

The Briefs: The Greatest Story Ever Told

BYO Records

Street: 10.23

It's been two years since The Briefs released their last full-length album, *Steal Yer Heart*, and I know I've been getting anxious for a new release to be announced. While this CD/DVD combo isn't a new record, it will still hold fans over. The 90-minute documentary takes an in-depth look at the band's history. There is extensive tour footage and quirky interviews from band members. The band's story probably won't appeal to people unfamiliar with them, but longtime fans will love it. It clearly wasn't created to recruit new friends, but rather to give existing fans something new. The CD section features live recordings of many of the songs highlighted on the documentary. "Gary Glitter's Eyes" was my favorite. I can't wait till the next full-length album is released.

—Jeanette Moses

The Case of Howard Phillips Lovecraft

Arte Video

Street: 10.23

This 45-minute documentary covers the life of the popular horror writer H.P. Lovecraft. The film is an assortment of old film footage and arts and crafts wherein a narrator talks throughout about H.P.'s life from birth to death. The strange thing is that the narrator addresses Lovecraft as "you." He says, "You are a man that despises the real world and only deals in the imaginative. You are a racist and a conservative..." I'm sure this little twist was some artsy slip to induce fear, but neither this nor the cardboard cutout of H.P. that wanders throughout the film is horrifying or provocative. The only thing I learned of Lovecraft is that he hated immigrants and didn't care much for life; I was more interested in reading his work prior to watching this movie. Oh, and the clip of the breast being cut open was really annoying.

—Spanther

Experiments in Terror Two

Other Cinema

Street: 09.25

A proposition: narrative filmmaking is not the best medium for horror. There's something about a narrative, especially an instantly recognizable one (as is the case with most genre horror) that tends to take the edge off of the fear factor, relaxes you a bit and lets you know that not everything is spiraling out of control. Take away the structure and you have groundless, random phenomena that you don't understand, some confusing, some threatening, producing a feeling of genuine dread and unease. This collection of short experimental features doesn't fully realize my premise, but it does take several steps in the right

direction, presenting images ranging from ghostly to graphic, horrible to humorous. While not completely mind-blowing or essential, it's interesting viewing for bored horror fans or blooming auteurs looking to take a stagnating genre into new directions.

—Jona Gerlach

Fantastic Planet (La Planete Sauvage)

Rene Laloux

Accent Cinema

Street: 10.23

This animated movie is based on a novel by **Stefan Wul** about the "Oms" and the "Draags" on a planet far from here, but yet somewhere still in the galaxy. The Oms are a human-like species that live among the Draags, as pets for the amusement and enjoyment of their blue alien species. It's a pretty fuckin' rad show, with a totally psychedelic undertone throughout the movie. The landscapes on this imagined planet are so visually vivid and beautiful, it makes you wonder if there really are planets that look like this in space. I don't want to give the whole story away but, a young Draag stumbles upon an orphaned Om, whom she takes as her own and names him Terr. Terr actually narrates the story as he grows up in the Draag society and then eventually escapes to lead the Oms in a revolution for equal rights. This, of course, is a revised summary of what the movie entails and there are plenty more twists and turns and other happenings that I don't want to disclose so as to not ruin the movie for you. I highly recommend watching this movie, and I wouldn't doubt that you could find it at the library.

—Adam Dorobiala

The Film Crew: The Giant of Marathon

Shout! Factory

Street: 10.09

With *The Film Crew*, **Mike Nelson's** *Rifftrax*, and **Joel Hodgson's** upcoming *Cinematic Titanic*, it's a very good time to be an old *Mystery Science Theater 3000* fan. Are your hard traded bootleg tapes worn out like mine? Are you unable to track down divx copies of your favorite *MST3k* episodes? Well, *The Film Crew* is an excellent alternative, casting **Mike Nelson**, **Kevin Murphy**, and **Bill Corbett** to thrash awful movies. The *Giant of Marathon* sees no mercy as **Steve** "greased pig" **Reeves** does his do-gooder duty of rasslin' the bad guys into submission! The 90 minute viewing even has a short skit in the middle, to add a little panache from the old days, and to give your mind a break from the deep hurting. Speaking as a long time *MST3k* fan, these releases are by no means disappointing, and I will gleefully add them to my already vast collection.

