

# THIS WEEK'S MOVIES



BY JUDITH CRIST

## BROADCAST:

Sun., ABC **The White Lions**  
 Sun., ABC **Stir Crazy**  
 Mon., NBC **Sessions**  
 Tues., CBS **The Idolmaker**  
 Wed., CBS **Two Kinds of Love**  
 Wed., PBS **Little People**

Thurs., ABC  
 Fri., CBS

**Summer of Innocence**  
**Tarzan, the Ape Man**

## ON CABLE:

HBO  
 SHO  
 MAX, SHO

**Blackout**  
**Murder in Space**  
**Revenge of the Nerds**

This is one of those clean-out-the-cupboards midsummer network-movie weeks, with an occasional rewarding leftover to be found.

One reward is the premiere of 1980's **The Idolmaker**, a frank and feisty film about the making of teen-age rock stars in the late '50s and early '60s. Written by Edward Di Lorenzo, with the directorial debut of Taylor Hackford (who went on to "An Officer and a Gentleman"), the movie is marked by a knockout performance by Ray Sharkey as an impresario who turns two nobodies into idols. Those in the know may see shades of Frankie Avalon and Fabian in his creations, those out of the know will find some zesty insights and all can revel in Sharkey's performance.

A second newcomer, 1979's **The White Lions**, based by Corey Blechman and Peter Dixon on Chris McBride's "The White Lions of Timbavati," never made it to American theaters but did make it to cable TV. It's a family-oriented wildlife story with Michael York, as the real-life naturalist Chris McBride, returning to an African wildlife preserve with his wife and young daughter. Their settling down to life in Africa and their caring for two orphaned white lion cubs provide the major story.

The third theatrical premiere is of John Milius's 1978 **Summer of Innocence**, whose only virtue is that, seasonally, it involves three surfers and therefore some cooling surfing scenes. The movie, filled with pretentious pseudo-philosophizing, traces the "growing up" of Jan-Michael

Vincent, Gary Busey and William Katt. It was a tedious and humorless 125 minutes in theaters (where it was called "Big Wednesday"), but is down to about 94 for telecasting. All to the good.

Top of the theatrical repeats is of 1982's **Little People**, a fascinating documentary about dwarfs by Jan Krawitz and Thomas Qtt. Centering on a convention of the Little People of America, whose members are all under 4 feet 10 inches tall, the film deals with their problems in an out-of-scale world on both personal and social levels. Laced with sophisticated humor, it is both a touching and illuminating work. PBS again is showing a 57-minute version of the 88-minute film.

1980's **Stir Crazy**, the prison comedy co-starring Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder as innocents incarcerated that grossed more than \$100,000,000 in its first year, is on its third run. Further, it has inspired a fall series on CBS, with Larry Riley and Joseph Guzaldo, respectively, in the Pryor and Wilder roles. Star charisma is what gives comedic life to the movie, which is strictly for Wilder and Pryor fans. For fans of Bo Derek in various stages of undress, or simply of dopey, dull movies, there's the second run of John Derek's 1981 **Tarzan, the Ape Man**, an alleged remake of the 1932 movie. Tarzan shows up midway through the movie and gets to yodel offscreen.

Two 1983 TV-movies are on their second go-rounds. A film as elegant as its

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