

**FIFTIES (1951-1960) D-G**  
**All reviews by Michael J. Weldon**

**DADDY-O** (Col. 58) D Lou Place, S David Moessinger, P Elmer C. Rhoden Jr. Phil (Dick Contino) is driven off the road in his truck by blonde Jana (Sandra Giles) in her convertible. She says "Touch me and I'll split your head open!" He tells the amused witnesses "If she were a man I'd knock her teeth out!" That's how the main characters meet in this neglected gem from AIP. With over the top dialog, implied sex and drugs, rock and roll music, top heavy beauties, and some strong violence, it occasionally approaches the level of mid 60s Russ Meyer dramas. After pumped up former drag racer Phil is cleared of manslaughter in a hit and run death, he's put on probation and loses his license. Sidney (Bruno VeSota, in a role patterned after Sydney Greenstreet) hires him to sing at his Hi-Note club and uses him to drop off mystery ("junk") packages from Mexico. When Phil (billed as Daddy-O) passionately and angrily sings "Wait Till I Get You Home," the reaction shots from Jana and bad girl Marcia (Gloria Victor) are priceless. They both wear tight sweaters with push up bras that make their chests resemble the protruding headlights of the 50s cars they drive. When Sidney's weird gym owner sidekick Bruce (Jack McClure) sneers and stares through his thick lens glasses, he resembles David Letterman (!). With a night time drag race, car hops, dancing, and a visit to a hot dog shaped L. A. lunch counter. Phil also sings "Rock Candy Baby" and the ballad "Angel Eyes" backed by a four piece combo. Jimmy Madden wrote the songs and the jazzy score was the first by John Williams. Contino, who was nearly 30 at the time, was a body builder accordionist who had two chart hits. Giles, from Hooker, OK, is very sexy and convincing in her role. She was also in LOST, LONELY AND VICIOUS (PV #31) and is now a well known L.A. real estate agent. VeSota directed Victor in INVASION OF THE STAR CREATURES (62). Place, a brother in law of Sam Arkoff, only directed one other feature - BEAST WITH A MILLION EYES (55). Moessinger later became a producer of WALKER, TEXAS RANGER!

**DANGEROUS CHARTER** (Sinister, 58) P/D/S Robert Gottschalk, S Paul Strait, P John R. Moore

Federal agents let three poor fishermen keep The Medusa, a luxury yacht they found adrift, to use as a charter boat to Catalina Island. It's all a setup to catch the killer drug smuggler owners. Most of the movie takes place on the boat after the bad guys take it back. Richard Foote is the sympathetic junkie character who plays guitar and sings and Peter Forster is his sadistic but cultured villain boss. Hero Chris Warfield later acted in and produced William Rotsler nudie movies. His fiancee is played by Sally Fraser (THE SPIDER, IT CONQUERED THE WORLD...). Crown Int. released the color drama in 62.

**DANGEROUS YOUTH** (Fang, 58) D Herbert Wilcox, S Jack Trevor Story, P Anna Neagle

Dave (Frankie Vaughan), a "cheeky blighter" in Liverpool (scenes were shot there), is a singer who joins the Army but gets into fights and is blamed for a death. He sings the corny theme song and blonde co-star Carole Lesley also sings. It starts out with trouble making "Oingo boys" in black clothes and white ties but soon settles into a service drama (inspired by Elvis Army headlines). With George Baker as the Padre and Michael Ripper as a soldier who picks a fight by calling Dave a scouse. By the makers of TEENAGE BAD GIRL. Vaughn, a short Dean Martin type singer (from Liverpool), had over 30 chart hits in England (54-68) including versions of "Tweedle Dee" and "Green Door." Note: Wilcox and actress turned producer Neagle were married.

THE DAY THE EARTH FROZE (SW, 59) D Aleksandr Ptushko, S Viktor Vitkovich, Grigory Yagdfeld, P Julius Strandberg  
(SAMPO) This impressive Vistascope color Soviet fantasy was shot in Finland, where it takes place. A wicked witch (played by a man) has the long blonde haired Annikky (Eve Kivi), kidnapped to an island. It's all a plot to force her immortal red bearded blacksmith brother (I. Voronov) to forge a "Sampo" which produces gold. He and Annikky's bearded woodsman lover (Andris Oshin) create a boat and set sail. Talking winds are captured in huge chained up bags, the sun is stolen and warriors are encased in ice. This is the '64 AIP version. They added narration (by Marvin Miller) and fake credits and tried to pass it off as a sci fi movie. By the director of SWORD AND THE DRAGON (56).

