

Movie Review

'The Fly' gets stuck in its own ointment

If there was an Academy Award in the "Best Slime and Ooze" category, David Cronenberg's "The Fly" would easily walk away with an Oscar. The movie is filled with body parts decaying, fly barf, fly barf dissolving body parts, fly baby abortions and exploding fly body parts.

Cronenberg has always gone for flashy and gory effects. His films "Scanners" and "Videodrome" were filled with blood, gore, guts, sadism and exploding bodies, making the viewer spend most of his time turning away from the screen instead of trying to follow the story line. Cronenberg redeemed himself, however, by toning down the blood and guts for "The Dead Zone," probably the best filmed version of a Stephen King novel since Stanley Kubrick's "The Shining."

In the original version of "The Fly," made in 1958 with David Hedison and Vincent Price, a scientist (Hedison) invents a machine that can teleport a man from one place to another. During his first trip through the machine, the scientist fails to notice that a fly has entered the teleport chamber with him. When the scientist comes out of the other end, he has the fly's head and one fly arm, and the fly has his head and one human arm. It was not a great day for science.

In the new movie, scientist Seth Brundle (Jeff Goldblum) makes the same mistake Hedison did 28 years earlier. Only this time, Brundle and the fly don't exchange heads and arms—instead, their DNA is spliced together. At first, Brundle notices no changes except an in-

crease in strength and an insatiable appetite for sugar and sex. He enjoys his new abilities, but there are some problems. His back begins to sprout weird, fly-like hairs. Then his face begins to break out with one of the worst cases of acne in history. His fingernails fall out. Then his ear falls off. Before long Brundle has filled his medicine chest with the body parts that have fallen off. The movie becomes nothing more than a disgusting display from the special effects department as Seth Brundle becomes "Brundlefly."

Jeff Goldblum, whose previous credits include "Into the Night," "The Big Chill," "The Right Stuff," "Silverado" and the 1979 re-make of "Invasion of the Body Snatchers," gives a fine performance as the eccentric scientist Brundle. Some of his wry comments about his

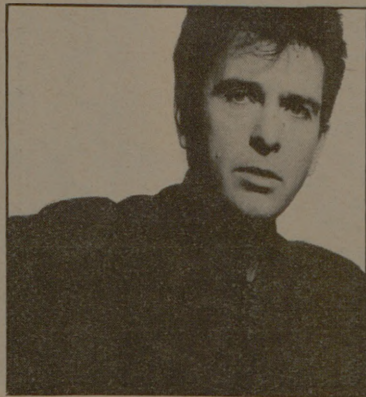
transformation provide a little comic relief in the face of the horror. The only problem is that Goldblum is so covered with makeup, it's hard for his talents to shine through.

Genna Davis, who starred on television's "Buffalo Bill" and "Sara," plays Veronica Quaife, a reporter who is sent to get the story of Brundle's new invention and ends up falling in love with him. Davis handles her role with all the range and emotion of a Barbie doll.

As a special effects movie, "The Fly" is marvelous. But as a movie about people, "The Fly" is a failure. Cronenberg has decided that gore is more popular than an intelligent story about people caught up in a horrible situation and has concentrated on the gore to bring in the bucks.

—Review by Karl Pallmeyer

Album Reviews



"So"
Peter Gabriel
Geffen Records
***** (five out of five)

It has taken 11 years and five albums for Peter Gabriel to achieve the commercial respect he deserves.

Gabriel Genesis helped start back in the late 60s. His bizarre lyrics, unique stage presence and powerful voice were the focal point of the band until his surprise departure in 1975. Genesis, under the leadership of Phil Collins, went on to become extremely successful, but Gabriel's solo career wasn't as bright.

"So," Gabriel's fifth album of original music, marks a high

point in his solo career. Although "So" is less experimental than most of his recent work, he still uses the various themes and rhythms he has borrowed from African tribal music. This time, however, he has toned down the sounds to make them more accessible to the pop music world.

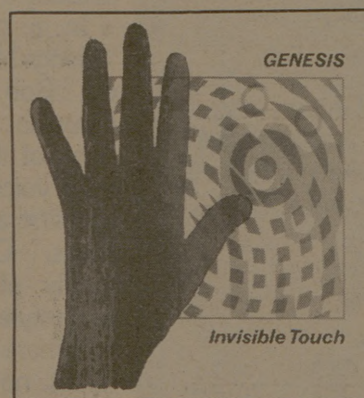
"Sledgehammer" has done fantastically well on the charts for the past couple of months. "Sledgehammer" is an irresistible dance track with lyrics filled with sexual innuendoes. Somehow Gabriel is able to sing about sledgehammers, bumper cars, honey bees and steam trains without turning the song into a tasteless exercise in male chauvinism.

The mood becomes quieter for "Don't Give Up," a gentle ballad that features a duet with Gabriel and Kate Bush. "That Voice Again," co-written with producer David Rhodes is made to sound eerie by L. Shankar's violin.

So far, "So" has been Gabriel's most popular album. He has also been getting massive play on the radio and MTV. Gabriel's tour is bound to sell out

almost anywhere he goes. Will success go to his head? I don't think so. "Big Time" is a satirical song about someone who makes it big and starts to do all the "star" things. I doubt if Gabriel will allow himself to become like the character in his song.

—Review by Karl Pallmeyer



"Invisible Touch"
Genesis
Atlantic Records
★½ (one and a half out of five)

Genesis has produced some good music since its inception in the late 60s, but what the band is doing now is too boring to mention. "Invisible Touch" is

an uninspired album that hardly even hints at the enormous talent the band has to offer.

The title track is a nice little song that is already a huge hit. It's one of those songs that you like the first 200 times you hear it but then starts to get old. "Tonight, Tonight, Tonight," with its techno-pop video game synthesizer beat, is destined to be the next hit. It's nice that they put these songs back to back so that you don't have to listen to all of the album to hear the hits.

The music for "Land of Confusion" sounds almost like a rap song but Collins doesn't rap. It would probably be embarrassing if he did. "Anything She Does" is a syntho-pap dance song with a chorus that sounds suspiciously like "Invisible Touch," "Throwing It All Away" is yet another Collins' moan about losing his wife while "The Brazilian," an instrumental, shows that the band can still play together if they want to.

Genesis has become a lot more popular with the general public now that they are more accessible but some of us prefer the old style.

—Review by Karl Pallmeyer