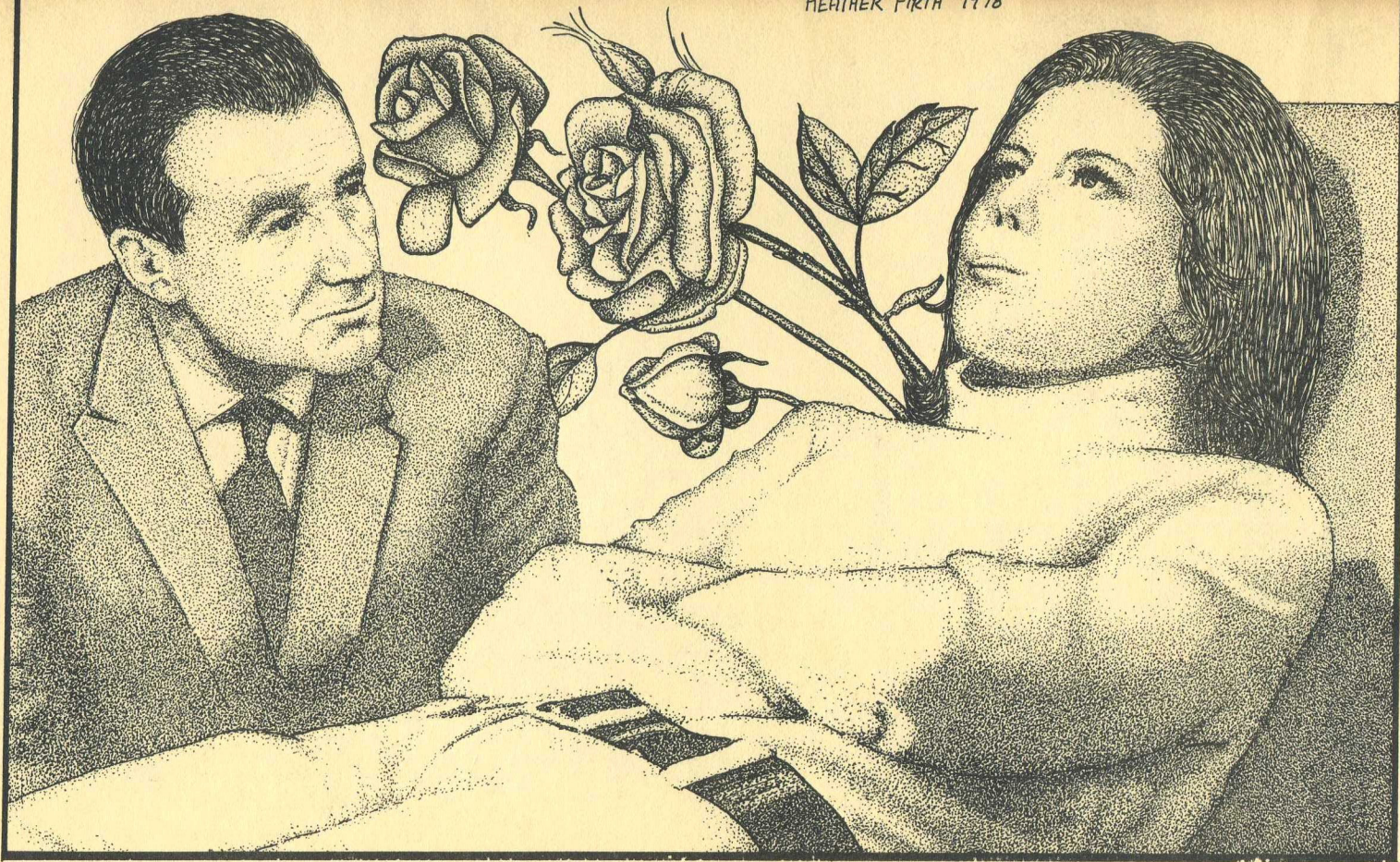


HEATHER FIRTH 1978



"The Avengers"/Patrick Macnee

Fan Network Newsletter

ISSUE #5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

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Deadline for contributions to be included in issue #6 is October 10, 1978.

* This issue is dedicated to my Grandma Reeves, whom I loved dearly. I wish she was still here to read it.

"The Avengers"/Patrick Macnee
Fan Network

Heather Firth, Chairperson
1925 Terry #7

Longmont, CO 80501 USA
(303) 776-4700

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Patrick Macnee, Honorary President

Bill Bradshaw, Representative in England

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Ramblings

It seems that the US Post Office decided that we should be charged more for their services. And if that weren't enough, they are now thinking about going on an unauthorized vacation. Grrrr! Hopefully this issue will get to you before they decide to do anything rash. I will not be increasing the price of Newsletters, clipping lists, and so on because of the postal increase. However, if anyone wants to donate an extra stamp or two for this worthy cause it will be most welcome and greatly appreciated.

There have been several members question me about putting out an "Avengers" fanzine. I would love to see someone take on this task, but I'm afraid that it won't be me. I'm going insane trying to put out this Newsletter on time...the prospect of putting together fiction and trying to edit and punctuate such a creature is not appealing to me at all! If anyone out there is brave enough to take on such a task I wish you all the luck in the world and I will be happy to publicize your project.

Now that our membership is beginning to grow a bit (we have 54 members at the time of typing, by the way) it might be worth starting to think seriously about sponsoring a charity drive of some sort. Does anyone have any ideas of how to raise money for such a project? What do you think would be a good charity to donate the proceeds to? Since we are an international group it would probably be best to donate to someone whose efforts are world-wide. Suggestions that I've received so far are: Save the Children, CARE, Greenpeace Foundation, American Heart Association, Cancer Society, and Sickle Cell Research. Any others?

Publicity information is starting to reach the media now concerning "The New Avengers" and you have probably noticed a few short mentions here and there. Be watching your local papers for more information on the show.



Ian Wadleigh (PATRICK MACNEE) is a dissipated and bitter writer embroiled in a life and death world of international intrigue in MCA TV/Universal's Operation Prime Time presentation of Irwin Shaw's "EVENING IN BYZANTIUM."

