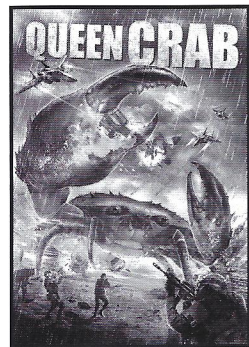


brother against brother) are thoroughly Shakespearean, its production values are ridiculously opulent (courtesy of Rome's renowned Cinecittà film studio), and though most of the cast hams it up, their silent-era-style emoting suits the exaggerated material. Look for 19-year-old Valentina Cortese (Oscar-nominated 33 years later for François Truffaut's *DAY FOR NIGHT*) as a naive, infatuated peasant girl and Luisa Ferida (Oswaldo Valenti's lover, also executed in the streets by anti-fascist partisans — while pregnant!) as one of Neri's jilted girlfriends. The bare bones DVD contains the film in Italian with English subtitles.

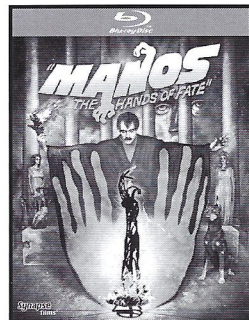
Writer-director Brett Piper has been hand-crafting unique creature features since the early-'80s and his latest effort, **QUEEN CRAB (Wild Eye)** — a low-budget, high-energy throwback to Corman-style 1950s drive-in fare — revels in his obvious love of old-school stop-motion-FX, as an overgrown mutation goes on the rampage... It begins 20 years ago, as little Melissa rescues a crab



from the pond next to her Crabbe Creek home. Conveniently enough, her scientist father is tinkering with an experimental growth formula, which this seriously dense kid feeds to her new pet. Cut to the present, with adult Melissa (Michelle Simone Miller) still living near that pond and providing companionship to her now-gigantic crab. Meanwhile, her neighbors are dealing with major vandalism, missing pets and slaughtered cattle due to some unknown predator. Enter State Wildlife Commission expert Stewart MacKendrick (A.J. DeLucia), who's investigating the strange occurrences; that is, if he doesn't get shotgunned by a local for being such a fucking nuisance. Then add Melissa's old-high-school-friend-turned-B-movie-starlet Jennifer Kane (Kathryn Metz); Richard Lounello's Deputy Sonny, a macho dimwit who provides inane comic relief; plus a pack of dumb-ass good-ol'-boys with a stockpile of military hardware. The plot is nothing new and it's dopey as hell, but the cast plays their roles with surprising conviction and Piper doesn't skimp on the title terror, giving his viewers plenty of crab-tastic carnage and refreshingly low-tech creature effects — particularly in the second half, after townsfolk kill its ravenous li'l offspring and the body count soars. Laced with amiable goofiness (such as Melissa calmly riding atop her immense pet's shell), this retro-romp is certainly a lot more fun than most of Syfy's vapid mutant-monster garbage. The DVD includes bloopers, three behind-the-scenes featurettes and an entertaining commentary with Piper, producer Mark Polonia and actor Steve Diasparra.

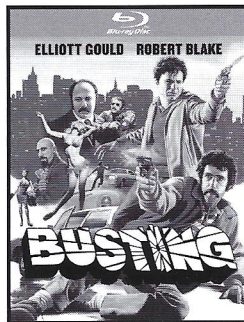
Trashed by MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000 and often labeled one of the louisiest films ever made, 1966's **MANOS: THE HANDS OF FATE (Synopsis)** was originally promoted with the headline, "It's beyond your imagination!" That's for damned sure! Because this \$19,000 folly by Texas insurance salesman/first-and-only-time writer-director Harold P. Warren (who also cast himself as one of the leads) is astoundingly amateurish, fascinatingly misguided and now available on Blu-ray. And while all past copies of the film have looked like dogshit, a long-lost work print, uncovered by collector Ben Solovey in an eBay sale, has restored the film to its pristine glory. The print is cleaner, crisper and more colorful than ever before

— which, ironically, only makes the filmmakers' ineptitude all the more apparent! The simplistic plot involves husband Michael (Warren), wife Maggie (Diane Mahree) and daughter Debbie (7-year-old Jackey Neyman) taking a wrong turn on their roadtrip vacation, only to stumble upon a remote house and offbeat caretaker Torgo (John Reynolds). Soon the family's dog is killed, their car refuses to start, plus there's no phone. Petulant, religious-cult whackjob The Master (Tom Neyman) has also been awakened from his slumber, while his bevy of white-night-gowned wives (recruited from an El Paso modeling school) bicker and catfight over the notion of killing cute



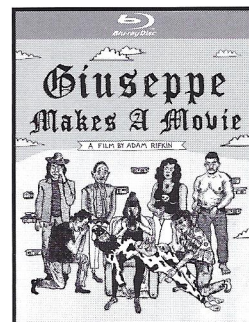
little Debbie. The production values are non-existent, the dialogue and post-production dubbing is risible, there's no discernible acting talent, and it's padded out with interminable, superfluous scenes; so thank goodness for Reynolds' continual weirdness as servile Torgo. Shuffling about in ill-fitting clothes and whining about wanting Maggie for his own (since the polygamist Master already has six wives), the guy is a jittery, twitchy, hilarious mess. No surprise, Reynolds was reportedly tripping on acid throughout the shoot. Extras include new featurettes on the making of the film and its restoration; a commentary with Tom Neyman and Jackey Raye Neyman-Jones; a brief talk with the creator of the puppet show "Manos: the Hands of Fate"; plus a "grindhouse" version of the film, complete with all of the muddy sound, faded and fuzzy images, emulsion-scratches, and random hairs that fans have suffered through in the past.

