

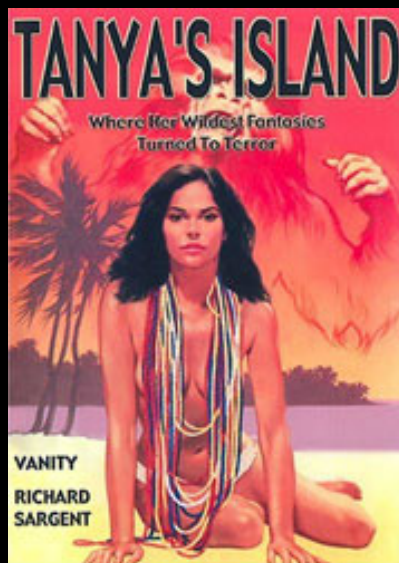
# the B-Movie Buffet

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## Tanya's Island [Substance]

1980; color

Directed by Alfred Sole

**Starring: Vanity, Richard Sargent, Mariette Levesque & Don McCleod**

This Canadian flick from 1980 stars a very young (and frequently naked) Vanity—that's right, the girl from Prince's ensemble—appearing here under the name D.D. Winters. Vanity plays Tanya, an actress making what appears to be some sort of jungle/native movie (even though the one scene we see her film is shot in what looks to be a bus or trolley) and living with her boyfriend, a painter named Lobo. Their relationship is tumultuous, if not violent, yet she seems to fully be committed to him. We see Tanya get into a shouting match/minor scrap with Lobo and, the next thing we know, she's walking down a mysteriously lit hallway and peering into room teeming with dry ice fog. All of a sudden the fog gives way to a tropical paradise apparently only inhabited by Tanya, Lobo and a white horse. How they and the horse got to this island is not fully explained—or explained at all, for that matter—but the change of scenery seems to have done their relationship good, as they're acting all lovey-dovey towards each other, and he's painting like there's no tomorrow. Once they decide to check out the other side of the island though, all hell begins to break loose. Tanya finds and befriends an ape-like creature, who she names Blue. Although he's supposed to be an ape, Blue looks more like a cross between a shorter Chewbacca and Kris Kristofferson in an ape suit. I've gotta point out that until we're introduced to Blue, the dialogue is so wooden it's practically petrified, and Vanity delivers her lines with about as much conviction as Troy McClure. Once the monkey's in movie things do pick up a bit, with a subtle nod to Mighty Joe Young in the way Tanya seems to be able to control Blue. Unfortunately, the guy in the monkey suit is the most expressive actor in the film, and all

he does is grunt, beat on his chest, throw coconuts, and sneer. Anyway, Tanya's new friend makes Lobo jealous and, as his anger progresses, he starts plotting ways to trap the beast and keep the girl all to himself. Then things go from bad to worse for Tanya, Lobo, Blue and, in turn, the viewer; we get jungle prisons (replete with the prerequisite escapes and recapturings—albeit with some twists), humans imitating apes, apes imitating humans and, eventually, implied ape on human rape. Tanya's Island is hilariously bad; almost transcending the so-bad-it's-good realm into the just plain lousy, yet it does offer moments of sin-ematic redemption like the scene where Lobo is stalking Blue in the jungle but moves about as deftly as John Belushi's Bluto prowls the campus in Animal House. As Tanya's Island spins out of control to it's (somewhat) predictable conclusion, two things becomes evident: it's a good thing Vanity discovered singing and no travel agent in the world is gonna be offering trips to this island any time soon.

—the Kommandant

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