

GOLD (Wild Eye DVD)

This lost-and-found movie from the high days of the American hippie era makes its first DVD appearance here. Equal parts comedy caper, nudie and political commentary, *Gold* is a thinly plotted jumble of themes and ideas. It's the kind of movie that looks like it was more fun to make than actually to watch, but it flares to life periodically thanks in large part to its soundtrack that includes excellent, unreleased music by the MC5.

Filmed in Northern California in 1968 the movie evidently wasn't completed until several years later as the MC5 tracks were recorded in London in early 1972. The group was being managed at the time by Ronan O'Rahilly of pirate radio infamy, who was the movie's co-pro-



Del Close in Gold.

ducer. The MC5 songs include the title track (a different take to that found on *Babes In Arms*), "Gold Rush" (a.k.a. "Train Song"), "Inside Out," and what sounds to me like an alternate version (or at least an alternate mix) of "Future Now." The brass band part from the end of "Sister Ann" also crops up. There's also music by David McWilliams, Ramblin' Jack Elliott (who also appears), Barry St John, Sail Cat and Beastly Times.

The movie is nominally set in the gold rush days of the Old West, although the costuming also includes 1920s gangster wear and basic hippie gear. Del Close stars as a wild-eyed revolutionary type and Garry Goodrow as his nemesis, the arch-authoritarian lawman who is out to stamp out the free-spirited behavior of the town's citizens. The two appear to improvise much of their dialogue together, some of which is pretty amusing.

Their bits are interrupted by free love and nude romping scenes, as well as some psychedelic fantasy sequences, which employ an array of trippy camera and lighting effects. It's a sprawling, anarchic mess really, but intentionally so, and there's no denying it was made in the spirit of the times. (Note for trivia buffs: Dan Hicks appears as an extra—look for him during the train scene.)

My screeners' copy didn't have any of the bonus features, but the commercial release will include commentary by Goodrow and director Bob Levis, a 60-minute interview with Levis from cable television and more. **(MS)**

More info: www.wildeyereleasing.com/gold.html