



MCN Columnists

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"ThanksKilling" is another DIY effort that proves just how difficult it is to make a movie that's so bad it's good and, therefore, funny. There are several pretty decent gags in Jordan Downey's twisted holiday comedy, but most viewers over the age of 15 will be embarrassed to admit they laughed at them. The killer turkey is Triumph the Insult Comic Dog with a waddle. As with most such genre parodies, "ThanksKilling" runs out of steam at the halfway mark, causing redundancies and much forced humor. As late-night treat for stoners on Thanksgiving, though, it certainly beats watching reruns of the Macy's parade and mainlining tryptophan.

Horror auteur Sean Weathers claims **"Lust for Vengeance"** is the "first and only true giallo film ever made in the U.S. to date." That boast won't mean anything to 99 percent of all American moviegoers, but it's nice that he thinks it's true. Giallo, "yellow" in Italian, shares the same roots as American pulp. From about 1930 to the mid-'50s, the work of even our best mystery writers was limited to cheap paperbacks with lurid covers. In Italy, the pages of almost all such mysteries were bound within yellow covers, hence the name. Even more than American exploitation specialists, Italian giallo directors amped up the sex, violence and horror, by lingering on displays of nudity, gore and rape. That's what distinguishes "Lust for Vengeance: 10th Anniversary Edition" from other DIY horror flicks. The story is divided into five separately hued segments, in which a different woman is slaughtered by a guy who felt dissed by them in high school. (The cast is unusually diverse for this sort of thing.) That's it.

I'm not quite sure why **"The Teacher"** is being re-released by Cheezy Flicks. The classic exploitation flick from Crown International Pictures was recently included in a collection of cult favorites compiled by Mill Creek Entertainment and it doesn't look a scratch less threadbare. Neither have the primary reasons for watching Howard Avedis' film changed: Angel Tompkins as the cougar teacher, Diane; Jay North (a.k.a., Dennis the Menace) as Sean, the horny high school graduate she seduces; and bad-guy actor Anthony James, one of the American cinema's creepiest fiends. James plays the recently released mental patient, Ralph, who blames Sean for the accidental death of his brother. The teenager fell from a ledge high above the shipping canal where Diane is sunbathing topless in her small boat. Ralph isn't happy that his voyeur's nest has been invaded and vows to thwart Sean's blossoming relationship with Diane. Tragically, for Ralph, he's too inept to make good on his threats. It's a crime they don't make sexploitation pictures like this anymore.