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Patrick Macnee from "Evening in Byzantium"

Evening in Byzantium

"Evening in Byzantium", adapted from the book by Irwin Shaw, is being shown in various markets around the US throughout August. It will probably have been shown in your area by the time this issue reaches you. Patrick Macnee's part in the production prompted me to watch the two-part mini-series after having read the book version as a preliminary. I would like to offer a few comments and comparisons on the two.

As is the case with many adaptations, "Evening in Byzantium" went through a re-write in order to bring it to the screen. The updated teleplay by Glen Larson and Michael Sloan has an entirely different flavor and sense of priorities than Shaw's work. A new plot was added which became the central theme around which the story rotated. Sufficient doses of action, politics and seat-edge suspense were thrown in to make the story of Producer Jesse Craig's visit to a modern-day 'Byzantium' suitably entertaining for television audiences. The dazzling world of the Cannes Film Festival becomes merely a backdrop against which a story of impending world holocaust unfolds. The characters are present to further the plot and Craig could be any well-meaning hero who stumbles onto a plot for world domination without necessarily having written a controversial script which puts him in the middle of a terrorist take over.

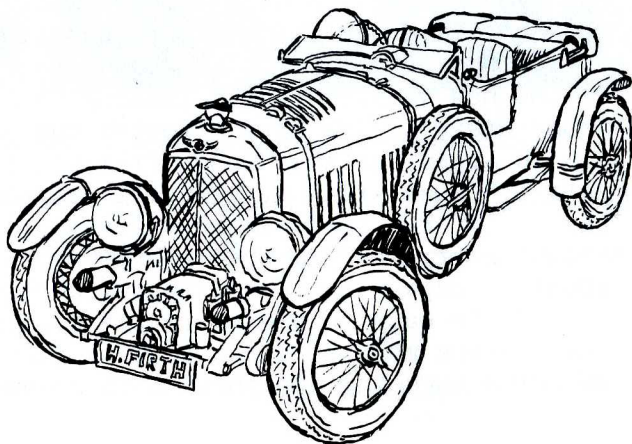
In contrast, Shaw's version deals mainly with characterizations which are painstakingly developed throughout the book. In an abundance of flashbacks we see how various people passing in and out of Jesse Craig's life have affected the man and caused him to appear at the Cannes Film Festival with a script he has written, yet will not admit to writing. The script by Craig has very little to do with the actual storyline and the majority of Shaw's book is spent in expanding and juxtaposing personalities.

It is easy to see where the original story by Shaw, being more of a personality study, would not be quite engaging enough to hold an audience for

television. Indeed, the book becomes somewhat slow in places and the continual flashback sequences, mercifully toned down in the teleplay, can become confusing. However, my preference must lean toward the book with its emphasis on exposing the reason that Jesse Craig returns to Cannes "to save his life". Suggested reading if you get a chance!

And now, a few notes on Patrick's part in the film. Firstly, the character's name was misspelled in the last issue of the Newsletter; it should be Ian Wadleigh. The show's producer, Robert O'Neill told me over the phone that he didn't believe Ian was in the book version. Wrong again. In fact, Ian had a much larger part in the book and was quite a colorful individual (to put it mildly!). A more direct re-write of his character from the book would have provided Mr. Macnee with a bit more screen time, especially since Ian wasn't fatally wounded in the book. However, a large majority of his language would not be allowed on television, particularly during prime time.

It was delightful to see Patrick on the screen once again and I thoroughly enjoyed each scene where he appeared. Unfortunately I have very little knowledge of the actors' craft (so said my drama instructor) and wouldn't want to fly under false colors in order to critically interpret Mr. Macnee's performance. Hopefully someone more qualified will choose to comment in a future issue of the Newsletter. (Hint, Hint...)



Network News

We have four new pen-pals to be included on the listing:

SHORON POLSEMEN: 1107 W. Nolcrest Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20903. Age: 26. Interested in British and foreign performers and publications of the 60's and 70's. Like to hear from all interested in the same.

ANNE McKEOWN: 40 Schade, Friedberger Anlage 30, 6000 Frankfurt/Main, Germany. I'm 16 years old and I like all kinds of sports and my favourite groups are Queen and ABBA. I also like swimming, boys and dancing.

JIM HOLUB: 6602 Farnsworth Drive, Parma, OH 44129. Born 7/31/52. Interested in science fiction, surrealism, Theatre of the Absurd, zen. Like "The Avengers", "The Prisoner", "Outer Limits", "Twilight Zone", "Secret Agent", etc. Also love soccer and the fairer sex.

PATRICK SANSANO: 10 rue Joliot Curie, Cité Nocaze, 26200 Montelimar, France. Age: 19. I speak and read French, English and Italian. Interests: Diana Rigg, original soundtracks, the episode "Never, Never Say Die" of The Avengers, Roy Thinnes and his ABC's show "The Invaders", James Bond movies 1962/77, others, Roger Moore. I want to contact Roy Thinnes for a photo dedication. If anyone knows his agent's management address please tell me!

There is a "Prisoner" fan club being formed now and they are looking for members and other contributors. Annual dues are \$10 for which you receive a membership packet containing, among other things, their quarterly newsletter "The Tally Ho". For more information (send a SASE) or to join write to: THE VILLAGERS, Lisa J. Rubin, 5030 Linnean Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008.

I still have plenty of original copy back issues #2 and #3 of the Newsletter if anyone wants them. The price on either is the same as for a single copy of the current issue (\$1.40) or they may be included as part of your subscription if you specify.

J. Barnicoat Ltd. in England announces that they are unable to get copies of "The New Avengers" paperbacks #1, #2 or #4. These are out of print and unobtainable - no reprint planned. They also say that there have been no other books from the series released at this date.

Berkley Publishers have released sale information on the "New Avengers" books to bookstores in the US and is currently taking orders from dealers for the first in the series, "House of Cards". If you are interested in purchasing the books you might talk to your local book seller and request that they order the series as it becomes available. #2, "Eagle's Nest" will be released in November. Berkley's announcement states:

HOUSE OF CARDS is the first novel in Berkley's new media tie-in series based on the CBS-TV hit adventure series, THE NEW AVENGERS. The viewing audience which has made THE AVENGERS series one of the most successful and long-running programs aired on the CBS-TV network, is certain to receive this new media tie-in series with excitement.

