

TV GUIDE April 16-22

Videolog

At Least There's No Commercials

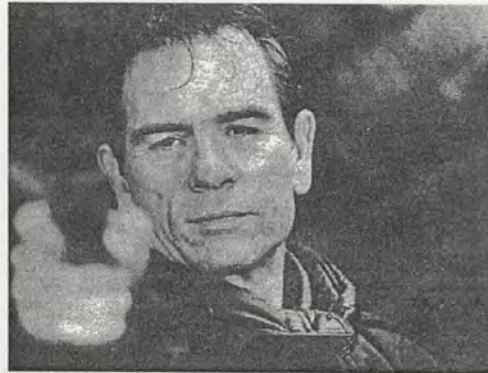
It's no secret that Hollywood has been scraping the barrel for ideas to put on film lately (uh, maybe a little longer). One recent trend is to take old TV series and remake them as widescreen spectacles, figuring that big budgets and expensive casts will translate 60s-era ratings into 90s box-office success. Hence, *Addams Family* (and *Addams Family 2*), *Dragnet: The Movie*, *Twilight Zone: Movie*, *The Beverly Hillsbillies*, and this week's *Videolog* selection, *The Fugitive*. Overall, this Andrew Davis action thriller is better than most TV reruns, even rivalling some of the original's plodding pace. Of course, David Janssen and Barry Morse do fill up four years of programming with a manhunt, whereas *The Fugitive '93* only does so in two hours. So things move a little faster. To recount the plot for those of you who don't grow up with the series (or its reruns after late-night news), the story involves one Dr. Kimble (Harrison Ford in a ridiculous

beard), who is railroaded for the murder of his wife. Only Kimble insists he didn't kill her; a "one-armed man" framed him.

An implausible twist of fate—a truly spectacular train wreck—busts Kimble from his bus on the way to prison, initiating a massive police chase headed by US Marshal Sam Gerard (Tommy Lee Jones). A well-paced game of cat and mouse, solid suspense, and good stunts ensue as Kimble roams Chicago, evading the cops and trying to prove his innocence.

All but two things work in this taut story: the script and Ford. Both are awkward, shallow and unoriginal. Which leaves most of the work to Jones and the stunt team—fortunately, they're up to the task. *The Fugitive* works best during its pulse-pounding action scenes, when all Ford has to do is look scared and run. Jones' obsessive Gerard is a character just begging for more development, more motivation. He's essentially Javert from *Les Misérables*: an uncompromising cop so determined to get his man that he doesn't even care about whether his man might just be innocent.

Maddeningly, we never get very deep under Gerard's skin, but it's a credit to Jones' skill that



even with such a thin role he managed a Best Supporting Actor Oscar. Davis (whose past credits include *Under Siege* with Steven Seagal) competently guides the picture, but a film needs more than just good action choreography to carry it.

Still, we need not wait too long for more Hollywood stabs at TV classics, and maybe those will be better. Coming soon: *The Flintstones*, *Cop Rock: The Movie* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Don't hold your breath.

While you're waiting, you can check out our sleeper of the week, Abel Ferrara's urban morality tale *King of New York*. This 1990 predecessor to his grittier *The Bad Lieutenant* has Christopher Walken being his usual deranged self as a gangster determined to take over New York's drug trade and improve the city's services for the disadvantaged.

Surprisingly polished and elegantly photographed, the film suffers from too many compelling characters and too little screen time. Still, Larry... ooops, sorry, *Laurence Fishburne* is good as Walken's crazed cronie and Wesley Snipes is equally strong as a vigilante cop. A disturbing portrait of a mad city well on its way to Hell—one that could apply all too easily to our own fair jewel of a town.

These and other recent releases are available for rental at Garden Ring Supermarket (209-1572) and at Videoforce in the Mehdunarodnaya Hotel (253-7708), as well as other local video outlets. Call for availability.

—Compiled by Jose Alaniz

There's No Business Like TV Show Business

Long rumours persist about a new entertainment channel, 51, due to begin this spring. With this in mind, established local music programmes are trying to get considerable headway—and it's showing.



TV Music

Programma A has just received a "fresh blood injection" with Joanna Stingray's *Red Wave* western rock profile series. The "A" crew filmed *Blues Mobile* at their Shabolovka studio and released a couple of songs last Saturday. A full release is promised soon.

The abridged airing of *Blues Mobile* did little credit to the group's live sound and impressive range of repertoire. Suffice to say that when recording at Shabolovka, the Georgians presented their best form yet—getting indecently sumptuous on *Mustang Sally* and forging a 7-minute guitar solo with no trace of repetition on *New Day Yesterday*. The complete one-hour show was filmed in a single take. In fact, as a regular admitted, he could hardly recollect another such case in which all the building's personnel, including a charwoman, assembled quietly at the doorway to listen.

ing the Southern Confederate flag while Kakuruzza performed the black anthem *Got My Mojo Workin'*. A good time party or a sly dig? Get your answers tonight. *Programma A* dares to run the footage, that is.

Fresh Jam

Jam, another big music programme (Channel One), is just back from the Frankfurt trade fair festival with fresh material. *Jam*'s next shows, on April 27 and May 4, will feature an exclusive interview with Jeff Healey, the acclaimed blind blues guitarist. Footage taken from Healey's appearance at Canada's recent Q Festival was provided courtesy of A&T Trade. Also, Larry Corriel has contributed a special "fusion" piece for the *Jam* airing. And Russian techno-flash guitarist May Lean will speak about his success in the West—no small achievement for the guy.