

Julie Adams and L'étrange Créature



When you try to name the best dance couples of the mid-twentieth century, more often than not you'll start and end with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. But there was another twosome that should not be summarily dismissed. Julie Adams and L'étrange Créature met on the set of the 1954 movie, "Creature from the Black Lagoon." L'étrange played the title role and Julie was the femme fatale. To be sure, their initial meeting was awkward. L'étrange was, after all, a monster who lacked human social skills. Obviously, his appearance took some getting used to. This was years before affirmative action, remember, and people still tended to shun horrific looking life forms. So Julie can't be blamed for shrieking in terror when she first laid eyes on him. (Her reaction was so naturally powerful that it was written into the movie script!) Eventually, she settled down and played her role like the professional actress she was. One scene called for the two of them to tussle, and that was when she discovered that L'étrange was an excellent dancer. He had all the moves of a typical testosterone-fueled man, and then some! Plus, he could boogie equally well in the water, thanks to his webbed feet. Sadly, those scenes stayed on the cutting room floor when the producer decided to bag the idea of a romantic comedy with plenty of song and dance routines and make a monster movie. The film did reasonably well, so the studio followed up by pairing Julie and L'étrange in a series of buddy movies. The puissance with which L'étrange flung Julie high into the air when they danced still caused her to scream in fear, and that became the part of their shtick that endeared them to audiences the world over. For a while, anyway, it was Fred and Ginger *who?!*