at a studio, is that if the camera moves just a little too far in one direction, you're suddenly in 1930s New York, or

you run into King Kong," says producer Neil Canton. "We needed some elbow room."

"It would have been difficult to shoot the 1885 Hill Valley on the back lot, even if we had built a lot of facades," agrees production designer Carter. "To properly conceal any traces of modern civilization, the camera could never see beyond those facades to the countryside, which would not have been an accurate depiction of the era. By building our own town over several acres, we were able to leave a lot of spaces between the buildings, give it some depth and get a glimpse of life beyond the storefronts."

The Hill Valley of 1885, says Carter, "is a place to come and see the development of a town that is going to have a future. It's a place that might have been born as a result of the Gold Rush, but didn't disappear afterwards, as many towns did. We do see the very beginnings of the town, like the Chinese camp and the shanty town, situated close to the train depot, which would have originated at the time of the gold rush and remained as places where newcomers to the area reside."

Carter's design of the town included the classic main street where a showdown would take place, as well as the very familiar town square. "We took the square as we know it in 1955, 1985 and 2015 and show the very beginnings of that design coming together." While some of the structures in the square will eventually be renovated to reflect the changing of the times, others withstand the passage of the decades with only minor alterations. The saloon stands in the same location as the

50s malt shop and the futuristic Cafe 80s. The theatre that will one day show 'Cattle Queen of Montana' in 1955, and the holomax presentation of 'Jaws 19' in 2015, is just being built. The most familiar landmark, Hill Valley's courthouse, is also under construction, with the clock to be dedicated at the town's festival.

The film makers considered a number of different locations in which to build their enormous set before deciding on the countryside around Sonora, California, a town located some 350 miles north of Los Angeles. Coincidentally, Sonora was one of the first locations the pioneers of the film industry discovered when they set out from Hollywood in search of new locations.

In 1919, the very first production to showcase the Sonora area on film was Universal Pictures' **The Red Glove**, a **Perils of Pauline** type serial. Since that time, the various plains, mountains, streams, waterfalls, forests and canyons of the area have served to portray the banks of the Cimarron and the Pecos to the Crimean battlefield in such classic films as **The Virginian**, **The Texan**, **The Charge of the Light Brigade**, **Rose Marie**, **Prisoner of Zenda**, **Toast of New York**, **In Old Chicago**, the **Hopalong Cassidy** serials, **Go West**, **Santa Fe Trail**, **My Little Chickadee**, **For Whom the Bell Tolls**, **Duel in the Sun**, **High Noon**, **The Great Race**, **Bound for Glory** and **Pale Rider**, among many others. The location has also been seen in television series such as **Rawhide**, **Lassie**, **Death Valley Days**, **The Big Valley**, **The Wild, Wild West**, **The Man From U.N.C.L.E.**, **Gunsmoke**, **Bonanza**, **Little**

Doc Emmett Brown (Christopher Lloyd) falls in love with Clare Clayton (Mary Steenburgen) in the old west on 1885



Railroaded

In addition to its rich cinematic lore, Sonora offered another major incentive for the *Back to the Future* production - the existence of the Sierra Railroad. Built in 1897 as a 57-mile route for the transportation of lumber products from the mountains to the main-line rail connection at nearby Oakdale, the railroad also found itself in heavy demand by visiting film companies. Over the years, the railroad's commercial duties have been discontinued, but the line has been preserved as a tourist attraction, as well as a staple of films which utilize the area.

For a pivotal piece of the action, Bob Zemeckis needed a steam engine to push the DeLorean to get it up to the requisite 88 miles per hour necessary for Time travel. The Sierra Railroad had exactly what the director was looking for. Engine Number 3, built by the Rogers Locomotive and Machine Works in 1891, was once again called into service.

The train was originally built for the Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad, and came to the Sierra in 1897, when the line was being built. Over the decades, it too has become a film and television star, with appearances in such films as *High Noon*, and such series as *The Lone Ranger*, *Tales of Wells Fargo* and *Petticoat Junction*. A small amount of cosmetic work was done to the locomotive to make it look brand new to its 1885 route, and Number 3 comes to the aid of Marty and Doc under the guise of Engine Number 131.

