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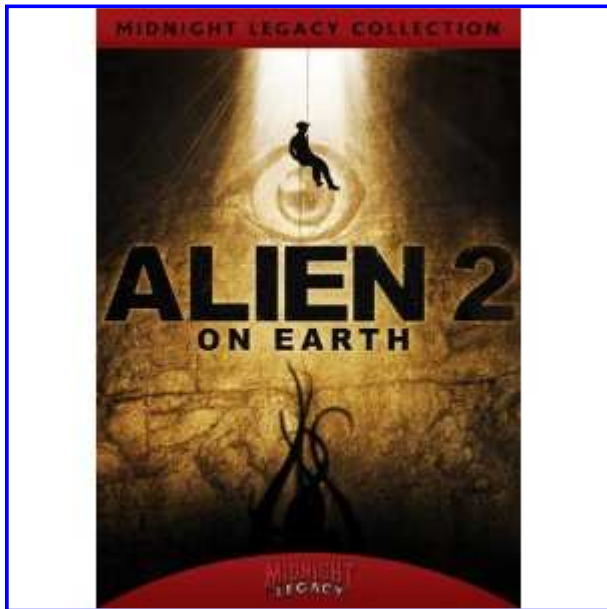
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Alien 2: On Earth



DVD / Blu-ray review (region 1)

Directed by [Ciro Ippolito](#) (as [Sam Cromwell](#))Starring [Belinda Mayne](#), [Mark Bodin](#), [Roberto Barrese](#), [Benny Aldrich](#)

Release date: Out now

**Shortly after a space probe crashes to Earth, intrepid speleologist Thelma Joyce (Mayne) begins to suffer from terrible psychic visions. When she joins a team of fellow experts on a caving expedition, they're attacked by an unstoppable xenomorph hatched from alien rock...**

During the giddy heyday of Italian exploitation cinema, filmmakers liked nothing better than ripping off or making unofficial sequels to Hollywood hits. And so fright-junkies were treated to such cut-price delights as [Lucio Fulci's \*Zombi 2\*](#) (*Night of the Living Dead* being known as *Zombi* in Italy, of course); *Evil Dead 3* (aka *La Casa 3*); the *Jaws* knock-off *The Last Shark*; and 1980's nutty little low-budget effort *Alien 2: On Earth*.

It goes without saying that [Ciro Ippolito's](#) movie isn't exactly in the same league as [James Cameron's](#) official sequel. Still, it's nice to see this barmy, obscure little film getting a semi-prestigious release from [Midnight Legacy](#), complete with lovingly restored sound and picture and a couple of extras (a soundless collection of effects outtakes and the hilarious Dutch VHS trailer, which advises viewers of a nervous disposition to steer clear. You have been warned!).

Few would argue that *Alien 2* is an unsung masterpiece. The story is a nonsense (what relevance do Thelma's unexplained psychic powers have to the plot? What's going on in the last 15 minutes? Why

is the cave setting so incidental to the alien invasion story?), the dialogue and acting are terrible, and the gore effects are ridiculous (in place of *Alien*'s chestburster scene, we get an "eye-burster" scene, which looks a bit like a gobstopper on a stick slowing being pushed through an unconvincing dummy). All of these add to the film's stupid, colourful charm.

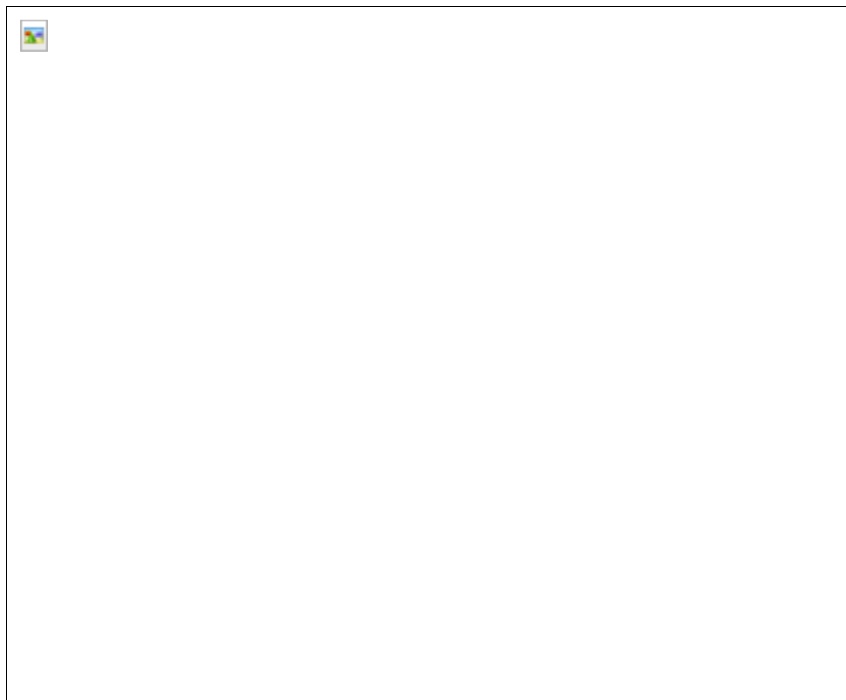
It's also a surprisingly well-shot film, with Ippolito making effective use of the creepy underground locations, and the weird score from "Oliver Onions" (actually Guido and Mauricio De Angelis) mixing funk and a glass orchestra in a unique, unsettling way.

The cave locations actually make *Alien 2* feel closer to the later *The Descent* than *Alien* (a fact reflected by the cover art), though it's not in the same league, obviously. Bearing in mind Neil Marshall's expressed love of exploitation cinema, it may not be a coincidence.

Watch out for *Dellamorte Dellamore* director Michele Soavi (under the pseudonym of "Mychael Shaw") popping up in a small role. **Matt McAllister**

### **VERDICT: 6/10**

***Alien 2* may not have the arty crossover appeal of the best Italian exploitation films of the period, but it's a dumb, fun monster movie that you almost wish had spawned a shoddy franchise of its own.**



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