

SHOCK YOKS!

BLOODSUCKERS FROM OUTER SPACE

(1984) ♂♂♂

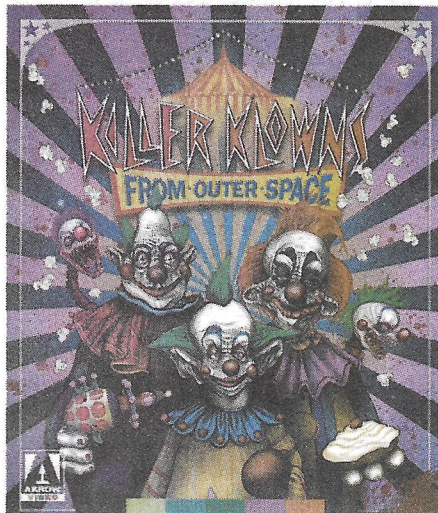
D: Glenn Coburn. Thom Meyers, Laura Ellis, Pat Paulsen, Billie Keller, Robert Bradeen. 79 mins. (Vinegar Syndrome \$32.98) 5/18

Seems that formerly fine, upstanding Texas farm folk are transmogrifying into brain-washed bloodsuckers, and only freelance photographer Jeff Rhodes (Meyers) and main squeeze Julie (Ellis) can save mankind. Question is: Should they bother? Coburn's technically crude but frequently funny creature comedy poses this and other pressing queries while taking broad satiric aim at ornery rednecks, lazy lawmen, spaced-out scientists and mad military brass. Some of the performances are rough-edged at best (guest star and erstwhile perennial Presidential candidate Paulsen literally phones in his cameo as our nation's distracted Chief Exec), but Coburn's casual, low-key approach keeps his free-form flick from self-destructing. And dig that crazy country hard rock theme song. Extras on Vinegar Syndrome's new Blu-ray special edition include a commentary track with writer/director Coburn, actor Thom Meyers and cinematographer Chad D. Smith; **34 Years Later**, a 50-minute making-of documentary; **Back to Bloodsucker Town**, a locations featurette; **Bloody Arm Rip 101** special effects featurette, plus a stills gallery and reversible cover artwork

JEREMIAH'S WOODS (2018) ♂♂♂

D: William Stancik. Alex Wood, J. Gabriel Wagner, Joe Zumba, Bennie Rockum, Marie Jenasee. 84 mins. (Laslo Films) 4/18

When mentally flatlined slacker friends Tucker (Wood) and Shafer (Wagner) head into a patch of nearby woods to find a final resting place for Tucker's deceased dog Murray, they encounter more than they bar-



gained for in the form of slow-moving, loud-talking forest fiend Jeremiah (Rockum). After recruiting reinforcements of sorts in Tucker's lazy, pervy in-law Fred (Zumba), they unwisely return and rapidly become Jeremiah's captives for an extended variation on the pawnshop basement sequence from **Pulp Fiction**. A graduate of the Rob Zombie School of Filmmaking, writer/director Stancik keeps his slasher spoof, lensed in the wilds of Washington State, consistently amusing via deadpan perfs, inspiredly brain-damaged dialogue, and knowing nods to a wide array of DIY horror tropes, from shaky cameras, grainy footage and random solar flares to mysterious flash forwards and murky flashbacks to our madman's previous crimes. Auteur Stancik also composed a deliberately hideous atonal tune, "I Grow My Tree in You," croaked by our raspy-voiced killer to Casio keyboard accompaniment ear-curdling enough to make Chester N. Turner's **Black Devil Doll from Hell**'s infamous soundtrack sound slick. Withal, **Jeremiah's Woods** makes for a welcome addition to the low-budget frightcom ranks, and we look forward to seeing more from auteur Stancik in future. In the meantime, don't ask why **The Shed Is Red!**

