

Airplane II: continues comic madness and lunacy

Movie review

by Terry Dupuis

What can you say about a movie which cost \$1 million to make and brought in \$150 million in box-office returns? One thing you can safely say is that there is bound to be a sequel to it. The small-budget movie in question, which became such a surprise hit, was *Airplane*, which came out back in the summer of 1980. It was a hilarious laugh riot which mercilessly spoofed the Airport movies, disaster films in general, and for good measure also threw in parodies of films like *Saturday Night Fever* and *From Here To Eternity*.

The inevitable sequel, *Airplane II*, recently hit movie screens, and it has been

doing brisk business, although whether it will come close to matching the success of the first movie remains to be seen. However, it continues the comic madness and lunacy which *Airplane* established, and anyone who enjoyed that first movie should find *Airplane II* to be almost as funny.

This time the action does not take place aboard a 747 plane which is heading for disaster: instead it takes place at a date in the near future aboard a lunar shuttle which is about to embark on its first commercial flight. The idea of placing the passengers on an airline flight to the moon was a clever variation for the plot of

Airplane II.

This device allows the movie not only to continue spoofing airline disaster films of yesteryear but to parody science fiction movies as well. Such films as *2001, A Space Odyssey* and *Battlestar Galactica* are spoofed.

As well, none other than William Shatner, *Star Trek's* Commander Kirk, is present as a guest star in *Airplane II*. There is even a gag at the beginning of the movie about E.T. phoning home.

At least four members of the original *Airplane* cast are back for the sequel: Robert Hays and Julie Hagerty as the hero and heroine; Peter Graves as the plane's

pilot; and Lloyd Bridges as the harried air controller.

Missing from the new screen flight are Robert Stack and Leslie Neilson, but there are some new people aboard *Airplane II*.

Chad Everett plays a suave pilot who is now Hays' rival for Ms. Hagerty; Sonny Bono portrays an eccentric suicidal passenger who is packing a home-made bomb in his luggage; and Chuck Connors portrays an officer from *Mission Control*.

Like its predecessor, *Airplane II* maintains a hectic pace. Some of the jokes are routines which have been reworked from the first movie, but there are quite a few original bits of business as well.

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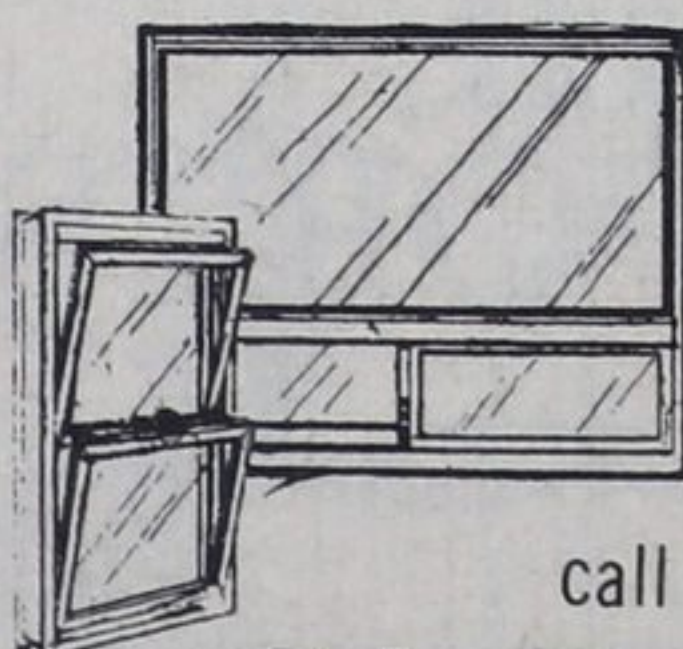
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