



## ELVIS GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

The Elvis Re-Releases  
Warner Home Video

You *could* say that Warner Home Video is commemorating the 30th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death by re-releasing a healthy portion of Elvis' Hollywood work. There's a six-film box set, two "Deluxe" editions, and one giant oversight. However, "commemorate" is the wrong word. Let's just call it what it is: "cashing in."

First, and we won't waste too much time on it, is the box set: *Elvis: The Hollywood Collection*. The box contains *Charro!*, *Girl Happy*, *Kissin' Cousins*, *Live A Little, Love A Little*, *Stay Away, Joe*, and *Tickle Me*. To say

these are the worst of The King's 30 films is an understatement. Hell, they make *Clambake* look like *The Godfather*. If the set was titled with truth in advertising in mind, it would have rightly been called *Elvis: The Scraps*. Seriously, if it's a choice between picking up *The Hollywood Collection* or a large fork with which to gouge your eyes out, go with the fork.

The two films getting the "deluxe" treatment fare a little better. By selecting *Jailhouse Rock* and *Viva Las Vegas*, Warner Bros. features the two most distinctive eras of Presley's career: The pre-army Elvis and the beginning of the Vegas lounge years.

*Jailhouse Rock* (1957) is definitely one of

the best films in The King's resume and showed he could indeed act. Elvis plays Vince Everett, a guy who learns to play guitar in prison with the help of a crafty former country star (Mickey Shaughnessy) on the assumption they will be partners after their release. Of course, once Vince gets out of stir, he strikes out on his own, reneging on the deal, and generally alienating everyone around him. In fact, *Jailhouse Rock* is the only Elvis film in which he truly played an unlikable character. In the end of course, Vince learns the error of his ways, becomes a good guy, and the happy ending is assured.

*Viva Las Vegas* (1964) finds Presley smack in the middle of his post-army fluff films. However, *Viva* rises above the rest by pairing him with his most formidable female co-star, Ann-Margret.

The King plays a race-car driver who hits Vegas looking for some cash to fix his car. Along the way, he works odd jobs, hooks up with Margret, and sings a few tunes. Will he win the big race? Will he get the girl? We're all on the edge of our seats.

Neither films really deserve the "Deluxe Edition" tag, as neither have very many special features, and none of them include people involved with the actual films.

The giant oversight is Warner Bros. completely ignoring Presley's best overall film – and his best performance – in *King Creole*. *Creole* showed that not only could he act, but had it not been for the horrid choices Colonel Tom made for him, Presley could have carved out the kind of rebel film persona along the lines of James Dean and Marlon Brando. Alas, it was never to be, but perhaps someday a two-disc treatment will find its way to the shelves. Keep your fingers crossed.

Jailhouse Rock: ★★★★★  
Viva Las Vegas: ★★★

Hated: G.G. Allin & The Murder Junkies  
MVD Visual

Director Todd Phillips is now a big-time Hollywood director with films that include *Old School* and *Road Trip*. Like a lot of directors, Phillips went to film school. However, his student film would give no indication of the path his career would take, as the subject of said film is notorious punk rocker and one-man wrecking crew G.G. Allin.

Allin gained infamy for frequently doing shows naked, inserting various objects in his ass, and flinging the results at his audiences. He fought with his fans, pulled them onstage by their hair, and generally cleared the room within a few songs. Oh yeah, he also repeatedly threatend to kill himself on stage. Ironically, he ended up dying in true rock-star fashion: a drug overdose in a hotel room.

*Hated* was completed just weeks before Allin's death, and has been available for years. MVD gives us a Special Edition DVD that includes two commentary tracks – one by Phillips and another another with Phillips and Allin's brother Merle. Also, for those wondering how Allin got to be the way he was, the interview with his mother leaves no doubt he was doomed to become one seriously screwed-up individual.

Film: ★★★  
Features: ★★★★★