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MCN WEEKEND

November 21, 2011

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MCN Columnists

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Posted Thursday, October 20th, 2011 - [No Comments »](#)



Bad Teacher: Unrated Edition: Blu-ray

Andy Warhol's Bad

Shockorama: The William Beaudine Collection

Sometimes, only a very thin line separates intentionally bad movies from truly, irretrievably and unintentionally bad ones. Intentionally bad movies can't be measured by the same criteria used to separate the wheat from the chaff at the local megaplex. Depending on their provenance and production values, good bad movies are limited mostly to the art- and grind-house circuits. Others have had to wait until they were championed by Quentin Tarantino, Roger Corman or such niche DVD distributors as Shout! Factory, Troma, Cheezy Flicks, Synapse Films, MVD and One 7 Movies. And, of course, simply adding the word, "bad," to a film's title doesn't mean it will be taken seriously as good bad or nasty bad, or its antagonist is worthy of our scorn.

"**Bad Teacher**," for instance, is neither a bad movie nor is Cameron Diaz' character an evil person, as was Billy Bob Thornton's Willie, in "Bad Santa." She's merely rude, lewd, obscene, lazy and greedy, depending on her mood at any particular moment of her day. Students don't fear the gold-digging pedagogue, as did the kids who sat on Thornton's lap in "Bad Santa." I think it's also safe to say that too many of us have had our educations entrusted to worse teachers than Diaz' Elizabeth Halsey. (At least, she lets the kids watch worthwhile movies when she's too lazy to teach, which is almost always.) Only one of Elizabeth's fellow teachers – Lucy Punch's delightfully petty Amy Squirrel — is repulsed by her personally or professionally, and that's mostly because the two women are in pursuit of the same substitute teacher: Justin Timberlake's dorky Scott Delacorte. As we make her acquaintance, Elizabeth has just been dumped by her sugar-daddy fiancé. To prevent another such insult, she commits herself to raising \$10,000 for a new set of boobs. (Again, she probably could have reached her goal simply by performing two weekends' worth of lap dances in Las Vegas, but she picked the honorable alternative.) So, what we're left with is a self-centered educator with a heart of something resembling gold, and, in Diaz' capable hands, she's, well, not that bad. I didn't see the theatrical version of Jake Kasdan's commercially successful comedy, so I can only imagine what's been added to the unrated DVD and Blu-ray. Since there's only a minute of semi-nudity and it already had been accorded an R-rating, it probably boils down to five more minutes of vulgar language and the verbal instructions in fellatio Elizabeth gives the teens. If any of that sounds entertaining to you, it's also worth knowing that Diaz is up to the task assigned her, as is the fine cast of supporting actors: Jason Segel ("How I Met Your Mother"), Phyllis Smith ("The Office"), John Michael Higgins ("Kath & Kim"), Thomas Lennon ("Reno 911!") and Eric Stonestreet ("Modern Family"), with cameos by David Paymer and Molly Shannon. The Blu-ray extras include an interactive "yearbook"; gag reel, outtakes and deleted scenes; a discussion with then-lovers Diaz and Timberlake and a closer look at her sexy carwash scene; cast members' recollections of their teachers; Movie IQ and BD-Love; and a DVD copy.

On the other hand, **"Andy Warhol's Bad"** is bad in all the ways people expect a beyond-campy Warhol production to be bad. Released in 1977, after writer/director Paul Morrissey parted company with Warhol, "Bad" even lacks the "polish" of "Frankenstein" and "Trash." And, yet, the almost amateurish production values and acting – Carroll Baker, Susan Tyrell and Perry King, being the sole exceptions – only serve to add to the movie's pulpy charm. Baker plays Hazel, a woman who runs a combination beauty salon and boarding house for female felons. She's also known locally for her electrolysis treatments. Tyrell portrays her pitiful daughter, while King's almost-charming hit man needs a place to stay while awaiting an assignment. It comes in the form of a request from a selfish mother to murder her autistic son, a request so onerous even the least reputable of hit man might report to police. Meanwhile, the female boarders are game for almost any assignment. This being the 1970s version of New York, the crimes committed barely register with the local media, no matter how hideous.

Expect for the aforementioned actors, it looks as if director Jed Johnson recruited the cast during an open call at Max's Kansas City. Some can barely recite their deli deliriously twisted lines. After a fire at a movie theater, the owner tells a TV reporter: "I just thank God we were showing a bad movie ... one of 'dose arty things. Otherwise, a lot more people would have been killed in 'dere." Later, after a baby is thrown out the window of a high-rise by its mother, a bystander on the street tells her snotty son, "That's what I'm going to do to you if you don't shut up." It may not be pretty, but for sheer outrageousness, "Bad" is tough to top. The late, great blues guitarist Mike Bloomfield contributed original music to the score. An edited R-rated version of the movie previously was distributed by Roger Corman's New World Pictures, but what would be the point. Cheezy Flicks is making the unrated cut available on a manufactured-on-demand basis, through Amazon and other outlets.