

Soylent Green (1973)

Written by

Stanley R. Greenburg & Harry Harrison

Directed by

Richard Fleischer

Cast

Charlton Heston

Leigh Taylor-Young

Chuck Connors

Joseph Cotten

Brock Peters

Paula Kelly

Edward G. Robinson

Stephen Young

Mike Henry

Lincoln Kilpatrick

Roy Jenson

Leonard Stone

Whit Bissell

Celia Lovsky

Dick Van Patten

Detective Thorn

Shirl

Tab Fielding

William R. Simonson

Chief Hatcher

Martha

Sol Roth

Gilbert

Kulozik

The Priest

Donovan

Charles

Gov. Santini

The Exchange Leader

Usher #1



Trivia

- The scene where Thorn and Roth share a meal of fresh food was not originally in the script, but was ad-libbed by Charlton Heston and Edward G. Robinson at director Richard Fleischer's request.
- During shooting, Edward G. Robinson was almost totally deaf. He could hear people only if they spoke directly into his ear. His dialogue scenes with other people had to be shot several times before he got the rhythm of the dialogue and was able to respond to people as if he could hear them. He could not hear director Richard Fleischer yell "cut" when a scene went wrong, so Robinson would often continue acting out the scene, unaware that shooting had stopped.
- Knowing that he was dying, Charlton Heston brought Edward G. Robinson a variety of wines and cheeses from all over the world each day Robinson was on set for his scenes, which were all shot first. Robinson died at age 79 on January 26, 1973, four months before the film's release in May 1973.

- The chase scene during the climax has no dialogue because the writer, Stanley R. Greenberg, didn't want it to become an action movie. A clause in the film's contract said no dialogue could be added or edited, so they made the entire chase silent.
- In the novel, the word "soylent" is supposed to suggest soybeans and lentils.
- The video game in Simonson's apartment, Computer Space (1971), was one of the first coin-operated video games, manufactured by Nutting Associates in 1971 and designed by Nolan Bushnell, who later founded "Atari" and designed Pong (1972). The video game was painted white for the movie but the original color was either yellow, red, blue or green.
- The Soylent Green manufacturing facility is the Chevron oil refinery and power plant in El Segundo, California.
- Leigh Taylor-Young (Shirl) and Stephen Young (Gilbert) were the only stars of the film who lived to see the real 2022.
- According to Dick Van Patten, Edward G. Robinson died that same evening of the final scene when he leads him to the room in the "Home Clinic." The next day Charlton Heston had the whole cast meet in the studio and made the announcement.
- This was the last film shot at the "MGM Studios" backlot on Overland Boulevard and Culver Boulevard in Culver City, California. Because of the end of the "studio system" MGM had let all of their lots decay and fall apart by the time of filming, which relieved the effects crew of much dystopian set-dressing. The lots were razed in 1973 to make room for an assisted living communities, condominiums, and office complexes.
- The pencils that Thorn gives Sol are Palomino Blackwings, distinguished by the gold-colored flat eraser end. These were highly sought after high-grade pencils discontinued in 1998. Notable users of Blackwings include: writer John Steinbeck, animator Chuck Jones, author Truman Capote, composer Quincy Jones, author E.B. White, and animator Don Bluth. The pencils have been brought back and are again available since 2010.
- Among the buildings in the matte "skyline" in the nighttime background of future New York City in the scene where Gilbert crosses the drainage ditch, one can see the Marina City towers (Chicago) and the Transamerica Pyramid (San Francisco).
- All of Sgt. Kulozik's lines were dubbed. Mike Henry's slight Southern drawl did not fit the New York City cop he was playing.
- All of Roy Jenson's lines were dubbed to hide his thin Canadian accent.
- The title card of the film - showing the words "Soylent Green" over the backdrop of lower Manhattan, New York City - correctly predicts the "future" showing a skyline without the World Trade Center towers. The "twin towers" were completed in 1973, the year of the film's release, and were destroyed on September 11, 2001.