

# The Reader Reviews

## Wizard of Oz - 1974

By  
Jim Bollinger

ZARDOZ  
Starring Sean Connery

Attention science-fiction and fantasy buffs - here is the first movie since *Clockwork Orange* that you can sink your teeth into. It seems strange to note, but this is the first movie released since 1972 that really approaches classic sci-fi, and it's one of the few since 2001: *A Space Odyssey* that is worth seeing. Furthermore, *Zardoz* will be refreshing for anyone who goes to see it, simply because it IS science-fiction - fantasy.

For those of us who have grown used to Sean Connery being THE James Bond (Roger Moore is just a poor imitation), and who think it would be hard to imagine him without his Austin-Martin and exploding briefcases, here he proves us wrong. Dead wrong. Connery, who was looking a bit aged and paunchy in his last Bond flick, shows that he isn't really getting older, but is indeed getting better. He has mellowed just enough to become excellent for the part, and he is, after all, a superb actor. Couple this with the talents of producer - director - writer John Boorman (*Deliverance*) and a sleu of extraordinary newcomers, and the result is one of the better SF flicks of recent years, and one which is on an acceptable par with *Space Odyssey* (the greatest of them all.)

This film, like 2001, is not the kind that one goes to see just for sheer entertainment; if that's what you want, go see *The Sting* or *Jeremiah Johnson*. *Zardoz* like Stanley Kubrick's films, is a thing man's (or women's) type of sci-fi, and it doesn't try to be the blatant in getting its message across (although it is clear enough). Thus, twelve-year olds, and those of twelve-year old mentalities, will be absolutely lost for those 2 1/2 hours (like the man in the audience with the Pat Boone shoes who shouted "I want my money back!" on the way out of the theatre.)



# ZARDOZ

*Zardoz's* resemblance to *Space Odyssey*, however, ends with the common trait of being the actual visualization of a SF book. In *Zardoz* there is substantial dialogue, and abundance of people (Most notably women), and no fantastic trip, like the 14-minute light show of *Space Odyssey*, although it does come close to such a trip near the climax, when Connery is absorbing all the knowledge of the human race, and in his battle with the "Tabernacle." *Zardoz*, however, is an experience all its own, and if you go to see it, see it with an open mind.

I suppose it's time for a quick synopsis of the plot: Connery plays the pary of Zed, an "Exterminator", or high-priest, of the god Zardoz in the year 2293 A.D. At this future point - in - time, the race of man has been split (by selective scientific methods) into two distinct groups: the Brutals and the Eternals. The Eternals are a race of immortals with heightened mental powers who live inside a force-field - enclosed, Eden - like area known as the Vortex. They are not physically invulnerable, but science has been perfected to such a degree that, if an Eternal were killed by violence, an exact duplicate (including identical brain patterns) could be created in a very short period of time. After having lived a couple of centuries, life for many Eternals has become the ultimate boredom, since they don't work at anything creative or challenging, and haven't the capacity for sex anymore, and don't even have any use for sleep. This combination of events, along with a number of others, has led to the formation of a semi-underground group dedicated to the destruction of the Tabernacle (the inhuman hidden and indestructible computer guardian of the Vortex) and the return to normalcy of human life.

To accomplish their ends, Zardoz was created, although originally to merely control the Brutals and force them to cultivate for the Eternals. The Brutals are the rest of mankind - that group apart from the select few who have to endure endless suffering, starvation, and death. Zed is a mutant, created by selective breeding on the part of Zardoz, who himself is a futuristic Wizard of Oz: a big, fearsome mask which hides the true identity of the weak Eternal who operates him.

