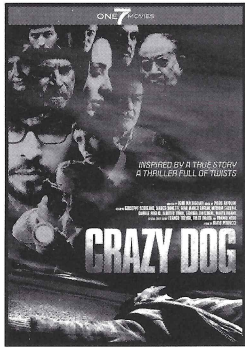
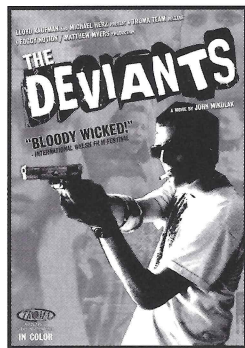


The 2012 Italian thriller **CRAZY DOG [Cane-pazzo] (One 7 Movies)** might not break any new ground, but it succeeds capably as a throwback to old-school EuroCrime fare. Allegedly inspired by a true story (yeah, we've all heard *that* one before!), this feature debut from director-cinematographer-editor David Petrucci boasts an absorbing structure, impressive style and plenty of psychological tension — all on a reported budget of only 15,000 Euros!... Twenty years earlier, when Marco Costa



(Gian Marco Tavani) was just a boy, a now-deceased serial killer called Cane-pazzo [Crazy Dog] savagely murdered his father. Motivated by questions about the official outcome, he investigates the old case on his own and interviews a criminologist (Marco Boneti) who nearly caught Crazy Dog, just before the alleged culprit committed suicide, and has his own theories about the killer's true identity. That's the cue for lengthy flashbacks to Crazy Dog's seemingly-unrelated victims and horrific modus operandi, as well as how reporter David Moiraghi (Giuseppe Schisano) grew dangerously obsessed with this baffling case. The lead performances are somewhat hit and miss, with Franco Trevisi making the most indelible impression as a mob boss with inside info about the killer. Also keep your eyes peeled for a couple cameos amidst Crazy Dog's victims, with Franco Nero going out in style as an eccentric rooftop artist and director Tinto Brass as a crooked doctor. The script gets shakier in the final half-hour though, with its characters becoming loopy and the convoluted ending unable to pass scrutiny. Luckily, Petrucci's deft direction and cutting keeps the story tightly wound and, at 83 minutes, doesn't overstay its welcome. The disc includes a behind-the-scenes slideshow.

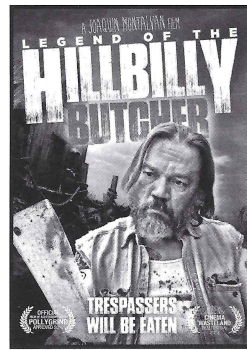
Imagine a rude, raucous comic variation of **THE BIG CHILL**, except populated by even *bigger* jerk-offs, and you have **THE DEVIANTS (Troma)**. Shot in the summer of 1994, around the tiny Pennsylvania coal town of McAdoo in Schuylkill County, this feature-length, NYU thesis project from director/co-writer John Mikulak was financed by a Panavision grant and out of the filmmakers' pockets, yet never found distribution — until now, twenty years later (which explains its \$1.05 per gallon gas prices!)... "Sloppy"



Joe (Nick Stavrides) is getting married, so his old buddies reunite for one last wild weekend. There's NYC hipster Cliff (Matthew Healy), a pretentious wannabe-writer who brings along his prissy girlfriend; Ted (co-writer/producer Matthew Myers) is a coke-snorting ass; Emmet (Sean Sutherland) is a twitchy nerd; and once-hefty Margaret (Karinna Karlan) is now a blonde hottie with a UFO fetish. But after Joe gets caught with a pair of hookers and the wedding is called off, he's determined to continue partying. Tiresomely-wacky complications ensue. There's bowling alley and barroom chaos, Ted is wanted by a local drug dealer,

Emmet is pursued by a religious zealot, and broad sight gags abound (like spilling a Ziplock full of cocaine with cops in the next room). Although the film initially resembles your typical, "wacky" indie throwaway, these screwed-up characters occasionally congeal in interesting ways, as they discuss half-baked dreams and regrets, unexpected friendships develop and old passions reignite. Alas, it also quickly slips back into low-brow idiocy, because when your life is swirling down the crapper, the *only* logical response is to drink heavily, snort some blow, gobble morning glory seeds (in hopes of tripping), and indulge in wanton destruction. It's highly impressive for a college project, but might've benefited from another semester of script polishing. The disc includes eleven deleted scenes and a blooper reel.

