

STRANGE INVADERS

Roger and Doris have been living a quiet, comfortable life until one night they are awakened by the arrival of a strange visitor. It's a child — the answer

to their dreams! A gift from heaven... or, from much farther out? The strange little thing takes over, wreaking havoc on the entire household. Life, as the couple knew it, is over. They're a family now and it's a nightmare!

Anyone planning a family, take heed of this cautionary tale! Doomed parents will appreciate the terror of the couple's plight. Part science fiction, part autobiography, **Strange Invaders** is another irrepressible comedy from Cordell Barker, director of the much-loved classic, **The Cat Came Back**, a 1989 Oscar® nominee.




This video is also available in French as *Tombé du ciel*.

Director: Cordell Barker
Producers: Jennifer Torrance, Cordell Barker

8 minutes 29 seconds
Order number: C9101 008



 Closed captioned.
A decoder is required.

TO ORDER NFB VIDEOS, CALL TODAY!
1-800-267-7710 (Canada)
1-800-542-2164 (USA)

www.nfb.ca/strangeinvaders

© 2001 A licence is required for any reproduction, television broadcast, sale, rental or public screening. Only educational institutions or non-profit organizations who have obtained this video directly from the NFB or an authorized distributor have the right to show this video free of charge to the public.

National Film Board of Canada
P.O. Box 6100, Station Centre-Ville
Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5

Printed in Canada



STRANGE INVADERS

STRANGE INVADERS



VHS

C9101 008



A National Film Board of Canada Production

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AFTER SCREENING THE FILM

- 1 To begin the discussion, talk a bit about the title of the film. The term “Strange Invaders” could be applied, without much of a stretch, to *all* babies.
- 2 The film can serve as a springboard for personal stories about impressions and perceptions of new babies. Explore how infants might be considered other-worldly travellers or “invaders.” Introduce the notion of the filmmaker using the Peanut character as a metaphor for his own life experience. (The creator of this animation, Cordell Barker, mentions that he’s the father of “three evil boys” who inspired the story.)
- 3 Be sure that all the viewers noticed that the man seemed disappointed when the dog was the recipient of the baby booties Doris had made and that Roger was drifting off to sleep when the major events of the film got under way. Might this film be about love’s own dream gone awry – or, keeping in mind the final scene, was it? Do we know at the end of the film if it was all a dream of Roger’s? Encourage the group to allow their imaginations to work on what “really” took place. Remember, all responses are “correct.”
- 4 Consider the filmmaker’s use of the dog as a foil and as an indicator of how Peanut’s arrival was going to affect all their lives. Ask the viewers to offer some examples of what the dog did and how he reacted in various scenes after the baby appeared.
- 5 Talk about the delicate balance the filmmaker maintains among real human activities and emotions, slapstick comedy and mad science. Invite the viewers to describe their favourite mad science moment and compare these with the parallel human counterparts. Remind everyone that pitting reality against fantasy is essential in creating many of the film’s comic effects.
- 6 Ask the viewers if they think that Roger was wishing on that star ... wishing for a baby? The penultimate scene – when he awakens with Doris beside him – seems to indicate that he was very happy. Might he not have been giddy with relief that what had preceded this scene was perhaps just a dream?

Direction, Animation,
Story, Backgrounds
Cordell Barker

Sound Design
Luc Préfontaine

Original arrangement of
“Flower” Duet, Lakme
Luc Préfontaine

Original music
Luc Préfontaine

Inking and Pencil-Testing
William Marce

Painting and Compositing
Jim Zaboroski

Voices
Roger: Cordell Barker
Doris: Jennifer Torrance
It: Jackson Barker

Sound Effects Editing
Studio La Majeure

Dialogue Editing
Saul Henteleff

Re-recording
Serge Boivin,
Shelley Craig

Production Supervisor
Scott Collins

Program Administrator
Cyndi Forcand

Producers
Jennifer Torrance,
Cordell Barker

Executive Producers
Svend-Erik Eriksen,
Ches Yetman

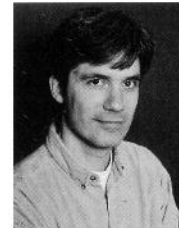
8 min 29 sec



- 7 Discuss the music in the film. Point out that “The Flower Duet” is from a well-known opera and that it is a *barcarole*, or boating song. Perhaps it was chosen to provide a little travelling music for the voyage of the star to Doris and Roger’s house. Ask the group what music they would have chosen for the film, and lead a discussion of how music complements and enhances the visual aspects of the film, colouring the pivotal moments of the story.



About the Filmmaker



Born and raised in Winnipeg, Cordell Barker began an apprenticeship in animation in 1974, cutting his teeth on “Sesame Street” spots, K-tel commercials and local and national ads. He approached the NFB in 1982 to make a film that eventually became **The Cat Came Back**, a 7-minute animated folk song that received an Oscar® nomination in 1989 and went on to garner 18 international awards. Barker is happily married and the father of “three evil boys” who provided the inspiration for **Strange Invaders**.



Recommended Reading

Suggest science fiction novels and short stories by such authors as Ray Bradbury (*Fahrenheit 451*), Isaac Asimov, H.G. Wells, Parke Godwin, Terry Pratchett, Neil Gaiman and Douglas Adams. These writers offer views of this and other worlds that are whimsical and full of sudden surprises, as in **Strange Invaders**. Canadian science fiction and fantasy are richly represented by Phyllis Gotlieb (*The Kingdom of the Cats*), Lloyd Abbey (*The Last Whales*), Terence Green (*Children of the Rainbow*), Hélène Holden (*After the Fact*) and Judith Merrill, editor of several anthologies (*Daughters of Earth*, *Survival Ship*).

Related NFB Videos

The Cat Came Back is Cordell Barker’s classic animation, which received 18 international awards, as well as an Oscar® nomination.

What on Earth! is a short animation about a surprise alien invasion.