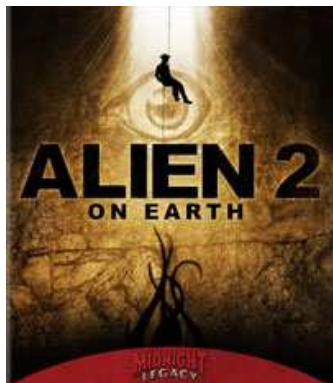


DVDSLEUTH.COM



Dvdsleuth.com is your source for dally Blu-ray Disc and DVD reviews.



Alien 2 On Earth (1980)

Midnight Legacy

Blu-ray Disc Released: 3/22/2011

All Ratings out of 

Movie:  (or  depending on your taste)

Video: 

Audio: 

Extras: 

Review by Mike Long, Posted on 3/2/2011

When the home video revolution exploded in the 1980s, obviously one of the best parts was the ability to watch a movie anytime that one wished. As the years went by, this attribute evolved into the fact that movie fans could have access to movies which would have never played in theaters near them. Suddenly, cult, obscure, and foreign films were readily available. This happened here-and-there during the days of VHS, but this idea really took off with DVD. Boutique home video companies were importing little movies left and right (mostly horror), much to the delight of cinefiles. Seemingly overnight, my shelf was filled with movies which I'd only read about like **Audition**, **Ju-on**, and **Suspiria**. It reached the point where importing DVDs (and eventually Blu-rays) felt like a waste of time, as the assumption was that someone would bring it to Region 1 at some point. But, it would be foolish to think we've seen everything that's out there, which new company Midnight Legacy proves with their U.S. debut of the 1980 Italian film **Alien 2 On Earth**.

As **Alien 2 On Earth** opens, Thelma (Belinda Mayne), a professional spelunker, races to appear on a TV talk show. But, not long after the interview starts, Thelma goes into a sort of trance and the interview ends. Her boyfriend (?), Roy (Mark Bodin), takes her out of the studio. While this is going on, we can hear chatter in the background about a space mission returning to Earth. Roy takes Thelma to a beach where a guy in a row boat comes over from a yacht, talks to her about monsters, and then leaves. Thelma and Roy then go bowling. Following this, the couple and a group of people (which includes Director Michele Soavi, here going under the name Mychael Shaw) visit a bar, and they then venture in a large underground cavern. Once there, they find a rock which seems to be alive which attacks them. Now, they must try and find a way out of the cavern.

(I just want everyone to know that I didn't make any of that up.)

I'm not an international copyright lawyer, but apparently the laws in Europe pertaining to impersonating a sequel aren't the same as the ones we have here. Most horror movie fans are already familiar with this concept. George Romero's film **Dawn of the Dead** was released in Italy as **Zombi**. Within months of its release, a movie called **Zombi 2**, which had no relation to Romero's movie, was out in Italian cinemas, clearly as an attempt to cash in on the American movie's success. (The Lucio Fulci movie was released in the U.S. as **Zombie**.) Apparently something similar happened with **Alien 2 On Earth**. Not long after Ridley Scott's

Alien opened in Italy, **Alien 2 On Earth** appeared on the scene. But, somehow, this one never made it to American shores. While watching the movie, I assumed that **Alien 2 On Earth** was simply a cave movie which was later turned into a monster movie. However, the Special Effects Outtakes included on the Blu-ray Disc clearly show "Alien 2" on the clapboard.

Again, prior to this release, I'd never heard of **Alien 2 On Earth** and judging by what I've found online, little is known about the movie. (When I first read the woefully inaccurate synopsis for the movie on IMDB.com, I thought that this was a re-titled **Alien Contamination**, but it isn't.) I'm not sure why it was never brought to the U.S., but I would have to guess that distributors didn't know what to do with it, as this is a weird movie.

When judged on any sort of normal film scale, **Alien 2 On Earth** is a disaster. There is very little story here and we're never told the motivations for anything that happens in the movie. I don't think that I've ever seen a movie so lacking in detail. What makes Thelma a spelunking expert? What are they looking for in that cave? Why is Michele Soavi typing by candlelight (using special candles imported from Italy) in the cave? Who was that guy in the rowboat? Why is the group at the bowling alley sharing a 64-ounce can of Del Monte pineapple juice? What dive bar in the American desert would have "WC" painted on the bathroom door? Why is the finale essentially a montage of bowling alley machinery? The movie doesn't make any sense and the connection between what we're seeing and the brief mention of the space probe is never made, despite what some have reported. The gore effects are minimal and the monster looks like a bloody sock puppet (That's literally bloody, not like something a British person would say.). The movie is never suspenseful or even mildly interesting.

However, if you are a fan of early 80s Italian horror films and names like Lucio Fulci, Luigi Cozzi, and Bruno Mattei excite you, then **Alien 2 On Earth** is right up your alley. The movie contains everything that made these movies unique. As with other directors in this ilk, Director Ciro Ippolito insists on showing certain things in real time, such as the boat rowing to the shore from the yacht or anyone walking or driving from one place to another. As with movies like **Zombie** or **The Beyond**, a portion of the movie was shot in the U.S., so that the movie would have an American feel. There are unnecessary close-ups of eyes and the synthesizer soundtrack sounds like every other Italian horror movie. The gore and nudity aren't impressive, but they are trotted out in a very non-chalant manner. And, as with Fulci's best known works, logic has no place in **Alien 2 On Earth**. In other words, this is a feast for fans of the genre.

While I'm still not sure exactly what to make of **Alien 2 On Earth**, I applaud Midnight Legacy for bringing it to America and I welcome them to the industry. The presentation is impressive (see below) and as a fan of cult movies, I get excited about films with which I'm not familiar. I'm very curious to see what they will bring us next.

Alien 2 On Earth made me want to learn more about the unknown connection between spelunking and bowling on Blu-ray Disc courtesy of Midnight Legacy. The film has been letterboxed at 1.85:1 and the Disc contains an AVC 1080p HD transfer which runs at an average of 35 Mbps. Midnight Legacy's website contains the following statement; "Every release will be treated with respect, properly restored, and presented as the definitive version of that particular film. If a film cannot be done correctly, it will not be done at all." Judging by this release, they are taking this promise very seriously. The image is incredibly sharp and clear, showing only a trace amount of grain and no overt defects from the source material. The movie opens with a ton of space program stock footage, which made me think that the whole thing would look awful, but once this ended, the video looked great. The colors are very impressive and the image is never overly dark or bright. The image has a nice amount of depth and objects in the foreground and nicely separated from the background. This 30 year old movie looks better than some recent releases. The Disc carries a DTS-HD Master Audio 2-channel audio track which runs at 48 kHz and an average of 1.6 Mbps. The track provides clear dialogue and sound effects. While it's not match for the video, the track is satisfactory. The stereo effects are well-done and the sound effects and music rarely overpower the dialogue. As with most films of this era, the dialogue sounds dubbed and a bit canned at times.

The **Alien 2 On Earth** Blu-ray Disc contains only two extras. The "Dutch VHS Trailer" (3 minutes) is simply a long trailer for the movie with Dutch subtitles. According to Midnight Legacy, the Dutch tape was hard to find and thus this trailer is a rarity. The other extra is an 11-minute reel of "Special Effects Outtakes". Most of these are simply alternate takes of effects (gore) shots seen in the film. This has no audio and there's not really anything of interest here. (Actually most of this looks just like the shots seen in the movie.)

Review by [Mike Long](#). Copyright 2011.