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## Hollywood Man

REVIEWED BY: The Graveyard Tramp Posted on 10/02/2012



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By 1976, the 'cycle' of biker films, epitomised by 1969's *Easy Rider* and exploited by Roger Corman and the likes in movies such as *The Wild Angels*, *Satan's Sadists* and *The Cycle Savages*, was well and truly on its last legs, having enjoyed a good few years as a popular (and profitable) staple on the drive-in and grindhouse circuits.

In many ways, *Hollywood Man* is a film that is almost like a eulogy to the biker genre. A favourite of Quentin Tarantino (who screened the film as part of his inaugural 1997 QT-Fest), it stars rugged seventies action man William Smith (*Angels Die Hard*, *The Thing With Two Heads*, *Grave of the Vampire*) as Rafe Stoker, a B-movie actor/director who has sunk \$130,000 into his own biker epic, *To Die Hard*. When he fails to secure the funding to complete the picture from traditional sources (who tell him biker movies are dead), he turns to an organized crime boss to secure the \$300,000 required. Of course, the mob boss agrees to put up the cash only after Rafe agrees to outrageous terms, including putting up his house and all past films he has a piece of as collateral, which he will have to hand over should he fail to deliver a commercially viable film within four weeks.

Naturally, the mob plan to double-cross the desperate filmmaker, sending a real bikie gang to disrupt the filming enough so that Rafe will miss the deadline date (but not so much that he won't be able to complete the picture, giving the mob not only all of Stoker's collateral, but 100% ownership of *To Die Hard*). But Rafe is no shrinking violet prone to being pushed around, and when he shows the psychotic Harvey (Ray Girardin) up one too many times, it's suddenly not just his movie but his life itself that is put on the line.

Filed in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and directed by the late Jack Starrett (himself an actor in biker flicks such as *The Born Losers* and *Angels Die Hard* before he turned to directing films like *Nam's Angels*, *Cleopatra Jones*, *Race With the Devil* and *A Small Town In Texas*), *Hollywood Man* is no great shakes as either a biker or action flick. But what it does do well is capture the passion of filmmaking and the lengths that some people will do to realise their dream and complete their movie no matter what the stakes are. There is a sense that what is happening on screen mirrors a lot of what Starrett and his contemporaries suffered through in real life. With a screenplay that includes credits by stars Smith and Girardin, the film is filled with dialogue that references low-budget filmmaking (the cameraman complains "I'm shooting this with short ends from *Gone With the Wind*" and Stoker, bloodied and bruised in the back of a cop car, tells the cliched policeman who is driving "Being here with you is like playing a bad scene in a B-movie with a dumb honky sheriff"). The cast is rounded out by cult fave (and former Warhol regular) Mary Woronov and Don Stroud (another familiar face from seventies biker films and episodic television shows like *Police Woman* and *Hawaii Five-O*), and there's a typically cheesy title song that is crooned by Tony Chance.

Unfortunately, CFS Releasing's DVD of *Hollywood Man* is quite abysmal. The grainy fullscreen print looks like it was struck from an old VHS ex-rental, and the sound is a muddy mess (there is a much sharper print uploaded on You Tube). Extras are nonexistent. *Hollywood Man* may not be Jack Starrett's finest moment as a filmmaker (the superb *Race With the Devil* would take that honour), but it deserves a lot better than this shoddy effort.

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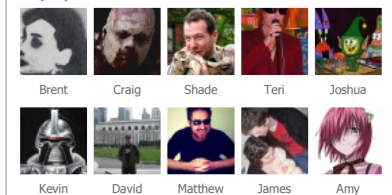
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DIRECTOR(S): Jack Starrett | COUNTRY: USA | YEAR: 1976 | DISTRIBUTOR(S): CFS Releasing | RUNNING TIME: 89 minutes | ASPECT RATIO: 1.33:1 | REGION: 0 / NTSC | DISCS: 1

EXTRAS:

There are no special features.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING:

- [Easy Rider](#)
- [The Wild Angels](#)
- [Race With the Devil](#)

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