We are starting to receive so many article clippings and orders that things have become a bit confusing. In the past I have listed each clipping only by its title and have had to go through several pages of clippings list each time one was ordered. I have now numbered all clippings and will continue to do so with future supplements. If you would like to number your clipping list to correspond with mine simply number each listing in order. When ordering from the list please include the listing number (if possible) and the article title. If you don't have a number for the clipping you might write a brief description to avoid confusion and note what page the clipping is listed on. I usually mail orders as soon as possible after receiving them so if you haven't received your order in a reasonable amount of time please contact me again. Supplement #4 is available now. The price is 25¢ or 10¢ and a SASE.

I must admit to an error in issue #4 of the Newsletter. (Well, everyone is entitled to one mistake, aren't they?) It was stated that the catalog lists for "Avengers" photos from George Schwartz were #3 and #300. Actually the lists to order are #3 and #100. *blush*

As far as I know, the 'Agents' issue of "Moonbeam" is still under production and will be out "any time now". I've had members write me asking why it is taking so long. Please remember that a fanzine is a spare-time endeavor on the part of the editors and they are often met with a variety of problems which can delay an issue. For one thing, there was never a set release date on the 'Agents' issue as far as I know. Secondly, the editor had to move in the middle of putting the thing together and that could have taken a little wind from her sails. I have written to her asking when she expects the thing to be out and when I hear anything definite I will put the info in the Newsletter. (I should be nervous....she has a 75-hour piece of artwork from me to include in that issue and I haven't heard from her since I sent it!)

We are still trying to find and report on any "Avengers" related sales item which members might be interested in. Could I persuade you to check around your area and see if you can find anyone who has books, magazines, photos, toys, etc. concerning the series (old or new)? If you let me know about such items I can pass on the information to other members.

Speaking of which, I have been trying to find as many copies of the old "Avengers" paperbacks as possible so that members who can't find them can ask me for copies. There have been letters sent to various used book stores across the nation as well as a few to shops in London. I am awaiting replies. While they are coming I have been haunting stores here in the Denver and surrounding area for the books. It would help me a great deal if members would check a few used book stores in their area. See the "Garage Sale" section for information on

what books I have extras of.

Diana Rigg is in a film now showing around the country. She co-stars with Elizabeth Taylor in the film version of "A Little Night Music" which has been quite successful on Broadway. Other stars include Len Cariou, Lesley-Anne Down and Hermione Gingold. "Night Music" won an Academy Award for Best Adaptation Score. Other than that I'm afraid that I know very little about the movie. Does anyone know a bit about the show? I hope to have more information by the next issue of the Newsletter. Anyone who wants to write a review of the film for me is most welcome to.

The Chamber of Commerce in Toronto reports that Linda Thorson has been working on stage there recently but has now returned to England to appear in a play called "Miss Alliance". Is there anyone with further news of what Linda has been doing lately?

I was sent an article not long ago concerning a film called "King Solomon's Treasure" which was made in South Africa some two years ago. Patrick Macnee has a part in the movie although I don't know to what extent he was involved. Other stars include Britt Ekland, John Colicos, John Quentin, Yvov Dufour, and Ken Gampu. The director is Alvin Rakoff and I understand that the film is based on a series of Rider Haggard novels. Patrick's publicity representative has very little information on the show and couldn't tell me if/when/where it will be released. As soon as I know more I will print it in a future issue.

Garage Sale

As I mentioned earlier I have several copies of the old "Avengers" series of paperbacks which I am offering to members who haven't been able to find them. If you are lacking any of these titles and wish to purchase them from me send the money and a SASE. If the book(s) have been sold already I will return the money and let you know in the next issue if there are any more available. I will not hold the money (check, money order, etc.) or give you credit for later books which may arrive. This will cause too much of a problem with my book-keeping and hurt feelings if I don't find any other. I ask that you please don't order these books if you have copies already. Give other members a chance to read them. Following are the titles and number of extras that I have.

- #1 The Floating Game - 1 extra
- #2 The Laugh Was on Lazarus - 2 extra
- #4 Heil Harris - 2 extra
- #5 The Afrit Affair - 1 extra
- #8 Magnetic Man - 7 extra

I have purchased these books in various used book stores in person and by mail for anywhere from 30¢ to \$1 each. I am selling them for 75¢ each (\$1.25 for overseas airmail) including postage. When ordering please list a second choice if possible in case I'm out of the one that you want. Also, I still have the extra copy of "John Steed: Jealous in Honour" if anyone is interested.

There is a firm in England which has for sale scripts from the Diana Rigg series of "Avengers". I have written for more information but do have the price of said scripts now. They are 11 Pounds each, surface rate postage paid. I don't know if the scripts are originals, although I doubt it, and I don't have a price for airmail delivery. Either you can write for more information or wait to see what I come up with by the next issue. The address is: The Cinema Bookshop, 13-14 Great Russell Street, London W.C.1, England.

Jerry Ohlinger's Movie Material Store has several photos of "Avengers" stars in films other than the series. You may recall that I printed information on his stock of "Avengers" B&W stills in an earlier issue. He also has 3 different color stills from the show at \$4.00 each. There are presently available 10 stills from "The New Avengers" but I don't have a price on them or know if they are B&W or color. Other photos of interest:

Pat Macnee "Sherlock Holmes in New York" 2 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "The Assassination Bureau" 20 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "On Her Majesty's..." 20 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "A Little Night Music" 5 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "Hospital" 5 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "Theatre of Blood" 10 @ \$1.50 ea.
Diana Rigg "Julius Ceasar" 2 @ \$1.50 ea.
Linda Thorson "Greek Tycoon" 1 color 8x10
Joanna Lumley "On Her Majesty's..." 1 B&W 8x10
Joanna Lumley "The Satanic Rites of Dracula" 1 B&W

I don't know the price on those last three stills but have written to JOMMS for them. The address for ordering is 120 W 3rd St., New York, NY 10012

Craig Henderson is putting together an index for the "New Avengers" episodes and hopes to be publishing that soon. Included will be plot descriptions, cast and crew credits, etc. The index will be mimeo with a photo cover, I believe. Craig also puts out a newsletter concerning various media occurrences, TV programs, films and so on. The newsletter has an emphasis on Spy/Detective and Sci-Fi/Fantasy. The title of the newsletter is "For Your Eyes Only" and it is available for 35¢ each or 3 for \$1.00. FYEO comes out semi-regularly (when possible) and is mimeo. The "New Avengers" index is \$1.00. Order both of these items from Craig at PO Box E, Bowie, MD 20715. Craig's latest issue of FYEO is being printed now and has "The New Avengers" as its front page story.