Ford's West

Not all of the action which takes place in the Old West was shot in Sonora. Bob Zemeckis had a specific scene which needed a very specific look and took his cue from legendary Western director John Ford. After completing work in Northern California, the *Back to the Future III* production headed to the place where such classic Westerns as *Stagecoach*, *My Darling Clementine* and *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon* had been shot.

"The first image the audience sees of the time period that Marty travels to," says Zemeckis "has to be absolutely correct. What we realized about going back to the 1800s is that most of our current knowledge and memories of the West comes from the movies. When Marty arrives in 1885, the audience has to see something that's immediately recognizable and makes them instantly accept the premise that our hero is back in the Old West. That image couldn't be shot anywhere else but in Monument Valley."

Before Marty could travel back to 1885, he needed a point of departure that would also convey the image of 1955. In the midst of the majestic buttes and mesas of the Navajo land, tourists to the area were rather confused to find, of all things, the Pohatchee Drive-In Theatre. "We didn't want our set to be a blight in the middle of such incredible beauty," says Rick Carter



Marty McFly calls himself Clint Eastwood to avoid confusion for his 1885 relatives

of the drive-in. "It had to have a sense of humour, because it's a drive-in that reflected the 1950s version of how we perceived Indians. It's a kind of goofy place with silly tepees and arrows in the ground and a huge mural of Indians charging. Actually, we had a lot of Indians working with the construction crew, and they all thought it was a lot of fun."

While everyone involved was excited about the prospect of filming in Monument Valley, the cast and crew were not prepared for the bitter cold they faced when they got there. Arriving on location at 06.00, the temperature was a frigid 12 degrees, with the mercury rarely rising above the freezing level during the course of the day. Bundled in multiple layers of clothing, the production team went about the normal business of filming, as Michael J Fox and Christopher Lloyd braved the elements in costumes more suitable for a summer's day.

While building their set in Monument

Valley, the film makers were extremely careful not to harm the wildlife of the area. After production was completed, the drive-in was demolished, and all materials were removed from the valley. The plant life originally cleared for the building was replanted back in the original location. "It's a spectacular atmosphere in which to work," says Michael J Fox of his time in Monument Valley. "It's the kind of place where in every direction that you look is a new and different picture-postcard type view."

As the release of any new Western invariably brings about questions as to the future of the horse opera, Zemeckis states that he has no expectations of his film being able to single-handedly resuscitate the genre. "What would make me happy is if our film exposes an entire younger generation of moviegoers to images they don't get a chance to see anymore, and to appreciate this part of America and her mythology." ★



Back to the Future III Buford 'Mad Dog' Tannen (Thomas Wilson)

very misjudged, gay rape subplot. Crassness always was a German genre mainstay and at least Emmerich is being true to form in his hybrid eclecticism.

There's not much to mention in the acting department though. Everyone emotes as haggardly as Karl Walter Lindenlaub's dirtied-down photography looks. Pare goes for cartoon machismo coming off as Actionless Man instead. (Surely lighting so many cigarettes in a helicopter cockpit is dangerous?). Trainer Lisa Eichhorn wanders around corridors to little effect. And Malcolm Mc-

Dowell, in another thankless cameo as the station Commander, seems determined to take over where John Carradine left off. As for drug dealer Stephen Geoffreys, (Evil Ed in **Fright Night**), wait until you hear his hilarious French Fry speech!

Moon 44 isn't quite bottom of the barrel Sci-Fi nonsense. It is watchable entertainment, often for all the wrong reasons, and, **Star Wars** nostalgia aside, the special effects are competently realised give or take the odd over-use of the same shots. However there's no escaping one major fact; **Moon 44** is

Roland Emmerich's best movie to date. Whether that's a recommendation or not is something for you to ponder. (Starburst rating: 3)

Back to the Future Part III

While *Starburst* ace Alan 'Evita' Jones was delving behind the scenes on **Highlander 2** in Argentina, the first of this year's crop of big genre movies hit UK preview screens. Nicholas Briggs reports...

Back to the Future Part III more or less picks up the story from the tantalizing end of **Part II**, which, you might think, makes it especially difficult to follow for anyone who *hasn't* seen **Part II**. Not at all! It's just as difficult to follow for anyone who *has* seen **Part II**!

