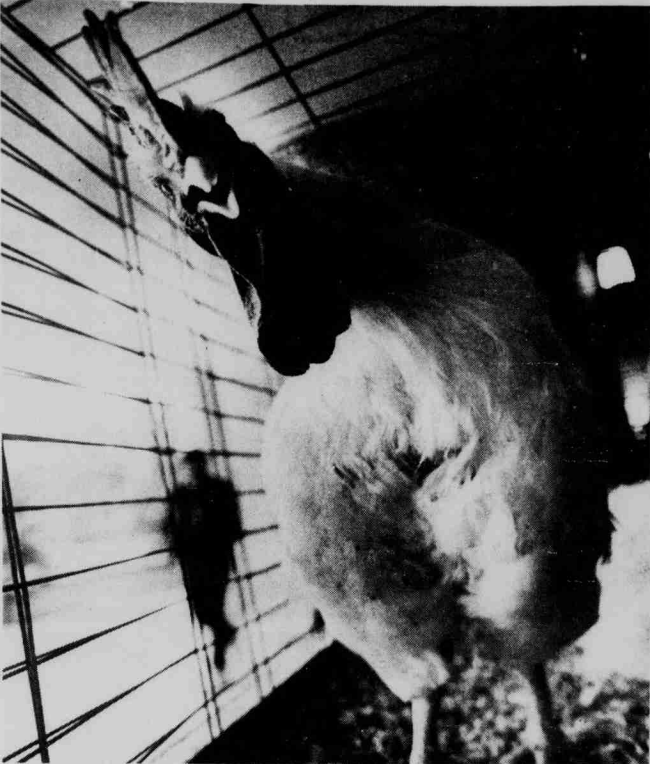


Features

Chicken McWhat?



The Ag Awareness Fair under Harrelson Hall brought out Bill Hewat's display for poultry science including this savory broiler breeder, Oh Dinah!

Staff photo by Mark Inman

Weird worlds showing up

By Jeff Lundrigan
Staff Writer

Weird stuff coming down the tubes man, really weird...

The creation of entire alternate worlds is a difficult, demanding task attempted by few filmmakers, few of which succeed. Tonight in the Ballroom two successful examples, *Wizards* and *The Dark Crystal*, will be shown.

Wizards, an animated feature shown at 7 and 11 p.m., takes place somewhere in the far future, long after nuclear holocaust has wiped mankind from the face of the Earth. In his absence the elves, fairies and other such creatures have come out of hiding.

Into this world is born Avatar and his brother, Blackwolf, both wizards of great power. The evil Blackwolf sets out to systematically rediscover the technologies of war and conquer the Earth.

This film could come from no other than Ralph Bakshi, who in 1972 broke the animation barrier and produced the first full length animated film for adults, the X-rated *Fritz the Cat*. *Wizards* is his best film to date and has rightly gained an enormous cult following.

Utilizing a technique known as rotoscoping, where conventionally filmed images are traced over frame by frame, then embellished to produce the final "cartoon," Bakshi turns old WWII stock footage into nightmarish scenes of mutant demon armies marching to slaughter.

At 9 p.m. Jim Henson's *The Dark Crystal* will be shown.

In a distant place in another time, an ancient, magical race called the Urseks shattered a crystal that held their power and splintered themselves into two separate races, the benign Mystics and the evil Skeksis.

According to prophecy, the crystal, now dark and radiating

FLICKS

evil, can only be made whole by one of the Gelfings, an elfin race the Skeksis have since tried to exterminate. They pretty much succeed, but miss two, a boy and a girl, whose quest it becomes to fulfill the prophecy.

Jim Henson, along with Gary Kurtz, set out to create a world unlike anything ever before captured on film.

This place is weird and has a strange twisted continuity to it.

It's populated by animals and plants that move around and get their food in some of the strangest ways imaginable.

Watch out for a marvelously repulsive scene where the Skeksis eat dinner, without apparently caring whether what they are eating is dead or not.

Monday night at 8 the Erdahl-Cloyd theatre will present Dan O'Bannon and John Carpenter's *Dark Star*.

Far in the future, three astronauts travel to the reaches of deep space on a mission to destroy unstable planets so colonists won't settle on them by mistake.

The story picks up after they have been at this mission for too many mind-numbing years, and they're all bored out of their skulls, spending most of their time listening to terrible music, sending back rude messages to Earth, and chasing around a troublesome alien "pet" which looks like a big beachball with claws.

O'Bannon and Carpenter made this movie as students at USC film school, and had originally planned *Dark Star* as a 45 minute short film. But after dropping out of school, they decided to add some

footage and try to market it as a feature. A year later, deep in debt and hated by all their friends for calling in too many favors, the two managed to get it into limited release.

Since then the movie has become a cult favorite, a model for people who want to shoot on a budget. It really is pretty funny, though uneven and slow in places. O'Bannon even has a part as the pin-brained Pinback who spends most of the film locked into mortal combat with the alien beachball.

Finally, Wednesday night in Erdahl-Cloyd at 8 is the best film showing this semester, *The Seven Samurai*, directed by Akira Kurosawa.

In feudal Japan a small village lives with the absolute knowledge that when harvest time comes, the bandits who live in the hills will sweep down and take everything. In desperation the villagers attempt to find leaderless samurai to help them, but, being very poor, can offer only rice as payment and have little luck, recruiting only five true samurai.

These five, along with two youths from the village whom they allow to join them, organize the villagers' defense, culminating with a final battle that takes place in a driving rainstorm.

Considered a renegade in his native Japan, Akira Kurosawa is hailed as a cinematic genius elsewhere. In 1954 he made *The Seven Samurai*, went way over budget on both time and money, and produced not only one of his finest films, but one of the finest films ever made.

See SAMURAI, page 6

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