Mandi Schultz is not accepting any more orders on slides. If you missed out..."Sorry about that, Cheif!"

Midnight Meanderings

AVENGING IS BETTER THAN EVER

by H.C. Chmielefski

With the usually successful show comes the usual merchandising that goes along with any program willing to sell manufacturing rights to corporations. The most common is the Movie/TV "Tie-in" book, which is meant to complement the visual experience. This is true with the "New Avengers". Over the past years six paperbacks have been released adapting the first set of "New Avengers" episodes.

These books are slightly different from most adaptation books. Unlike the "Star Trek", "Twilight Zone" and "Space: 1999" books which strive to give you four to six episodes per book, the "New Avengers" books are one book to one episode. A story is taken and expanded to novel length giving the author more room to expand characterization, scenes, and go into detail on scenes that the script can't afford the time for.

HOUSE OF CARDS by Peter Cave is the first and best of the set. It begins in Siberia where a training Russian agent steps into a British pub and pleads for Vodka. He is shot for doing such an inane thing. During the course of the novel Steed, Purdey and Gambit help a Russian scientist escape to their side whereby a Russian agent responsible for him activates the "House of Cards"; Russian agents conditioned by narco-hypnosis to kill whoever he commands then die. Needless to say, Steed is the target...

THE EAGLE'S NEST by John Carter is an exception to the one book, one episode rule. It contains two adaptations: "The Eagle's Nest" and "The Midas Touch". "Eagle's Nest" is about a Nazi group planning to literally resurrect Hitler. "Midas Touch" is about a man who can kill by merely touching you. The novel is flawed because the author spends too much time on details rather than action causing it to bog down in the middle. Some good suspense in the first chapter.

TO CATCH A RAT by Walter Harris is the most unusual of the set. Steed, Purdey and Gambit are not the main characters of the book. They are more a set of detectives who figure out everything in the end. The main characters are two men, John Cledge (code name: Catcher) and another man known only as the "White Rat". They are double agents out to destroy the spy network of Englishers in East Germany and do so, except for the network's commander, John Steed. Then one man they thought they had destroyed comes back claiming to know who the "White Rat" is. Very good indeed.

FIGHTING MEN by Justin Cartwright is slow in getting started but just bear with it. It will grab you about page 25 and keep you hanging until the end. It seems Purdey and Gambit are the only two people holding back a troop of British army men from turning Mercenaries and taking over an African country. Good but flawed in one respect; Steed seems to be taking things too lightly and spends more time drinking than coming up with ideas. Purdey and Gambit are the real stars.

THE CYBERNAUTS by Peter Cave (based on the "Last of the Cybernauts") taken on its own is great, but as a sequel to the other Cybernaut episodes falls on its face. Mad ex-British agent (minus legs and one arm) gets his hand on some Cybernauts and uses them to kidnap scientists to make work a nasty idea he has (shades of "Return of the Cybernauts"). Now this novel suffers from many inconsistencies which are used to keep the story going. First off, the novel claims that the Cybernauts were created by a Doctor Dormevil to take over the world. Wrong. They were created by Doctor Clemen Armstrong to clear Radioactive areas. During the course of the story Mike Gambit dents one by using Kung Fu and Purdey wrecks one by pushing it down a flight of steps. (Remember when the Cybernauts were originally undentible by a tank shell at close range?) Then to top it all off, the bad guy has the scientists create cybernetic limbs and drives the New Avengers crazy by pulling "Six Million Dollar Man" stunts. At one point he kicks a car door right into Gambit's stomach, hinges and all.

The best laugh of the novel was when one of the characters claimed that these cybernauts were the best, the ultimate in cybernauts. Right.

HOSTAGE by Peter Cave is the best in the suspense/action group. Purdey is kidnapped by enemy agents and a ministry official is claiming to Gambit that Steed is responsible and that Gambit should kill Steed. Suggest you read it right after HOUSE OF CARDS.

From the overview of all these books I will have to say that Avenging is better than ever.

MOTHER

by Sally Syrjala

A mental image of 'Mother' strikes me as being preferable to an actual visual depiction. When this mythological figure is only alluded to we can have the fun of speculating as to exactly what physical appearances are possessed by this being, as well as what type of personality characteristics are embodied within. The imagination is allowed full rein and can create an image that would be impossible to duplicate on the screen.

An image that is only known within the abstractness of the mind takes on much more force than does a known entity. When we become acquainted with a subject the mystery leaves the arena and with that disappearance goes some of the magic it once held for us.

The unknown has more pull and more fascination than does an item which is spelled out in detail. A figure only suggested lets one's mind recreate the type of situation old radio shows engendered. It lets the mind take over and make its own image of what the subject looks like.



A realization of the imagery would lessen its impact.

When we actually encounter something that has frightened us or held some special appeal it is often a disappointment. Our mind has manufactured something that reality can never duplicate or even approximate. 'Mother' is the type of figure that mental imagery can create a stronger character than an actual physical presence can portray.

When Steed and company refer to that illusionary figure it takes on a much stronger imagery if it remains an unknown factor. Once we see that person as they are we are no longer intrigued by the mystery that surrounds the shadowy illusion.

Mystery and shadow images are some of the strongest elements in fiction. They let us create our own realm within that of the author. It is sort of a joint enterprise with the viewer/reader given a chance to participate in the creative aspect of the medium.

That participation creates more of a link with the vehicle and causes the person to become more fully involved with its enjoyment. Our creative outlets are given a chance to vent themselves. Thus the kingdom we have entered becomes that much more magical and that much more "ours".

No actual visual image would please all our multitudinous visions of what our collective minds see. Therefore, the alchemy and mystery is better retained by a simple allusion to 'Mother' or seeing only the figure in shadow or some other fashion that retains the element of the unknown.

