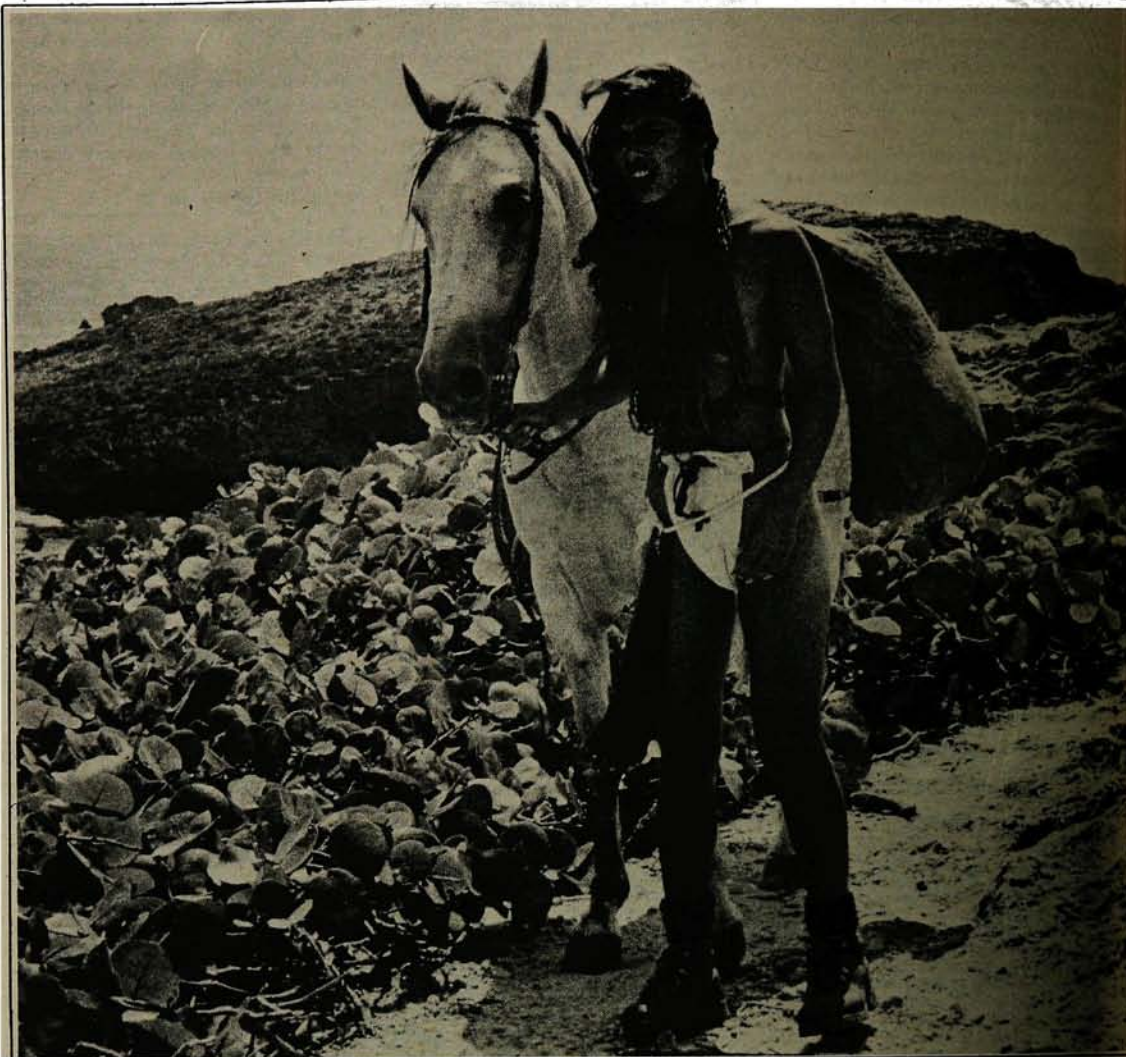


child. She has a properly exotic body, of which much is seen, but only the more innocent of audiences (like the Ontario Censors, who ruled that "some scenes may be offensive"), would call her trysts with man and near-man daringly erotic. Richard Sargent has studied (and not very well) in the Jan-Michel Vincent/Perry King school of acting, and Don McCloud, the figure in the monkey suit, doesn't speak, so his reputation is safe.