This is the root of all the film's faults - it's a sequel of a sequel. Apart from the fact that the beginning is generally garbled because of the inexplicable exclusion of a key scene from the end of the last film (when Marty receives the letter from Doc), the film is generally hindered by the cogs of the plot grinding so loudly you can almost hear them. **Part III** has to find its way out of the mess left by the fast, furious and frenetic **Part II**.

This has two unpleasant side effects. There's the customary Time

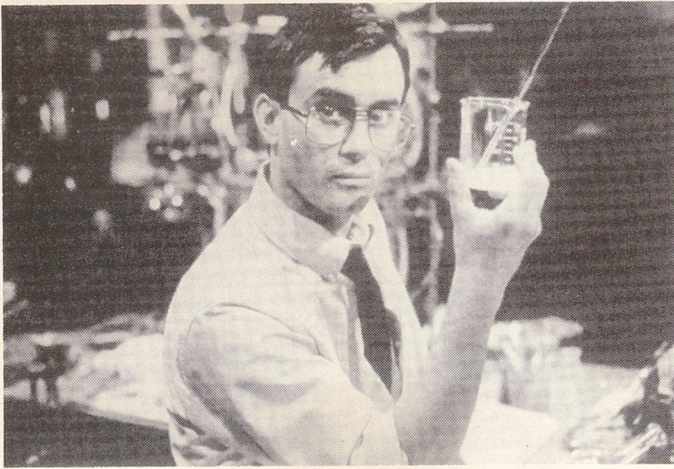
travel gobbledegook dialogue, but here director Robert Zemeckis has Marty and the Doc yell it at break-neck speed, presumably in the hope that this will get it over with as quickly and dramatically as possible. Unfortunately it just makes it confusing and hard on the ears. Also, the need to tie up loose plot ends seems to extend the action a good five minutes after the movie's natural conclusion. Was anyone *really* worrying about Marty's girlfriend?

However, all that aside, the third **Back to the Future** is a superb action-adventure movie. Zemeckis keeps that camera moving, Alan Silvestri's score thunders along a treat (with large helpings of Western pastiche) and there are excellent performances all round. Particularly notable is William F Wilson returning as Biff Tannen's ancestor, Buford 'Mad Dog' Tannen, the monumentally villainous outlaw whose aggression is only matched by his overwhelming stupidity.

The special effects, although perhaps less in evidence, are still uncannily convincing, with Michael J Fox interacting with himself in several scenes - and not a visible split-screen in sight! The technical wizardry, fast editing and energetic musical scoring reaches an 'edge-of-the-seat' *gasping* crescendo when Marty, Doc Emmett (and an

Back to the Future III Doc Emmett Brown (Christopher Lloyd) and Marty McFly (Michael J Fox) in the Doc's workshop of 1885





Re-Animator 2 Herbest West (Jeffrey Combs)

unexpected passenger) make their ludicrously makeshift attempt to get back...

Back to the Future Part III also masters the Western genre, throwing in a gritty, smelly realism which contrasts hilariously with Marty's Roy Rogers-style outfit. For the most part the film takes on board the more leisurely pace of the original, then crashes in, blazing on all guns with the exhausting energy of **Part II**.

It's ironic that the film should suffer from being a sequel, because it has for the most part taken the strengths of its predecessors and moulded them into a downright exhilarating piece of fun entertainment. Although the ending is a little protracted, there's one last dazzler from the effects people and a bit of humorous sentimentality to leave you all warm inside. Ahhh...

(Starburst rating: 7)

Back to you, Alan...

THE GORE CORNER

Re-animator 2

Being brutally frank, **Bride of Re-animator** is total garbage. Retitled for faster video rental, Brian Yuzna's continuation of Stuart Gordon's engaging original is a dull, static, badly directed mess nervously teetering on the knife edge of over-played farce. When it finally falls into 'Carry on Re-animating' territory after an hour of tedious gore-play, it hits rock-bottom, never recovering despite an action-packed, if confusing, finale.

Re-animator became an instant classic because it was a model of economical precision. The balance of black humour with bad taste, off-colour kinkiness with inspired splatter, may have been accidental but it worked in the relentlessly tacky B movie context. Everything played at a rambling pantomime level, with hammy gore thrown in cynically to keep the punters happy, subverts the crucial elements of dangerous surprise upon which the original depended. Yuzna tries hard to recapture that

gleeful suspense dynamic but it becomes quite painful watching him forever miss the ill-defined mark.

