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'Yellow Submarine' Resurfaces

Restored version
to play at the Castro

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We all live in a golden submarine. At least that's the latest wish of the surviving Beatles, who are on a binge of revisionism since the wild success of their "Anthology" CD collections. In Liverpool yesterday, Paul, George and Ringo presided over the world premiere of the newly restored "Yellow Submarine,"

**REPEAT
performance**

their classic animated film from 1968.

The movie, in a fantastic new 35mm print with fresh scenes and digitally remastered six-track stereo sound, opens Friday and runs through September 15 at the Castro Theatre. The Castro is one of nine venues in the United States selected for a limited big-screen engagement before MGM rolls out its new home video of the movie.

It's a momentous occasion for the Beatles, who notoriously were embarrassed by "Yellow Submarine" in its first incarnation.

The group, says self-made "Yel-



The Beatles didn't like "Yellow Submarine" when it came out in 1968, but the surviving members presided over the premiere of its rerelease.

low Submarine" expert Dr. Bob Hieronimus, wanted nothing to do with the project when they realized it would be produced by Al Brodax, the man responsible for the animated Beatles TV series.

"We're not going to have us looking like the Flintstones," they complained.

But art director Heinz Edelmann developed a signature look for the picture, a vivid Pop Art fantasia that set the tone for design and anima-

tion for years to come. The look became so emblematic that the artist Peter Max is often credited, and he rarely bothers to correct the mistake.

The dumpling-like Blue Meanies, with their mouse ears and "anti-music missiles," are one of the movie's many stylistic strokes of genius. The "Eleanor Rigby" segment uses photocopied cityscapes to depict bleak

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Beatles Didn't Like 'Yellow'

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industrialism: the hallway at the Pier, where the band conductor Old Fred enlists the Beatles' help against the invading Meanies, is a riot of surrealist imagery.

But the Beatles were indifferent to the project — they didn't even read their speaking parts — and British critics were quick to dismiss the film. As a result, "Yellow Submarine" has never quite earned the admiration it is due.

Hieronimus, a writer, muralist, radio host and all-around gadfly based in Maryland, is working on a book called "It Was All in the Mind: The Co-Creation of the Beatles' 'Yellow Submarine.'" He has spent the past two decades trying to right the many wrongs he sees in the movie's case history.

According to Hieronimus, Edelmann and his animation crew "weren't given so much as a poster" when the film was completed. "Heinz got four hours of sleep every two nights" to finish the film, which fulfilled the Beatles' three-picture obligation to United Artists. "When he fin-

ished, he was nearly blind."

Edelmann decided long ago to wash his hands of the whole mess. But Hieronimus, who claims to have seen "Yellow Submarine" well over 200 times, says he "disturbed Edelmann's peace" in 1993. "I must've said the right things," because he coaxed the art director out of hiding.

Edelmann, Brodax and many others were on hand for the London premiere. "It's going to sound corny," says Hieronimus, who also attended, "but a major goal in my life has been trying to build bridges between discordant factions."

In fact, that's what attracted him to "Yellow Submarine" in the first place. "The Beatles are not my favorite group, not by a long shot," he admits. It's the film's timeless story of transcending differences that made Dr. Bob a devotee.

"'Yellow Submarine' fulfills an idea in my heart, that we do not have to kill the enemy. We need to transform the enemy.

"It sounds stupid, but we can do it with love and music."