Zed, with the aid of his mutant friends, manages to stow away on the giant stone head of Zardoz (which is really an airship) in order to gain entrance to the Vortex. His purpose is to find the truth behind Zardoz and destroy the Vortex. He receives inadvertent aid from the female Eternal May, who bargains for his life in order to "study" him. She soon learns his mission, but instead of killing him, lets him live to fulfill his mission and strikes a bargain with him. Her plot includes the use of Zed as an inseminator, since Eternal males were all impotent. However, she is opposed by Consuela, who wants Zed destroyed to protect the Vortex, and, I suspect, her own long-forgotten emotions. One thing leads to another, and it is soon

learned that, because of the profound boredom life has become, many of the Eternals wish to die, but can't. (Dissenters in this community are forced to live eternally in senility by being rapidly aged past this point and no further.) In the end, the Eternals get their wish, May gets her wish, the mutants get their wish, and Zed gets Consuela and lives happily ever after (more or less).

The absolute beauty behind this picture is that the meaning of the plot is rather ambiguous, while the plot itself is relatively clear. The problem here is that there is no book to fall back on as there was for 2001 to get a feel for the author's intent and meaning. But that is a plus, as is Connery's portrayal of Zed. As in his many Bond movies he has managed to maintain a certain air of calm civility, despite the utter brutality of his situation (for more info on this, see the Feb., '74 issue of Playboy). My only complaint about the movie is that some parts (especially near the end) are a trifle too drawn-out and would have been more effective if they were a bit shorter. All in all, however, this film is another MUST SEE, especially if you like sci-fi. *Zardoz* is also more evidence of Hollywood's slow return to ascendancy over TV. But, keep in mind that if you need your story line spelled out for you, or if you just want to be entertained you probably WON'T LIKE *Zardoz*, and if you have the precepts of a normal teenie-bopper (God forbid), you'll hate it. But for those of you who like to have your imagination, and really like fantasy with their sci-fi (Tolkien fans should like it, too), you will absolutely love this film. So take your pick.

## 3 Dogs in Labor

by Jim Bollinger

Two new albums hit the charts in April (along with a number of others), and here I am to entertain you with my evaluations of their entertainment. The victims this ish are Three Dog Night with *Hard Labor* and Chicago with *Chicago VII* (in 1998, we'll probably be seeing *Chicago MCMXLIV*).

*Hard Labor* 3 Dog Night ABC - Dunhill

This album is probably one of their most entertaining yet. It's not stupendous, but it is good. It's their latest attempt at a semi-concept album, and they come quite close to pulling this one off.

The very beginning of the album opens with that familiar circus-type refrain off their current hit-single "The Show Must Go On." It isn't the entire song, just that one refrain they go into "Sure As I'm Sitting Here," which is a nice song, but nothing to get worked up about. It's followed by two fair songs (which include a reprise of "The Show..." 's refrain) before they swing into the album's gold nugget. "Sitting in Limbo" is one of the best to come out of 3 Dog in many a moon. Excellent lyrics, fantastic sound: I loved it as soon as I heard it.

The second side, however, contains the meat of the album, with most of the best tracks. Featured are some tunes that are different for 3 Dog, and the recurring, barely audible refrain from "The Show Must Go On," which seems to be the album's theme. The four tracks are:

"I'd Be So Happy" - off-beat beginning for them, but it has the familiar 3 Dog Night chorus. It comes thru as a very tender love song with just enough restrained strength.

"Play Something Sweet" - a throwback to their early days, but with a different twist, and a Harrison-like guitar. I like it.

"On the Way Back Home" - Another one that sounds like someone else except for the chorus. This song seems incomplete; begins nicely, but degenerates. Good and bad, but too long.

"The Show Must Go On" - This is the most extraordinary song on the whole album. It's so radical that, when I first heard it on the radio, I couldn't believe it when the announcer said it was Three Dog Night. This could be an experiment in a new sound or image for them, but I'm probably wrong. It shows they have versatility, and that they really are great showmen. At the end, it winds down as the musicians get tired, apparently. Then the stage door creaks slowly shut, then slams, and that's all folks.

Like I said, all in all, this album's pretty good, and very entertaining. Judging by Danny Hutton's and Skip Konte's appearances (on the album and "In Concert"), maybe 3 Dog wants to foster the image of being the circus showmen of rock.

The album package itself is almost worth the price of admission. But then, Three Dog Night has usually had very imaginative album jackets.