THE VILLAGE GREEN ENGLAND OF THE AVENGERS

by Gene Davidson

The "Avengers" series has many exciting things going for it. The action and fast paced excitement, the brilliantly compelling storylines, the charm of John Steed himself, and of course one of the overlooked features....the beautiful English landscapes of the settings themselves. The original series was filmed in the beautiful countrysides of

northern London. Such villages and rural areas as Hertfordshire, Borehamwood, Radlett and others lent to the charm and elegance of the adventures and contributed much to the overall excellence of the entire work.

In 1972 I felt compelled to finally see for myself these settings and to try and track down some of the locations where the Diana Rigg and Linda Thorson episodes were filmed. So in July of 1972 I arrived in London all set to visit the areas where the legendary John Steed himself had visited. I must say at this point that one of my main goals on this visit was to meet Patrick Macnee. However as luck would have it, Mr. Macnee was out of the country at the time. I did manage to meet Mr. Macnee in New York later and what a wonderful person he truly is. He is indeed a gentleman and a great friend to know.

But, getting back to the theme of this story....my first trip outside of London itself was to the city of Elstree where the EMI Studios are located. Elstree itself is a small, quiet city but it does contain three of England's finest filming studios. Upon arriving at the Elstree Studios I announced that I had come from America on an "Avengers fact-finding vacation". They were amazed that anyone would come thousands of miles for the love of a TV series. Nevertheless, they were very kind and provided me with some excellent promotional material from the show and some 8x10 pictures.

After seeing the studios I departed by private car to search for the locations, buildings, and landmarks which could be identified with the many episodes we had seen on TV. Since the first area I visited was the village of Radlett I'll mention that this was the location for the filming of the first Tara King episode called "Have Guns Will Haggle". Tara's (Linda's) first actual appearance was in the final Diana Rigg episode called "Forget-Me-Knot", but this was the first solo Macnee - Thorson episode's location for filming. Here in Radlett I was able to find some of the street locations of this episode. I think I also

spotted the factory which was used as a location in the film. In the story it was said to be an Ordinance factory.

Next I drove through vast and varied areas of the whole Hertfordshire region. Realizing that my best bet to find locations was to simply ask people in the area, I stopped and asked various persons in pubs and restaurants if they knew where "The Avengers" scenes had been filmed. I also told them of my great respect for Patrick Macnee and these great and friendly people echoed my sentiment for England's most famous star. After departing from my luncheon meal I was directed by two persons to an elegant and huge country mansion. Right away I recognized this house as the monastery in the episode called "Get A Way". I wrote down the name of the place which was called Canfield House. I studied it carefully and at the same time it brought to mind the episode itself with all its action. After seeing it I moved on.

Old fans of the series will recall that the Avengers' cities themselves always had a charming English name such as Little Putney on the Swuff or Lower Storpington. It was my desire to find these entire cities, but I'm not certain I did find these two in particular. These towns were used in some excellent Diana Rigg episodes.

My next stop was at the direction of some townspeople in one of the area towns. And at last I found it....the very bridge from which Linda Thorson dived into the water in the super episode "They Keep Killing Steed". I drove into town and found the exterior street scenes where Linda and co-actor Ian Ogilvy had been seen in that episode. My final burst of glory came when I took an excursion to Sussex and found the cliff locations used in the episode "All Done With Mirrors".

Thus ended my visitation of the fascinating "Avengers" locations. I must admit that I did try, without luck, to locate 3 Stable Mews, the fictional location of John Steed's apartment. Certainly a worthwhile trip (to an avid fan of Mr. Macnee) and one I'll always treasure.

LOCs of Gold

CRAIG HENDERSON, Hyattsville, MD:

I have FINALLY gotten settled to the point where I can start up operations again. Starting to get back in touch with everyone and publish FYEO again. ((see "Garage Sale" section. ed.)) I'm also going to publish a "New Avengers" index and review that was written by a British fan. I was thinking of waiting until the show ran on CBS to check out the credits and get US airdates, but I think I'll go ahead and publish it before the show starts so fans can have it as a viewing guide or whatever.

The "Sense of History" piece in #4 moves me to make a few corrections. THE AVENGERS started in January (not March) of 1961 and it was called THE AVENGERS from the beginning. POLICE SURGEON, as I mentioned before, was a completely different series that was on the year before. In the first episode of THE AVENGERS Dr. David Keel's (Ian Hendry) fiancée was murdered (accidentally) by some foreign agents and Hendry set out to avenge her death. His activities were soon noticed by the British spy-types and he was contacted by you-know-who, who decided Keel would be useful to work with (though Steed could hardly be called Keel's "assistant"). This went on for 26 episodes.

In 1962-63 and 1963-64 the two Honor Blackman series of 26 episodes each were telecast. I've always heard the Hendry series was actually broadcast live, not on tape. The two Cathy Gale series were taped (with filmed exteriors; I'm sure you've seen this on a lot of the British shows on PBS). Mrs. Gale, by the way, was not another Ministry agent but was, like Keel and Peel, a "talented amateur" whom Steed found useful. I think that is one of the biggest problems with the Tara King episodes. I didn't dislike Thorson and/or Tara so much as the fact that Steed's partner now was another agent, he had a regular boss appearing and he was generally surrounded by bosses and fellow agents and a lot

of organizational claptrap. In the earlier series Steed was never a company man.

Anyway, the two series she did made Honor Blackman a star. (Those series were seen in a number of other countries, but not in the US. One of the reasons we've never seen them is because British and American video systems are not compatible and it wasn't until about 1970, I believe, that a practical/inexpensive method of altering British video tape so it could be run in America was devised. By then no one was really interested in trying to syndicate the Cathy Gale series here; the syndicated package already has all those filmed episodes so why bother.)

The decision was made to do another 26-episode series, this time on film. At this point Julian Wintle, Albert Fennel and Brian Clemens enter the picture. Diana Rigg was cast as Steed's new partner and the show went on in Britain in the fall of 1965. It sold here to ABC and started in March 1966 when ABC decided to forego BEN CASEY reruns and put THE AVENGERS in that timeslot.

SHARON POISEMEN, Silver Spring, MD:

I was very much delighted at all the wonderful information you sent me as a new member of the Avengers Fan Network. It is always fun to get in at the start of something exciting. I have never joined a fan club before and am surprised to find your publication so helpful.