The good ol' days of redneck regional horror returns in director-cinematographer Joaquin Montalvan's ingenious 2012 backwoods bloodbath **LEGEND OF THE HILLBILLY BUTCHER (MVD-visual/Whacked Movies)**, which comes with an abundance of graphic carnage, a streak of pitch-black humor and an exceptionally gritty appearance

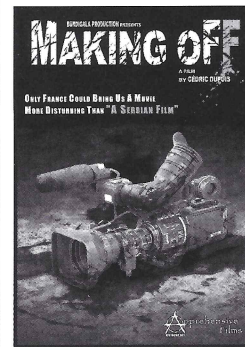


(in fact, much of the film looks like it was shot on authentically-shoddy film stock). Scraggly-haired hermit Carl Henry Jessup (Paul E. Respass) loves his moonshine, his property, live-in kin Rae Lynn (Theresa Holly), and grousing about the modern-day, polluted world. Little does anyone realize, he also likes to carve up human corpses for their meat. Respass' remarkable performance is unnervingly believable and the film is at its best when simply focusing on Carl's lifestyle, whether he's hanging out with dirtbag neighbor Billy Wayne (Chris Shumway), who eventually gets on Carl's bad side after nearly raping Rae Lynn during a "date"; missing his deceased parents, which leads to sepiated flashbacks and conversations with their decomposed skulls; or slaughtering various folks who've either roamed onto his land or simply gotten on his nerves (with Montalvan playing an eviscerated victim in one of the gory highlights). Unfortunately, the script by Montalvan and Eunice Font tends to wander unnecessarily (e.g. trippy nightmares warning Carl of his cursed bloodline, his pact with some type of demon) and the ending is particularly slow-paced. Despite those missteps, this **HILLBILLY BUTCHER** is surprisingly atmospheric, sleazy, retro fun. The disc includes a half-hour interview with Montalvan, Respass and Holly; an hour-long behind-the-scenes featurette that delves into the film's development, conversations with the cast, unused footage, and how Montalvan turned his Pasadena backyard into a backwoods bayou; plus Montalvan's surrealistic six-minute short film, **STRAIGHT RAZOR**.

Steeped in haunting imagery and an obvious affinity for the insect kingdom, **NIGHTMARE WORLD: THE FILMS OF TED KNIGHTON (Alpha Video)** presents a trio of 16mm shorts by this Philadelphia-based artist/filmmaker. First up, the allegorical 11-minute **IN** (2009) is set in a dreary, black-and-white society not far from our own — except for the latest new fad. People have begun to wear small boxes over one eye, each containing a live insect crawling about tiny props and backdrops. In full color, no less! It could be a spider, a beetle, or in the case of our married lead (Chris

Braak), a cricket and a millipede, with him and his wife quickly entranced by these gizmos, despite the fact that they obstruct personal interactions and alienate them from the real world... In the 22-minute **SIX INSECTS** (1999), the behavior of a half-dozen different insects are recreated with human beings. Some vignettes are simple (the ravenous Caterpillar is reproduced as a man engorging on a salad bar) or abstract (for the Honey Ant, a line of silhouetted males wait for a hanging replete's regurgitated food), while the best segments are intriguingly eerie. For the predatory Wasp, a pedestrian is attacked, left paralyzed in the trash and cannibalized by infants, while the Soldier Ant has a camo-dressed military patrol dispassionately sacrificing themselves to form a bridge across a river... Lastly, Knighton's 18-minute **TESTING** (2004) takes a more overtly sci-fi/horror slant, as an extreme surgical procedure is conducted and an authoritarian voiceover expresses reservations about their ethically-dicey experiment (which the viewer isn't entirely privy to until midway). Once again entwining human and insect behavior (in this case, bees), it's strange, surreal, but also a bit ponderous. All three films are skillfully crafted and fitfully hypnotic, though conceptual pieces such as these are probably better suited to a museum installation than a relaxing evening on the living room couch.

An obsessed aspiring filmmaker takes a severe wrong turn in the low-budget, 2012 French feature, **MAKING OFF (Apprehensive Films)**. Subtitled in English, its framework is a making-of documentary for a home-made horror flick that's never completed due to homicidal circumstances. Though boasting a few truly repulsive moments,



this cheaply-produced outing ultimately fizzles due to mediocre acting, a lack of any real character insight and a leaden message about the desire for fame. Cédric Dupuis (who's credited as the film's director, but is played by Olivier Bureau) follows his dream of making a self-proclaimed "outstanding moment of cinema" by quitting his day job, going into debt by buying a camera and computer, and embarking on a DIY horror flick starring a handful of friends, who volunteer their time even though Cédric is a boorish, incompetent schmuck. In fact, the guy's so clueless he records every moment of his filmmaking process for posterity. Alas, when the filming of "Devil Dark Weekend" doesn't go as well as anticipated, our wannabe-ateur loses it. He goes without sleep, chain smokes, harangues his friends, argues with his frustrated wife, and babbles directly into his camera about his artistic vision, until his rage becomes uncontrollable. In between scenes of full-blown-bonkers Cédric shooting his epic, he takes a hammer to his wife's skull, then proceeds to murder his cast on-camera, one by one, along with torture, coprophagia, beating a cat to death, and screwing