When it comes to '70s-era buddy-cop movies, writer-director Peter Hyams' 1974 feature-debut **BUSTING (Kino Lorber Studio Classics)**, covers all of the bases. Littered with rebellious attitude, humor, gunplay, violence, and un-PC behavior, it also boasts the knock-out pairing of Elliott Gould and Robert Blake as Los Angeles Vice Squad Detectives Michael Keneely and Patrick Farrel. These unorthodox, rule-bending partners are just trying to do their jobs — arresting a high-end call girl, getting beaten up by angry queers during a gay bar bust, rousting a backroom massage parlor populated with junkie-whores — but it's difficult when the corrupt brass are in the pocket of Carl Rizzo (Allen Garfield), a wealthy local purveyor of dope and prostitutes. When the duo gets too close to Rizzo, they're promptly reassigned (to a men's public bathroom) yet continue to annoy this well-connected sleazebag in their spare time. This is one deeply cynical film though, with the pair's obstinance getting them beaten half to death, and though Hyams provides plenty of gritty atmosphere and composes several thrilling tracking shot sequences (including a wild chase and shoot-out through LA's Grand Central Market), its frustration about a broken criminal justice system is apparent throughout. The two stars have terrific chemistry, with Blake playing Ferrel with the same



cocky attitude he'd bring to **BARETTA** less than a year later, and Gould perfectly embodying the scruffy, burnt-out, bubble-gum-chewing Keneely. The colorful supporting cast includes William Sylvester (2001: *A SPACE ODYSSEY*) as a mob lawyer; Michael Lerner runs the counter of a dirty bookstore; (future Huggy-Bear) Antonio Fargas is an offensive barroom "faggot"; Danny Goldman pops up as a green young lawyer; plus the great Sid Haig plays Rizzo's bodyguard. There's also Cornelia Sharpe (future wife of *SERPICO/SCARFACE* producer Martin Bregman) as a hooker who doffs her dress to screw a dentist (Logan Ramsey) at his workplace. The Blu-ray includes two commentaries — the first with Hyams, who recalls researching the script and using stories from actual vice cops, as well as the pushback **BUSTING** received from gay activists; plus a "selected scenes" track with Gould and writer Kim Morgan, which runs for about half of the film.

What drives someone to be a filmmaker? That question is usually aimed at Hollywood legends or critical darlings, but in the delightfully warped 2014 documentary **GIUSEPPE MAKES A MOVIE (Cinelicious Pics)**, director Adam Rifkin focuses on the DIY realm of prolific trailer-park auteur Giuseppe Andrews, who's been cranking out his unique "films" (**TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING**, **TRAILER TOWN**) since the late-'90s on budgets of under \$1000 each, starring (often dentally-challenged) non-actor friends, neighbors and local homeless. We meet Andrews (an ex-actor who appeared in **INDEPENDENCE DAY** and Rifkin's



DETROIT ROCK CITY) as he readies production on his latest outsider effort, 2007's **GARBANZO GAS** (which he proudly plans to complete in only two days), rounds up his cast, buys props at a party store, and prepares to shoot at a nearby Vagabond Inn. Meanwhile, Giuseppe's tirelessly supportive father Ed (a guitarist for The Bee Gees and Joe Walsh in the late-'70s) drives him around, goes on beer runs for alcoholic castmembers and displays the patience of a saint. Some of the most striking segments involve Giuseppe's troupe of performers though — Vietnam Ron, Walt Dongo, Sir Bigfoot George, ex-"titty bar" employee Tiffany Naylor — who appreciate Giuseppe's nonsensical humor, while offering insights into their own grim, often tragic lives. From dealing with unexpected snafus (e.g., elderly Tyree shitting his pants in Ed's car), through Giuseppe's slapdash 'fuck continuity, screw the script' shoot, it's also readily apparent that Andrews legitimately cares about his colleagues and remains almost unnaturally good-natured throughout the cut-rate chaos. The 2-disc Blu-ray includes a commentary with Rifkin and producer Mike Plante; deleted scenes; a half-hour 2012 interview with Giuseppe from his new Austin, TX digs (hard to believe, the guy's even spacier nowadays); his failed TV-pilot 5th **WHEEL**, which plays like a slightly more coherent, 22-minute version of his films; plus the finished, 75-minute **GARBANZO GAS**, which is even more inane, boring and downright unwatchable than I'd anticipated. The "plot" involves a slaughterhouse cow (Vietnam Ron in baggy, cow pajamas) winning a hotel vacation, befriending two low-life imbeciles and dealing with steak-hungry psychos, with a last-minute anti-meat message. Free-form absurdity or amateurish, self-indulgent nonsense? It's your call.