

then the story only simmers; it never boils.

If you really want a dose of Tennessee Williams this weekend, my advice is to rent the original on videocassette.

Out of this world

Although most critics and science-fiction fans were disappointed with the first season of "War of the Worlds," the series was renewed.

"We're coming back with 22 episodes and a new look," says series star Jared Martin. "We had a lot of trouble focusing the stories. There was too many ties to the original movie, and that didn't work."

So when "War of the Worlds" returns with new episodes at 6 p.m. Sunday on WTOG, Channel 44, there will be numerous changes.

During the first season, Martin played Dr. Harrison Blackwood, a scientist who was part of a team that was trying to stop aliens from gaining a foothold on Earth.

These slimy, buglike creatures were a part of an original invasion back in the 1950s. Some of them had been in suspended animation and were awakened by exposure to radiation.

In the second-season opener, a second wave of aliens arrives and wipes out the old aliens. The new aliens will look like humans, therefore saving the producers tons of money that would have been

spent on makeup.

The new invaders are from the planet Morthrai. The planet's sun blows up, and these cold-blooded creatures come down to Earth with an instant cloning machine which allows them to duplicate any human. They begin to infiltrate all levels of society.



Martin

Heck, they probably even get Dan Quayle.

Anyway, Blackwood and his team, which now consists of Dr. Susanne McCullough (Lynda Mason Green), combat-ready John Kincaid (Adrian Paul) and 13-year-old Debi McCullough (Rachel Blanchard) are out to stop the invaders.

"There'll be more action for my character," Martin said. "And the villains will be more clearly defined."

'Night Walk'

The competition against "Sweet Bird of Youth" includes "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" on ABC and "Night Walk" on CBS.

"Night Walk" is routine woman-in-peril drama in which Lesley-Anne Down

plays a woman being chased by ruthless hit men.

It combines violence — she is tracked down after witnessing a murder on a remote stretch of beach; and romance — the case is handled by pretty boy Robert Urich.

There's nothing too complicated here, but Urich and Down are pleasant enough actors to spend an evening with. Urich's own 10-year-old son, Ryan, makes his acting debut in this new made-for-TV movie.

Odds and Ends

The Showtime cable service will offer "Elaine Bosler: Top Tomata" live from Omaha, Neb., on Wednesday night. She says it's coming from Nebraska because she wants to show that what's funny in New York and Los Angeles is just as funny in the Midwest.

The Arts&Entertainment Channel will offer numerous specials on China this month. Calling it the "Red Dynasty" series, A&E will start off with "Sons of the Revolution," which examines how the country turned Communist following World War II. It airs at 9 p.m. Monday.

At 8 p.m. Friday, A&E will air "One Village in China" which traces the cultural history of the way Chinese women are treated.

Walt Belcher also writes about television and related topics for the Tribune's BayLife section.