



Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995
CLASSIFICATION BOARD

DETAILS OF THE FILM:

FILE No T00/1505
Processing Date: 1-May-2000

Title: TITUS
Producer: CONCHITA AIROLDI/JULIE TAYMOR/JODY PATTON
Director: JULIE TAYMOR
Production Co: CLEAR BLUE SKY PRODUCTION
Country Of Origin: USA
Applicant: BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD
Language: ENGLISH
Format: 35 mm
Duration: 162 MINUTE(S)
Version:
Dubbed: **Subtitled:**
Colour/B&W: Colour
Application Type: dual PE + S/H 151-200 mins

PROCEDURE:

The Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995, and the Classification Guidelines approved by the standing Committee of Attorneys General, are followed when classifying films.

Item Viewed: YES **Viewing Date:** 1-May-2000
Written submissions: NO **Oral submissions:** NO

MATERIAL CONSIDERED:

In classifying this item regard was had to the following:

- (i) **The Application** YES
- (ii) **A written synopsis of the item** YES
- (iii) **The Item** YES
- (iv) **Other** NO

DECISION

(1) Classification: R 18 +
(2) Consumer Advice: MEDIUM LEVEL VIOLENCE
(3) Key: V(i-m-j)
(4) Ratified By: _____
(Senior Classifier)

SYNOPSIS:

This film is a time-bending version of Shakespeare's "Titus Andronicus", about a victorious Roman general (Titus) has just won a victory against the Goths. Having captured their queen Tamora and her three sons, he sacrifices the eldest. Returning to Rome, he finds that Caesar has died and he decides to support Saturnius rather than Bassianus, as the next Emperor. Titus'

daughter Lavinia is betrothed to Bassianus but Saturnius claims her as his own. She agrees but runs away with Bassianus, aided by one of her brothers, who is killed by Titus for his betrayal.

After agreeing to marry him in place of Lavinia, Tamora convinces Saturnius to forgive Lavinia and Bassianus but their happiness is shortlived. Tamora and her lover Aaron's schemes lead to Bassianus being killed by Chiron and Demetrius, Tamora's two remaining sons, who then rape and cut off Lavinia's hands and tongue. Two of Titus's sons are framed for these crimes and they are beheaded under Saturnius' orders. Finally Titus, with the aid of his brother Marcus Andronicus, his remaining son Lucius, grandson Lucius and Lavinia, successfully seek their revenge against Saturnius, Tamora, Aaron, Demetrius and Chiron but at the expense of more lives.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION:

In the Board's opinion this film warrants an "R" classification for depictions of medium level violence which are unsuitable for those aged under 18 years of age as they require an adult perspective.

Violence

Depictions of note are as follows:

1. Approx 64mins - There is a sequence lasting approximately two minutes which illustrates the results of the violence (rape, removal of hands) on Lavinia. She is looking anguished and woeful and tries to hide her arms, which now have branches instead of hands at the ends. The impact of this sequence is high because of its sadness and the brutality involved, the fact that it lasts for two minutes heightens the impact, especially because the reaction of her uncle Marcus to her state is especially poignant.
2. Approx 142mins - Titus has captured Tamora's sons and has them hoisted upside down by their feet. He slashes each one's throat, visuals of one of them being slashed is shown in a rear shot but the blood flow is visible. The slashing of the other son is seen as Titus draws his knife forcefully across his throat and the blood flows copiously down the body into a pan. In front and rear shots, the two men's bodies are shown twitching as they die from blood loss.
3. Approx 146mins - In front of his dinner guests, Titus holds Lavinia in front of him and twists her neck twice with audible cracks. She falls to the ground dead.
4. Approx 148mins - After explaining to his horrified guests the reasons for his actions Titus stabs Tamora in the neck with a knife. A frontal shot shows the knife enter through the right side of her neck and then exit, there is detail of the bloodied entry and exit wounds. Saturnius then stabs Titus in the chest with a candleabra, there is a top down shot of this and the viewer sees Titus sprawled across the table with it embedded in his chest. Lucius is enraged and thrusts a large spoon down Saturnius' throat. The emperor is seen gagging and grasping at his attacker but Lucius grabs the spoon and thrusts it right to the back of Saturnius' throat, killing him.
5. Approx 150mins - The camera pans over the dead bodies (which are now covered with plastic), showing their wound and blood detail.

In the Board's opinion these depictions of violence are strong depictions of realistic violence with a high degree of impact but they are not gratuitous or exploitative. Nonetheless the impact of them is as such that they require an adult perspective and thus warrant an "R" classification.