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Greydon Clark Drive-in Double Feature: Hi-Riders (1978)/The Bad Bunch (1976/aka Tom/VCI DVD) + Uninvited (1988/Cheezy Flicks DVD)

Picture: C/C/C- Sound: C Extras: C/C- Films: C/C/D

Greydon Clark is one of those successful 1970s directors who thrived in independent exploitation genre filmmaking in the 1970s and made some of its more interesting films, but by the 1980s, he had done everything he could and never found a way to recover. We now look at three of his features on two recent DVD releases that show the kind of work he was doing.

The Bad Bunch (1973) was his very first film and in it, he played Jim, a Vietnam Veteran who visits the father of a young man with whom he served. His friend was African American, he Caucasian, so when he goes to the tough neighborhood to do so, he also meets the brother of the dead man (Tom, played by Tom Johnignarn) who hates white people, liberalism, the war and blames Jim for his death as much as anything. It becomes an exploitation film from there, but is also an interesting time capsule, despite being overly obvious about its populist take on politics. Aldo Ray, Jock Mahoney and Mardi Rustam also star.

Three films later came **Hi-Riders (1978)** which wanted to capitalize on both car films and the bandit-chase cycle of that subgenre, as drag racing leads to people being killed and the father of the competitor wants fatal revenge. It is more entertaining for its stunts, widescreen cinematography and crudeness than its script, which is on the weak side. The result is not quite what you might get out of an Australian Brian Trenchard-Smith (or slimier) film of the kind, but it is still worth seeing, especially since the cast includes Mel Ferrer, Stephen McNally, Neville Brand and the great Ralph Meeker.

Both of those are fun, but by 1988, Clark landed up doing **Uninvited** and it went straight to video. Though you could never figure out what the thing is about form the title, the idea is a hoot. A nice, kind orange cat found in a lab in Florida has a deadly secret within it literally. Another creature lives inside it and when it manifests itself, people get horrifically killed. A much smaller creature is using it as a living host, slowly pops out of its mouth and starts to kill as it instantly grows to human size!

Yes, this really, bad, lame howler belongs on **Mystery Science Theater 3000** and Cheezy should have included such a commentary, but it also reminds us of how bad genre filmmaking declined by the late 1980s. Alex Cord, Clu Gulager, Rob Estes and George Kennedy also show up.

The anamorphically enhanced 2.35 X 1 image on **Hi-Riders** (miscredited on the box as 1.85 X 1 and shot in Todd-AO 35mm anamorphic by Dean Cundey just before his classic work on Carpenter's **Halloween**) and letterboxed 1.85 X 1 image **Bunch** on each respective film offered by VCI are in fairly good shape, but the prints are aged, have some issues and the 1.33 X 1 image on **Uninvited** looks worse with pale color and a more degraded image throughout.

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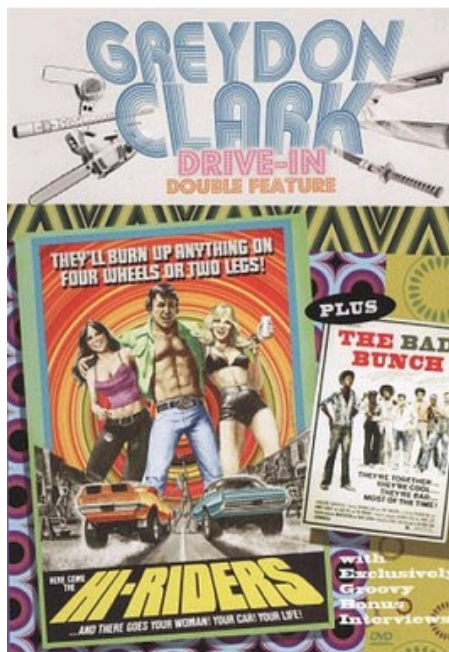
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- > The Great Mouse Detective – Mystery In The Midst Edition (1986/Disney DVD)
- > Simon & Simon: Season Four (1984 – 1985/Shout! Factory DVD)
- > Spaghetti Western Collection (Any Gun Can Play/A Bullet For Sandoval/The Strangers Gundown/Today We Kill, Tomorrow We Die/VCI DVD Set)

The Dolby Digital 2.0 Mono on the VCI films are good for their age, while the same on **Uninvited** is a little harsh throughout.


Extras include trailers, on-cameras interviews and feature-length audio commentaries with Clark and company on both films from VCI, while the Cheezy DVD has trailers for other films and some intermission shorts.

For more on Clark, try this link to his howler **Black Shampoo**:

[http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/2120/Black+Shampoo+\(1976\)](http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/2120/Black+Shampoo+(1976))

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