I do plan in the near future to contribute news items that I think may be of interest to other fan members. I subscribe to many film, theater and TV publications such as "Variety", which is a great source of tidbits that may interest others.

As to my interests in "The Avengers"; I would like to see information, comments, photos, etc. on the previous two women who starred opposite Macnee, first Honor Blackman (before it came to America) and Diana Rigg. I hope you plan to do more on them in the future.

STEVE ERAMO, Stoneham, MA:

I just finished listening to "The New Avengers"; a pen-pal of mine in England sent cassette tapes of six episodes. They are fantastic. If the tapes are only half as excellent as the episodes we're in for a pleasant surprise!

BILL BRADSHAW, England:

This is too late, I know, but I've an alteration to make to that piece of news I gave you about Pat's car commercial over here. For a start, it was for Vauxhall Motors, not British Leyland. (Groan) And secondly, he's made two different ads (as Steed) pushing these cars, both of 'em beautiful! The second one was aired last Sunday night, and to date I've only ever seen either of them once! What's more, no one else seems to have had any more luck, so they're really spreading Steed thin for some strange reason.

Did you know about "The Professionals"? That's a series produced by Brian Clemens, Albert Fennel and under the aegis of 'Avengers Film & TV Enterprises' (the symbol appears at the end of each show). Laurie Johnson does the (excellent) music, Brian Clemens writes most of the scripts, and numerous other "Avengers" personnel are involved. The first series of 13 episodes was produced in mid 1977 and screened here in January '78 till early April. The show was tremendously popular and 13 new shows are presently being filmed with the same cast and production crew.

The stars, by the way, are Gordon Jackson as George Cowley, head of C15, a government department which "takes on work which the army or police can not handle", Martin Shaw as Ray Doyle and Lewis Collins as his partner Bodie (just Bodie) - these two being the young agents under Cowley's command. Lewis Collins was originally tested for the role of Mike Gambit alongside Gabrielle ("UFO") Drake as Purdey. Clemens kept them in mind later on and Gabrielle Drake appeared in the "Dead Men are Dangerous" episode whilst Lewis Collins played Martin Shaw's sidekick (Shaw played Purdey's ex-lover) in the "Obsession" episode.

GLORIA McCUTCHEON, El Monte, CA:

I don't think just referring to 'Mother' in "The New Avengers" will keep the old standbys of the original happy. We were used to Patrick Newell and those pretty girls that are always waiting on him. Surely none of us have forgotten the pure joy of the episode where 'Mother' is trying to tell his aunts an adventure with a blonde Tara, or the disgust on his face when he discovered that his inept nephew was the only agent available to help Tara out of trouble in the hotel her Uncle was staying at. That is only two instances that the comedy relief gave the viewer a short breather in the midst of all the excitement. This could not have happened without the physical presence of the one that keeps the Avengers in good working order. He is our 'Mother'.

CAROL FINGER, Buffalo, NY:

If I remember correctly, didn't Tim Heald (("John Steed: Jealous in Honour")) write a book synopsis of year two of the "Space: 1999" series, or am I confusing him with some other Englishman?

About your #4; I would like to say that I agree with Mr. Bill Bradshaw, the writer of "The New Avengers in England". Gambit is terribly neglected. You see, I saw the first 4 or 5 episodes of "The New Avengers in Canada", then the rotten station put back the England-based episodes. Oh, they're good, but.... Issue #4 is the only issue that I have been able to get so far. Personally, I am quite fond of "The New Avengers". Around here they are only shown on Canadian stations. It promises to be very good. Gambit seems to get in a lot of trouble with the Canadian police; they don't believe that he is a British secret agent. Also, Purdey's feet should be classified as deadly weapons! A few of the original "Avengers" (with Diana Rigg) are shown here. I have seen quite a bit of Tara King (more Canadian TV) and really did not like her.

SALLY SYRJALA, West Barnstable, MA:

I have been having the pleasure of listening to a few "Avenger" tapes. They do bring back memories. It helps immensely to be able to hear those voices



again. Albeit, it would be preferable to be able to see the episodes as well.

"How to Succeed at Murder" was one of the goodies that again rang through my ears. Hmm... I wonder if that one might not be a bit dated by now. Remember it was the one where the secretaries were feeling subjugated and were doing their employers in to take over the business. Then it would seem she would have to hire a secretary after the feat were accomplished to handle all the work. Also was listening to the tape of "From Venus with Love".

Terrific! If I remember correctly and make the correct assumptions, one would think that "From Russia with Love" must have been out about the time this program was first aired. The way Steed and Peel can merge with all types of organizations is precious. They fit in no matter where they go. The humor just below the surface is so good. Truly a remarkable pairing.

"Frederick the Footman" - hmmm... Frederick viewed himself more as Valentino than a footman. You knew anyone with such visions would eventually find his way into some magic kingdom such as Avengerdom. Seeing he also had the good fortune to be among those priveleged to have had some connection with "Upstairs, Downstairs" it would seem he has had the helping hand of fate ushering him into two special realms. Who said lightening doesn't strike twice?

Don't know if you subscribe to "Starlog" or not: however, issue 16 has a mention of "The New Avengers" within its covers. Stars O' Trek, do you

suppose there will be enough mentions to enable an Ubiquitous Avenger column to arise? There are three small pictures - one each of the three New Avengers. It goes on to say:

"According to English sources, who have already viewed two seasons of the series, Steed is every bit as sophisticated as ever, Gambit adds an interesting dimension to the familiar formula and Purdey can kung-fu like nobody's business. Already they have taken on the televised like of vampires and ghouls - when they get to America, who knows? CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE STEED KIND, anyone?"

You know, that last suggestion is not without merit. Don't forget all those titles from yesterday: "How to Succeed...", "From Venus with Love", etc. Seeing we have already met Venusians, could new extragalactic encounters be the next encounters? Does give one something to look forward to and it is nice to see a magazine with the readership of "Starlog" giving "The New Avengers" some deserved publicity.

MANDI SCHULTZ, Rochester, MI:

#4 got here the other day. Nice job. I didn't know you darkroomed. I used to but had to sell it all when we needed the \$\$.

