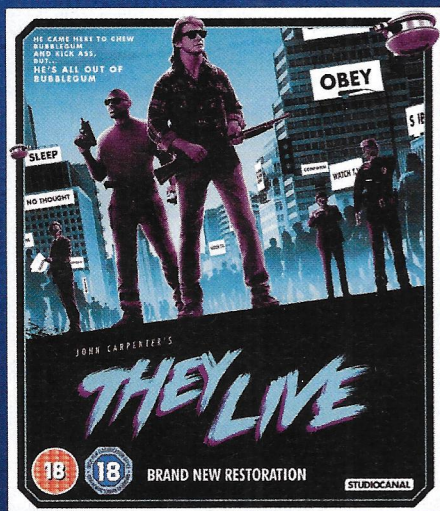


They Live is a biting satire of yuppies and unrestrained capitalism told through the lens of a sci-fi actioner about blue-collar tough guys. Yet here we are in 2018, and one could argue that the film is more relevant than ever.

Roddy Piper is Nada, a wanderer without meaning, trying to chase the American Dream. Then he discovers a pair of special sunglasses which give him the ability to see how corrupt and controlled the world really is. As he walks the streets of Los Angeles, he notices that the media and government have hidden subliminal messages everywhere in order to keep the population in line. Furthermore, most of society's elite are actually aliens with world domination in mind. It's up to Nada to save the day by chewing bubblegum and kicking ass, but the aliens aren't going down without a fight.



Despite a premise some would consider outlandish, Carpenter's ability to balance sincerity to the material with the film's satirical qualities really helps drive his point home. They Live moves at a brisk pace and lets the tension and paranoia rise until it reaches fever pitch and explodes into a glorious romp. However, Carpenter integrates just the right amount of humour and self-awareness without ever losing track of the message at heart.

On top of being an excellent thought-provoking thriller, it's also an entertaining buddy movie that boasts great chemistry between Piper and his main co-star, Keith David, which is really punctuated through a scene where they brawl uninterrupted for five minutes and make amends afterwards. It's probably the most macho scene in the history of cinema. But this is pure Carpenter -- an everyman hero saga that effortlessly blends genres and provides both food for thought and entertainment in abundance.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟🧟

SPECIAL FEATURES: Unfortunately, the disc isn't stacked with extras. There is an entertaining commentary with Carpenter and Piper, but if you're picking this release up then you'll be doing so for the movie itself. Fortunately, They Live is more than worth your money -- even if it will go towards fuelling the capitalist mega powers.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟🧟

THEY LIVE is out now on UK Collector's Edition: 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray, DVD and Amazon Prime Streaming courtesy of Studiocanal.

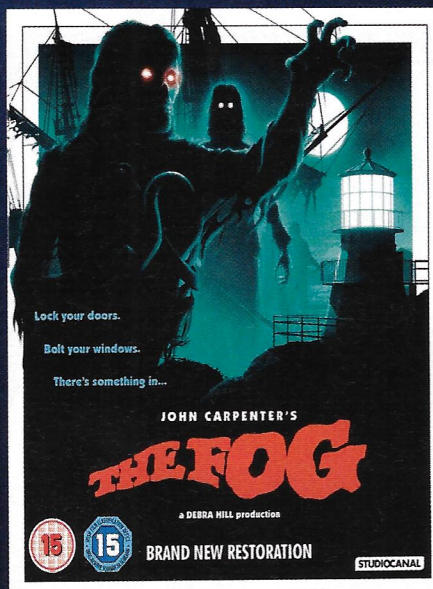
REVIEWED BY KIERAN FISHER

THE FOG (COLLECTOR'S EDITION: 4K ULTRA HD AND BLU-RAY)

THE FILM: Following up his 1978 classic Halloween was never going to be easy, but John Carpenter returned with a successful chiller that's just as impressive in its own right. While The Fog didn't receive the same critical adoration or go on to spawn a mega hit franchise that continues to this day, as far as good old-fashioned ghost stories go, it's hard to beat. The Fog is a cinematic campfire tale rooted in small town Americana gothic, and it's wonderful.

