

tary track with Russell's wife Lisi, and interviews with actress Sammi Davis and editor Peter Davies. Both collaborators convey the excitement and challenges of working with such a volatile and iconoclastic director from both sides of the camera. In addition, a substantial doc probes the making of the movie's prosthetic makeup effects.

Lair of the White Worm has aged remarkably well, and this new restoration gives Russell's colourful palette a much-needed coat of digital gloss. Fans will want to slither quickly to snap up this limited edition.

JEFF SZPIRGLAS

CLEAN YOUR PLATE

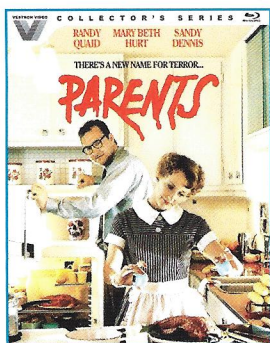
PARENTS (1989) Blu-ray

Starring Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt and Sandy Dennis
Directed by Bob Balaban
Written by Christopher Hawthorne
Vestron Video

"Randy Quaid is the perfect dad, if you want to be afraid of your dad," director Bob Balaban muses in the commentary of the Vestron Video re-release of *Parents*. Featuring Quaid and Mary Beth Hurt as Nick and Lily Laemle, the blood-lusting suburbanites that anyone would be terrified of, and set in a pastel backdrop of Eisenhower's America, this 1989 video store staple is truly unique.

It's centred around ten-year-old Michael Laemle (Bryan Madorsky) who's as nervous as any new kid at school. But tough math questions and cute classmates pale in comparison to the overwhelming stress caused by the knowledge that something's just not right about his parents. After nightly dinners of the same meaty, undefinable "leftovers" and an earth-shattering glimpse of his folks having sweaty sex, Michael's anxious disposition exacerbates to the point where he believes he's the offspring of cannibalistic killers.

Parents touches on themes of budding sexuality, following Michael's awkward encounters with a girl at school, and the recurring thoughts of his parents in the throes of passion, but with a spacey, twisted sense of humour that makes it so strange. Between the surrealist nightmares that our skittish hero endures, featuring oceans of blood and disembodied body parts, and the pitch-perfect yet starkly opposite performances from Quaid and Hurt, *Parents* never quite reaches camp like one might expect it to, but remains devastatingly funny as its own breed of anti-comedy. Quaid plays his character as cold as possible, easily able to walk off this set and onto a straight drama as a serial killer, while Hurt is a '50s caricature: constantly cooking and cleaning in her best pearls – a satirical version of June



Cleaver from *Leave it to Beaver*.

Aside from being beautifully restored, this release boasts commentaries from Balaban and producer Bonnie Palef, as well as an interview commentary with composer Jonathan Elias that features his eerie score. There is also a series of illuminating featurettes — one of the standouts being "Leftovers to Be" with writer Christopher Hawthorne, in which he discusses how strange it was that Randy Quaid was cast because he looks just like his own father, to the point where it briefly upset his family. Understandably so, because this vision of parenthood is riddled with paranoia, hallucinations and insanity that has a strong flavour all its own.

RICHELLE CHARKOT

THANKS FOR THE REISSUE, ARROW!

CREEPSHOW 2 (1987) Blu-ray

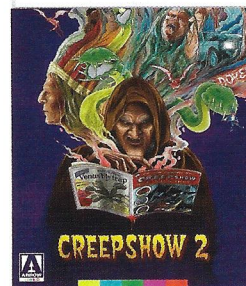
Starring Lois Chiles, George Kennedy and Tom Savini
Directed by Michael Gornick
Written by George A. Romero, Stephen King and Lucille Fletcher
Arrow Films

Stephen King may be best known for his iconic novels, but Arrow's deluxe resurrection of *Creepshow 2* celebrates his early days penning little slices of malice for periodicals – the source of the tales in this 1987 anthology.

Although this trio of stories contains a decent pair of winners, Michael Gornick's follow-up to

George A. Romero's original is a case of diminishing returns (note: Romero penned the screenplay to the sequel), such as in the opener "Old Chief Wood'nhead," featuring George Kennedy, about a general store holdup and the golem-like effigy of an aboriginal chief. It's paced too slowly, and given its stereotypical depiction of First Nations peoples, hasn't aged well. Best of the bunch is "The Raft," about a group of college kids at an isolated swimming hole pursued by a murderous oil slick in the lake. Buoyed (literally) by some fun (if dated) effects work, it's a tight chiller that plays out like a lo-fi version of *The Shallows*. Finally, there's "The Hitchiker," in which a selfish woman (Lois Chiles: *Coma*, *Moonraker*) keeps running into the victim of her hit-and-run, with deliciously gory results (and the classic line, "Thanks for the ride, lady!").

The original *Creepshow* attempted to translate the look and feel of E.C. Comics directly to the screen, but Gornick's approach feels more like flipping channels through Saturday morning cartoons, with the animated sequences between the stories and interstitials featuring Tom Savini in ridiculous makeup as "The Creep." While Romero's film balances comedy and horror in a uniquely hyperbolic way, Gornick's style is more laid back, which is surprising given his role as cinematographer on the previous *Creepshow* (and two of Romero's *Dead* films). The problem is that these stories really need a gleeful sense of mania to play well, which only comes in small bursts here.



Parents