

Leviathan just too derivative

Leviathan ★ Famous Players Capitol Square

review by Paul Sparrow-Clarke

Well, it's Creature Feature time again. Two crew members of Shack 7, a high-tech mining facility that sits 10,000 feet beneath the ocean, come across an old sunken wreck while drilling for silver ore. Clad in bulky diving suits, they

Does this sound familiar? Did you see *Alien*?

enter a derelict Russian ship and come out with an old safe. The name on the broken bow of the ship is "Leviathan." Returning to Shack 7, which is home to eight people nearing the end of their months-long shift, the rusted safe is opened, revealing some old files, a videotaped captain's log and an old bottle of vodka. It turns out that the vodka is contaminated with a strange germ that, once loose, mutates its victim into a strange thing that



Amanda Pays, Ernie Hudson and Peter Weller fight to stay above water in *Leviathan*, a horribly derivative flick that has few redeeming qualities.

is part fish, part man. When this thing inevitably gets loose in the brooding confines of Shack 7, it stalks the crew members indiscriminately, dropping out of high places, springing up from beneath the floor, etc. Does any of this sound familiar? Did you see *Alien*? *Aliens*? *The Thing*?

Leviathan is such an incredible rip-off that it is worth examining in detail for a moment exactly what features of the film are derivative. First, there is of course the basic plot structure, which I have outlined above. In both *Alien* and *Leviathan* the

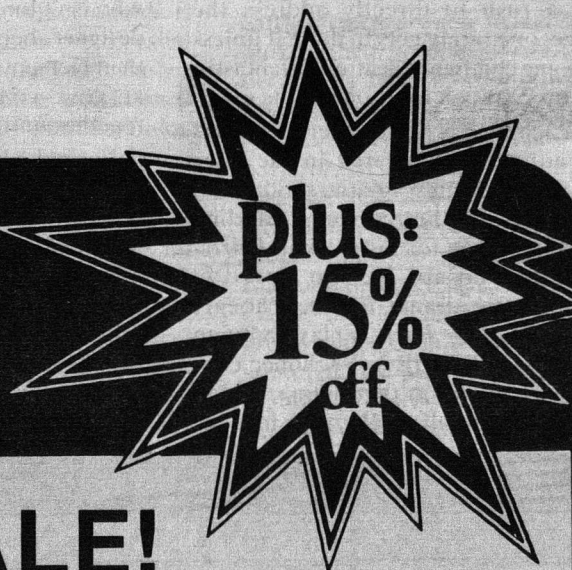
creature is brought back from a derelict wreck, be it ship or spacecraft. In both cases the creature is not in the form that will eventually threaten the crew: here it is a virus, in *Alien* it was a parasite attached to a crew-member's face. Then there is the setting, an isolated community in space (*Alien*) vs. one underwater. Both are hostile environments in which the wearing of some kind of suit is necessary. Now to get down to smaller details.

Above the surface of the water there is the representative of the Company, who

doesn't really give a damn about the employees trapped in Shack 7 — they are not people but merely expendable assets (*Alien*/*Aliens*). The sets representing the interior of Shack 7 look very much like the interior of the *Nostromo* in *Alien*. The spectacular mutations of the people who are first infected by the germ look very much like similar scenes in John Carpenter's *The Thing*. There are cheap scares where what appears to be the creature

LEVIATHAN — p 10

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