



'WAR OF THE WORLDS':

A LEGENDARY TALE BRIDGING TWO CENTURIES

One of our best-loved science fiction tales was born in the Victorian Age when H.G. Wells's now-classic novel "War of the Worlds" was published. Nearly one hundred years later, the story that shocked the world is brought into the Space Age with the October 1988 premiere of WAR OF THE WORLDS, the hour-long science-fiction/adventure series distributed by Paramount Domestic Television.

Serialized in 1897 and published in 1898, H.G. Wells's novel was hailed as a brilliant work of fantasy and spawned a fascination with outer space and science fiction that continues today. The success that "War of the Worlds" has found in literature, radio, film and now television is a tribute not only to its ageless story but to our own profound fear of the hostile unknown.

Hollywood's involvement in the "War of the Worlds" saga began in 1925, when Paramount film director Cecil B. De Mille purchased

(more...)



PAGE TWO

the film rights to the story. Over the span of nearly 30 years, the script passed through the hands of some of the most legendary names in film history -- De Mille, Sergei Eisenstein, Ivor Montagu, Jesse Lasky, even Alfred Hitchcock. Finally, it reached producer George Pal, who was to make "War of the Worlds" one of the most revered science fiction films of all time.

But long before it enthralled movie audiences, "War of the Worlds" panicked an entire nation when Orson Welles and his cast of radio performers presented their version of the story on Halloween Eve, 1938. Written by Howard Koch and told as a series of news bulletins reporting on a Martian invasion in the sleepy town of Grovers Mill, New Jersey, the radiocast was so terrifying and realistic that it sent thousands of Americans into a collective state of hysteria. Ignoring numerous on-air announcements that this was a fictional radio play, frightened Americans grabbed their children, dashed into their cars and headed for the hills to escape the imminent alien onslaught.

Fifteen years later, and more than a half-century after the novel's publication, producer George Pal brought "War of the Worlds" to the screen for \$2 million -- \$1.3 million of which went to special effects. Directed by Byron Haskin from a screenplay by Barre Lyndon, "War of the Worlds" was a solid box office hit and won the 1953 Academy Award for Gordon Jennings's stunning special

(more...)

PAGE THREE

effects. Starring Gene Barry as Dr. Clayton Forrester and Ann Robinson as Sylvia Van Buren, this classic film still stands as an extraordinary cinematic achievement.

The television series, which will debut with a two-hour premiere episode, picks up the story 35 years later, in 1988. Harrison Blackwood, adopted as a child by Dr. Forrester after his parents were killed by the aliens, has grown to be a gifted astrophysicist. When it is discovered that the aliens have "resurrected" themselves and resumed their deadly mission, Dr. Blackwood becomes one of the few people in the world who knows the truth. It is now left to him and his team to devise a means of destroying the aliens before the aliens can wipe out mankind.

WAR OF THE WORLDS is produced by Triumph Entertainment Corporation of Canada in association with Ten-Four Productions and is distributed by Paramount Domestic Television.

#

PRESS CONTACTS:

Amy Bertram
Director, Publicity
PARAMOUNT DOMESTIC
TELEVISION
(213) 468-5995

Maggie Begley
MAHONEY/WASSERMAN
PUBLIC RELATIONS
(213) 550-3922