

Classics of French Erotica

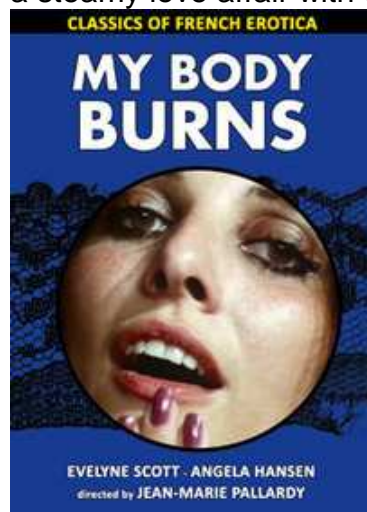
Apr 15th, 2009 | By [Joe Shearer](#) | Category: [Featured DVD](#)

Erotic films have long been considered the seedy underbelly of the film industry, but at the same time has always been among the more profitable enterprises, especially when it comes to shooting on a budget.

Naked is naked, you see, and fans of this particular genre will literally buy into most anything you toss at them if there are bared boobies involved.

Of course, this particular brand of entertainment has been around since talkies were considered a passing fad, but the 1970s and its wave of breakout porn classics helped spark a new appreciation for the bawdy sex comedy, and helped provide French filmmaker Jean-Marie Pallardy build a career built on naked men, swarthy, randy men, and a camera.

“My Body Burns” (1972) is in some ways is ahead of its time. The film follows two women locked in a steamy love affair with each other. One of them, the



completely smitten Evelyn, is in love with Michelle, who enjoys their trysts but is also torn between Evelyn and her male lover, a rich older man named Mr. Sands who wants Michelle all to himself.

Evelyn is ready to take the next step and come out with her relationship to the world, damn the torpedoes and the judgmental sneers. Michelle, however, wants to end the relationship, one assumes, at least in part because of the comfortable, traditional lifestyle Mr. Sands can afford her.

The film has plenty of comedic elements, with silly facial expressions, a farcical orgy scene and a variety of quips (one character said “Like they say in the old country: if you can’t drink while you work, you better find a new job!”).

But the film descends into seriousness as Mr. Sands plots with Michelle to kill Evelyn, leading to a quite humorless and even depressing finale.

“Truck Stop” (1978) is a retelling of “The Odyssey” set in more modern times, where a truck stop owner named Penelope fends off amorous suitors as she

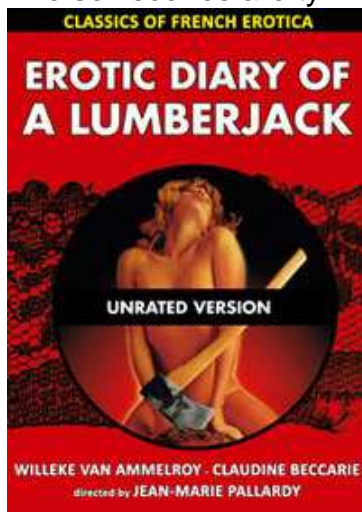




waits for her beloved to return from a journey far off. “Truck” is much more over the top, with pratfalls and slapstick comedy that evokes memories of a certain Fine, Howard and Fine, as the brutish truck drivers slap and punch each other at will, but usually end up drinking and laughing together when they’re done (or at times even during).

“Erotic Diary of a Lumberjack” (1974) is sort of a misnomer, as it centers around a college professor who is about to receive a Nobel Prize when he escapes to a small village that features an open-air brothel specializing in all sorts of naughtiness, which the film even takes the time to point out in the narrative.

The sex scenes are ty



pical of the times, overwrought man-woman scenes that often leaves an anatomically observant viewer questioning the physics of it all, and mostly hesitant woman-woman sequences that drag on.

There are hints here and there of more extreme tastes, with S&M teases (In “Burns,” Michelle, in exasperation over Evelyn’s behavior, whips her with a belt as Evelyn writhes passionately on the floor), encounters with transvestites (in “Truck Stop” one man sets up another to have sex with a tranny, laughing all the while). But for the most part the scenes are set with a sense of fun, not taking itself too seriously, even during the most stoic parts of “Burns.”

The women are all attractive (and silicone-free), but the men are mostly stocky brutes who in real life would be wan to score such ladies.

The DVD extras include interviews with Pallardy, which are mostly interesting as a comparison, since you can watch select sequences with subtitles, while the films themselves are dubbed, illustrating that, in fact, sometimes things are lost in translation. Also included are photo collections and deleted scenes.

This set is certainly is not for everyone, but everyone who enjoys a good filmic roll in the hay, is a fan of 70s cinema, or just likes to watch naked people cavorting around, or is looking for good frat-house cinema, any of these films would be worth your while.

Rating:

“Burns”: 3 Yaps out of 5

“Truck Stop”: 3 Yaps out of 5

“Lumberjack”: 2 1/2 Yaps out of 5

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