

Entertainment Outlook

Who's 'Bewitched' by Fred Dryer?

ASK DICK KLEINER



DICK KLEINER

By Dick Kleiner

Q. Did the man that plays Rick Hunter on "Hunter" play on "Bewitched"? — R.M., Americus, Ga.
A. No. When the TV series "Be-

witched" was being made, Fred Dryer was only interested in playing football. He's a former college and NFL star.

Q. I have five bucks on this one. My friend says that Vicki Lawrence and Carol Burnett are sisters. I know they are friends and look alike and worked together, but are they sisters? — B.M., Houston.

A. No, they are not and never have been. That rumor started because they worked together and look alike, but it isn't true.

Q. Can it possibly be true that both Steve McQueen and Gig Young actually died of AIDS? — S.H.A., Madison, Wis.

A. AIDS was first recognized in 1981. Young died in 1978; and McQueen in 1980. So probably not. McQueen's battle with cancer was well-publicized.

Q. I watched Lucille Ball and Harry James in "Best Foot Forward." In the beginning of the movie, wasn't Judy Garland one of the girls singing in the group? She sang two songs, but I didn't see her name listed. — M.R., Kalamazoo, Mich.

A. No, I don't know who you might have mistaken for her, but Judy Garland was not in that 1943 film.

Q. Please tell me the name of the actor who played Joe Flynn's (Capt. Binghamton) sidekick on the old "McHale's Navy" TV series. — G.M., Houston.

A. That was Bob Hastings, who played Lt. Elroy Carpenter, the captain's perennial yes-man.

Q. I love watching Shadoe Stevens on "Hollywood Squares." He said something on the show recently about a movie he is in. What is the movie? Is Shadoe Stevens his real name? — S.K.R., Columbia, Ala.

A. Shadoe — his real name is Terry Ingstad — has made a film called "Traxx." It was supposed to have been released this spring and then this summer, but it is still unreleased. That always makes me suspicious that it is a bomb and may never see the light of the drive-ins.

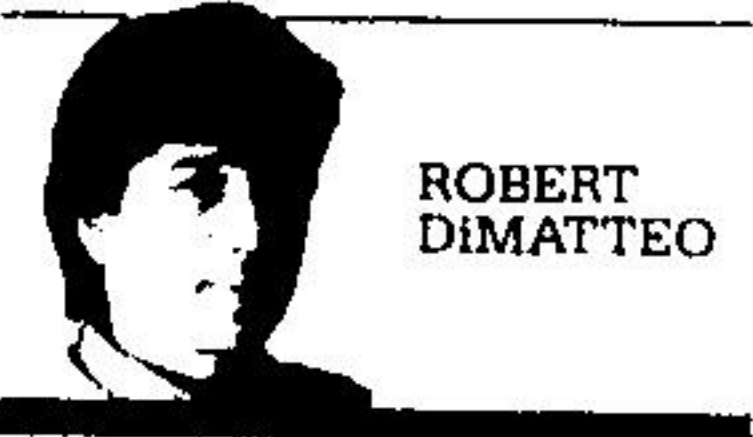
Q. As a kid (in the late '50s or early '60s), I saw a movie called "The Atomic Kid," with Mickey Rooney. It was about two prospectors who stumbled across a ghost town where the U.S. was measuring the effect of an atomic bomb blast. The bomb went

off and Mickey and his friend somehow survived. They thought it might be because he had just eaten a peanut butter sandwich, so they tested peanut butter. Nobody else remembers that movie. I thought it was very funny and would like to see it again. — J.A., Audubon, Pa.

A. You are probably the only one east of the Pecos who saw that movie. "The Atomic Kid," with Rooney, Robert Strauss and Elaine Davis was a Grade B floperoo that was made in 1954.

New films update Dickens classics

FILMETER



ROBERT DIMATTEO

By Robert DiMatteo

In Movie Theaters

SCROOGED (PG-13) Bill Murray always stands a bit outside his roles, mocking them. That's why we like him: His material may get sappy (as in the ill-fated remake of "The Razor's Edge"), but Murray won't. He's effortlessly hip.

Playing the youngest network president in TV history, Murray is in good misanthropic form in the first half of this update of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." He's like a nightmare version of NBC's Brandon Tartikoff — the bottom line is all that matters to this greedy young go-getter. The movie, scripted by two "Saturday Night Live" alumni, is at its best when satirizing the TV business, coming up with some dandy examples of commercial network insipidity.