But in two areas, *Tanya's Island* doesn't need to apologize. Mark Irwin's cinematography is effective and lush. Though he couldn't have realized it at the time, his work calls to mind and bears favorable comparison to Nestor Almendros' work in *The Blue Lagoon* and Caleb Deschanel's in *The Black Stallion*. The ape make-up was created by Rick Baker, who rather specializes in simians (*King Kong*, *The Incredible Shrinking Woman*) and Bob Bottin (*The Fog*, *The Howling*). They have their own humorous touch, in giving Blue a face that bears a disconcerting resemblance to Sterling Hayden.

One's sympathy, however, goes out to Alfred Sole whose bad luck seems to be holding. His previous film, *Communion*, was well received at festivals in 1977, but only got scattered release under the title *Alice, Sweet Alice* before the distributor, Allied Artists, collapsed. A carefully plotted horror film, set in his hometown of Paterson, New Jersey, it stands miles above the current stab-and-chase fare, but it could only be released (now called *Holy Terror*) by playing up the small role played by the then very innocent-looking Brooke Shields (only 10 years old at the time), in what was her first film part. Its tight control is in sharp contrast to the meandering and heavily edited *Tanya's Island*, but Alfred Sole's name is still in the credits.

**J. Paul Costabile •**

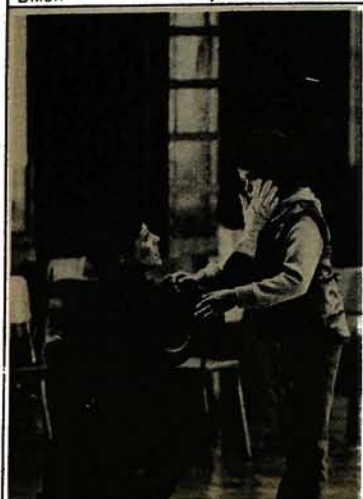


Losing her bearings? D.D. Winters is back to basics in *Tanya's Island*.

## TANYA'S ISLAND

d. Alfred Sole a.d. David Shepherd, Steve Wright p. Pierre Brousseau co-p. Rainier Energy Resources Inc. exec. p. Pierre Brousseau, Jean-Claude Levesque assoc. p. Daniel Kingstone p. man. Frank Rosetti sc. Pierre Brousseau d.o.p. Mark Irwin, csc cam. op. Robin Miller gaf. Jock Brandis, Carlo Campana grip Maris Jansons, Scotty Allen sd. engineer Brian Day boom Tom Mather superv. ed. Andrew Henderson, cfe ed. Michael MacLaverly, cfe sd. ed. Peter Burgess mus. Jean Musy art d. Angelo Stea ward. Julie Ganton make-up/hair Shonah Jabour spec. efx make-up Richard A. Baker, Rob Bottin p. acct. Wayne Aaron set dresser Enrico Campana l.p. D.D. Winters, Richard Sargent, Don McCloud, Mariette Lévesque, Mark Irwin stills Denis Fugère p.c. Pierre Brousseau Productions (1979) col. Film House, 35mm running time 91 min. (original version), 82 min. (N. Am. version) dist. New World-Mutual (English Can.), Les Films Mutuels Ltee (Quebec)

*Clown White's* Lorene Yarnell and Mark Dillon photo: Ron Watts.



## Paul Shapiro's *Clown White*

Producer Martin Harbury picked up on an idea that had been circulating among a few Toronto filmmakers for some four years, to make a film on deafness and mime. That was over three years ago, and the result is *Clown White*, a fifty-minute television film. In telling the story of a rebellious deaf child who goes on a class outing to the city, where he runs away, Harbury got himself in for more than he bargained for. "The whole field of deafness is a vast and complicated one," says Harbury. "Everyone has very strong viewpoints, so we had to tread a very delicate path."

This delicate path concerns the ways in which deaf children are taught to communicate. *Clown White* doesn't comment on these ways - indeed, its strength lies in its open-mindedness towards the various approaches used by the concerned adults in the film. It does, however, throw a curve into any

## SHORTS

handbook approach, considering the film's central character, Jason, a very bright but frustrated and uncommunicative boy about ten years old. Jason's isolation goes beyond the fact of his deafness. He appears singular in his alienation, even in his school class of fellow hearing-impaired children; we often see him through glass partitions or even as a background silhouette.