DEATH IN SMALL DOSES (Fang, 57) D Joseph Newman, S John McGreevey, P Richard Heermance

"Tom" (Peter Graves, the same year as BEGINNING OF THE END) is an FDA agent who moves into an \$8 per week L. A. boarding house and becomes a truck driver to investigate the black market for amphetamines and pep pills. He drives with the hopped up, jive talking jazz fan neighbor Mink (Connors just before THE RIFLEMAN series) and falls for the widow landlady (Mala Powers, same year as THE UNKNOWN TERROR). Merry Anders (THE HYPNOTIC EYE) is a roadside waitress who uses and deals. Incredibly, nearly everyone Tom meets either deals pills (a nickel a piece wholesale) and/or uses. Several characters freak out and crash trucks or attack others or are killed when they dare to speak up. In a memorable scene, Mink totally loses it in the diner (after he had swallowed "2 dozen bennies"). Also with Harry Lauter, Roy Engel, Robert B. Williams and Bob Shayne, all familiar looking 50s sci fi movie vets. It was based on a Saturday Evening Post article and is a top fave of The Cramps. By the director of THIS ISLAND EARTH.

DESTINATION SPACE (Sinister, 59) D Joseph Pevney, P/S Rip Van Ronkel  
This CBS pilot film from Paramount doesn't seem to be in any reference books. Benedict (Harry Townes) has to defend his plan for the first manned Moon orbit during a Senate hearing. One senator (Robert Cornwaite), obviously patterned after McCarthy, mocks the plan as "Benedict's Billions." The determined hero defeats the "utter nitwit" with a pro space program speech. Eventually the mission is accomplished with an official observer (Edward Platt) on board. Meanwhile we see a space wheel, a meteorite collision and space walks, all using models as good or better than ones in 50's theatrical films. The familiar cast includes Whitney Blake as Benedict's fiance, Cecil Kellaway, Charles Aidman, William Traylor, and John Agar in a minor role as an astronaut. Townes was in SCREAMING MIMI and on every sci fi TV show of the period. Pevney had directed MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES (57).

ELECTRONIC MONSTER (Fang, 57) D Montgomery Tully, S Charles Eric Maine, J. MacLaren-Ross, P Alec C. Snowden

(ESCAPEMENT) Jeff (Rod Cameron), a New York insurance investigator is sent to Cannes to investigate the death of a film director. He discovers a former Nazi doctor (Carl Jaffe) doing "psychotherapy" experiments at a clinic run by the mysterious Zakon (Peter Illing with a monocle). Jeff's actress ex (Mary Murphy from THE WILD ONE) is there too and must be saved. Patients are put in morgue like drawers wearing a metal electrode cap that "clears their minds" and makes them dream. The dreams (filmed in a studio) are either good (modern dance) or bad (a whip dance). A black female dancer and a big Zakon head show up too. Seeing this for the first time since the 60s, I realized that the characters are all WW2 stereotypes, including good British doctors, save the day Americans and collaborating French. The dreams should have been much more imaginative. The music features weird electronic bloopers. Columbia released the Anglo-Amalgamated feature in America at 72 mins., but the original (available from Sinister) runs 8 more.

EXPRESSO BONGO (Kino, 59) P/D Val Guest, S Wolf Mankowitz

If you've seen ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS, here's a cool atmospheric b/w musical (based on a play) with a similar theme and setting from the time it was happening. Johnny Jackson (Laurence Harvey at his best) is an enthusiastic small time Jewish Soho manager who discovers Bert (Cliff Richard) singing "Play It Real Cool" in The Tom Tom Club. Renamed Bongo Herbert, he sings a ballad on TV and a religious song for his solo variety debut. He soon has major hits and is getting drunk with a blonde American movie star (Yolande Donlan) and questioning the whole phony business. Johnny also sings, solo and with with the record company president (Meier Tzelniker from the stage version), and appears on a TV panel show about teens. One song goes "You've got a chip on your shoulder and an H bomb in your pants." Maisie (Sylvia Syms) is Johnny's stripper girlfriend who wants to be a singer. The very young looking pre hit Shadows back Bert in his pre-fame scenes and Burt Kwouk has a tiny role. There's a split screen segment and the credits are on pin ball machines. Columbia released a soundtrack E.P. by Richards, who had already had 8 hits. EXPRESSO would make a great double bill with DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE (62) by the same director and screenwriter. The Kino release is widescreen.

