

explain the cool Sam Peckinpah-derived title): The denizens of economically depressed Central City are all trying to kill Dobie (Dwayne Hickman, still pleasantly amorphous after all these years) after he has spurned the advances of Thalia Menninger (Connie Stevens).

Asked, tongue-in-cheek, why Beatty didn't do the TV movie, Hickman quipped, "After seeing *Ishtar*, it was obvious to me Warren couldn't do comedy anymore." It's a better line than any the movie has.

Noble

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C-1

part) arrive from the United States with the dire intent of taking Struan away from Dunross and tai-panning it up themselves.

Their ally, they think, is Dunross' devoted and lifelong adversary, Quillan Gornt, head of a rival company. Gornt is played by John Rhys-Davies, master thief of scene stealers. But the raiders run into complications. Bartlett didn't plan to fall in love with the elegant Orlanda (Julia Nickson), hired by Gornt to seduce him, and Tchotok didn't think she would be so attracted to Dunross himself.

Nobody planned on the huge explosion and fire aboard a floating restaurant in the harbor. It tends to spoil a fancy Struan bash in Bartlett's honor. But that's not all. In part four, a giant landslide takes away a high-rise apartment house and with it — perhaps too conveniently — two major characters.

Thanks to the script by Eric Bercovici and the direction of Gary Nelson, the story roars along dynamically; the twists and turns are worth the ride. Four hours proves not really a minute too long. Well, maybe a minute. But certainly not five or 10.

Many of the best performances are by Asian actors, some of whose faces are familiar. Burt Kwouk, who does an outstanding job as Phillip Chen, one of the Struan executives, played the lunatic martial artist Cato to Peter Sellers' Inspector Clouseau in the *Pink Panther* pictures. Nancy Kwan, who plays Dunross' executive secretary, was long ago Suzie Wong in the movies.

Khig Dhiagh, who has a field day as the boisterous and sinister Four Fingers Wu, a prominent criminal and financier, once was the arch villain Wo Fat in the series *Hawaii 5-0*. He can also be seen in a key role in the recently revived theatrical feature *The Manchurian Candidate*.

There are new faces, too, like that of Tia Carrere, who plays a businessman's mistress with the intriguing name of Venus Poon. She gets one of the film's better lines when she barks at him,

"Where's my mink coat? Probably on your wife's back!"

Noble House is more than another story of treacheries and skullduggeries among the rich. There's substance to the saga, set against a background of interlocking culture clashes: past and present, East and West, youth and age, communist and capitalist, class and no class.

Hong Kong itself, magnificently photogenic, is a character in the film that one of the other characters can scarcely stop talking about. "Here in Hong Kong, profit is our pleasure," Gornt says. "This is Hong Kong," the tai-pan says. "Here the strong survive and the weak perish."

They survive or perish under the shadow of impending, potentially cataclysmic, change. In 1997, Hong Kong will leave what's left of the British Empire and its domain reverts to China. The thought is never far from Clavell's mind.

Even hard-driving entrepreneurs know that all work and no play makes for a dull miniseries. Bartlett is shocked when Orlanda offers him a present of "pillowing" with a gorgeous call girl. "This is Asia," she explains. "Here, sex is not Anglo-Saxon guilt. It is pleasure to be sought after like great food or great wine."

caustic or world war II, ironic, erotic and highly charged biblical and mythological tableaux, and landscape settings whose atmospheres are highly charged with psychological tensions."

Now, he is working a series of paintings based on a composition by Rubens. Working from a large painting by the Baroque painter, Goldman is exploring the idea of "taking Rubens, looking at him

WALK-IN

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Barbara Streisand & Richard Dreyfuss in "HUTS" (R)
Nightly 7:30, 9:30 / Sun & Tue 2:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:00

HOLLYWOOD 1 & 2

ST. HAMMOND COLISEUM (FREE PARKING)

Tuesday Special - All Stars '96
Walt Disney's "CINDERELLA" (G) 1:30, 7:15
Academy Award Nominee - Best Song
"DIRTY DANCING" (PG-13)
8:30 Disney's "BABY BOOM" (PG)
Academy Award Nominations
Steven Spielberg's "EMPIRE OF THE SUN" (PG)
Sun 7:00, 7:30 / Weekdays 7:30
Walt Disney's "HOLLYWOOD" (G) 1:30, 7:15

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Academy Award Nominee

Best Actor - Jack Nicholson Best Actress - Meryl Streep

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6:30 Diane Keaton "BABY BOOM" (PG)

7:30 Premiere / Last 3 Days "HOUSEKEEPING" (PG)

9:45 Cinemascope Premiere "BLIND TRUST" (R)

WESTWOOD 1 & 2

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Tuesday Special - All Stars '96

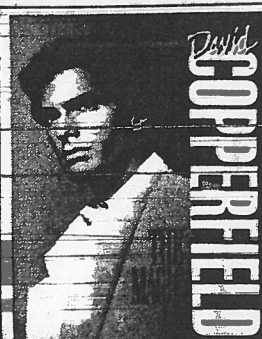
Academy Award Nominee - Best Song

"DIRTY DANCING" (PG-13) 1:30, 3:15, 7:10, 9:00

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TV update

SUNDAY: 1 p.m., Channel 7, Don Donohue.
Midnight-1 a.m., Channel 19, World Vision.
Midnight-1 a.m., Channel 45, Millinger Hour.

WEDNESDAY: 10-11 p.m., Channel 19, Harry O.

FRIDAY: 11:30 a.m., Channel 45, Moore's Nautilus.

SATURDAY: 7-8 a.m., Channel 54, Daniel Boone.
8 a.m., Channel 64, Marshal Dillon.
8:30 a.m., Channel 64, Have-Guy Will Travel.
10 a.m., Channel 45, Keys to Success.
Midnight-1 a.m., Channel 54, Firing Line.

C PART ENR.
2/21/1988