All together, it's a nice album, especially if you like the group. So stop in at your favorite record shop during visiting hours and give the patient a thorough check-up; I'm sure you won't regret the labor.

*Chicago VII*  
Chicago  
Columbia

## Chicago sires a Seventh Son

I haven't bought any Chicago albums since their third; the fourth was just a "greatest hits," and the rest didn't sound interesting enough. But then, one day on Starview, I heard some cuts from the album and I decided I had to have it. Well, I certainly wasn't disappointed. It's really a work of high quality.

In this four-sided epic, each musician gets at least half a side to do his stuff, and the effect is a pretty versatile, relatively cohesive odyssey of sound. It runs the gamut from just bongos ("Prelude to Aire," "Aire") to an ARP Synthesizer (Byblos) and the Pointer Sisters ("Skinny Boy"). I'll never understand, though, why side 2 is directly on the other side of side 1, and etc. - you have to change the records manually three times instead of once (if the sides were placed correctly).

The best side of the album is side 3, which boasts one of their best songs ever, their current release, "Searchin' for So Long." If you've already heard it, you know what I mean; if not - you must hear it! Other highlights on the album are "Devil's Sweet," sort of futuristic rock that sounds like a refugee from 2001; "Life Saver," sort of Guess-Whoish, and a probably dynamite single; and "Song of the Evergreens," which, if it would have followed "Searchin'...", would have been the complement to a truly super-duo.

My only complaint about the album is that, in some sections, it's way too long (witness "Aire" and its prelude, which are little more than glorified noise). Chicago apparently considers it a cardinal sin to do just a one-LP album, but I think it would do them good to put restrictions on themselves just once. They'd probably produce a much better album, (perhaps even shoot for perfection), and they would be able to hit *Chicago XX* that much faster. (And besides, haven't they heard of the vinyl shorgate?)

This album package is relatively sparse: no posters, no lyrics; there aren't even times given for the songs on the labels, but they do manage to overcome the lack of gimmicks with a plethora of good vibes. If you can afford the dough (and it's certainly not cheap), and if you dig their sound, *Chicago VII* is definitely their best since 1970, so don't miss it.

## It Happened

in

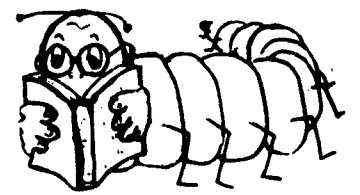
## Meade Heights

The things some people do. We are subjected to so much grief at Capitol Campus and then this happens. It was almost enough to push us over the brink.

We had a party on Friday night, May 3rd, at 925B Flickinger St. It was a somewhat typical "Heights" party until the crime was committed. After the crowd cleared and the only beer that was left was on the floor the crime was discovered. Some Bum or Bums had stolen our April and May "Penthouse" and the May "Playboy" magazines from our bathroom. Now that's definitely a low blow!

Now there is no hope -- our last link to reality has been broken and none of us had yet gotten around the pictures and started reading any of the articles yet! How anyone could have gone so low is beyond me. But we know that whoever you are - that your conscience is bothering you. So to get the weight off your mind you can put the magazines in a brown paper bag and leave them in W-104 or sneak up at night & put them in our mailbox.

Signed Residents of 925B  
Flickinger St.



## Amnesty

The War is not over for the millions of people whose lives are affected by the Amnesty issue. These people are

1. people who resisted the draft and are either in exile in other countries or "underground" in the United States;

2. military resisters including the 30,000 at large deserters;

3. Vietnam era veterans with less-than-honorable discharges;

4. persons who have criminal records as a result of objections to the War;

5. families of resisters presently in exile, in prison, or "underground."

There will be a meeting for all people interested in the Amnesty issue Sunday, May 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Friends Meetinghouse, 6th and Herr Streets, in Harrisburg.

We will be discussing Amnesty in general: what it is, who needs it, and why it should be given. We will also be planning for future activities.

Several potential recipients of Amnesty will be present at the meeting to discuss their feelings on the issue.

We encourage those people who do not support Amnesty and those who are familiar with the issue to attend this meeting.

There will be refreshments after the meeting.

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