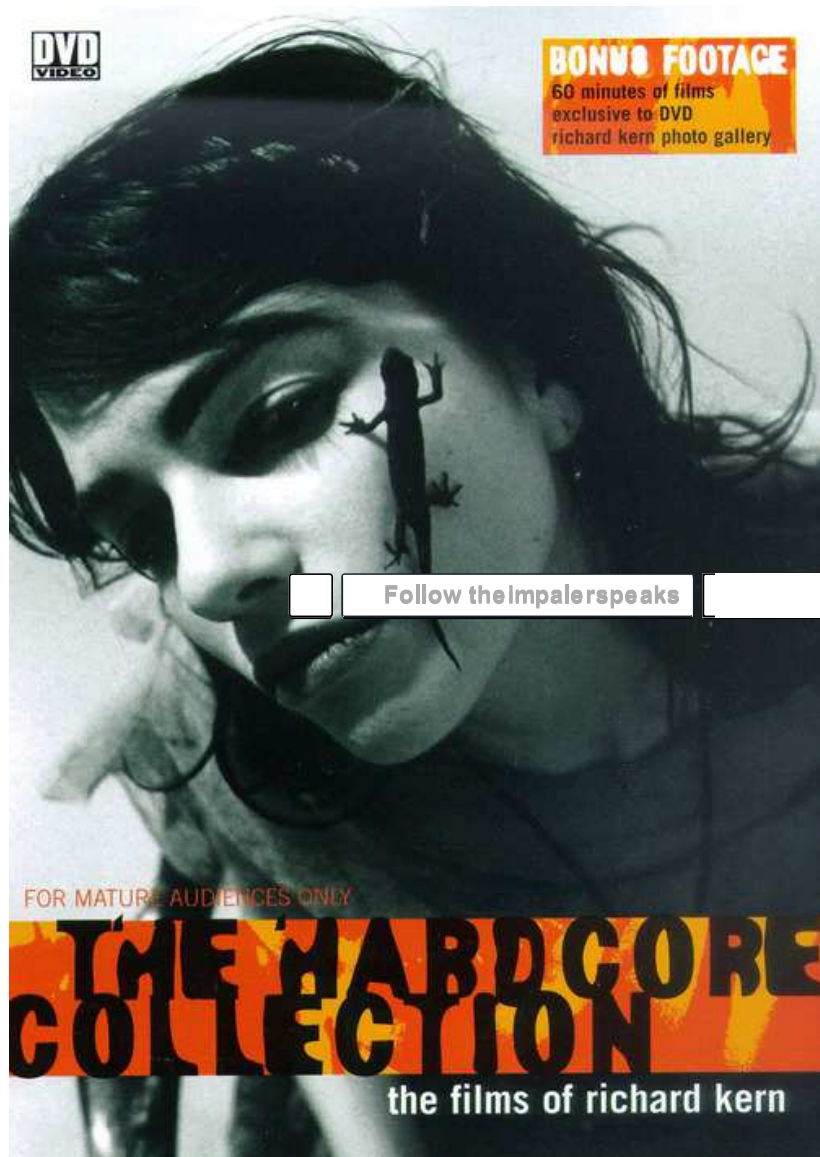


The Impaler Speaks

Richard Kern - The Hardcore Collection



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The Films Of Richard Kern: The Hardcore Collection ([MVD Visual](#))

director: Richard Kern

How many times have I watched the core group of films in this collection on a lovingly (if illicitly) burned DVD made from my now-completely-thrashed VHS copy? Um, I'm a writer, not a mathematician. I honestly couldn't say, but the simple answer is 'a lot'. Are the films here simply that great, that unmissable, that life-changing? Again, a simple – if, perhaps, one that may seem confusing until I tie everything together at the end of this review – 'not entirely'. 'Not entirely?!' '... BUT...'.... Oh, there's a 'but'. Good. Yes, there is a 'but', and it's a big one. (No pun intended.) Many of the short films in this collection can almost universally be considered shocking, confusing, and, at times, disgusting – even by me. BUT (yes, there it is) that's not the point. Or perhaps that IS the point – Kern's point, as a filmmaker, at any rate. Kern is an iconic figure in the New York City underground art scene, an innovator of performance art and unapologetic provocateurism, and the films collected here represent – as the title quite clearly implies – the 'hardcore' segment of his repertoire. The films featured here include all of those found on the original VHS release – 'Death Valley '69' (1986), 'Right Side Of My Brain' (1984), 'You Killed Me First' (1985), 'The Bitches' (1992), 'The Sewing Circle' (1992), 'Fingered' (1986), 'Submit To Me Now' (1987), 'My Nightmare' (1993), 'Horoscope' (1991), and 'X Is Y' (1990) – and an hour's worth of additional films that have never before been commercially released, including the 'Manhattan Love Suicides' trifecta ('Stray Dogs', 'Woman At The Wheel', and 'Trust In Me' – all from 1985), 'Submit To Me' (1986), and 'The Evil Cameraman' (1986). Kern utilizes both color and



