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# The Glassy Eye



By  
 Dave  
 Meile

Tonight, 7 p.m. WGN, ch. 2.  


(1982) *Louis Jourdan, Adrienne Barbeau*  
 Those of my acquaintances who are comic-book connoisseurs swear that the DC comic "Swamp Thing" is top-notch. I, of course, am a mature, cultured individual with far loftier pursuits (such as watching bloodthirsty-giant-rabbit movies) than indulging in such childish whims as comic-book reading, so this movie has yet to do much for me.

Our hero, the scientist, has some formula that will save the world. The villain arrives with armed swamp thugs and tries to steal the mystical elixir. Some of the goo spills on our hero, and he becomes a hideous rubber-suited guy with a conscience. He slogs through the bogs, pining away for his true love and upending villainous motorboats. Harmless fun that is neither camp nor frightening. By Wes Craven, director of the notorious "Last House on the Left" and "Nightmare on Elm Street."

**Thursday, 3 p.m. WGN, ch. 2.**  
*"The Lost Weekend" (1947)*  
**Ray Milland, Jane Wyman**

This is the greatest alcoholism movie ever made. Despite the implausible, wimp-out ending, it is alternately harrowing, melodramatic and funny in a sadistic sort of way. Glassy Eye Hall of Fame award to Frank Faylen for his work as Bim, the night orderly in the psych wing of New York's Bellevue State Hospital. Bim prepares Ray Milland for his impending delirium tremens: "That stuff about pink elephants... that's the bunk. It's little animals... little funny animals. Little rabbits. Tiny turkeys in straw hats coming through the keyholes." Ray is understandably upset.

**Friday, 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. USA, ch. 17**

*"Shame" (1961)* **William Shatner. Directed by Roger Corman**

Roger Corman is probably the most famous B-film director of the '50s and '60s, and his influence on the film industry is staggering. While many remember his clever low-budget horror flicks, "Shame" is for my money one of his most important films and easily his most socially conscious.

William Shatner stars as a slimy racist who invades a sleepy southern town and, through numerous inflammatory speeches, incites the townspeople to engage in racial hatred and violence. Dependable character actor Frank Lovejoy is the newspaper publisher who tries to discredit Shatner and is severely beaten. Later Shatner blackmails the publisher's daughter into fabricating a story about being raped by a black youth at the town's newly integrated high school. The youth is nearly lynched before Shatner's plans are uncovered.

Filmed in three weeks for \$90,000 in Charleston, Mo., with real townspeople giving the film a frightening authenticity absent from many of Hollywood's "race" pictures. The subject of integration was far too volatile in 1961, and few folks went to see this film. Corman was terribly disappointed and went back to making more lucrative horror and drive-in films.

While Corman is sometimes wildly overpraised, this is a film for which he deserves a great deal of credit.

**Saturday, 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. USA, ch. 17**

*"Assassin of Youth" (1937)*  
**Luana Walters**

Little information exists about the scores of drug-and-sex-exploitation flicks from the '30s and '40s. All claimed to be "sizzling exposes" or a film that "dared to tell the truth!" Some were shown at sleazy theaters in major cities; others were shown in small town bars and libraries in the name of education. Usually a kid smokes some of the pernicious weed, has sex, lies to his

parents, kills his parents with a frying pan and is sent to prison, where he goes violently insane. If "Assassin of Youth" is anything like "Reefer Madness" "Marijuana, Weed with Roots in Hell" or "She Shoulda Said No," it will be fantastic. I recommend it.

**Sunday, noon. WGN, ch. 2**

*"Dangerous Money" (1946)*  
**Sidney Toler, Victor Sen Yung**  
 Sidney Toler (born in Missouri) squints his eyes and pretends he's Chinese in one of the last Charlie Chan films. Victor Sen Yung, star of "She Demons" and originator of the immortal Hop Sing character on "Bonanza" provides comedy relief. It's considered one of the worst Chan films.

**Sunday, 3 a.m. WGN, ch. 2.**  
*"Paris Playboys" (1954)*  
**Leo Gorcey, Huntz Hall**

No, of course they aren't actually filmed in Paris. The budgets for Bowery Boys flicks could barely pay for a tumbler of cappuccino, so occasionally dem boys probably walk in front of a grainy film of the Eiffel Tower. Huntz is mistaken for a French scientist who discovers fuel made from sour cream. Sort of a '50s equivalent of the "Gilligan's Island" episode where Gilligan discovers a super-duper glue. It's at least as moronic. Somewhere in some rundown theaters in the Bowery, people must have laughed because they made about 60 of these films. Directed by William "One Shot" Beaudine, who made films faster than my mom knits sweaters.

Next week: *"The Corpse Grinders," "The Thing that Wouldn't Die"* and a Tor Johnson cameo.

**Other stuff:**  
*"Rosemary's Baby" (1968)*  
**Friday, 11:30 p.m., ch. 2**  
*"Angels with Dirty Faces" (1937)* **Friday, 1 a.m., ch. 6.**  
*"Flight to Mars" (1951)* **Friday, 2 a.m., ch. 15.**  
*"The Invisible Ghost" (1941)*  
**Sat., 1 a.m., ch. 17.**

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