The story is simple; a cursed coastal town is haunted by supernatural sailors on the eve of its 100th anniversary. You see, the townsfolk must deal with the sins of their ancestors when the sea-faring spooks return to settle an old score, hidden in the glow of a terrifying fog that can't be stopped.

Like Halloween, The Fog's horror stems from its simplicity. Carpenter is more concerned with cultivating atmosphere and creating dread for viewers. Carpenter opts for a 'less is more' approach, and



the film's ambiguity and supernatural elements make for quite the spine-chilling experience. Michael Myers has human qualities, but how do you put a stop to unexplainable mist that can glide through any open space? The fog has an other-worldly feel and feels every bit as dangerous and oppressive as any formidable horror villain.

Most horror aficionados will attest to the haunting power of The Fog, but it deserves to be placed alongside the iconic director's finest work. Pick this release up, turn the lights off, and experience scare fare at in its most masterful, purest form.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟🧟

SPECIAL FEATURES: The disc comes with two audio commentaries. The first is hosted by Carpenter and Debra Hill. The second features some of the film's cast and crew members, Tom Atkins, Adrienne Barbeau, as well as production designer Tommy Lee Wallace.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟🧟

THE FOG is out now on UK Collector's Edition: 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray and Amazon Prime Streaming courtesy of Studiocanal.

REVIEWED BY KIERAN FISHER

DEADBEAT AT DAWN

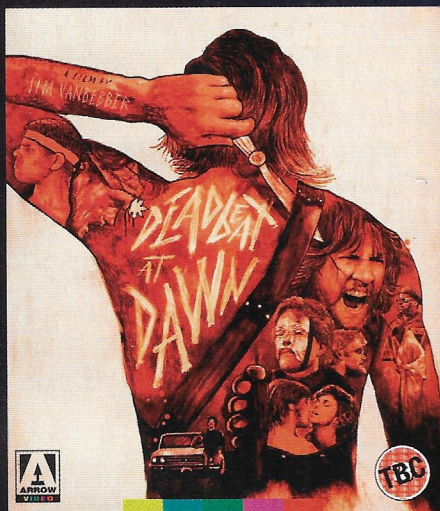
THE FILM: Whether you love his work or hate it, there's no denying that low budget auteur Jim Van Bebber is a maverick when it comes to DIY filmmaking. He's spent his career struggling to get new movies made (his Manson Family movie took 10 years to make), but the end results tend to be memorable, uncompromising works of brutality. His debut, Deadbeat At Dawn, is a marvel of independent filmmaking.

Taking place in an dilapidated urban hellscape, the film follows Goose (Van Bebber), a gang banger who gives up the life of crime and violence at the behest of his girlfriend. Of course, if we've learned anything from crime stories, it's damn near impossible to get out of the game and bad things will happen eventually regardless. This one is no different. As it turns out the local gangs have unfinished business with Goose, but they end up slaughtering his girlfriend instead. This leads the heartbroken criminal on a savage crusade into the abyss, and you best believe things get nasty.

Few filmmakers capture the feeling of hopelessness, lost youth, or being a social outcast quite like Van Bebber. Deadbeat At Dawn marked the first of several films about drug-addled, violent outsiders. His flicks are harrowing and unapologetic, the

real deal counterculture cinema that's hard to watch but nonetheless fascinating. In *Deadbeat At Dawn*, one character proclaims "I hate people and just don't fuckin' care." These are the types of characters the auteur centres his films around, and this skewed worldview is peppered throughout his work.

Still, unlike some of his other movies, *Deadbeat At Dawn* is still quite entertaining and fun. The characters are all over the top and colourful, and we get plenty of splatter and even some Kung-fu for good measure. You'll laugh at scenes featuring Goose's dad as he chases his son with a meat cleaver and roams around topless. At other times, though, it's downright disturbing and cruel. But it's an ugly movie and ultimately depressing, so enter at your own risk.



While not for all tastes, *Deadbeat At Dawn* deserves this release and Van Bebber deserves credit for what he's accomplished. He's a demented genius, and we need more filmmakers who march to the beat of their own drum in the name of art. Hideous art it may be, but it will leave a lasting impression.

