

# NOW ON BLU-RAY AND DVD

By Pete Roche

## RAIDERS! THE STORY OF THE GREATEST FAN FILM EVER MADE

Long-hailed as one of the greatest action movies of all time, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* left an indelible psychic boot-print on the foreheads of those lucky enough to have caught it on the big screen during its initial theatrical run in thirty-six years ago.

The film—a throwback to the adventure serials of the 1930s and '40s—resonated particularly with preteen boys. No surprise, really. After all, director Steven Spielberg (*Jaws*, *E.T.*) and producer George Lucas (*Star Wars*) conceived the story of swashbuckling academician Indiana Jones in homage to their boyhood comic book heroes and Saturday matinee protagonists. Too old for rustic roleplaying (and too in-demand for leisurely games of play-pretend), the bearded



blockbuster kings channeled their fever-dreams into Harrison Ford's razor-stubbled treasure-hunter.

For those still young enough in 1981 to appreciate Indy's exploits and recreate them with friends in local forests and parks (perhaps drawing a stink-eye from authority figures), *Raiders* was

tinderbox for the imagination, a stunt-packed showcase whose memorable set pieces inspired prepubescent daredevils onto neighborhood garage roofs, across rivers, and over ravines.

But few of us documented our afterschool archaeological forays on film. Especially not in any manner that juxtaposed Spielberg's sweltering shoots in South American jungles.

Chris Stropoulos and Eric Zala did. In fact, the 11-year olds from Ocean Springs, Mississippi went one further, undertaking a shot-for-shot *Raiders* remake with a gaggle of geeky friends in basements and backyards.

One summer stretched into two, then three...then seven. By the time the duo wrapped production they were distracted high school seniors, far less interested in Indiana Jones (or spending time with each another) than in women and weed. Their VHS masterpiece, *Raiders: The Adaptation*, made for cutesy newspaper fodder and landed the boys on a few morning talk shows. But the '80s were over. Chris, Eric, and pals had grown up and moved on. Their story didn't end with high school graduation, however.

Now available on blu-Ray and DVD, *Raiders! The Story of the Greatest Fan Film Ever Made* chronicles the making of the low-budget (but big-hearted) Indy imitation and improbable reunion of Stropoulos and Zala, who mend fences in their forties to shoot the one pivotal scene they couldn't possibly restage as kids: The explosive desert fisticuffs between Ford's indefatigable Jones and Pat Roach's musclebound German airplane mechanic.

It's a true case of life imitating art: A documentary about amateur filmmakers who recreate their favorite summer cinema blockbuster over the span of seven years...and then some.

~Continued on Page 28



**LYLE HEATH**  
"The Versatile and Multi-Instrumentalist Musician"

**Still booking for 2016**

**Thursday, August 25th • 7-10pm**  
Pickled Pepper • Open mic • GOTL

**Saturday, August 27th • 8-11pm**  
Jeffco Lakes Campgrounds  
Adult Swim • Andover, Ohio

**Wednesday, August 31st • 1pm-2pm**  
Villa at the Lake Facility  
Piano Show • Conneaut, Ohio

**Thursday, September 1st • 6pm-8pm**  
Old Mill Winery • Geneva  
Acoustic Thursday

**Friday, September 2nd: WEDDING**

**Saturday, September 3rd • 9pm-12am**  
Jeffco Lakes Campgrounds • Andover

**Sunday, September 4th • 2:30-5:30pm**  
The Winery at Spring Hill • Geneva

**Monday, September 5th • 12-4pm**  
Old Firehouse Winery • GOTL

To book contact: **440-381-3736**  
or name search on 

Open 7-Days-A-Week!

Bob's Our 10th Season!

**FOOD COURT**  
*Geneva-on-the-Lake*

Same friendly people, best food prices!



Roasted Corn-on-the-Cob  
Corn Dogs • Sausage • Pulled Pork  
Hot Dogs • Fresh Cut French Fries  
Hamburgers • Nachos  
Cheese-on-a-Stick • Cheese Cakes



LOCATED ON THE STRIP  
GENEVA-ON-THE-LAKE RESORT

## Welcome to Conneaut, Ohio!

Please join us for an **extended** vacation or just spend a weekend in the most northeastern portion of the state!

**September 2 • Monroe Sirens Annual Swiss Steak Dinner**  
4095 Center Road, Route 7 Monroe (Conneaut), OH 44030 440-594-3873  
Served from 4 pm to 7 pm. \$10.00 adults, \$5.00 for kids 12 & under. Benefits the fire department.

**September 3 • Route 7 Garage Sale**  
Tour Route 7 for some great bargains Labor Day Weekend!  
Route 7, Starting in Conneaut, the Tour Route 7 Garage Sale stretches from Conneaut south into Hubbard, Ohio in Trumbull County!

**September 7 thru September 21 • Great Lakes Series**  
Conneaut Public Library  
304 Buffalo Street Conneaut, OH 440-593-1608  
A three part series for adults and teens will be presented by Bette Lou Higgins.  
All programs are from 5:30-6:30PM. Call to register!

