

Chest

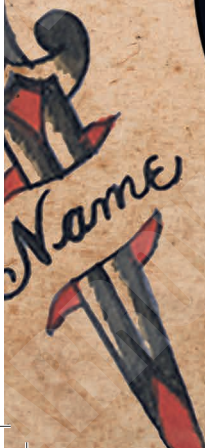


9.50

80.00

IN CHEST OR-  
LEG COST MORE

PAY IN  
ADVANCE



CHEST  
2.00

6.50





# CONTENTS

- 4 Cast and Crew
- 7 Moving Going Nowhere: Kathryn Bigelow and Monty Montgomery's *The Loveless* (2019) by Peter Stanfield
- 19 Additional Music Credits
- 22 About the Restoration



# THE LOVELESS

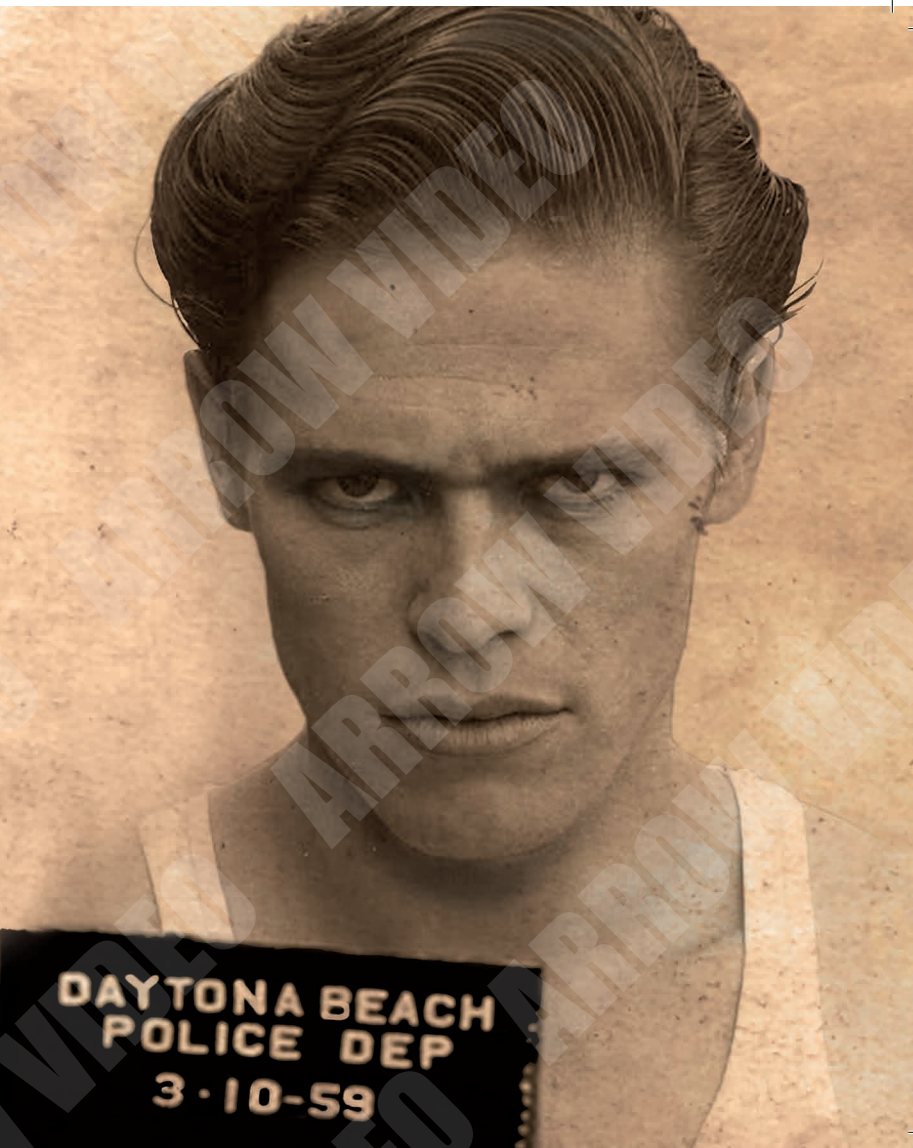
1981

## CAST

**Willem Dafoe** as Vance  
**Robert Gordon** as Davis  
**Marin Kanter** as Telena  
And  
**J. Don Ferguson** as Tarver

## CREW

Written and Directed by **Kathryn Bigelow** and **Monty Montgomery**  
Produced by **Grafton Nunes** and **A. Kitman Ho**  
Director of Photography **Doyle Smith**  
Film Editor **Nancy Kanter**  
Music by **Robert Gordon**  
Additional Music by **John Lurie**  
Production Design **Lilly Kilvert**



DAYTONA BEACH  
POLICE DEP  
3-10-59





## MOVING GOING NOWHERE: KATHRYN BIGELOW AND MONTY MONTGOMERY'S *THE LOVELESS*

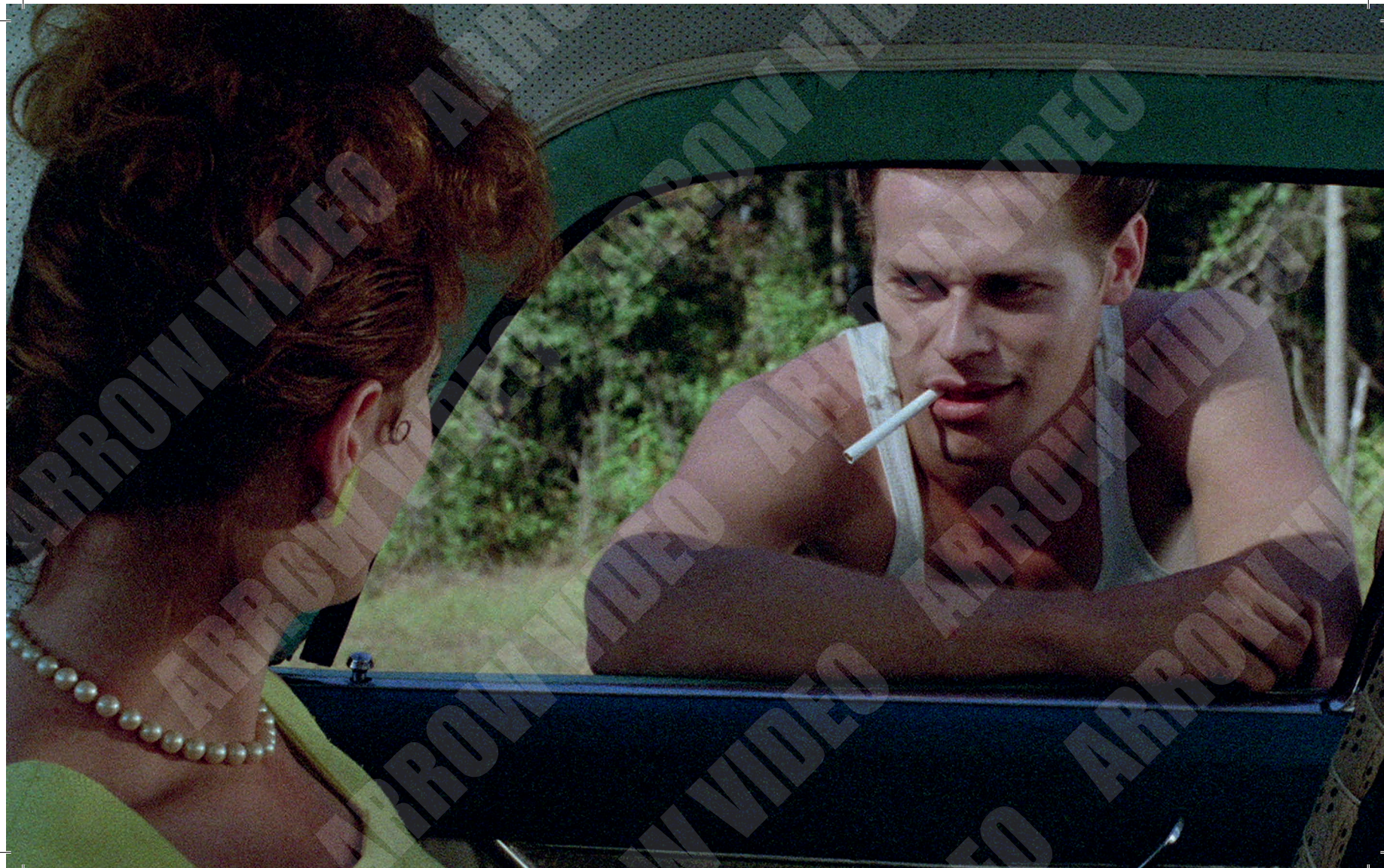
by Peter Stanfield

On their way to the Daytona races, a group of motorcycle punks make a forced stop at a garage and diner off US17 to fix one of the bikes. Somewhere between boredom and the next cigarette, they attract the attention of the local girls, and then things get violent.

Some ten to fifteen years before the release of Katherine Bigelow and Monty Montgomery's *The Loveless* (1981), this scenario had been tirelessly repeated and fixed into a ragged formula. It was first used in the Marlon Brando vehicle *The Wild One* (1953), then revived with Roger Corman's *The Wild Angels* in 1966, and subsequently rerun in a cycle of forty-odd films which concluded in 1972. All but one of the outlaw biker films were made by independent companies that specialized in producing exploitation movies for open-top theatres, neighborhood cinemas and rundown inner-city houses. Despised by critics, but welcomed by exhibitors denied first-run films, these cheaply and quickly made movies were produced to appeal to an audience of mobile youths. The cycle revelled in a brutal and lurid sensationalism drawn from the same headlines as Hunter S. Thompson's *Hell's Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs* (1967).

Collectively, the films portray a picture of America that is the inverse of a progressive, inclusive and aspirational culture. A nihilistic taint runs through the cycle without providing much in the way of social or aesthetic compensation. Dumb, uncouth and loutish; repetitive, formulaic and eminently forgettable, the films were made for real and imagined hoodlums. Awash with proletarian protagonists, the cycle was geared to a market of kids who stayed in education no longer than legally required.







In contemporary reviews, *The Wild Angels* was regularly, and unfavorably, compared to Brando's film and to Kenneth Anger's experimental *Scorpio Rising* (1963), which a *New York Times*' critic described as a "phantasmagoric ... necromantic view of the horror and charm of the motorcycle set, with its fetishistic leather and chains, its primitive rites and its death-sex-leader syndrome." The overlaps between the films were myriad: like *The Wild Angels*, Anger's film was focused on the rituals of biker gangs, a homosocial environment with contingent sexual overtones, Nazi regalia refashioned as pop culture iconography, and a pop music soundtrack. Where they differed was that while most critics found some redeeming value in *Scorpio Rising* they found little of worth in Corman's movie.

Both *Scorpio Rising* and *The Wild Angels* make direct references to *The Wild One*, explicitly acknowledging it as an influence. Along with *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), *The Wild One* has a unique reputational cachet, produced at the forefront of a trend in juvenile delinquency films, it is now seen as synonymous with teenage rebellion and as a portent of the rock 'n' roll generation to come. Based on a 1951 *Harper's* magazine story, "The Cyclist's Raid," which in turn drew on a 1947 *Life* magazine spread devoted to hoodlum motorcyclists running riot in the California town of Hollister, until Corman's film, *The Wild One* was singular in its rendering of motorcycle gang culture.

*The Wild One* opens with a foreword: "This is a picture of shocking violence. It couldn't have happened in most American towns ... but the fact that it happened in this town, and in this way, is a stern warning that it must not happen again." Whatever credibility the film has as a cautionary tale, its sensational subject matter sold it at the box office and helped stir up the publicity. Despite a display of healthy cynicism toward its claim to be socially progressive, critics did not dismiss out of hand the filmmakers' intentions to deliver a serious commentary on a topical issue, nor were they unimpressed by its creative ambitions, with *Variety* describing it as "an artistic picture for hoodlums." Reflecting on the correspondence between it and *The Wild Angels*, the critic Lawrence Alloway thought that Brando played his part like Jean Gabin in a leather jacket. On the other hand, he considered Corman's film to be "without such echoes, though there is a suspicion that Peter Fonda dreamed of them in a couple of scenes."

The initial attraction of all three films is their promise to render in exquisite detail the violent urges and acts of their hoodlum protagonists, but the filmmakers behind *Scorpio Rising* and *The Wild One* also had artistic pretensions. They were not just delivering social commentary or exploiting a contemporary folk devil. Conversely, *The Wild Angels* was neither conceived nor mistaken for a work of art. And the same artlessness would define any of the films that intemperately followed in its wake. The cycle of outlaw biker films was workaday industrial pictures made for wage-laborers; they were not made with metropolitan aesthetes in mind.

Beyond a shared scenario of bikers mixing things up with small town locals, *The Loveless* effectively avoids a direct link to the Corman-influenced cycle by setting its story at the tail-end of the 1950s, half a decade before the headline-grabbing antics of the Hells Angels. Moreover, its designated milieu is art-house film theatres, not garbage-strewn drive-ins. *The Loveless* is the heir apparent to *Scorpio Rising*, not *The Wild Angels*. And like Anger's film it has a better soundtrack than the over-amped surf rumble on Corman's picture.

It is not just the retro 50s setting that distinguishes *The Loveless* from the lumpen mass of bike movies, but also its location along a stretch of highway near Savannah, Georgia. With the exception of a few undercapitalized movies shot in Florida, the cycle made best use of the dry regions of America's western states, from rundown Venice Beach settings to Bakersfield scrublands and Death Valley deserts (superbly pictured in the Corman-financed *Naked Angels*, 1969). In contrast, the humidity and heat of the *The Loveless*' US17 locations make a unique and fittingly fetid context for its melodramatics.

And while the earlier biker films filled out their 90 minutes of screen time with languorous shots of cyclists tooling down endless highways, moving going nowhere, *The Loveless*, like *Scorpio Rising*, spends remarkably little time on the road. Instead, it chooses moments of stasis as its subject: scenes of bikes being broken down and rebuilt in a garage, of its protagonists taking off and putting on leather jackets, leaning against a Coke machine or a jukebox, throwing knives, tumbling dice, and combing their hair – always combing their hair. The camera lingers on objects and people, freezing and fetishizing these moments into a series of poses, producing a studied composition in cool.







Anger's camera had similarly loitered over pin-ups and movie mag cuttings of Brando and Dean, over bikers' bodies, boots, jackets, belts and chains. Montgomery and Bigelow follow his visual cues, meticulously detailing their bikers' world of men's adventure magazines, Lucky Strike cigarettes, zippo lighters, Thunderbird wine, burgers and catsup, evoking the rich iconography of fifties pop culture. This imagery is intensified by an oversaturated palette, which produces the appearance of a William Eggleston photograph sucked through a color Xerox machine. The aesthetic perfectly matching the motivations and tawdry desire of the story's characters. In this and other respects, *The Loveless* pairs well with Maggie Greenwald's Jim Thompson adaptation *The Kill-Off* (1989), which also delves into the seething unsettled sexual tensions that lie just beneath the surface in small town America.

Unlike *The Loveless*, *Scorpio Rising* had a contemporary setting and was as much of its moment as Danny Lyons' 1960s photographic project on Chicago outlaw cyclists, *The Bikeriders* (1968). *The Loveless* is a retrospective view which recreates an idealized vision of the 1950s every bit as exotic as that rendered by The Cramps or as caricatured by The Stray Cats. The film's co-star, Robert Gordon, had a CBGB's and Max's Kansas City pedigree to equal those of the Ramones and Johnny Thunders, but by 1977 he had turned his punk persona into an immaculate presentation of the first spring of rock 'n' roll. On his first two albums he was partnered with Link 'Rumble' Wray and, unlike star Willem Dafoe, hardly needed dressing for his role in the film.

As much as its touted cinematic influences – which stretch from Anger to Douglas Sirk via Ulmer's *Detour* (1945) – and its fantasy take on bikers and the fifties are blatantly apparent, *The Loveless* resonates just as noisily with a NYC downtown punk sensibility. It sits well alongside (and to my mind outshines) contemporaneous low budget New York independent features such as Susan Seidelman's *Smithereens* (1982), Bette Gordon's *Variety* (1983), Ulli Lommel's *Blank Generation* (1980), and Marcus Reichert's *Union City* (1980) – the latter starring Debbie Harry and with backroom contributions from *The Loveless'* Monty Montgomery, Kathryn Bigelow and director of photography Doyle Smith. With Evan and John Lurie from the neo-beatnik combo The Lounge Lizards composing and playing the links between Gordon's tunes and a set of golden

oldies, the correspondence with other cineastes based in the City, such as Jim Jarmusch, is made even more legible.

When double-billing *The Loveless*, play it with Anger's film for maximum impact. But give *The Kill-Off* a run too to better see how well the film has absorbed and relocated the 1980s obsession with *noir*. Then couple it with Jarmusch's *Mystery Train* (1989). That film's Japanese lovers and rockabilly connoisseurs speak eloquently of the draw of American 1950s pop culture for non-natives, an appeal that is central to the attraction of *The Loveless*. It is said that Montgomery and Bigelow's film has never done much business in the States, and doesn't have much of a reputation there, but it is rightly revered in London, Paris and Tokyo.

**Peter Stanfield is the author of Hoodlum Movies: Seriality and the Outlaw Biker Film Cycle, 1966-1972.**









## ADDITIONAL MUSIC CREDITS

Songs written, recorded and produced by  
**Eddy Dixon**

"Relentless"  
Opening credits theme song

"Santanada"  
Bikers arrive at diner

"Beauxdy Green"  
Back at the diner

"Delta Blue"  
Garage trailer office

"Let's Take a Walk"  
Working in the garage daytime

"Mediterraneo"  
Kissing in garage

"Did I Throw My Love Away"  
On the radio in the garage at night

"Hung Loose Baby"  
Bikers entering bar

"Relentless (instrumental version)"  
Final scene into tail credits







# ABOUT THE RESTORATION

*The Loveless* is presented in its original aspect ratio of 1.85:1 with mono audio. All restoration work was completed at R3Store Studios, London. The original 35mm camera negative was scanned in 2K resolution on a Scanity. Thousands of instances of dirt, debris, scratches, picture instability and other instances of film wear were repaired or removed through a combination of digital restoration tools and techniques. The mono tracks were remastered from the original mag reels. The film was graded on Digital Vision's Nucoda Film Master.

The restoration of *The Loveless* involved an international search for the original elements, which involved valuable assistance from many people, including the majority of the original filmmaking team. Thankfully, these materials were finally located with Augustus Color's assistance in the Technicolor vaults in Rome.

This restoration has been approved by co-director/writer Monty Montgomery and director of photography Doyle Smith.

Restoration supervised by James White, Arrow Films

R3Store Studios:  
Gerry Gedge, Jo Griffin, Rich Watson, Nathan Leaman-Hill, Stephanie Mourey, Emily Kemp

Technicolor:  
Thomas Cliff

Augustus Color:  
Maurizio Cisterna, Jacopo Pica

Special thanks:  
Monty Montgomery, Doyle Smith, Nancy Kanter  
Grafton Nunes / Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque  
Larry Greenburg / Ambi Distribution  
Katie Trainor, James Layton, Theo Harrison / Museum of Modern Art  
Haden Guest, Mark Johnson / Harvard Film Archive  
Ed Carter / Academy Film Archive  
Joe Rubin/OCN Digital  
Scott Grossman / MGM  
Andrea Kalas / Paramount  
David Gregory  
Angela Fuguet

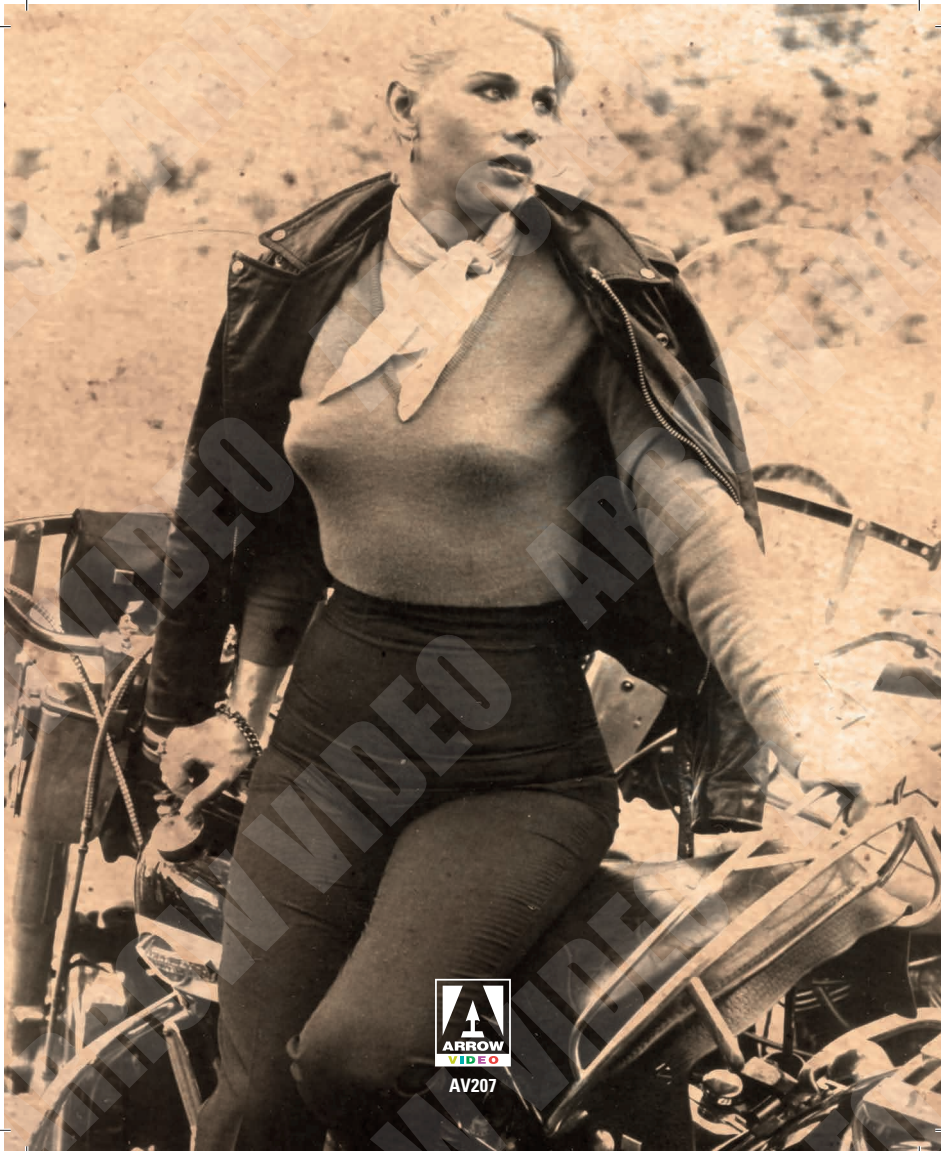
# PRODUCTION CREDITS

Disc and Booklet Produced by **Michael Mackenzie**  
Executive Producers **Kevin Lambert, Francesco Simeoni**  
Technical Producer **James White**  
QC Manager **Nora Mehenni**  
Blu-ray Mastering **David Mackenzie / Fidelity in Motion**  
Subtitling **The Engine House Media Services**  
Artist **Gilles Vranckx**  
Design **Obviously Creative**

# SPECIAL THANKS

Alex Agran, Travis Crawford, Willem Dafoe, Eddy Dixon, Elijah Drenner, Robert Gordon, Marin Kanter, Lilly Kilvert, Phillip Kimbrough, A. Kitman Ho, Lawrence Matarese, Monty Montgomery, Grafton Nunes, Doyle Smith, Peter Stanfield, Gilles Vranckx





AV207