

collection of Trailers for other Uearthed Films titles (including a very brief trailer for Brutal). Meanwhile, the features of the disc include a very brief behind the scene featurette. It is brief at best but it gives a peek behind the camera to show the cast and crew who clearly had a lot of fun making this film. However, this is completely assumed as there are no cast and crew interviews to back this up. Rounding up the extras on this disc, we have three music videos for "Nakigoto", "Brutal" and "Blood". None of them play to my personal taste but if you're a fan of k-pop or rap then you should find yourself suitably entertained.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

BRUTAL is out now on **US DVD** and **Blu-ray** courtesy of Uearthed Films.

REVIEWED BY JON DICKINSON

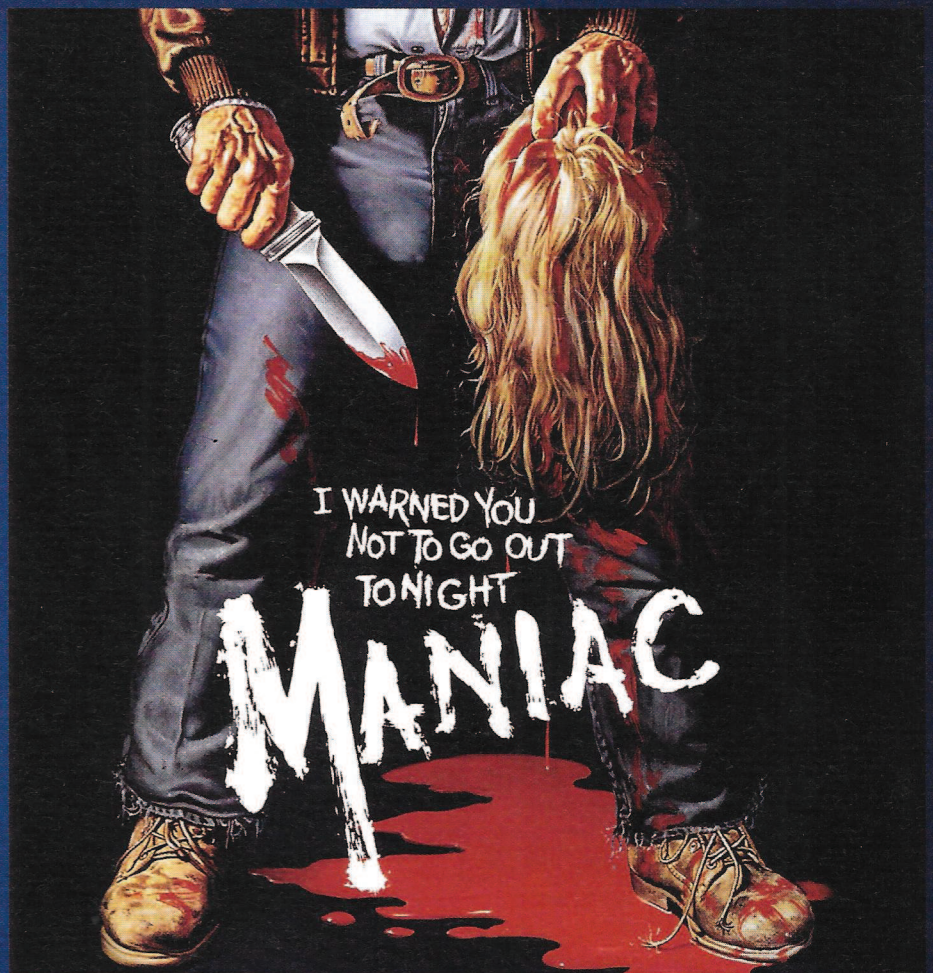
MANIAC

THE FILM: William Lustig's iconic horror *Maniac* is infamous for its violence and the hysteria that was whipped up by the media shortly after its release. *Maniac* is the story of a psychotic man called Frank as he stalks the streets of New York at night killing young women and keeping their scalps as trophies. However, after a chance meeting with a young female photographer, Frank continues his struggle to keep his murderous intentions at bay.

Dark, savage and unnerving, *Maniac* is not by any means an easy watch. With it, Lustig has delivered one of the most disturbing films to ever come out of the 80s. As a whole, it is a very nasty viewing experience that most modern filmmakers wouldn't dare replicate. That said, there is something special at work here. Lustig's depicts every violent act in the most responsible approach possible. Every bit of its violence is ugly and despite Tom Savini's exploding head, it can be argued that there's nothing exploitative with the way it handles its violence.

Elsewhere in the film, the cast are just as effective. Jo Spinelli plays Frank, the film's titular Maniac. He is fantastic and his depiction of the character is both disturbing and unpredictable. Joining him on screen is Caroline Munro as Anna, the photographer who starts a relationship with Spinelli's Frank. During their time together the film takes an unexpected tonal shift that serves as a stark contrast to the film's darker scenes. It is during this constant contrast where the film continues to keep audiences on the edge of their seats throughout.

Overall, I am not surprised that so many people have continued to have



issues with this film. Again, it's nasty and Lustig is hardly a tactful filmmaker. Some call it misogynistic. Some call it tasteless. However, I think *Maniac* is a powerful film thanks to the incredible performance by the cast and stunning effects work by Tom Savini. So, if you can look beyond its controversy, you'd be doing yourself a favour by checking it out in this glorious 4k restoration.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

SPECIAL FEATURES: Blue Underground has killed it with this amazing presentation. Offering fans a stunning range of extras to consume. There's plenty of content to be enjoyed and it begins with two fantastic audio commentaries with Lustig and other members of cast and crew. Also included with the disc are several trailers for the film including a large volume of radio and TV spots. Although the trailers are somewhat repetitive it's interesting to see how Lustig attempted to market the film to mass audiences.

On the second disc, fans can look forward to a bevy of featurettes lasting over 2 hours. First, there is a blooper reel that was recovered from previously unseen 16mm footage. Beyond that, you can look forward to in-depth interviews with Caroline Munro, Tom Savini and Composer Jay Chattaway. Each interview

provides a deeper understanding of what it took to bring the film to life and the effect it had on their lives after it was released.

However, a personal highlight of the second disc is the *Maniac Men* featurette. In it, William Lustig meets up with Songwriters Michael Sembello and Dennis Matkosky. Their hit *Maniac* might have been written for *Flashdance* but for many years it has been rumoured that Matkosky and Sembello actually wrote *Maniac* for Lustig's movie. What happens next is truly superb.

Rounding up the extras, Blue Underground has also included a bevy of publicity appearances and news clips of the media hysteria that rocked the world upon the release of the film. These additions may be brief but they go to great lengths to show the determination of Lustig to make the film a success and the condemnation of it by the media. It's really fascinating to watch.

Throw in the CD soundtrack and a collectable booklet featuring a new essay by Michael Givgold, this is a must own Blu-ray for every *Maniac* fan out there.

Rating: 🧟🧟🧟🧟

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