Those new photos are nifty. I'm repeatedly amazed by how little Pat seems to have aged over the last 10 years. (One of those people with the portrait in the attic??) Purdey is cute! Great haircut. I wonder who everyone will decide to rate her with - Emma or Tara.

Actually, in the Cathy Gale season there was yet another femme - Venus Smith - who helped Steed. I think she was a nightclub singer. But she didn't go over very well so she was phased out.

The bit in "House of Cards" reminds me of the scene in "Too Many Christmas Trees" where Steed is opening his mail. He gets a card from Cathy Gale and then looking at the postmark wonders what she's doing at Fort Knox. (Er... "Goldfinger" was in full swing at the time.)

CINDY PHARES, Nederland, TX:

I went to a con in Houston recently and Jerry Ohlinger had a dealer's table set up. I came across the notebook of "Avengers" stills he had and they are absolutely fantastic. I bought 2 color stills and 3 black & white. I'm going to order the rest of them through the mail.

Just loved the two pictures of Steed in #4.

You'll really like the "New Avengers" books. Mike and Purdey are great together. "To Catch a Rat" is really good.

I was watching the 8:00 movie on Channel 39 last night and they advertised "Evening in Byzantium" with a shot of Pat. It airs here August 24 and 25. I can't wait to see it!

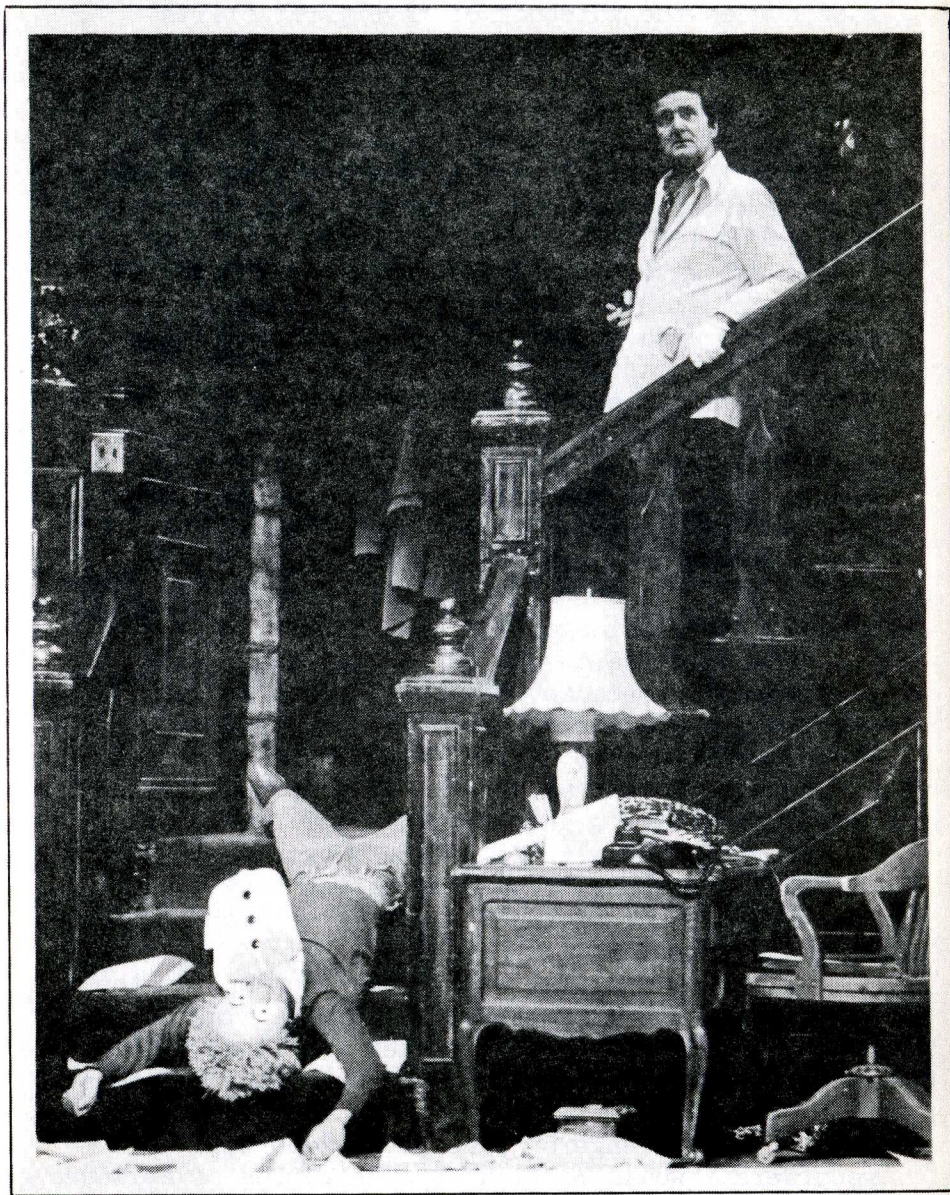
You mentioned in your last Newsletter, if I remember correctly, that you have a New Avengers magazine. Isn't it fantastic? I've had mine for about a year now and find myself looking through the book constantly. I guess what makes it so great is that Patrick wrote it.

LARRY CHARET, Chicago, IL:

The main reason CBS is airing "New Avengers" late night is because they are far too violent for today's prime-time. The PTA would have a field day with them. While the episodes I've seen are not as violent as the old series, they would never pass today's anti-violence requirements. Why do you think all the police shows are on at 10:30? Same reason. I am just hoping they don't cut the violence. Wouldn't surprise me one bit if they did, however.

I like Diana Rigg over Linda Thorson but the stories are the main attraction. Diana Rigg couldn't save some of the poorer episodes and Linda Thorson certainly did not ruin the many excellent episodes that she was in.

If any "Avengers" fans have video tape recorders I would be glad to make copies of episodes I have in trade for something of interest that may be in their area TV. Must be Beta-Format, however. I have all the B&W episodes except "Silent Dust" and a fairly good sampling of the others.



Patrick Macnee in "Sleuth"

DIANE LIND, President; The Patrick Macnee Fan Club
Omaha, NE:

Just finished reading through Newsletter #4. I enjoyed the publicity shots of Pat and of Pat, Joanna and Gareth together from the new show.

