

A moral fable for all, not Monty but still great

by Ken Burke

No doubt the first thing most people have heard about **Time Bandits** was the list of names associated with it - in particular John Cleese and Michael Palin as actors, and Monty Python animator Terry Gilliam as director. God knows, that was more than enough to have me expecting a new Python-ish romp, and the publicity for the movie did nothing to dispell that idea. Well, **Time Bandits** is not Monty Python. What it actually is isn't easy to explain. It's a moral fable dealing with the attractions of evil, bringing a boy named Kevin and six time-travelling dwarves into conflict with Napoleon, Robin Hood, Agememnon, and others, including a magnificently evil genius in the most malevolent castle I've seen in eons. It's also the most twisted "Children's Movie" you'll ever see.

"The Wizard of Oz of the 80's", trumpets one ad, and that's both accurate and hopelessly misleading. OZ was all sweetness and light, 'cept for a certain western drip of a witch; **Time Bandits** focuses intensely and darkly on the evil side, even in the jokes and seemingly throw-away scenes. But that doesn't stop the movie from being FUN, it just throws the audience off center until they can realize what's going on and appreciate the uniqueness.

What the casual movie-goer may not realize is how clever the film atually is. Gilliam and Palin (co-authors of the script) have subtly snuck a brilliant allegorical framework - a la THE FAERIE QUEENE - into what at first glance seems a piece of fluff (albeit gruesome fluff). More than that I won't say, except that the totally unified structure of the film can only be seen at the end, and even then nothing is spelled out. Gilliam

knows that half the fun of a symbolic tale is figuring out who represented what, why this person did that, and what it all really means anyway. Believe me, it all works out magically.

Because of this, **TIME BANDITS** is actually a serious movie, with the jokes serving to keep things moving along. Initially, they don't do too well at that - the visit with Napoleon wasn't funny at all - but eventually, with John Cleese helping immeasurably as a Robin Hood who actually is a hood, the movie picked up the energy it needed. It was apparent in the film when Palin was writing and when Gilliam took control of the script by the style of the situation, and Palin's Python-ish vignettes came second to Gilliam's perversely morbid imagination almost every time.

If you think you know what a 'perversely morbid imagination' really is, then be prepared - this film is truly state-of-the-art. Gilliam crowds the screen with grunginess and grotesqueries to the over-flow point at times, although he is careful to use this to interest and amuse, not sicken. Arms are snapped off, knights are shish-kebaped, and more people are blown up than you could shake a stick at. Of course, the movie being rated G, this isn't shown graphically, but imagination fills in the rest (at least on scene involving a rat I could definitely have done without).

Gilliam's imagination can't take full credit for the movie's imagery, however. The movie owes a heavy debt to messrs. Fellini and Pasolini in the images conjured up in several scenes. At least twice the movie copied (not adapted, COPIED) Fellini's SATYRICON virtually shot-for-shot. That didn't ruin anything for me, but it sure as hell made me uneasy - couldn't

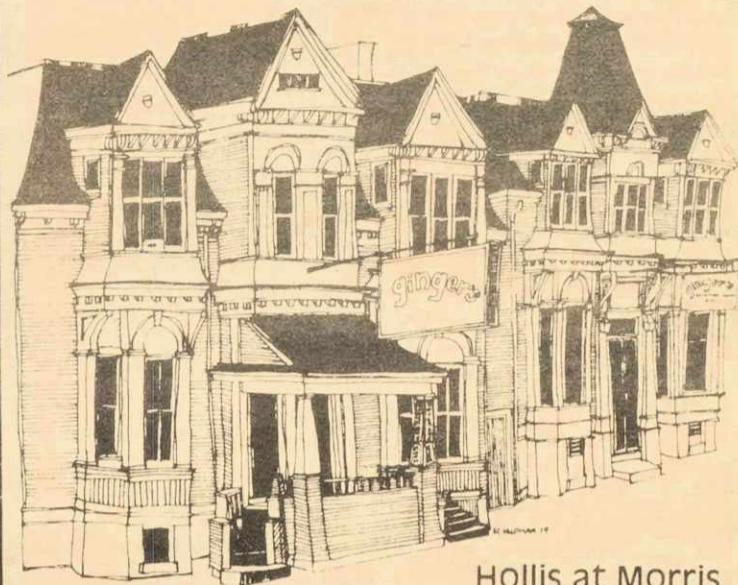
he have done it even a little differently? It's true that Satyricon (playing Dec. 5th at the Cohn) is a virtual treasure-house of the weird and grotesque, and perhaps Gilliam wanted to show off his film knowledge, but direct steals hardly ever impress.

It is when Gilliam sticks to his own weird skull that the film works best. Gilliam takes the obvious, but often over-looked view, that evil is simply much more interesting than good, and proceeds to demonstrate this in his own fascination with the dark side. Evil becomes progressively more powerful during the film as the characters fall under its influence, and, by having evil represented by David Warner at his most self-confidently menacing, the film achieves its purpose of both showing the dual menace and seductive nature of evil. To further this effect, the supreme being of good is played by Ralph Richardson as a rather supercilious Banker-type who made the boy sign for something he happened to break in the adventure. The choice isn't easy, but Gilliam doesn't do anything as nicely asinine as having the child hero reject evil to be pure, and watch the Sound of Music ten times running; he says instead that there's nothing wrong with being fascinated by evil - just don't fall under its influence, that's all.

The last half-hour is pure unforgettable movie fantasy material when Kevin and the dwarves hit the castle of ultimate evil. Gilliam pulled out all the stops in creating a truly neat-o ending to a unique and rewarding film, and if you don't mind being told a "Children's Story" like you've never heard or seen before, **TIME BANDITS** is a good way to begin an early second childhood in style.

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Just 'For the health of it'

by Leonard Currie

The second annual Health Professions variety show "For the Health of It" was presented Nov. 14, 1981 at the Queen Elizabeth High School. Skits were entered by the Student Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (SAHPER), Physiotherapy, Nursing and Pharmacy students with fillers of song and dance provided by Physiotherapy, Dental Hygiene, Pharmacy, SAHPER and the Tupper Chorale.

The School of Physiotherapy won the competition for the best skit for the second consecutive year.

It was a full-house event, attended by students, friends, alumni and faculty members of the Health Professional Schools.

The entertaining hosts for the evening were Glenn Levy and Sandra Grant, two Pharmacy students.

Pharmacy opened the show with an ear-piercing rendition of the Currie (SAHPER) and Roy Dob-play "Sorry, Wrong Number". The son (Pharmacy) have every right

to feel proud of their efforts. As Tupper Chorale performed excerpts from the musical "Oklahoma". Physiotherapy entered a take-off on the Academy Awards entitled "The Scrimshaw Awards", which featured excerpts from "Airport", "StarBoars", "Dolly Pom Pom" and other hits.

SAHPER provided the audience with an intimate view of "General Hospital" starring Dr. Pepper and Knickerbocker. The School of Nursing described "Nursing through the ages" from cave nurses to those in the modern era with a finale featuring Chuck Baker as "The Boy from New York City".

Musical interludes from the talented Randy Hachey (Pharmacy) and Brian Tomie (Physiotherapy) closed the evening on an exciting note.

The producers of the show, Beth Covert (Physiotherapy), Chuck Baker (Nursing), Leonard

to feel proud of their efforts. As "For the Health of It" 81, it is recorded as a great success, and as one of the audience stated, "a thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining evening". We are already looking forward to "For the Health of It" 82 - so let's hear it one more time just "For the Health of It!"

