

for your eyes and your horror minds.

George C. Scott is the strongest part of the film, playing the Lieutenant with ease and sophistication. He's thoughtful, humorous and intelligent; he's open to the idea of otherworldly explanations so there's none of the overused trope where someone has to convince someone there's a demon, ghost or poltergeist behind it all. This is an Exorcist film after all and it's great that it side-steps this element of predictability.

The film plays out like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* with an injection of horror, complete with a Nurse Ratched who runs around with scissors. If you're after something identical to *The Exorcist* then you may be disappointed by this dialogue-heavy, intricate tale that's more about the story than the scares. There are moments of dread, as mentioned, and a jump scare that'll have you out of your chair, but this is a character-driven piece that is without the sharp shocks of *The Exorcist*.

The Exorcist III is a worthy follow-up, but is without the straight-up terror from the original. For that, it can only be classed as a lesser film. *The Exorcist* managed to perfectly balance an important familial tale with skin-prickling frights that will be remembered for decades to come. This one is great too, but without the everlasting Exorcist effect.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

SPECIAL FEATURES: I can't fault this 2-disc collection with its array of special features, which includes the Director's cut that was first believed to be lost. Further extras include an audio commentary, a making of, deleted scenes, image galleries and an audio interview with William Peter Blatty, plus tons more. It's a real feast for those that are keen to delve into the world of *The Exorcist III* even more.

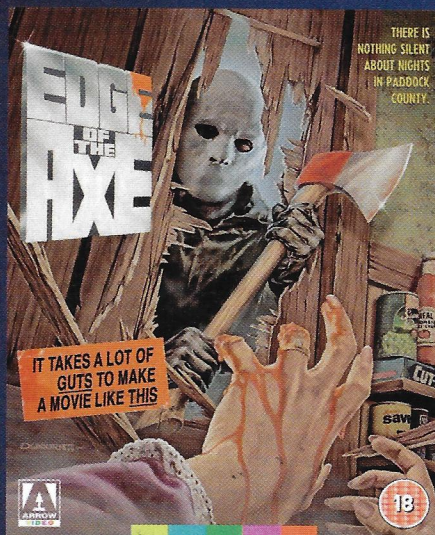
Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

THE EXORCIST III is out now on **UK Blu-ray** courtesy of Arrow Video.

REVIEWED BY JESSY WILLIAMS

EDGE OF THE AXE

THE FILM: From experienced Spanish director José Ramón Larraz, working here under the alias of Joseph Braunstein, comes *Edge of the Axe*; a late-to-the-party and low budget eighties slasher. Now, as always Arrow Video have done a terrific job in terms of restoration, making this film look fresher than it ever has since its original release in 1988 and this release looks great overall but there



are some doubts over whether the film actually deserves it.

Set in a rural American county, but filmed primarily in Spain, *Edge of the Axe* opens with a masked axe-wielding psychopath killing whilst inside a car wash machine during broad daylight, an opening which immediately raises expectations that the rest of the film struggles to live up to.

What we get is a relatively staid slasher mystery with an ever increasing but not always visible body count and a few red herrings scattered about. However, this is executed with so much inconsistency, as the violence too often seems unsatisfying and the tension generated fluctuating wildly between non-existent and gripping, resulting in a film that struggles to build any lasting interest.

Now even making allowances for the usual weak story and plot conveniences, so often predominant in the slasher genre, the fact that Larraz can't reliably fall back on entertaining violence leaves *Edge of the Axe* only one area in which to excel in - that of the mystery.

And it is clear that it is here that the filmmakers saw as the heart of the film due to the number of potential suspects bordering on that of an Agatha Christie novel. In the end the fundamental focus on the new-to-town Gerald (Barton Faulks), his bug exterminator friend Richard (Page Moseley), and Gerald's love interest, the young Lilian Nebbs (Christina Marie Lane in her only credited role) becomes somewhat confusing as their interest in getting to the bottom of these murders appears to be more to pass the time rather than any real interest, although the same could be said for the local Sheriff too.

Thankfully the story and action do improve as the film goes on, with the shoehorned appearance of Jack Taylor sure to raise a smile, and those who stick with it will be rewarded, but

the importance given to keeping the audience guessing is unfortunately to the detriment of the films overall quality, and ultimately leads to an unsatisfying and misjudged climax.

Lacking the style, violence and fun of earlier European and American slashers, *Edge of the Axe* does flirt with genuine moments of quality but ultimately is a clear second-rate slasher that resides in the shadows of many that came before it. That's not to say it won't entertain many of you however, even if only in parts.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

SPECIAL FEATURES: Arrow Video very rarely disappoint on this front and this release of *Edge of the Axe* is no different, with the disc including an Image Gallery slideshow, original trailers in English and Spanish as well two different, brand new audio commentaries, including one from the fantastic *The Hysteria Continues*. I am also glad to report, subtitles for the hard-of-hearing which is becoming more common place.

But for many of us the real value of the special features comes in the form of additional content such as interviews of documentaries. Here, we are treated to three newly recorded interviews of around ten minutes each. These are a charming one with actor Barton Faulks, an informative one with actor Page Moseley and one with make-up artist Colin Arthur, during which he admits he doesn't remember doing the film but still manages to provide general interesting insights.

The first pressing of the release also comes with a collector's booklet, with the first 500 limited edition copies coming with a slipcase.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

THE EDGE OF THE AXE is out now on **UK Blu-ray** courtesy of Arrow Video.

REVIEWED BY MAREK TURNER

THE BEYOND

THE FILM: From the depths of Hell comes the Shameless Films recently released Blu-ray of *The Beyond* aka *L'Adila* from giallo genre legend Lucio Fulci. For fans of the sub-genre and the Italian director, this release will be one to ensure sits upon a small yellow throne within the collection as it is known to be a staple piece from the highly stylised horror category. However, for those who don't quite have the taste for Italian cinema just yet, this particular film might not be the best starting place as it struggles to be cohesive and hold its own attention.

The Beyond follows the youthful Liza,