THE FABULOUS WORLD OF JULES VERNE (Englewood, 59) D/S Karel Zeman

(VYNALEZ ZKAZY) This wonderful looking Czech fantasy is based on several Verne novels (including Deadly Invention and Face The Flags). It features Melies style special effects (including submarines, airships and a giant squid) mixing actors with 19th Century engravings and animation. The plot concerns the possibility of science ending the world. The Warner Brothers 61 US intro features Hugh Downs (who recently finally retired from 20/20). They also Anglicized the Czech actor names. Even if you've seen the feature check out this tape for THE MAGIC WORLD OF KAREL ZEMAN, an excellent British documentary short showing the kindly seeming Zeman at work and behind the scenes on this and his other features (BARON MUNCHHAUSEN and JOURNEY TO THE BEGINNING OF TIME) plus scenes from his early shorts. The original US trailer is also included.

(THE FAMOUS) HOLLYWOOD BURLESQUE (SW, 52) D J. D. Kendis

Many of the comics in this review are female and the jokes deal with drinking and husbands. A guy peeping through a keyhole is edited into a bedroom set sequence. Jenne "The Modern Tigress" stars with Hilary, Honey Hayes and others who strip down to their pasties and G strings. An "Oriental" dances before a Goddess Shiva backdrop and the last (and best) one does a serious bump and grind. Comedy routines refer to our occupation forces in Europe and the music is 30s style jazz. Kendis, a former jeweler, produced movies like SLAVES IN BONDAGE and GAMBLING WITH SOULS in the 30s.

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS (SW, 54) D/star John Ireland, D Edwards Sampson, S Jerome Down, Jean Howell, P Roger Corman

A truck driver (Ireland) wanted for murder attempts to take a race car driver (Dorothy Malone) and her Jaguar across the Mexican border at gun point, but gets stuck pretending he's a pro driver during a border race. The story (by Roger Corman) is simple and lots of scenes use rear projection. Malone is the most impressive acting wise and it's fun to see future AIP regulars like Bruno VeSota, Iris Adrian, Jonathan Haze and Snub Pollard. Jazz music is by the Chet Baker Quartet. Floyd (father of David) Crosby was the cinematographer. Corman's 3rd screen credit (he started directing the next year), it was the first release from ARC (later AIP). Thank Johnny Legend for presenting the rare video release - but one reel is shown twice (!).

FEMALE FIENDS (Sinister, 59) D Montgomery Tully, S McLaren Ross, P Alec C. Snoden

(STRANGE AWAKENING) An American (Lex Barker) in France is KO'd on the road, taken to a hospital then wakes in a cast in a Riviera home. He has no memory but is told that he's Peter, a wealthy heir whose poet father has been poisoned. The

confused wheelchair bound man eventually falls for his “sister” (Lisa Gastoni from WILD WILD PLANET) and discovers the whole plot. His “wife” (blonde Carole Mathews from THE MONSTER AND THE APE serial) is having an affair with his doctor (Peter Dyneley from THE MANSTER). Other characters are the mother (Nora Swinburne), a French blackmailer and a Swedish servant. This is the “longer 75 min. version” of the b/w British feature, based on the 40s novel Puzzle For Fiends. The 6’ 3” Barker worked non stop in Europe throughout the 60s and was especially popular in W. Germany. Tully also directed THE ELECTRONIC MONSTER.