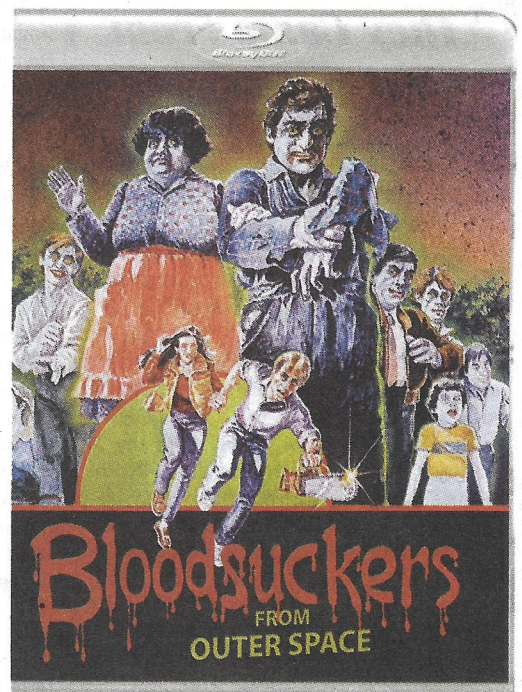
—The Phantom

KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE

(1988) ♂♂♂

D: Stephen Chiodo. Grant Cramer, Suzanne Snyder, John Allen Nelson, John Vernon, Royal Dano, Michael Siegel, Peter Licassi. 90 mins. (Arrow Video \$29.98) 5/18

At a lovers' cove, Mike (Cramer) and Debbie (Snyder) spy a shooting star they believe to be an Earthbound comet. Although reluctant at first, Mike is talked into exploring the nearby woods by his sweet-as-a-sugar-cookie gal. In the woods, they find a giant circus tent. While most people would run for the hills upon this discovery, Mike and Debbie actually venture into the tent for a look around. Inside they locate proof that the tent is actually a space ship, complete with a giant room full of oversized cotton-candy cocoons. (The meaty insides of the cocoons consist of hapless humans, which the Klowns use like juice boxes when they need a quick blood fix.) Hysterical, Mike and Debbie seek help from Deputy Dave (Nelson), who refuses to believe their crazy story and even arrests Mike for disturbing the peace. (It doesn't help that Mike is dating Dave's ex-girlfriend.) Pretty soon, the quiet little college town is under assault by the horde of Klowns as they prowl the streets for human blood. Dave nails his proof of the Klowns' existence when he and Mike discover all the cars at the lovers' cove have been cotton-candyized. (Some of the preferred methods of murder the Klowns employ include psychotic puppet shows, Klown-headed popcorn serpents, custard-pie acid bath, sinister shadow-created creatures, and a boxing-match decapitation, among others.) When the police station is suddenly swamped with calls pertaining



to the cosmic creepers, Sheriff Mooney (Vernon) is convinced the whole town is in on a joke to drive him to retire. After Debbie is taken captive and imprisoned in an outsized balloon, Deputy Dave and Mike team up with the dim-witted Tarenzie Brothers, Rick (Siegel) and Paul (Licassi), to storm the Klowns' ship and save the girl. On the ship, Deputy Dave, Mike and Debbie face off with the 50-foot Klownzilla, while Rick and Paul make time with a couple of Klown babes. **Killer Klowns** is an enjoyably whacked-out, hyperactive creature feature with some top-notch monstroids, plenty of twisted humor and imagination to spare. The Dickies' title song is cool (as was their Klowns-infested video), while Vernon steals the show as the paranoid, teen-hating lawman. (His delivery of lines like "Well, whoopity-goddamndy-do, what do we have here?" and "I oughta shoot you right now, you red-nosed freak!" is classic.) The film borrows heavily from such beloved horror movies as the original **The Blob** and **Night of the Living Dead**. The movie's major flaw is having all the characters seem generally brain-dead and obnoxious (especially the Tarenzi Brothers), which can make repeat viewings tough. Still, **Killer Klowns from Outer Space** remains a breath of fresh air for evil-extraterrestrial and crazed-clown fanatics, and Mama Chiodo's boys—Stephen, Charles and Edward—deserve credit for crafting a wild and clever winner. Arrow Video goes over the big top with the extras, offering a Chiodo Brothers commentary, interviews with Suzanne Snyder, Grant Cramer, composer John Massarie and original members of The Dickies, who recall the genesis of the theme song, the documentary **The Chiodo Brothers Walk Among Us**, new and vintage featurettes, deleted scenes, audition footage, bloopers, image galleries, original theatrical trailer and more.

—Rob Freese