Rating: 🧠🧠🧠🧠🧠

SPECIAL FEATURES: As is the case with most Arrow releases, the extras are loaded. This is the perfect introduction to the filmmaker as the features include a career retrospective documentary, his short films, and music videos. There is also a behind the scenes doc about *Deadbeat At Dawn* along with a commentary, outtakes, and an image gallery.

Rating: 🧠🧠🧠🧠🧠

DEADBEAT AT DAWN is out now on **UK Blu-ray** courtesy of Arrow Video.

REVIEWED BY KIERAN FISHER

THE SNARLING

THE FILM: A sleepy English village is invaded by the cast and crew of a new zombie horror film, but the horror turns real

when someone or something starts tearing villagers, cast and crew to shreds.

The *Snarling* is the feature directorial debut of Pablo Raybould who has been clearly inspired by the works of Joe Dante and John Landis. In fact, Raybould's efforts borrow heavily from their catalogue to make a solid horror comedy. However, in his execution, Raybould struggles to manage the juxtaposition of both genres successfully.

Some could blame a low-budget or a directors inexperience as a reason as to why this film is so uneven. I personally think the film is unable to reach its full potential because of how convoluted the script is. The film doesn't get a moment to breathe. It goes from scene to scene whilst a bunch of actors do their best to bring a poorly written script to life. As a result, the film barely manages to keep up its momentum and I spent a large portion of the film feeling very frustrated.

It's not entirely bad news. Raybould manages to inspire his cast to deliver the goods to get the job done. It's just a shame that their performances only seem to shine in its more comedic moments. As for the films more intense or scary parts, every performance is massively exaggerated and over the top.

It would be easy to criticise *The Snarling's* glaring technical errors but the main issue I have with the film lies with its practical effects. The werewolf effects are laughable and there is a distinct lack of gore or creativity. However, all negative aspects aside, Raybould's efforts do pay off albeit intermittently. There are quite a few effective scares along the way and in these moments it is clear that Raybould possesses the necessary skills to keep audiences engaged. In this case, he seemingly has



trouble executing them with precision.

The *Snarling* is an entertaining comedy but that's all. Perhaps with a tighter script, better performances and a focus on making its horror elements more effective, this would have been a completely different viewing experience. I have no doubt that with more experience under his belt Raybould could deliver the goods needed to make this film a success. Until then I would advise you to approach this one with caution.

Rating: 🧠🧠🧠🧠🧠

THE SNARLING is out now on **UK DVD** courtesy of Left Films.

REVIEWED BY JON DICKINSON

THE MONSTER

THE FILM: A mother and daughter must confront a terrifying monster when they break down on a deserted road.

To sum up Bryan Bertino's latest offering *The Monster* in one word, I'd have to call it amazing. In combining solid performances and fantastic creature effects, *The Monster* delivers one hell of a punch and never left me wanting more. In fact, not only did Bertino exceed every one of my expectations but his efforts have easily secured a place for *The Monster* as one of my favourite horror films of the year.

In the film mature teenager Lizzy (Ella Ballentine) is forced to live with her alcoholic mother Kathy (Zoe Kazan) after her father leaves their home. After being neglected by her mother, arrangements are made for Lizzy to spend time with her father. Unfortunately for Lizzy, Kathy oversleeps and the two are forced to travel during some bad weather and their car breaks down after hitting a wolf on a lonely stretch of road unaware that a monster lurks within the darkness of the woods.

The first act serves as a compelling and utterly heartbreaking mood piece led by two fantastic actresses and goes into great detail about the struggles they face in their everyday lives. Through their interactions and arguments, audiences quickly learn why the bond between mother and daughter is so strained. By the time the second and third act comes around, Bertino quickly ramps up the action and the pair are forced to stand together despite their differences to unite against a new threat. At the end of the day *The Monster* is a film about survival. Survival against everyday horror and survival against supernatural threats.

In the director's seat, Bryan Bertino does a truly superb job here to create