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Amigos (1985/MVD)

Picture: C Sound: C
Extras: C- Film: C+

Ivan Acosta's **Amigos**

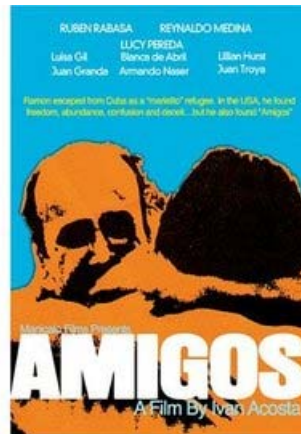
(1985) is a comedy about the same event that fueled Brian De Palma's remake of **Scarface** (1983) and was when President Carter had so many Cubans come with amnesty to The United States, but instead of a gangster tale, we get a portrait of prejudice within the community and the results, pro and con.

Now that might not sound like comedy material, but Acosta's script uses irony and exposure of hypocrisy to nail the problems with such hate by persons who should have known better and made a difficult situation worse. Though the film is not perfect, it works more often than not and holds up rather well for a low budget film from its time.

The acting is decent and it is a rarely heard independent voice on the subject form that or any time since, which is why it makes sense that MVD visual would issue this on DVD. The result is an ambitious film worth a look and for **Scarface** obsesses, also worth a look for an alternate take on what was really going on at the time.

The 1.33 X 1 image is soft, from an old analog master and shows its age, though since this was shot on film, could be remastered in HD down the line and should be considered for an independent release as such. The Dolby Digital 5.1 is really pushing it in trying to stretch out and repurpose the old monophonic sound, which was recorded under low budget circumstances. The combination is still watchable (in part thanks to subtitles) but the film deserves better next time. Extras include two trailers and a making of featurette.

- Nicholas Sheffo



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