

**Reverse Shot
Fesses Up**
Introduction

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**Spotlight on
KIYOSHI KUROSAWA**

Pulse
Cure
Charisma
Bright Future

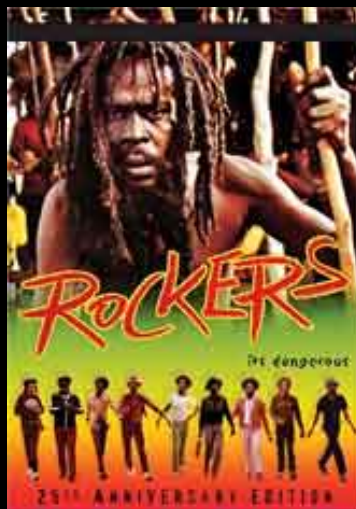
They Came**From Memphis****WILLIAM EGGLESTON:**

-William Eggleston interview
 -William Eggleston in the
*Real World/
Stranded in Canton*

IRA SACHS :

-Interview with Forty Shades

THE NEW MAGAZINE OF FILM CULTURE

**Rockers**

Dir. Ted Bafaloukos, 1978, Jamaica
 Mvd, \$24.95

I'd still have to recommend this if its only available images were those stupid swirly-twirly "psychedelic" visualizations you can watch on iTunes. The music is that constant and that classic. Happily there's a movie attached, and its greatest success is in mirroring and thus amplifying the lackadaisical but never politically blunted sounds and rhythms of the reggae music that both inspired and soundtracked it. *Rockers* is rarely discussed without mention of its predecessor, 1972's *The Harder They Come*, but it's needless to ask which one's "better." *Rockers* certainly boasts more all-stars, with a cast that includes "Dirty Harry" Hall, Jacob Miller, Gregory Isaacs, Robbie Shakespeare, Burning Spear, and Pete Tosh, among a slew of other talents. It's also the lighter, funnier, and more vibrant movie of the two, and its panoply of island colors sparkle on this Anniversary Edition DVD.

Rockers opens with a long, slow-building, percussion-driven jam by the Abyssinians. After a few minutes Ashley "Higher" Harris sidles up to face the camera and, in no hurry whatsoever, takes several slugs off of an enormous bong and explains through heavy patois (helpfully decoded in an accompanying glossary) the themes of "I-heights" and love for all. More than merely setting the mood, this beginning jam session at once signals the movie's pace and indifference to plot. Once it gets around to it, though, we learn that main character Horsemouth (legendary drummer Leroy Wallace, essentially playing himself) wants to buy a motorbike so he can ride around and (physically) sell more records. He gets the bike (in a funny bargaining sequence), loses it at a party, locates it on a gangster leader's warehouse lot, gets the shit kicked out of him, and eventually assembles a crack team of musician friends to retrieve it as the film turns somewhat erratically into a hijinksy heist caper.

of Blue's Ira Sachs

Interviews

Andrew Niccol

Noah Baumbach

Tilda Swinton

New York Film Festival

Shot/Reverse Shot:

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Good Luck

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Two Eyes

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New Releases

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-Corpse Bride

-Thumbsucker

-The Weeping Meadow

-Where the Truth Lies

DVD Reviews

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But structure and plot matter little here; it's the music and the random in-between scenes that you'll cherish weeks later. Decades distant from their "Bad Boys" (the Cops theme) notoriety, Inner Circle perform a startling "Tenement Yard" at a soon-to-turn-sour house party. Burning Spear serenades Horsemouth a cappella on the beach. We go inside a pressing plant to see gobs of shellac squirted out, flattened, punctured, and grooved into the 45s Horsemouth hawks from the back of his bike and at neighborhood stores.

Flaky tourists serve as fodder in tossed-off scenes both comic (Isaacs retrieving locked-in keys from cars for a laughably inflated price) and exultant (Hall and Horsemouth hijacking the DJ booth at a disco party so they can blast "Queen Majesty"). Although he's Greek, any cultural anxiety director Ted Bafaloukos could have had on set never surfaces onscreen, as he consistently identifies with and champions the causes of Rastafari. On the DVD's choicest extra — a relaxed, thoroughly unpretentious interview — he discusses how the musicians and actors involved understood and appreciated his desire as a hip outsider to fairly display but never feign to co-opt their culture. Thus *Rockers* feels less like a filmmaker's triumph than it does the triumph of Jamaica itself.

—JUSTIN STEWART

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