**Wednesday, September 7th:** "Ladies of the Great Lakes"  
**Wednesday, September 14th:** "Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum"  
**Wednesday, September 21st:** "Monsters of the Great Lakes"

**Thursdays:** Lighthouse Cruisers Cruise-Ins Conneaut Township Park 6-dusk  
**Fridays:** Racing at Raceway Seven thru Labor Day.  
**Saturdays:** Farmer's Market, Park Ave., Moose Parking Lot 9a-1p  
**Now Thru Labor Day:** Railroad and Conneaut Historical Society Museums Open



**Visit us at [www.visitconneautohio.com](http://www.visitconneautohio.com)**  
**440-593-2402**

**King's X**  
and  
**The Rick Ray Band**

**Live at the Agora**  
**Saturday 10/1/16**  
[www.agoracleveland.com](http://www.agoracleveland.com)  
**\$20.00 adv \$25.00 DOS**

**Whooz Playin'**

**Sat. Aug. 27 • 7-10:00PM**  
**Sunset Harbor Bar & Grille**  
**Fairport Harbor**

**Fri. Sep. 2 • 8-11:30PM**  
**Cabanas**  
**Chardon**

**Mon. Sep. 5 • 1:30-5:30PM**  
**Debonne Vineyards**  
**Madison**

**Fri. Sep. 9 • 7:30-10:30PM**  
**Bone Daddy's**  
**Painesville**

To Book: 440-796-3057  
[www.WhoozPlayin.com](http://www.WhoozPlayin.com)

Check out our videos!

~Continued from Page 21

Haven't seen *Adaptation* on videocassette (or online)? No worries. Tim Skousen and Jeremy Coon jam enough of Strompolos and Zala's knockoff into their meticulous making-of to impart the essence of the grainy, gloriously goofy whole. We go back in time to watch Eric (Indy), Chris (Belloq), and their adolescent cohorts donning thrift-store costumes (and boy scout uniforms) to reenact key moments—from Indy's opening fertility idol gambit in Peru to the ark-opening, Nazi-melting climax in the Aegean Sea. We learn how the kids illustrated their own storyboards, designed makeshift sets (Well of Souls, Tanis dig, etc.), and choreographed barroom fights and shootouts over the span of several school interims, keeping true-to-course despite family shakeups and parental breakups.

Then-and-now interviews with the players reveal how they ignored naysayers with can-do attitudes (and youthful naivety) to reconstruct *Raiders'* signature props (the ark, medallion, Staff of Ra) and booby traps (rolling boulder), and how they maximized on personnel by casting acquaintances in multiple roles: A boy portraying a Hovitos indian one afternoon might play a Nazi thug or Cairo swordsman the next. Chris and Eric disclose the crushes they nursed over their Marion Ravenwood stand-in, dissect the disagreements had with one another (and their siblings), and explain why someone's pet beagle doubled as the Hitler-saluting spider monkey. When the kids nearly burn down a house recreating the confrontation at Marion's Nepal pub, their parents appoint a grown-up to supervise further shoots—unaware the babysitter they've selected is himself a beer-swilling movie arsonist. Eric nearly has his skin burned off when his chums mistakenly apply industrial latex to his face to mold a Belloq mask. Later, a hurricane whisks away his childhood home.

The '80s footage is juxtaposed with here-and-now clips of adult Strompolos and Zala swallowing their pride to solicit the funds needed to shoot a convincing airplane brawl (with a full-scale, custom-built plane rigged to explode). We groan with the guys as torrential rain threatens to wash out production, sympathize with Zala as he begs his nonplussed employer for an extra two days off, and bite our nails when a hired FX man gets a little too close to his own pyrotechnics. Chris purges skeletons in his closet by recalling his brushes with drug addiction, recovery...and an alternative rock band.

We also meet Jayson Lamb, a third *Adaption* collaborator whose inflated ego and eccentricities force Chris and Eric to withhold a reunion invite...until the eleventh hour. When he does come aboard, Lamb wastes little time reaffirming his fifth-wheel status by dispensing unwanted special effects input in the presence of hired experts who know better.

Skousen and Coon weren't the only ones impressed by Strompolos and Zala's efforts: Their documentary boasts praise from *Raiders* actor Jonathan Rhys Davies (Sallah), nerd critic Harry Knowles (*Ain't It Cool News*), and actor / director Eli Roth (*Inglourious Basterds*)—who proves implemental in circulating bootleg copies of the *Adaption* to certain Hollywood higher-ups. More than mere nostalgic look back at the boyhood project of teenage dreamers, *Raiders!* is a heartwarming tribute to the magic of first kisses and second chances in an increasingly cynical age. It's must-watch material for Indiana Jones fans...and should-see stuff for any self-respecting cinema buff.

Bonus blu-Ray and DVD materials feature over four hours of commentary, deleted scenes, outtakes from *Adaption*, and Q&A footage from its 2003 premiere at the Alama Drafthouse in Austin, Texas.

Today's Best  
**MIX 97.1**

**Rated #1**  
**With Northcoast**  
**Women!**

DAUGHTRY TAYLOR SWIFT PRINCE MADONNA BRYAN ADAMS BEYONCE

**Today's Best**  
**Mix of Music!**

Enjoy Great Savings With "Discount Deals"  
Online: [www.mix971FM.com](http://www.mix971FM.com)

**HAVE A SAFE & HAPPY**

**LABOR DAY WEEKEND**

**DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE**