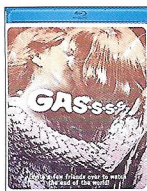


similar contemporary films Anderson trades snark and cynicism for heart. Fans of the *Batman* TV series from the '60s and Warren Beatty's *Dick Tracy* will find much to enjoy here. Recommended. (J. Cruz)

Gas-s-s-s ★★★

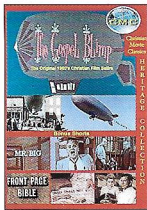
Olive, 79 min., R, DVD: \$19.99, Blu-ray: \$29.99



In this 1970 counterculture satire, the end of the world arrives thanks to a military mishap: the accidental release of a nerve gas that instantly turns everyone over 25 into senior citizens. As the elders die of old age, only the teenagers and young adults are left and the film follows the odyssey of flower children Coel (Robert Corff) and Cilla (Elaine Giftos) from Dallas to a commune in New Mexico. Along the way, they collect traveling companions (Bud Cort, Talia Shire, Ben Vereen, and Cindy Williams) and wind up facing cowboy car rustlers on motorbikes, a football-themed militia engaged in looting and pillaging, and a biker gang that has taken over a golf course where they trade in their motorcycles for golf clubs. Alternatively titled *Gas! or, It Became Necessary to Destroy the World in Order to Save It*, this counterculture apocalypse was one of the last films directed by B-movie legend Roger Corman, who continued to produce hundreds of low-budget films for theaters, home video, and cable TV. But the portrait of hippie culture here is silly and clichéd, the satire is broad and clumsy, and the film is more odd than funny—a time capsule curio that has dated badly. Not a necessary purchase. (S. Axmaker)

The Gospel Blimp ★★★1/2

Christian Movie Classics, 94 min., not rated, DVD: \$14.99



The Gospel Blimp is a 1967 curio, a comic short satire with a pronounced Christian theme that nevertheless casts a wary eye on flamboyant expressions of faith. A gaggle of Christian suburbanites come up with the wild idea of delivering the Word of God to lots of people by buying a blimp that will trail airborne messages from Holy Scripture. Using crude but effective special effects, director Irwin Yeaworth's oddball film charts the increasing absurdity of the enterprise, which evolves into a self-congratulatory corporation featuring a CEO who begins looking more and more like Captain Nemo. Also included here is the 1968 short "Mr. Big," which has a bit of a *Twilight Zone*-like look and feel in its story of a pampered aristocrat who spends the night in lockup after a traffic accident and undergoes a spiritual conversion. ("Mr. Big" is ably directed by the wonderful Corey Allen, who helmed multiple episodes of *Bonanza*, *Police Woman*, and numerous entries from the *Star*

Trek canon). Finally, the entertaining 1959 short "Front Page Bible" is about a crusading small-town newspaper editor who puts biblical messages in his headlines to capture public attention. A set of rare, somewhat strange, but often entertaining faith-based short films, this is a strong optional purchase. (T. Keogh)

The Herschell Gordon Lewis Feast ★★★1/2

Arrow, 17 discs, 1,195 min., not rated, Blu-ray/DVD Combo: \$229.95



This 17-disc set presents 14 films directed by Herschell Gordon Lewis, an exploitation filmmaker with the mind of a promoter who earned the nickname "Godfather of Gore" for the bloody low-budget horror films that he made in the 1960s and '70s. This collection features the infamous "gore" movies that cemented Lewis's reputation: *Blood Feast* (1963), a bloody comedy about an Egyptian cultist who caters a party with a buffet of human parts; *Two Thousand Maniacs!* (1964), a drive-in *Brigadoon* with Civil War ghosts returning for bloody revenge on Northern tourists; *Color Me Blood Red* (1965), a comic gore film centered on a mad painter who discovers a new shade of crimson in blood and starts slicing up his models for more paint; and *The Wizard of Gore* (1970), about a magician who eviscerates his volunteers and then hypnotizes everyone into believing it was all an act. The performances are wooden, the dialogue hackneyed, and the effects are unconvincing at best, but *Wizard* delivers gross-out gore by the bucketful and earned the filmmaker a cult following. Also included here are Lewis's less notorious gore films *The Gruesome Twosome* (1967), *A Taste of Blood* (1967), and *The Gore Gore Girls* (1972), the nudie movies *Scum of the Earth* (1963) and *How to Make a Doll* (1968), the hillbilly pictures *Moonshine Mountain* (1964) and *This Stuff'll Kill Ya!* (1971), the witchcraft film *Something Weird* (1967), the biker gang actioner *She-Devils on Wheels* (1968), and the nihilistic juvenile delinquent drama *Just For the Hell of It* (1968). These cult films are notable for being crude, cheap, and outrageous, but they have their fans and are presented in an impressive special edition collection, with extras including new video introductions, audio commentaries, the 2010 documentary *Herschell Gordon Lewis: The Godfather of Gore*, and new and archival featurettes and interviews. Classic cinema this is not, but Lewis's work is key in horror film history. A strong optional purchase. (S. Axmaker)

I Wake Up Screaming ★★★

Kino Lorber, 82 min., not rated, Blu-ray: \$29.95

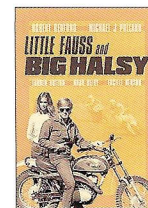
I Wake Up Screaming is a defining 1941 film in the shadowy crime genre that would later be called film noir. Victor Mature stars as Frankie Christopher, a sports promoter who

is also the prime suspect in the murder of a beautiful model (Carole Landis) he helped to attain celebrity success. The film opens with Frankie getting the third degree under the glare of a blinding lamp while the victim's sister (Betty Grable) is treated more gently nearby. Flashbacks fill in their stories and set up their romance while an obsessive police detective (Laird Cregar) promises to get the evidence he needs to send Frankie away for murder. Set in New York City, the film was shot on the Fox backlot, which gives the city scenes that slightly artificial, exaggerated quality, and director H. Bruce Humberstone, a veteran of Fox musicals and Charlie Chan mysteries, shows a knack for the expressionist images and hard shadows that would come to define the genre. Mature's glib confidence is a good fit for his character and Grable takes on the first dramatic role of her career, while Cregar sets the templates for both the obsessive, intimidating police detective and the stocky, soft-spoken noir heavy, using his bulk to dominate and intimidate while his quiet delivery carries a sinister threat with every line. It's a fine early noir and solid Hollywood thriller with star power and impressive style, making its Blu-ray debut with extras including audio commentary by film historian Eddie Muller, an alternate opening title sequence, a deleted scene, and a photo gallery. Recommended. (S. Axmaker)



Little Fauss and Big Halsy ★★★

Olive, 99 min., R, DVD: \$24.95, Blu-ray: \$29.95



Sensitive-guy idol Robert Redford was cast as a heartless (and often shirtless) jerk in this 1970 motorcycle-race narrative that reputedly suffered from behind-the-scenes rough patches between the two lead actors and was no easy ride (even though the inspiration was probably *Easy Rider* for director Sidney J. Furie. In retrospect, however, the loosely-plotted *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* scores reasonably well as a macho frenemy drama. Redford plays Halsy, a magnetic but irresponsible, injury-scarred off-road racer on the California circuit. Suspended from competition, the womanizing lout hooks up with Little Fauss (Michael J. Pollard), a man-boy mechanic with racing ambitions. Taking advantage of Fauss's naiveté, Halsy goes on the road with the kid, where they are joined by a sexy/flaky cast-off biker chick (Lauren Hutton) who reads *Naked Lunch*. Along the way, Fauss's hero-worship of Halsy turns to disdain the more he listens and learns. Featuring soundtrack ballads performed by Johnny Cash, this road flick is recommended. (C. Cassidy)