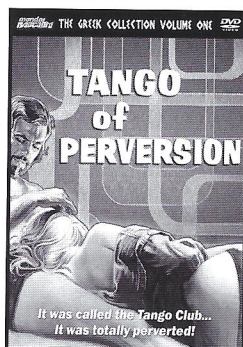


His name might not be familiar to US filmmakers, but Dacosta Carayan [Kostas Karagiannis] was one of Greece's most prolific directors and **Mondo Macabro** has unearthed a pair of his sexy giallo-esque thrillers, both with new transfers and viewable in Greek with subtitles or English-dubbed. First up is 1974's **TANGO OF PERVERSION** [a.k.a. **Tango 2001**], a sick tale of murder, mindgames and sexual dysfunction. Local heart-throb Lakis Komninos (credited as Larry Daniels)



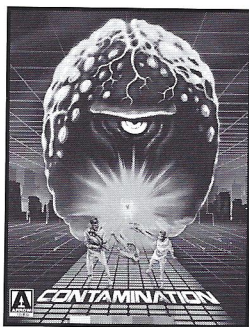
stars as Stathis (or Steve, in the English-language version), a rugged gigolo who screws older women, holds court at a Tango-themed nightclub and borrows the posh bachelor pad of quiet friend Joachim (Vagelis Voulgaridis) for one-night-stands — unaware that his impotent pal is secretly shooting home movies of this hump-

ing via a one-way mirror. Everything goes haywire when Stathis' strung-out main squeeze Joanna (Erika Raffael) is lured to Joachim's home by a lesbian admirer (Dorothy Moore) with the promise of drugs, Stathis catches the two together, his volatile temper leads to murder and it's all inadvertently captured on film! Not kinky enough for you yet? Wait until Joachim discovers a cure for his limp dick through corpse-screwing, and soon needs fresh prospects. In an interesting twist, Joachim is unquestionably screwed-up, but he's also a timid, long-bullied outsider simply searching for happiness, while Stathis is the film's *real* bastard — casually using and abusing friends and lovers, and a complete asshole right up to its sat-
isfying (yet rather predictable) ending. Awash in dated trappings (typically-ugly '70s fashions, a stunningly awful rock band, a slo-mo lovers-running-through-nature montage) and often bordering on the ridiculous, this is workmanlike sleaze that doesn't get bogged down in excessive style or pretensions... A tad more restrained in the deviance department, 1976's

THE WIFE KILLER initially bounces between two distinct storylines — a noirish set-up (a rich wife and her scheming, unfaithful husband) and a crime-thriller (a sexual predator on the prowl) — only to end up blending them for even loopier exploitation possibilities. In the later thread, a stocking-masked deviant lurks around lover's lane and attacks a couple in their car, raping the woman and slaughtering both. The latest in a string of sex crimes, the perpetrator leaves behind no clues and the police are baffled. Then we meet study ship's captain Dimitris (Lakis Komninos, once again playing a scumbag with aplomb), who's married to his wealthy employer Eleni (Dorothy Moore) and worried that he'll be cut off if she discovers his hot blonde mistress. So Dimitris concocts a convoluted scheme to eliminate his bothersome wife once and for all, by working in cahoots with this local nutjob (Vagelis Seilinos) and making dead Eleni look like just another sex-crime victim. Will the dumb-ass cops fall for this sham, with Dimitris

as the grieving spouse? Will one of Eleni's old suitors toss a monkey wrench into his half-baked plan? Plus in an amusing twist, this serial rapist turns out to be a whole lot smarter than bone-headed Dimitris anticipated. Blunt yet reasonably entertaining, there's nudity, double-crosses, misogynistic behavior, a tidy wrap-up, and (like the first film) lots of utterly gratuitous local color, such as a restaurant floorshow performing traditional Greek dances for their dinner crowd. Both discs also contain "Sunshine & Shadows," a 25-minute documentary on the history of Greek cinema.

Although best known to schlock fans for the cut-rate space opera **STARCRASH** and his hilarious Hercules duet with Lou Ferrigno, one of writer-director Luigi Cozzi's cheesiest piles of steaming Eurotrash is 1981's **CONTAMINATION** (Arrow Video). Mixing Italian interiors with a few US exteriors (you weren't fooling anyone, Cozzi!), it's over-