I have been thinking about those super-8mm movies of the old show. However, the prices are rather high for me. Even the featurette versions are expensive. I'm afraid I just can't afford them right now as much as I would like to own all three episodes. I'm presently looking for a firm here in the US that sells complete or short versions at a more affordable price. If I find such a firm I will let you know.

Perhaps you can find a few extra copies of the "TV Times Souvenir" issue at Jeff's Comic Store (Jay-Bee Magazines). The address is 776 8th Ave., New York, NY 10036. Tel: (212) 757-6923. The price is \$6.00 postpaid. The owner, Jeff Greenbaum, told me that he also imports many other foreign publications including the "New Avengers" paperbacks.

Diana Rigg is co-starring in the movie version of the Broadway musical "A Little Night Music". And besides acting she even does some singing in the picture. Pat always said that she was very talented in every respect. It certainly appears that he was right.

I wanted to send you a copy of the article that appeared in the "TV and Radio Waves" column by Peter Citron in the entertainment news. ((The article that Diane is referring to was in an Omaha paper recently. It is a short interview with Patrick Macnee about the upcoming series and contains a mention about Diane's club and the Fan Network.)) I've corresponded with him before about the reruns of the old show. He really likes the show, especially the episodes with Diana Rigg. I was surprised and excited when I heard about the article. In fact, I did not even know anything about it until my local book dealer called me and told me the good news. After that I got one call right after another. Many friends and even relatives phoned to inquire if I was the same Diane Lind as the one in the article. Also, everyone wanted to

know all about the Fan Network, my connection with Pat and, of course, the show itself. Finally, when the evening paper arrived, I got to read the article for myself. Even though it was short I was quite pleased with the interview. It is another great plug for Pat and it would appear that the club got some unexpected advertising from it, too.

Our CBS affiliate, WOWT-TV is planning to air "Evening in Byzantium" on two consecutive nights; August 23 and 24 at 8:00 pm. They will also rerun August 24 and 25 at 10:30. I plan to tape the whole show. Also, this week I noticed that the paperback book is now available.

GARY ADLER, Lynbrook, NY:

At CBS my contact is Toby Becker. She has informed me that "The New Avengers" will be on Friday nights at 11:30 pm. I called to get a press packet, which is now in preparation. Full press information on TNA will be released in August and the possibility exists that I might go into NYC for a screening. If anything develops further, I'll let you know.

DAYLE PALKO, Aurora, CO:

Just had to sit down and type out a quick note to tell you thanks for the newest NL! You're really doing a bangup job with it, though I am having a problem and it's all your fault! I always loved "The Avengers" dearly, and would watch it at every opportunity. But as the years drifted by the opportunities grew slighter and eventually there were none. I learned to live with the lack, and even became as reconciled as is possible for one of my demanding nature. And then you came along stirring up old memories. Now I miss them acutely all over again! Aren't you ashamed of yourself? 'Fess up now!

EILEEN ROY, Fullerton, CA:

I read the article comparing "Avengers" with "I Spy" in #2 with fascination. It connected up with a lot of random bits I had floating in my head. For one thing, in a small and extremely

informal survey I've been randomly collecting, it seems almost every "Star Trek" fan I've asked has been an 'alien' while growing up, at school or in their family. That's one reason, I think, we all identify with Spock so much - the alien among us. But it wasn't until I read the article that I realised so many good fictional teams were so similar in make-up.

The dominant member of the team, whether in rank, experience, personal magnetism or whatever, is always white, male, upper class, appreciates women (and vice versa), is extroverted, gregarious, likes people, good food, good clothes, etc. Practically an archetype of the most respected and liked male Humans (in this culture). Examples: John Steed, Kelly Robinson, Jim Kirk, Napoleon Solo.

The other member is the alien, the different one, the not quite respectable one, who is the friend and equal partner of the superlative Human. They are the intellectuals, the too-brights, masters of all trades and jacks of none, the loners by inclination (music lovers? People with the right side of their brain dominant as opposed to the more common left-language-and-social-side of the brain dominant?), distrustful of involvement and over-emotionalism. Or Emma Peel, Scotty, Spock, Illya Kuryakin. That may be one reason why people disliked Tara so much. All set to empathize and she didn't fit the role. Just a simple minded little fluff-head for the hero to pat on the head and rescue whenever she needed it, which was frequently.

Max Smart and 99 played that kind of relationship for laughs. Alien or not, at least 99 knew her way in from the rain. "Wild, Wild West" doesn't fit... I think Conrad dominated that show so much that a real team situation never happened, despite Arte's best efforts. "To Catch a Thief" on the other hand, sometimes did make it, for me at least, because Malichi Thorne was the most vulnerable, awkward, sexy boss I ever fell in love with. Can you think of any more examples or counter-examples?

etcetera...

Firstly, I would like to say that there is a stack of unanswered mail sitting beside me which has reached a height of nearly half a foot. It will probably grow some more before this Newsletter is finished. If my usual speedy reply is a bit slow in reaching you the excuse has already been presented. Come time for a deadline this Newsletter must take precedence.

You may have noticed that this issue runs 29 pages instead of the normal 25. Everyone seemed to be quite fond of the photos in issue #4 and I thought that they added a bit to the NL, so there are more in this issue. Since I had the same amount of information to include this necessitated my running over 4 pages. I didn't think you'd mind.

I recently sent a publicity package on the Fan Network to our newspaper here in Longmont hoping that they might take note and send over any fans of the show who contacted them. Surprisingly enough they took more notice than I expected and actually called me about an interview. Of course I was delighted to oblige them and made an appointment for that day. We talked for about an hour and a half and the photographer came out a few days later to take some accompanying pictures for the article. Hopefully my swelled head didn't show up in the photos! It was an interesting experience and I'm anxious to see the article if/when it comes out. Maybe it will gain us a few members from this area.

Speaking of which: during the interview a question was posed which I couldn't answer without a bit of thought. I now present that question to you as a suggested topic for next issue:

Why does "The Avengers" retain such a devoted following and why are you a fan of the show?



Jesse Craig (GLENN FORD), a once great movie producer, has every right to hold a grudge against Ian Wadleigh (PATRICK MACNEE) a dissipated and bitter screenwriter in MCA TV/Universal's Operation Prime Time presentation of Irwin Shaw's "EVENING IN BYZANTIUM."

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