—Conor Dow

The Man Who Souled The World

Whyte House

Street: 11.01

This is a deep look into the life of **Steve Rocco** and his marketing of **World Industries** that changed the business side of skateboarding forever. It was really interesting to hear all that happened from day 1, from money problems to the media war he started, up until now. Filled with loads of historical events in the skateboard world and even more commentary from the people who were there, there is no way that you won't learn at least one thing from this DVD. Although I am not usually a fan of documentaries, this one didn't seem to bother me as much as others have. Each interview was highly edited which made me wonder how credible the story was, because it seemed like they spliced the footage up so much that they could have changed the words drastically, which was quite odd for such a subject. Check it out if you want to see what the skateboarding industry was like before there was one.

—Adam Dorobiala

Plagues & Pleasures on the Salton Sea

A Metzler/Springer Film

Docurama Films

Street: 09.25

The Salton Sea: A man made 40-mile wide cesspool of a sea, located smack in the middle of the deserts of Southern California. Right next to the water sits Salton City, an area with some of the lowest valued and least desirable property in the entire state. This documentary delves into the history behind how the water got there (it wasn't entirely intentional), and supplements the well-presented information with interviews from some of the nuttiest characters in this country. The entire documentary emanates of strange humor and creepy folks, making for a very worthy and informative look at such an interesting and unknown festering ass-lake, surrounded only by the looniest people in California. Most certainly, this is a worthy watch for the curious.

—Ross Solomon

Schmelvis: Searching for the King's Jewish Roots

Jewish Flicks

Street: 10.09

Schmelvis is a film about a group of Jews from Montreal who travel to Memphis and Israel to try to provoke and put truth to the rumor of **Elvis** being Jewish. Apparently **Elvis'** great-grandmother was Jewish, which somehow makes **Elvis** Jewish because of Judaism's rules following matrilineal lineage. The impetus of

the film is pretty stupid—intentionally so—hence, the filmmakers argue amongst themselves throughout in a *Seinfeld* kind of way with all the self-referencing, but sans the craft and humor. In the end, the directors fail to provoke and put truth, though when all is said and done they don't seem to mind.

—Spanther

The Treasures of Long Gone John

Get With It Productions

Street: 10.01

This is the long-awaited documentary film that follows **Sympathy for the Record Industry** founder Long Gone John through his obsession with collecting. By focusing on both John's fascination with music, and on his love for art, the film treats the viewer to history lessons on 70s punk rock, current low-brow art trends and the personal history of the anti-mogul himself—his troubled childhood, his history of bootlegging live shows and his all out assault on underground music that started in the late 80s. We are led through LGJ's collections of records, trinkets and fine art, all the while getting to know the man and the artistic scenes that he frequents. Some collection highlights include an original **Charles Manson** family vest, **Debbie Harry's** prozac bottle, and the jacket **Iggy Pop** wore on the back cover of *Raw Power*. A rare glimpse into the life of the industry's strangest record label guru.

—James Bennett

Twenty To Life: The Life and Times of John Sinclair

MVD Visual

Street: 10.30

John Sinclair is an American institution. From his early work with the **White Panther Party**, to his years of organizing artists, poets and other left-leaning revolutionaries, Sinclair has always been a cornerstone of activist leadership. He of course went on to manage the Detroit powerhouse, The **MC5**, and became an early victim in the government's crackdown on drug use—being sentenced to 20 years in prison for giving two joints to an undercover cop. That itself would make an awesome documentary. Sadly, the second half of Sinclair's life is riddled with lame radio call-in shows and an unhealthy obsession with beat poetry. The film focuses a bit too much on the "bad poetry performed with a second rate jazz band" side of Sinclair's life, and not enough on his early days with the **Detroit Artists Workshop**. It's like the older he gets, the more he turns into **William Shatner**. Goddamn it!

—James Bennett