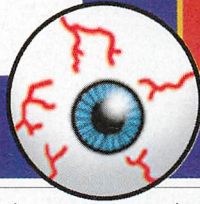
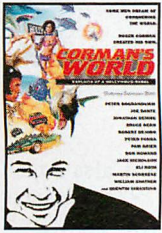


THE WIDE EYE of Dr. Cyclops



Roger Corman isn't anywhere near close to retiring, but if he was, **CORMAN'S WORLD: EXPLOITS OF A HOLLYWOOD REBEL** (Anchor Bay) would be a perfect summation of his career and accomplishments. The veteran filmmaker has been even more celebrated for the screen giants he's launched than for the movies



he himself made, and both receive their full due from documentarian Alex Stapleton. From his early years to the 21st century (where he's seen on the set of the Syfy flick *Dinoshark*, as astute a producer as ever), his contributions to cinema from A-pictures to Z-flicks are surveyed via copious clips and, even more noteworthy, on-screen reminiscences by everyone from exploitation stalwarts Dick Miller and Pam Grier to Oscar-

she shot hundreds of hours of footage for *Corman's World*, relating fascinating-sounding stories that had to hit the cutting-room floor. Unfortunately, only about 13 minutes of these found their way into the DVD and Blu-ray's extended interviews, and little of this is as juicy or moving as stuff Stapleton has described. More engaging are 15 minutes of interviewees' personal messages to Corman, though it's a distraction that neither section IDs the speakers on screen (particularly when at least one doesn't appear in *Corman's World* itself). The docu is still an essential purchase, but the missed opportunity repped by its extras drops the disc rating to:

CYCLOPS RATING:

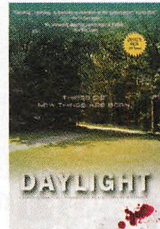
—Michael Gingold

Fans of Glass Eye Pix and *Martha Marcy May Marlene* will appreciate the upstate New York atmosphere of David Barker's **DAYLIGHT** (Cinema Purgatorio). Daniel (Aidan Redmond) and his pregnant wife Irene (Alexandra Meierhans) get lost while driving to a rural wedding, and when they stop to ask directions, they wind up in the hands of a trio of crooks (Michael Godere, Ivan Martin and Brian Bickerstaff) holing up in a house they've apparently taken over by violent means. From the start, it's hard to tell just how far the thugs will go

in their mistreatment of their captives; at times they seem polite, or perhaps a tad sympathetic to Irene's condition (thankfully, her pregnancy isn't exploited for cheap threats/chills), while others suggest the gang would have no compunction about getting rid of the two potential witnesses. A particularly harrowing scene about 20 minutes in is enough to set off a sense of unease that permeates everything that follows.

This brief (74 minutes) feature finds room for occasional ruminations on religion and fate, though

every time you think it's going to go all cerebral, a scary or squirmy bit of business pulls it back into disturbing territory, and the entire cast is first-rate.



The DVD provides a 12-minute excerpt with commentary by Barker and producer Jay Van Hoy, who reveal that *Daylight* was born from the need to quickly put together a project "that could star a pregnant Swiss woman" and was developed via improv, with a minimum of footage shot. Despite the fast, spare nature of its creation, *Daylight* feels fully thought-out and accomplished, looks pro in the disc's widescreen transfer and can hold its own with any number of psychological thrillers done with much more expansive budgets and schedules.

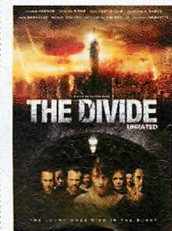
CYCLOPS RATING:

—Michael Gingold

There's a fine line separating a movie that's compellingly nihilistic from one that's just depressingly so, and for this reviewer's money, **THE DIVIDE** (Anchor Bay) falls on the right side of it. Opening with an impressive setpiece of panic and destruction as a nuclear holocaust descends upon Manhattan, director Xavier Gens follows a group of apartment-house tenants into a basement bunker set up by paranoid super Mickey (Michael Biehn). The cellar at first seems to be a place of refuge, but it inexorably becomes a cauldron of bad feelings and worse behavior, as some of the group succumb to the animalistic side of human nature while a dwindling number of others try to keep it together. Committed performances by all involved help make this engrossing; Lauren German provides a sympathetic center, and while Biehn at first seems over the top, his characterization comes to make sense under the circumstances, and there's a nervous ten-

sion in watching some of the other men trapped with him descend to and past his level of dementia, with Michael Eklund's physical and mental dissolution especially striking.

On the DVD and Blu-ray, the 2.35:1 transfers make *The Divide*'s grotty details appear as sharp as possible for maximum uncomfortable atmosphere. A commentary by Gens, Biehn, Eklund and co-star Milo Ventimiglia, however, is much more lighthearted—and just as profane in Biehn's case—as the quartet alternately praise and poke good-natured fun at the other cast. Their



conversation focuses less on the technical side of the film than on the fluid nature of its scenario and performances, a great deal of which were improvised as the shoot proceeded and the characters organically developed. One is left with the impression of *The Divide* as an actors' playground—albeit one with plenty of roughhousing involved, though it is stressed that no one on set actually got hurt (even when, as we learn late in the talk, the stunt coordinator set his own bare-chested son on fire).

CYCLOPS RATING:

—Michael Gingold

D**EADHEADS** (Freestyle) was the creation of Brett and Drew Pierce, sons of original *Evil Dead* FX creator Bart Pierce, so one might expect this regional, Michigan-shot production to be similarly rough around the edges. In fact, it's quite slickly made, with unexpectedly attractive rural vistas (nicely caught in the DVD's widescreen images)—though a little bit more grit would have been an advantage. At its (extracted) heart, *Deadheads* is a road movie/love story in which nice guy Mike (Michael McKiddy) wakes up as a sentient zombie in a Midwest teeming with mindless,



Photo: Copyright Cinema Purgatorio

winners Martin Scorsese and Jonathan Demme. Throughout, all involved achieve a laudable balance of extolling Corman's many virtues without losing sight of the fact that, let's face it, some of the flicks he backed were pretty schlocky stuff. Nonetheless, the good ones, particularly *The Intruder* (which to this day can hold its own against any of the more "respectable" social-issue films of the '60s), receive the praise they deserve.

Stapleton has stated, in interviews with Fango and others, that