

# Arts cont'd

## ONE SHELL OF A HIT

"THIS ONE REALLY RIPS DUDE"

by Pro Create

In 1984, two young men created a quartet of amphibious destruction called *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (TMNT). In 1990, six years later, Golden Harvest releases the movie. I can hear the cries of outrage. "Not another comic book movie!"

It isn't really. The original TMNT comic was a parody of other comic books, and of mainstream culture in general (thus the fascination with pizza). Much of the original biting satire is missing from the movie, but the ghost remains helping to make an enjoyable movie.

The press kit says that the movie is for adults, not just kids. Actually, the movie is caught in between a desire to be mature, and a need to appeal to the younger folk. The result is a movie that can be enjoyed by adults while they worry about



what their kids (cousins, little siblings etc.) are seeing. As the little girl in front of me said, "Raphael sure says 'damn' a lot."

If you're not thrown into a panic at Turtles influencing kids by saying damn, then how about good guy Casey Jones (Elias Koteas) who goes after crooks

using sports equipment. Bashing somebody with a hockey stick doesn't bother me, or most kids, they see it all the time in the NHL. But, the baseball bat with the accompanying 'thud' made me flinch.

If Bobby Herbeck (writer) and Steve Barron (director) truly

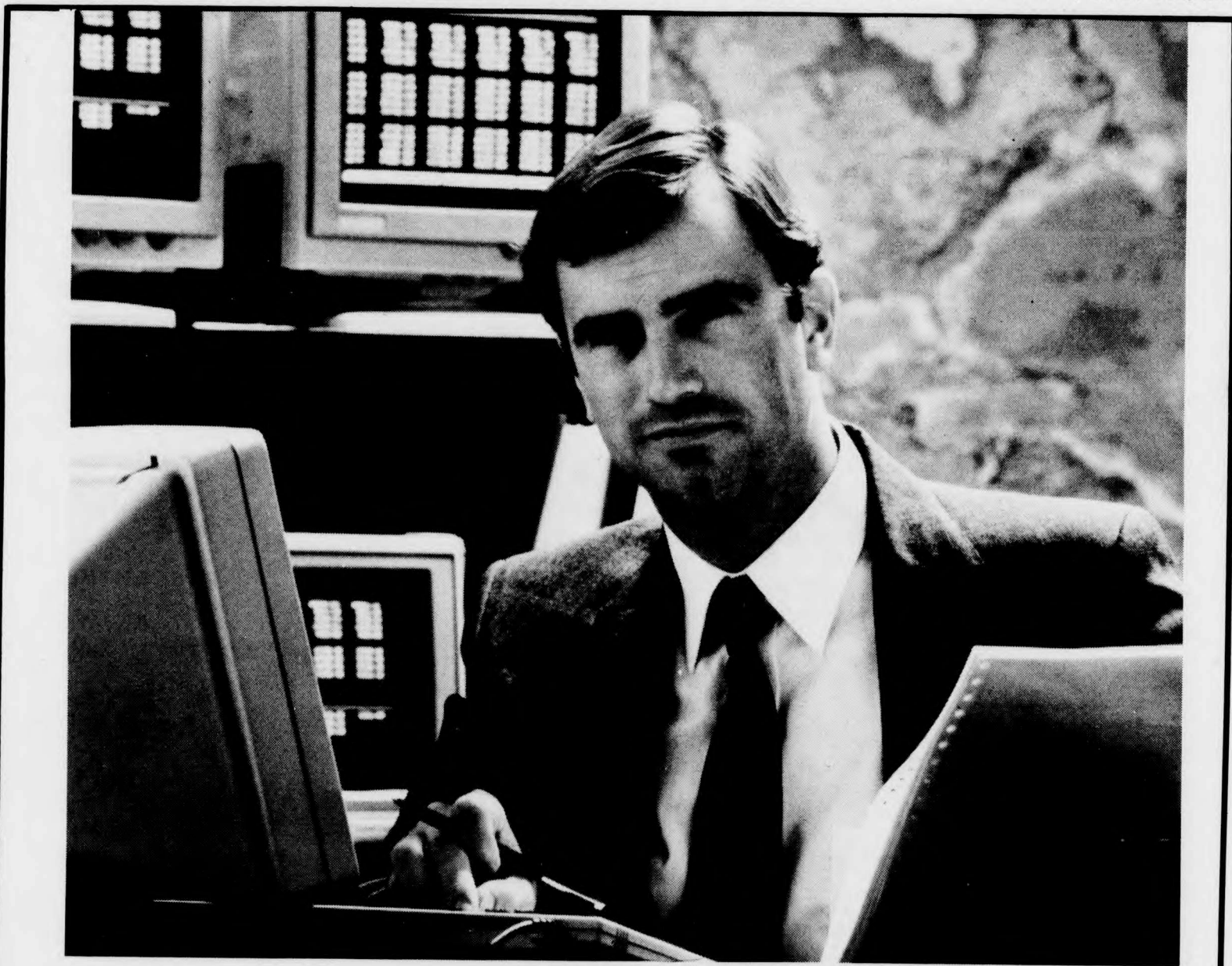
wanted to make an adult movie, then they should have concentrated more on the sub-plots. Two examples: the first is the "romance" between April O'Neil (Judith Hoag) and Casey. In the beginning, there is an awful lot of animosity between them, and then when they leave the city with

the turtles, the most intimacy that they express is having a civil conversation. That's it until the end of the movie, when they kiss through five minutes of credits. The relationship evolved very abruptly, with no subtlety. Subtlety in a movie about turtles and Ninja's? Obviously not.

My second example is when the turtles have been defeated, separated from their master, Master Splinter, and have left the city. Master Splinter psychically teaches the turtles that the most important tool of the Ninja is the mind, not the body. There isn't a notable increase of mindpower by the turtles in the rest of the movie.

Other than those two minor complaints, the rest of the movie is a wonderful visual experience. Jim Henson's animatronics have grown from making a frog ride a bike to this: quite an accomplishment. The motions of all the turtles are fluid and believable, so much so, that after the first five minutes you forget that you're watching a special effect.

So, suspend your firm grip of reality, sit back with your popcorn and enjoy what is sure to be "a shell of a hit." movie



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