The best efforts of his teacher - an earnest, concerned man played with evident enthusiasm by Saul Rubinek - fail to reach him. When the boy defaces a school wall with chalk drawings of clown faces (an image which repeatedly intrigues him), his teacher feels compelled to respond punitively by barring Jason from a class trip to the Planetarium. Not easily deterred, Jason stows away on the expedition. Found out, and about to receive more punishment, he breaks loose and runs off into the midst of the city, pausing first to complete his freedom by discarding the Phonic Ear amplifier that remains his only link with the world of hearing. He returns to a store window where a mime in white-face (played by Lorene Yarnell of the famous American mime duo, Shields and Yarnell), has been performing. Through her and the gestures of mime he finds a mode of expression that satis-

fies him; he returns to the school group, now in white-face himself, with good cheer and a spirit of reconciliation.

What *Clown White* has done best is to depict sympathetically the world around Jason. With one or two hard-hearted exceptions, everyone tries in his own fashion to be helpful, even the otherwise anti-social bus driver whom the children love; this last is played by Michael Ironside, widely seen this year in David Cronenberg's *Scanners*. Jason's classmates are all tenderly created composites of children that Harbury and director Paul Shapiro met while researching the film in various institutions for the deaf around Toronto. Each of them is portrayed distinctly, rather than as part of an amorphous group of secondary characters, reflecting the care with which the film was made.

The film is Harbury's second dramatic project but it is no accident that his background is primarily that of a documentary filmmaker. *Clown White* is an extensively researched film whose story evolved from Harbury's and Shapiro's encounters with the deaf community. The children in the film were selected from among the 45 hearing-impaired youngsters that were auditioned, part of the largely positive response that the project received in that community. The

big find was Mark Christopher Dillon who plays Jason. "A natural," Harbury enthuses, and indeed, Dillon projects an instinctual sense for performing. After all, the boy had a lot on his shoulders; a leading role which is not a speaking part.

Director Shapiro finds poignant framing for Dillon but balances these with the young actor's own intense assertiveness. This assertiveness was one of Harbury's central discoveries in researching the film; that on the one hand deafness is "the invisible handicap" (probably few people are aware that Canada has some 1.7 million hearing-impaired citizens), while on the other, "in their own parlance and in their own understanding of things, they are not handicapped people." While the Jason character represents, in part, the difficult individual case which the textbook couldn't adequately prepare for, he also embodies the drive through which people find their own solutions. Mime is the discovery that unlocks

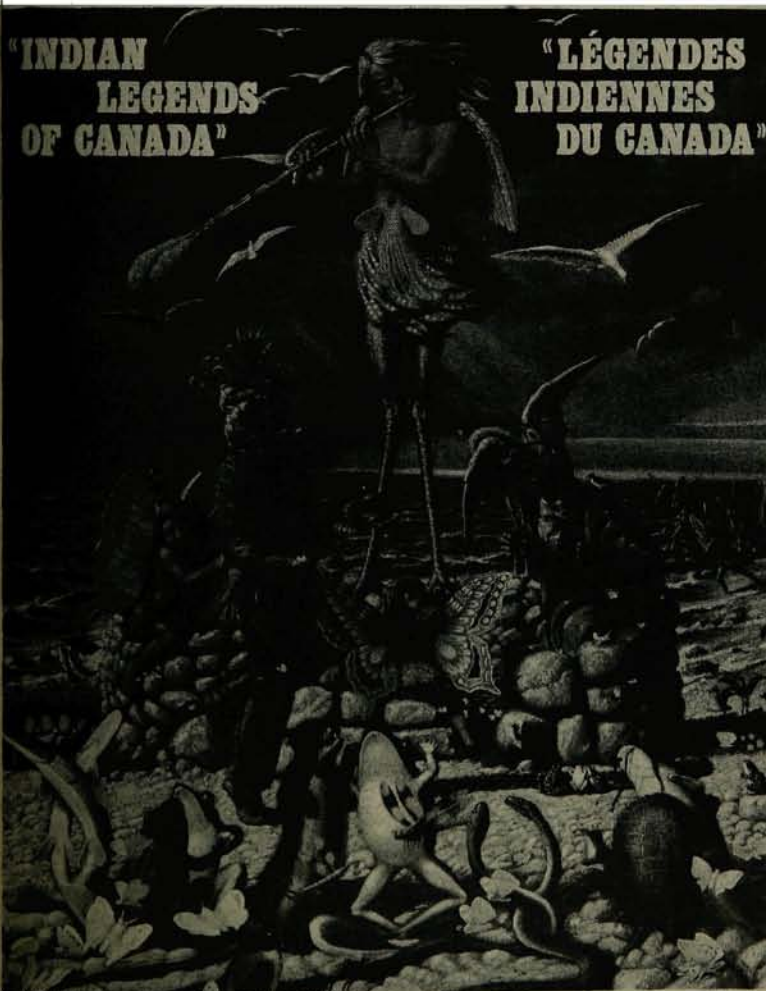
Jason's expressiveness, but it is also significant that he comes to it by means of the inner resources of pride and determination.