The Impaler Speaks... supporting local music worldwide, from Austin TX to the United Kingdom and everywhere else. The Impaler has been a member of the Mass Movement creative team since it was a cut-n-paste fanzine many years ago. This is a way to add some depth to the coverage I am able to provide in MM, and so much more.... Support indie music. Support indie film. Support indie life.

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@LydiaKayE15 Such a pleasure! Looking forward to seeing you on the big screen, in Austin sometime, and on my next visit to the UK!

RT @AngryEyes13: Let's be movie

black-and-white visuals – often within the construct of a single film, to provide contrasting imagery as scenes or points-of-view change – and very little dialogue, making many of these films avant garde music videos, of a sort, for an impressive collection of artists whose music is as difficult for the mainstream to digest as Kern's films: Sonic Youth, Butthole Surfers, The Dream Syndicate, Wiseblood, SPK, Cop Shoot Cop, Joseph Budenholzer, Lydia Lunch, Norman Westberg of Swans, Black Snakes (featuring Kern on guitar), and J.G. Thirlwell (aka Clint Ruin, aka Foetus, aka the guy who did all those crazy-good industrial remixes for Pantera, aka just look him up and start buying his records – you'll be glad you did). The majority of the actors in these films – most of whom turn up over and over again – are members of Kern's performance art circle in some capacity, rather than people whose chosen profession is to act, which is perfectly suited to Kern's desires and the final pieces on display here. The few exceptions to this are Henry Rollins – when he was in that 'scrawny bodybuilder' period and had long hair and very few tattoos – and a selection of NYC musicians/artists that include Sonic Youth, Lydia Lunch, Norman Westberg, J.G. Thirlwell, Pete Shore of Unsane, and Nick Zedd. The 'performance art actors' are generally pseudonymed in some fashion – Lung Leg (née Elizabeth Carr – aka the cover star of Sonic Youth's 'EVOL' and possibly the most well-known of the bunch), Jaqui O., Jessica C., Annabelle, Squeak, Mystery Girl, Cruella DeVille, Audrey Rose, et al – and their roles vary by their abilities... and/or their proclivities. Kern's primary themes throughout 'The Hardcore Collection' are graphic – and often unorthodox, by generally accepted social standards – sex; murder; grotesqueness; abandonment; disillusionment; and the popularized – if cartoonishly moribund – concept of occultism. This collection includes some scenes – and, in fact, some entire films – that are difficult at best to sit through for all but those with iron-clad dispositions, and this definitely is not a DVD the average person would want to leave lying around the house for a parent or babysitter or random co-worker to stumble across... BUT it provides an indispensable archival look at the early days of truly independent filmmaking – and kick-ass music – in New York City, along with more than a few cheap thrills (if you want to look at it that way). The Impaler's verdict: 'The Hardcore Collection' is essential to own and essential to view – at least once – for anyone with any interest at all in independent filmmaking, avant garde art or music, and/or the living beast that is New York City. **The Impaler** [@impalerspeaks](#)

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[@Battfest](#) Limozine deliver high quality Hot Rock Action in spades, to be sure!

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[@impalerspeaks](#) Hi, check out my short horror film
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RT [@thetuesdayclub1](#): Fab gig at Paper Dress last night
[@paperdressed](#) [@scantregard](#)
[@impalerspeaks](#) thanks all + medusa no mid nme & the eye h...

[@thetuesdayclub1](#) Had a blast and a half! Absolutely ready for another round!

RT [@thetuesdayclub1](#):
[@impalerspeaks](#) star man. Great to meet you last night :) hopefully we can do the return trip one day. Thanks for all ...

[@LadyLakeMusic](#) [@carlsberg](#)
[@Battfest](#) Awesome! Yes, loads of great rock n roll with
[@thetuesdayclub1](#) [@limozineband](#)
[@DamnVandals](#) [@Dana_Jade](#) !

[@StuartLawson](#) Fantastic! Hope the final day of casting went well!

You've been good to me, London! Heading back to East Anglia today. 2 days left on The Impaler's UK tour!

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