FIRST SPACESHIP ON VENUS (Englewood, 60) D/S Kurt Maetzig, S Jan Fethke (DER SCHWEIGENDE STERN) In the future (1985!), an international (and totally interracial) team of 8 top doctors and professors are sent to a lunar space station, then to Venus to investigate threatening messages. A narrator describes their jobs and routines and they survive a meteor attack. On Venus, they use a land rover and encounter bouncing metallic “insects,” a petrified forest, a sphere (“like an immense golf ball”) and ruins. 50s American space movie cliches are mostly absent, but the physician widow Sumiko (Yoko Tani in a red suit) is a former lover of the American guy. The old prof. is British (at least in this dubbed version) and the communications officer is black. The chess playing robot is a little tank. A Theremin is heard. It’s based on Polish writer Stanislaw Lem’s 1951 novel. Only Tani (also in SAVAGE INNOCENTS and MARCO POLO) was known to western moviegoers. Crown Int. released the E. German Totalvision and Technicolor feature here in 62. Unlike later Soviet bloc sci fi movies released by Roger Corman, they didn’t add monsters or tamper too much with the plot. Hugo Grimaldi was the supervisor. The 78 min. video print looks great and is letterboxed.

FRANKENSTEIN’S DAUGHTER (Englewood, 58) D Richard Cunha, S H. E. Barrie, P Marc Frederic  
 Oliver “Frank” (Donald Murphy), is the demented and horny live-in assistant to an old European chemist (Felix Locher). Frank and the creepy, crippled gardener (Wolfe Barzell), use a liquid formula to turn the doctor’s nice tennis playing niece (Sandra Knight) into a part time monster with pop eyes. She roams the neighborhood at night (the paper screams “Woman Monster Menaces City!”) in her bathing suit. Then they graft the head (badly mangled from a car crash) of sexy blonde Suzie (Sally Todd), onto a revived body figuring that a woman’s brain would be more likely to obey. The ugly killer #2 monster is played by Harry Wilson, once the stand-in for Wallace Beery. Top billed John Ashley is the clueless boyfriend, Page Cavanaugh And His Trio play at a pool party and Harold Lloyd Jr. sings (“Have you heard, daddy bird?”). Also with Robert Dix. This entertaining nonsense was made the same year as Cunha’s GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN (PV #30). The memorable make ups were by Harry Thomas. Locher was the father of actor Jon Hall and Knight was Mrs. Jack Nicholson at the time.

GANGBUSTERS (SW, 54) D Bill Karan, S Phillips H. Lord, P William J. Faris, William H. Clothier

After an extreme overkill 3 part intro, this settles into the tale of John “Omar” Pinson (Myron Healey), the smiling, smooth talking but vicious public enemy #4. He fakes his own death after his second prison escape and a crazed young ex con (Sam Edwards) kills to impress him. A flashback of Pinson digging out of his own grave is a nice touch and many actual locations are used. The “true story” was released the same year as DRAGNET (the movie version of the TV series) and Corman’s HIGHWAY DRAGNET but has a darker tone. With Frank Gerstle

(MONSTROSITY) and Don Harvey (in many serials) as detectives, Frankie Richards as Slug and Joyce Jameson in a bit part. It's a Johnny Legend Untamed Video.

GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN (Englewood, 58) D/cine. Richard Cunha, S Frank Hart Taussig, Ralph Brooke, P Arthur A. Jacobs  
Wayne (Edward Kemmer) helps Janet (blonde Sally Fraser) and her archaeologist father Prof. Cleveland (Morris Ankrum) to search in the woods (it was filmed in Big Bear, CA). They discover the "brutal, degenerate and depraved" revived Spanish Conquistador Diablo (big pro wrestler Buddy "Jethro's dad" Baer in armor). The local sheriff (short B western star Bob Steele) arrests Wayne for the mute giant's murders and Diablo carries off a local beauty (Joline Brand). Other characters are Crazy Indian Joe ("All White Man Die!") and a brave teen named Charlie Brown. Jack Pierce did the makeup and the music is by Albert Glasser. It's not as over the top or fun as Cunha's FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER or SHE DEMONS (both also from Astor in 58) but, despite the obvious dummy and fake boulders, it's actually a better, more coherent movie. Fraser and Kemmer (from the SPACE PATROL show) were also both in THE SPIDER (also 58).