More Mary Shelley than H P Lovecraft, **Re-animator 2** has Herbert West, (Jeffrey Combs), and Dan Cain, (Bruce Abbott), again experimenting on Miskatonic University Hospital corpses with iridescent green fluid. The plan is to revive Cain's girlfriend Meg by using her heart and a body made from morgue spare parts. With Arkham's police lieutenant still trying to make sense out of **Re-animator** events, West recreates life with a new formula containing an amniotic serum extracted from a rare Peruvian iguana. In time-honoured tradition it all ends in tears and bloody recrimination while the severed head of Dr Carl Hill (David Gale) delights in West's epic failure by flying around aided by sewn on bat wings.

Yuzna's inexcusably misjudged sequel is a boring shambles from start to finish. The writing is on the wall when the names of five special effects houses flash up during the opening credits. This usually equals a rush job and the overall hastiness is reflected throughout the production from the sloppy

JOE VERSUS THE VOLCANO: Written and directed by John Patrick Shanley. Produced by Teri Schwartz. Executive producers, Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall. Music by George Delerue. Visual Effects Supervisor, David L Carson. Visual Effects by Industrial Light and Magic. Starring Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan, Lloyd Bridges, Robert Stack, Abe Vigoda, Dan Hedaya, Amanda Plummer and Ossie Davies. 102 mins. Cert PG. Released July 6th

DARK ANGEL: Executive producers, Mark Damon and David Saunders. Produced by Jeff Young. Directed by Craig R Baxley. Special Effects Supervisor, Bruno Van Zeebroeck. Starring Dolph Lundgren, Brian Benben, Betsy Brantley, Mathias Hues, Jon Bilas and Michael J Pollard. Cert 18. Released July 13th

I BOUGHT A VAMPIRE MOTORCYCLE: Written and produced by Mycal Miller and John Wolskel. Directed by Dirk Campbell. Music by Dan Friedman. Props and 'The Bike' built by Steve Watts. Special Effects by Image Animation. Starring Neil Morrissey, Amanda Noar, Michael Elphick, Anthony Daniels, Andrew Powell, George Rossi, Midge Taylor and Daniel Peacock. 104 mins. Cert 18. Released July 6th

MOON 44: Executive producer, Michael A P Scording. Written and

produced by Dean Heyde and Roland Emmerich. Directed by Emmerich. Starring Michael Pare, Lisa Eichhorn, Malcolm McDowell, Brian Thompson, Dean Devlin, Leon Rippey and Stephen Geoffreys. 99 mins. Cert 15. Released July 6th

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III: Executive produced by Steven Spielberg, Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy. Produced by Bob Gale and Neil Canton. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. Music by Alan Silvestri. Special Visual Effects by Industrial Light & Magic. Story by Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale. Screenplay by Bob Gale. Starring Michael J Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Mary Steenburgen and Thomas F Wilson. Cert PG. Released July 11th

RE-ANIMATOR 2: Executive producers, Paul White, Keith Walley and Hidetaka Konno. Produced and directed by Brian Yuzna. Written by Woody Keith and Rick Fry from a story by them and Yuzna based on H P Lovecraft's 'Herbert West - Re-animator'. Music by Richard Band. Special Make-up and Visual Effects by Screaming Mad George, Kurtzman, Nicotero and Burger EFX Group, Magical Media Industries, Dublin EFX and David Allen Productions. Starring Jeffrey Combs Bruce Abbott, Claude Earl Jones, Fabiana Udenio, David Gale, Kathleen Kinmont and Mel Stewart. 96 mins. Cert 18. Released June 8th

script to the hopeless acting, from the lazy editing to the calculated one-liners scuppering what little horror there is. The latter observation highlights the major narrative mistake Yuzna makes. Being forced to laugh at everything is pointless and his broad comic ap-

proach can't disguise the fact that this ex-Empire emperor isn't wearing any clothes at all, let alone new ones. I sincerely hope **Society** isn't the one-off in Yuzna's career that **Re-animator** proved to be in Gordon's.

(Starburst rating: 1)

Re-animator 2 falls into 'Carry On Reanimating' territory