**Salem Alaton** ●

**CLOWN WHITE.** d. Paul Shapiro sc. Jeffrey Cohen & Paul Shapiro p. Martin Harbury or mus. composed by Bruce Cockburn d.o.p. René Ohashi ed. James Lahti & Mairin Wilkinson p. man. Sally Dundas loc. sd. Bryan Day & Tom Mather art d. Roy F. Smith a.d. Steven Wright (1st), Martha Hendriks (2nd), Don Baldassara (3rd) props Peter Lauterman (master), Paul Dreskin (asst.), Greg Pelchat (asst.) 1st asst. cam. Bill Brown gaf. Jock Brandis best boy Scotty Allan grip Maris Jansons loc. man. Suzanna Plowright p. co-ord. Susan Mander ward. Mary-Jane McCarty, Karin Ariss (asst.) art. trainee Birgit Siber make-up Suzanne Benoit cont. Susan David casting d. Jeffrey Cohen extras casting Peter Lavender tech. advisors Victor Solitario, Patricia Vaughan catering Jesse Frayne stills Ron Watts lp. Saul Rubinek, Lorene Yarnell, Michael Ironside, Henry Ramer, Patricia Collins, George Touliatos, Michael Winecott, Ralph Small, Stephen Witkin, Shelley Goldstein, Tani Brown, Jeffrey Cohen, Bill Sheldon, Bernie Finkelstein, Bruce Cockburn, (kids) Mark Christopher Dillon, John Humphreys, Kelly Halligan, Arleigh Graham, Vanessa Vaughan, Danielle Turton p.c. Martin-Paul Productions Ltd. col. 16mm running time 52 min.

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## IN RELEASE

by J. Paul Costabile

## BLOW OUT

While recording sounds for a low-budget horror movie on which he is working in Philadelphia, sound man Jack Terry witnesses what he first thinks is a car accident. He is able to rescue one of the passengers, a girl named Sally Bedena from the sunken car, but not the male driver, who turns out to have been a prominent contender for the American Presidency. Later, when Jack replays the tape he was using at the time, he realizes that he actually witnessed an assassination, but he can get no one to believe him. Sally, for her part, is reluctant to help, since she was in on a scheme to blackmail the late governor, but eventually agrees when it becomes clear that the killer will want to tie up any loose ends—like Jack and Sally. Brian De Palma's *Blow Out* offers John Travolta, as Jack, his first really solid adult role, which he brings off quite well. Nancy Allen is the bimbo who finds herself over her head, and a slimmed-down John Lithgow turns in a menacing performance as the psychotic killer who talks like a Watergate conspirator. In addition to his familiar Hitchcock homage—this time to *The Man Who Knew Too Much*—De Palma also alludes to *Blow Up* and *The Conversation*, and suffuses the film with technical bravura and a dark and cynical humor. With Dennis Franz, Peter Boyden, Curt May, J. Patrick McNamara, Ernest McClure, Maurice Copeland.

**Producer:** George Litto. **Executive producer:** Fred Caruso. **Director, script:** Brian De Palma. **Photography:** Vilmos Zsigmond. **Editor:** Paul Hirsch. **Sound:** Jim Tannenbaum. **Production design:** Paul Sylbert. **Music:** Pino Donaggio. **Running time:** 107 minutes. **Distributor:** Ambassador. **Ratings:** Restricted-Alberta./Adult accompaniment-Ontario/18 years-Quebec.

## ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK

An airplane, bearing the President of the United States (Donald Pleasence), is crashed in New York by a terrorist group. But this is 1997, and New York City is no longer the American metropolis, but a vast walled prison, where once you go in, you don't come out. But since the President, who has been held by the ruthless Duke of New York (Isaac Hayes), must be rescued, police chief Bob Hauk (Lee Van Cleef) convinces Snake Plissken (Kurt Russell), a master criminal and one-time war hero, to go in and bring the man out. Before he struck it rich with *Halloween*, John Carpenter attracted attention as a master of the action genre with *Assault on Precinct 13*, and it is in this context that *Escape From New York* is best seen. Drawing on

the rugged style of his idol Howard Hawks and the spare, no nonsense approach of Don Siegel, Carpenter has created a fine, crisply told tale which, because it shows the decline of America in such an offhand way, is that much more effective. The casting is letter perfect, and includes Ernest Borgnine as the last cabbie in Manhattan and Harry Dean Stanton as a genius appropriately named Brain. Adrienne Barbeau also appears, as Brain's girlfriend, and is no slouch either. Another small masterpiece from John Carpenter. With Tom Atkins, Charles Cyphers, Joe Unger, Frank Doubleday, John Diehl, Ox Baker, Season Hubley, Nancy Loomis.

**Producers:** Debra Hill, Larry Franco. **Director, script, music:** John Carpenter. **Script:** Nick Castle. **Photography:** Dean Cundey. **Editor:** Todd Ramsay. **Production design:** Joseph Alves. **Music:** Alan Howarth. **Running time:** 99 minutes. **Distributor:** New World-Mutual. **Ratings:** Restricted-B.C. (warning)/Adult, not suitable for children-Alberta./Adult accompaniment-Ontario/14 years-Quebec.

## ENDLESS LOVE

With its similarities in plot to *Romeo and Juliet*, it would at first seem logical that Franco Zeffirelli would be the proper choice to direct the film of Scott Spencer's novel *Endless Love*. But this story of seventeen-year-old David Axelrod's obsessive passion for fifteen-year-old Jade Butterfield required quite a different technique from Zeffirelli's lush romanticism and preference for style over substance. Judith Rascoe's script, for its part, has removed the book's subjective approach, straightened out its narrative, and most unfortunately taken the story out of its late sixties milieu and placed it rather uncomfortably in the late seventies. The resulting film *Endless Love* has little of the book's power. Martin Hewitt gives the role of David a good try for a first-timer, and he is at least marginally taller than Brooke Shields, who plays Jade. She, for her part, appears less uncomfortable than she did in *The Blue Lagoon*, but at this stage in her career she should be trying to get away from roles that merely play on her beauty. She gets no instruction here, and neither do the experienced older hands who play the young lovers' parents—Shirley Knight and Don Murray as the Butterfields, Beatrice Straight and Richard Kiley as the Axerods. Thus, *Endless Love* winds up as a fine story in the wrong hands. With Penelope Milford, Jimmy Spader, Ian Zierling, Robert Moore, Jan Miner, Salem Ludwig, Leon B. Stevens, Teri Shields, Christine Jacobsen as Brooke Shields' standin.

A Polygram production. **Producer:** Dyson Lovell. **Executive producer:** Keith Barish. **Director:** Franco Zeffirelli. **Script:** Judith Rascoe, from the novel by Scott Spencer. **Photography:** David Watkin. **Editor:** Michael J. Sheridan. **Production design:** Ed Wittstein. **Music:** Jonathan Tunick. **Lionel Richie. Running time:** 115 minutes. **Distributor:** Universal. **Ratings:** Restricted-B.C. (warning), Alta., Sask./Adult Parental Guidance-Manitoba./Adult accompaniment-Ontario/14 years-Quebec.

## THE FOX AND THE HOUND

*The Fox and The Hound* is the twentieth feature animated film to be made by Walt Disney Productions. This tale of a fox named Tod and a hound named Copper, who become friends as pups but are forced to be enemies as adults, supposedly introduces a new, younger team of animators and writers to rejuvenate the Disney studio. But, in fact, the film, which owes a lot of its style to *Bambi*, turns out to be the swan song for such veterans as animators Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, the last survivors of the team that made *Snow White*. Don Bluth, who was to have been the overall director, left the company in 1979, and the result is that *The Fox and The Hound* is rather tepidly directed by three hands in the traditional conservative Disney style. On the other hand, for technical quality, the Disney studio remains the leader in animation, Mickey Rooney, appropriately enough, is the voice of the optimistic Tod, while Kurt Russell does Copper. Their younger selves are done by Keith Mitchell and Corey Feldman, while Pearl Bailey does the voice of a maternal owl called Big Mama, and also sings the rather dull songs. With the voices of Sandy Duncan, Jeanette Nolan, Jack Albertson, Pat Buttram, John Fiedler, John McIntire, Dick Bakalyan, Paul Winchell.