GIANT GILA MONSTER (Englewood, 59) D/S Ray Kellogg, S Jay Simms, P Ken Curtis

Unlike in many teen movies of the time, the best buddy of the nice hard working mechanic hero Chance (Don Sullivan from TEENAGE ZOMBIES) is the friendly sheriff (Fred Graham, a vet of many serials). Chance sings (about the Lord telling children to laugh) to a little girl that needs leg braces. Then he bravely blows up the monster with some nitro in his jalopy. Toy vehicles and a train are destroyed and DJ "Steamroller Smith" spins platters at a barn party. Steamroller and another character have comedy relief drunk scenes. With Lisa Simone (MISSILE TO THE MOON) as the French girlfriend and Shug Fisher as the rich oil man. I first saw GILA in the early 60s at a Saturday matinee double bill at The Detroit in Lakewood, Ohio. Even then, most kids thought it was a ripoff, but enjoyed imitating the loud Theremin sounds. Conservative top 40 radio pioneer Gordon McLendon backed this and THE KILLER SHREWS, which starred GILA's producer. Fisher had been with Spade Cooley's band and Curtis (later Festus on GUNSMOKE) was with The Sons Of The Pioneers.

GIRL GANG (SW, 50) D/edit Robert C. Derteno, P George Weiss

Non-stop drug abuse is what keeps this incredible roadshow classic going. Joe (Timothy Farrell), a "regular guy" in a black shirt with white tie, lives in a cheap apt., but he always has willing young women around ready to steal cars, rob a gas station or blackmail horny businessmen for their weed or heroin. He gives June (Joanne Arnold) lessons on how to "joy pop" (in her leg). Wanda agrees to do 5 boys (offscreen of course) in order to join the gang while others get high and make out by garbage cans in the alley. Every time somebody gets high, harp music is heard. Joe also uses a disbarred alky doctor and young Jack who brings new customers ("Let's blaze em, you'll hit the ceiling!"). Women wear pointy push up bras, there's a cat fight, boogie woogie piano music and some jitterbug dancing. Farrell was also in PIN DOWN GIRL and GUN GIRLS (both PV #20) also by Derteno. William C. Thompson was cinematographer (notice the mic shadow). It's a Johnny Legend presentation.

THE GOLDEN MISTRESS (Englewood, 54) D/S/act Abner Biberman, S Lee Hewitt, P Richar Kay, Harry Rybnick

A New York model (Rosemarie Bowe) convinces Bill (John Agar, who narrates), a small boar captain in Haiti, to help her find some solid gold skeleton statues. They, his kid assistant Cristoff (Kiki) and her thief father (Biberman) face leeches, a giant clam, sharks and the "power of Dahmballa." The impressive looking Technicolor U.A. release was filmed on location in and around Port-Au-Price and at impressive ruins of a fortress and a palace (sites of slave revolts). The locals appear poor but content in the pre Papa Doc Duvalier days. Time is spent showing Agar's double diving and authentic Hatian dancers. It's all fairly believable and tame until Cristoff's father Iznard (Andre Marcisse) takes Bill to a secret island. Members of a killer "lost, untamed African tribe" in war paint and grass skirts, tie the leads (now in love) to stakes. Their escape is pretty hilarious. The cinematographer was William C. Thompson (PLAN 9). This was one of the last acting roles for Biberman (WHISPERING GHOSTS, THE LEOPARD MAN...), and his first of many 50s director credits (he used the pseudonym Joel Judge). 50s covergirl Bowe was married to Robert Stack.

GOLD RAIDERS (Fang, 51) D Edward Bernds, S Elwood Ullman, Daniel Ullman, William Lively, P Jack Schwartz

The Stooges (with Shemp) are peddlers who go to the town of Red Mesa in their wagon. They make friends with former marshall George O'Brien (as himself - George O'Brien, in westerns since 1922) who sells insurance but still has time for cliché old west shootouts, bar fights and chases. The top billed Stooges slap each other a lot, harmonize ("Just Plain Jane") and conduct a medical exam on a passed out drunk. Laura (Sheila Ryan) is the daughter of the alcoholic old Doc (Clem Bevans) and Taggart (Lyle Talbot) is the businessman villain. Also with Fuzzy Knight (useless stuttering sheriff), Monte Blue, John Merton and other western vets. The United Artists release is only 56 mins. long. This and the 1930 Ted Healy movie SOUP TO NUTS (PV #26) were the only Stooge features with Shemp. Director Bernds (PV #30) also directed Stooges shorts with Curly, Shemp, and Joe Besser, and features with Curly Joe.