Kong goes wrong

By Stephen B. Wilk

Hey, what's this Denham fellow got, anyway?

It's better be good after all this hubbub. — two men outside 'Kong' exhibition, King Kong (1933)

Dino de Laurentiis' remake of the classic King Kong is without a doubt, one of the most widely publicized motion pictures ever released.

Purposes of publicity have played up the big ape in a style that Carl Denham would have be proud of — King Kong's picture has been placed on posters, cups, T-shirts and iron-ons, inside comic books, and featured in tv and radio accounts and video cassettes. With this much coverage, several people will go, if only to see what all the holler is about.

My first impression of the film is disappointment that an animated Kong was used in this production. Much of the charm of the original Kong lay in the way he moved, his personality, his sound and his choreographed fight scenes brought to life.

The new Kong, on the other hand, is played by an actor in an ape suit, and this fact is immediately obvious. The special effects are limited to matting (superimposing) shots of the suited ape into scenes so that he appears to be running.

All of Kong's fights have been cut, with the exception of a brief wrestling match with a snake; it looks like an ape trying to tie himself up in a garden hose. Moreover, the much-touted forty foot movie monster only appears on screens for barely a second.

The plot is essentially the same as the 1933 version, but has been altered somewhat to be 'relevant.' This arrogant, yet lovable movie producer Carl Denham has been replaced by grabby, tactless Fred Wilson (Charles Grodin), an official for Petrox Oil.

Wilson plans to exploit Kong's island for its petroleum and use Kong in a Petrox promotion. (Let Petrox put an ape in your ads!) Opposing this ecological rapist is our Hero, Jack Prescott (Jeff Bridges), a young paleontologist from Princeton.

He is a man burdened with a heavy social conscience, and tries to make Wilson look bad every chance he gets.

Prescott also provides the romantic interest for Dwan (Jessica Lange), the new Fay Wray. Differences between Dwan and Wray are most characterized by Dwan's perfection of the ape and his choreographed fight scenes.

The group hits a peak with the popular single "Train Kept A-Rollin' All Night Long," and then left the stage to thunderous applause. Since only an hour had passed, it was generally assumed that this was an intermission of sorts. Aeromith had been playing hard, but 90% of the audience was known to play about two-hour sets.

They soon returned, and went into the title cut from Toys in the Attic. However, it seemed strangely lackluster compared to the band's earlier pyrotechnics.

After taking it through the motions, they left again. This time they did not return.

The house lights went on, and with the realization that the concert had lasted barely 70 minutes came the shock that Aeromith hadn't even played "Dream On," their all-time most popular song, and certainly their most well-known.

Aeromith fans had waited over two months for this concert. They bravely long ticket lines, the stifling air of the Boston Garden, and rough, brutal treatment at the hands of the police, along with endless searches for contraband.

I think we deserved something better. One may not, perhaps, blame the Boston Garden for canceling the original concert, or the Boston Police Department for being anxious to prevent a recurrence of violence.

I cannot, however, justify the treatment accorded by Aeromith to their most loyal fans anywhere. For with success, musical or financial, must come the maturity necessary to be true professionals.

They didn't keep a-rollin' all night long

By David B. Koretz

Aerosmith, the area's favorite punk rockers, came back to the Hub on Dec. 16 to heaven the Boston Garden with their hard, heavy metal sound. However, for the many of the sellout crowd of over 17,000, mostly teenagers, the evening fell short of perfection.

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