**Producers:** Wolfgang Reitherman, Art Stevens. **Executive producer:** Ron Miller. **Director:** Art Stevens, Ted Berman, Richard Rich. **Script:** Larry Clemmons, Ted Berman and others, from the book by Daniel P. Mannix. **Senior animators:** Frank Thomas, Ollie Johnston and others. **Editors:** James Melton, Jim Koford. **Production design:** Don Griffith. **Music:** Buddy Baker, Jim Stafford, Richard Johnston, Richard Rich. **Running time:** 83 minutes. **Distributor:** Paramount. **Ratings:** General-B.C., Sask., Manitoba, Maritimes./Family-Alberta, Ontario./All-Quebec.

## VICTORY

In 1943, German propaganda officer Karl Von Steiner (Max Von Sydow), on a visit to the Gensdorf prisoner-of-war camp, is intrigued by the impromptu soccer games which Captain John Colby (Michael Caine) has organized for the men, and he comes up with an idea. A team of allied prisoners will play a match against a German team. Colonel Waldron (Daniel Massey), the leader of the camp inmates, is reluctant to agree to the plan, but when it appears that the game can offer perfect cover for an escape, he accepts the match. The simplistic notions of war and heroism which prevade *Victory* are not exactly those of director John Huston, who has a more cynical turn of mind, but his skill brings it off in fine style. Sylvester Stallone

appears as an irrepressible American who gets himself on the team in spite of his disdain for the game. He plays with his usual cocky style. Michael Caine's Colby is a typically reliable Michael Caine performance, and the great Brazilian soccer star Pelé leads a contingent of professional athletes who acquit themselves reasonably well as the team. Only a rather jaundiced looking Carole Laure, in what is being billed as her first English-language role as a Resistance member, seems out of place. *Victory* is hardly Huston at his best, but that is a lot better than most. With Bobby Moore, Osvaldo Ardiles, Paul Van Himst, Co Prins, Tim Pigott-Smith, Julian Curry, Amidou, Jean-Francois Stevenin.

A Lorimar production. **Producer:** Freddie Amidou. **Executive producer:** Gordon McLendon. **Director:** John Huston. **Script:** Evan Jones, Yabo Yablonsky, from a story by Yablonsky, Djordjic Milicevic and Jeff McGuire. **Photography:** Gerry Fisher. **Editor:** Roberto Silvi. **Production design:** J. Dennis Washington. **Music:** Bill Conti. **Running time:** 117 minutes. **Distributor:** Paramount. **Ratings:** Parental Guidance-Ontario./Mature-Manitoba./General-B.C./Family-Alberta./All-Quebec.

## WOLFEN

Michael Wadleigh, best known as the director of the film of *Woodstock*, makes his first fictional feature with this horror offering. *Wolfen* is a dark and pessimistic picture of urban decay and collapse, in which Dewey Wilson, a worn-down New York detective (played with a tough-guy American accent by Albert Finney), tries to solve some brutal murders. Among the victims is the head one of one of the city's oldest families, who is found in Battery Park, along with his wife and bodyguard, all in various states of dismemberment. The search leads Dewey to suspect some immense power and cunning, but just who or what it is is a mystery. To its credit, *Wolfen* offers something different from the standard features of the genre, though with one of Dewey's assistants being a hip coroner (Gregory Hines), there is enough gore to satisfy the fans. What may hold the film back is the considerable intellectual baggage which Wadleigh loads into it. In addition to the decline of the American city, the threats of terrorism and counterintelligence security, and the plight of the Indians are also involved in the story. Along with over-use of the infrared, point-of-view camera, it makes the film rather too clever. Given the saturation of horror flicks at the moment, this may limit *Wolfen's* appeal. With Diane Venora, Edward James Olmos, Dick O'Neill, Tom Noonan, Dehl Berti, Peter Michael Goetz, Max M. Brown, Anne Marie Photamo.

An Orion release. **Producer:** Rupert Hitzing. **Executive producer:** Alan King. **Director:** Michael Wadleigh. **Script:** Wadleigh, David Eyre, from the novel by Whitley Strieber. **Photography:** Gerry Fisher, Garrett Brown. **Editors:** Chris Lebenzon, Jordan Leondopoulos. **Production design:** Paul Sylbert. **Music:** James Horner. **Running time:** 114 minutes. **Distributor:** Warner Bros. **Ratings:** Restricted-B.C. (warning), Alberta, Ontario/14 years-Quebec.