But the Dickens story is a Victorian morality tale at heart, and the movie

gets in trouble — and into schmaltz — when it tries to teach Murray's character a lesson in humanity. Along the way, the Ghosts of Christmas Past (rock star David Johansen) and Christmas Present (Carol Kane) are welcome additions to the fun, and there are lively bits throughout. But the movie tries to have it both ways — lampooning the corny Americana of inspirational holiday flicks like "It's A Wonderful Life," and ending up as inspirational itself.

Karen Allen has the cheerless task of playing Murray's former sweetheart — a mousy good girl who works with the homeless (and stands for the values that Murray has forsaken). Playing Murray's assistant, Alfre Woodard is part of a how-the-other-half-lives subplot that seems straight out of a black sitcom.

At the climax, Murray and the cast sing "Put a Little Love in Your Heart," and he speechifies: "There are people who are having trouble making their miracles happen..." The way it finishes up, this could be the first wholesome, feel-good movie of the George Bush era — if that's your idea of a good time. **GRADE: ★★★**

OLIVER & COMPANY (G) Not one of the great Disney animated movies, this revamping of Dickens' "Oliver Twist" is nevertheless likable family entertainment. The Dickens tale has been transposed from 19th century

London to contemporary Manhattan, with cats and dogs standing in for the original humans.

The story follows the contours of Dickens. Orphaned kitty Oliver hangs out with a pack of pickpocket dogs led by the human Fagin. When Oliver is taken in by a sweet Fifth Avenue girl, Fagin's boss Sykes seeks revenge, kidnapping Oliver and the girl.

This is Disney's most urban-ethnic animated effort to date. Alas, the computerized drawing lacks the depth of field and handcrafted finesse of classic Disney. It's the characters themselves who will have kids purring with pleasure — especially since the voices are supplied by the likes of Billy Joel, Cheech Marin and Bette Midler. Midler gives her brassy best to the part of a highfalutin poodle, and she warbles the best song, too. **GRADE: ★★★**

New Home Video

WILLOW (PG) RCA/Columbia. \$89.95. This George Lucas/Ron Howard blockbuster received a lot of bad press for borrowing freely from sources ranging from the Bible to "The Hobbit."

Eclectic it most certainly is; needlessly gruesome it sometimes is, too — especially for a PG rating. Yet the movie is not the boring fiasco some have described. It's a moderately entertaining fantasy pastiche, complete with a cute baby orphan prophesied to save his people, an evil sorceress queen (Jean Marsh), her beautiful warrior-princess daughter, a dashing swordsman (Val Kilmer), a community of elves and a fearsome, two-headed dragon. The dwarf characters give the movie a tickling kid's-size charm. Would that the bigger characters had as much appeal. **GRADE: ★★★**

Film grading: ★★★★★ — excellent, ★★★ — good, ★★ — fair, ★ — poor

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PS Home Post Scripts

By Glenda Hughes, Sales Rep. **873-0300**

The holly and the ivy is appearing everywhere and it really is starting "To Feel A Lot Like Christmas!" In the real estate profession, this month is a round of parties, good cheer amongst the agents and offices and most of all a time to be in touch with our past clients. Actually, I am always glad that this month arrives with gusto each year, for it makes me do the little things that I've been meaning to do, over the past 11 months! It means I have a REAL excuse to shop and I can play a kid again without people looking at me really strangely. What fun we can all have in this holiday season - and no one need be exempt.

I'm sure that some of you, who think, that because their home is on the market, they are going to have to be in suspended animation for the next month - but not so. Sure, it is difficult to have people viewing your home, when you want to get out and do other things, rather than think about your home looking perfect, but it is not the end of your seasonal fun! Several of my clients have expressed to me their fears that perhaps there might be a load of washing left out, or worse still, a couple of coffee cups in the sink that have been left out due to a squeeze for time in the morning. Good grief, people are very forgiving you know during this time of year, and you have to "live" - even if your property is on the market. Don't go overboard in trying to do everything - you will only dampen your Christmas spirit - and I sure don't want that to happen. Loosen up, have fun and turn on the Jingle Bell Rock and enjoy. I think I'm going to go around and put bows on my For Sale signs, just to remind my clients that it's a fun time of year - and just to have a good time. January rolls around with amazing speed, and all of a sudden the holidays are gone and I sure don't want my clients telling me that they wish they never had their homes on the market during December.

You can turn negatives into positives you know - just try asking your agent to help you out a little this season - everyone is only too happy to try and comply with different wishes at this time of year - don't hesitate to ask.

Enjoy, Enjoy! As my doctor says, "cook with sherry" and most of all - smile - a new home for Christmas has got to be the nicest gift of all.

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