

Home Video

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■ There are no summer doldrums in the game of big movie titles ■ A Louis Harris poll shows an untapped market for performing-arts tapes.

The Hits Are Coming

Stuck for months with generally humdrum titles, video stores will soon have a dozen splashy movies to offer for rent. Video releases usually follow theater openings by four to six months, and from May into the fall will come the big films — from "The Addams Family" to "The Prince of Tides" — that got people into theaters last winter and in a couple of cases went over the \$100 million mark at the box office.

Divining the right release date is as big a headache for studio video divisions as it is for their theatrical counterparts. Last week Warner settled on May 20 for "J. F. K." (on two cassettes) to precede a schedule crowded with "Cape Fear" (June 4), "The Addams Family" (June 18), "Grand Canyon" (June 25) and "Bugsy" (July 1).

But May, if schedules don't change, is crowded, too, especially the last week: "Father of the Bride" (May 27), "My Girl" (May 27) and "For the Boys" (May 28). In an attention-getting move also scheduled for late May, Orion will drop the price of "The Silence of the Lambs," the big Oscar winner and a best renter for months, to \$19.98.

In July, according to plan, will come "Star Trek VI" (July 1) and "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle" (July 15). The month might also

From Big Screen to Small

Scheduled video release dates for some recent popular films.

May 20 J. F. K.
27 Father of the Bride
27 My Girl

June 4 Cape Fear
18 The Addams Family
25 Grand Canyon

July 1 Bugsy
15 The Hand That Rocks the Cradle

Oct. 30 Beauty and the Beast



Warner Brothers

produce "The Prince of Tides," though a specific date hasn't been confirmed.

Two later entries are "Beauty and the Beast" (\$24.99), which Disney is saving for Oct. 30, and "Hook," which could be released at about the same time and also at a low price.

Unexploited Audience

Performing-arts titles make up a minute percentage of the overall video market, but to hear the public opinion pollster Louis Harris tell it, the industry is missing out on a veritable bonanza by not promoting the genre.

Recently L. H. Research, of which Mr. Harris is chairman, polled 1,500 Americans at all economic levels to determine their attitudes about supporting the arts and viewing them in all mediums. When it came to video, 40 percent of the respondents from

VCR households reported that they increasingly watched cassettes rather than television programs and 56 percent said they would like to rent or buy arts tapes.

Using this and other of his research findings, Mr. Harris has made some rough projections. Eight percent of the respondents said they would be certain to rent or buy arts tapes if they were available. Take 8 percent of 178 million adult Americans in VCR households and that comes to 14.2 million potential renters or buyers of arts tapes.

The Harris report found that respondents who patronized the arts rented tapes an average of 28.2 times over the past 12 months. Multiply 28.2 by 14.2 million and that makes about 400 million rentals. If the rental is \$2, say, then a hypothetical arts market could reach \$800 million.

"Someone's going to connect on this sooner or later," Mr. Harris said.