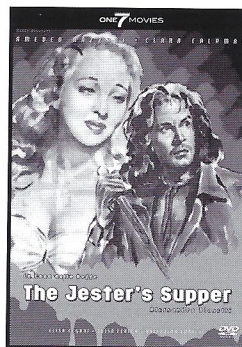
stuffed with sci-fi idiocy, copious gore and unintentional laughs. When an empty freighter is sighted near NYC, authorities board this ghost ship, find the crew torn to shreds and stumble across a cache of "eggs" hidden inside crates of coffee. Full of deadly alien bacteria, these glowing,

pulsing globes are soon erupting in people's faces, causing their torsos to explode and soaking the set in fake innards. Our heroes includes a Brooklyn cop (Marino Masé), a sexy Colonel (Louise Marleau) and a burnt-out, disgraced astronaut (ZOMBIE's Ian McCulloch) who discovered a cave full of these eggs during his last mission to Mars (wait... huh?) and now resides in Weehawken, N.J. Who's behind this scheme to infect humanity? Our intrepid trio eventually uncovers an extraterrestrial conspiracy involving a weird, slimy, decidedly-chintzy Martian cyclops-creature and its mind-controlled Earthling minions... Those already familiar with Cozzi's work will know what to expect — the characters are broadly-drawn morons, the direction is ham-handed and the production values are downright pathetic. Sure, that might sound like braindead fun, but the film is often unforgivably boring (particularly once our leads head to South America to investigate the freighter's coffee company), livened up only by Cozzi's frequent bursts of outlandish space-monster-produced mayhem [Danger: exploding lab mice!]... The packed Blu-ray/DVD set offers the restored film in (stilted) English or Italian with subtitles, along with a 43-minute talk by Cozzi about his life and career; the 23-minute "Appunti Sul Fantacinema" [Notes on Science-Fiction Cinema], in which a young Cozzi discusses the making of **CONTAMINATION**, along with behind-the-scenes footage; a lengthy horror festival Q&A with Cozzi and McCulloch; an analysis of Italian film knock-offs with Chris Poggiali and Maitland McDonagh; and much more.

Brief, brisk and populated by amusingly boneheaded characters, writer-director Lari Terás' micro-budgeted, 2013 feature debut, **BLOOD RIDERS: THE DEVIL RIDES WITH US** (Brinkvision) is an escalatingly-bloody comedy of errors that takes place over one long and crazy night. It begins as just another tedious summer evening in suburban Ontario, with Dane (Joel Ballanger) and Zoey (Caitlynn Medrek) getting drunk outdoors, when the pair spot Janek (Corey Lof) and Kyle (A.J. Morabito) attempting to break into a parked car and join them on their joyride. Unfortunately,

this clueless quartet picked the wrong car to steal, because this particular junker has a dead girl in its trunk! Of course, these dimwits continue to make one misguidedly absurd decision after another, while encountering an array of (often short-lived) oddballs — Emo-Satanists in search of one integral item for their dark ceremony, a surprisingly-chummy Neo-Nazi neighbor, a hyper-active photo-journalist — amidst human sacrifices, unexpected sexual attraction, disposing of a leaky SUV full of fresh corpses, and running into old childhood friends in the weirdest places. Like so many do-it-yourself projects, the overall performances are a mixed bag, but all four leads are consistently ingratiating, with Medrek the standout as charmingly-twisted Zoey, who has a dangerously hair-trigger temper and spends much of the film caked in blood. Terás deftly maintains a darkly comic edge throughout, while his only misstep involves ill-conceived inserts of assorted deceased characters being interviewed in the afterlife; their only imaginable purpose is to pad out the film to a barely-feature-length 71 minutes. The DVD includes a commentary by Terás and producer Kyle Chappell.

A black-and-white Italian costume drama, made in 1942 and set in 15th century Florence, might sound like potentially dry stuff, but director Alessandro Blasetti's **THE JESTER'S SUPPER** [La Cena Delle Beffe] (One 7 Movies) turns out to be a charmingly disturbed tale of humiliation and vengeance. Adapted from Sem Benelli's play (which already had a successful run on Broadway, starring John and Lionel Barrymore) and shot in



fascist Italy as World War II raged, the film boasts more casual cruelty and moral ambiguity than you'd find in Hays Code-regulated Hollywood fare of that era, as well as some of the earliest bare breasts in the history of Italian commercial cinema... Throughout his life, Gianetto Malespini (Osvaldo Valenti, who later joined Italy's Decima MAS commando unit and was executed in 1945 after being accused of collaboration and torture) has been bullied by the loutish Chiaramontesi brothers, Neri (popular star Amedeo Nazzari, in a change of pace from his usual macho-heroic roles) and Gabriello, who're currently jealous that Gianetto has taken up with the lovely Ginerva (Clara Calamai, from Visconti's **OSSESSIONE**). After the most recent vile behavior by these asshole-siblings — tearing Ginerva's blouse clean off (the aforementioned tits, barely on-screen for one second) — fed-up Gianetto concocts a cunning scheme involving a dinner party, pumping up Neri's unchecked ego, disguised Gianetto sleeping with unsuspecting Ginerva, and "insane" Neri ultimately imprisoned, strung up and forced to confront the people he's wronged and deceived over the years. Man, when Gianetto gets revenge, he *truly* means it! The story's complications (madness, repentance, manipulation, pitting

