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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

HIGHLY ORIGINAL WESTERN '**THE SCARLET WORM**' HITS HOME VIDEO SAME DAY AS 'COWBOYS & ALIENS' – PROVES THE GENRE DOESN'T NEED TO RESORT TO OUTRAGEOUS HYBRIDS

On December 6, two competing Westerns hit store shelves, and they offer two very different possibilities for the genre's future. *Cowboys & Aliens* is a big studio Western that mixes in sci-fi, CGI and noisy blockbuster elements, seeming distrustful that today's audiences will accept a straight-ahead Western.

The Scarlet Worm (on DVD and Blu-Ray from Unearthed Films/MVD), on the other hand, is a glowingly reviewed independent Western that proves a horse opera can still capture the public's imagination – even on a low budget – as long as its story offers something fresh and original within the traditional framework.

“We feel there is still new ground to break with an old plow,” says the film's associate producer Mike Malloy. “But if you look at the recent major-release Westerns, they have either been remakes like *True Grit* and *3:10 to Yuma* or genre hybrids like *Jonah Hex* and *Cowboys & Aliens*. We wanted to make a film that resorted to neither extreme. Plain and simple: Make a straight Western with a story you haven't seen before.”

Exactly how original is the *Scarlet Worm* story? “It's the first Western ever to center around abortion, insofar as we know,” says screenwriter David Lambert. But he's quick to add, “This is not an advocacy movie that makes any generalizations about the abortion controversy. I wasn't interested in writing a message movie.”

The plot of *The Scarlet Worm* has a gentleman assassin named Print (Aaron Stielstra) hired to rub out a cruel brothel owner (Spaghetti Western veteran Dan van Husen) who mandates abortions on all his whores. Considering himself an artist, Print normally has style and flourish to all his killings, but this latest job presents two challenges: He is being told by his employer to get it done “quick and dirty,” and he is forced to train a young understudy while working.

While it's a story set-up that allows for crowd-pleasing traditional elements of gunplay (replete with real practical squibs) and romance (which includes some whorehouse nudity), the film also has plenty of room for highbrow prestige elements, as introduced by the intelligent, highly original script.

And those elements are getting noticed, both in the form of festival selections and advanced praise (see following page). With this press and word of mouth, *The Scarlet Worm* has cut through the throng of other low-budget Westerns, which are mainly just direct-to-video shootemups.

Although *Scarlet Worm*'s cast includes a fistful of veteran Spaghetti Western actors – Dan van Husen, Montgomery Ford, Mike Forest and Ted Rusoff – the film is not a Spaghetti homage. It instead seeks to recapture the gritty realism of the early '70s American Westerns – films like Sam Peckinpah's *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* or Robert Altman's *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*.

“We aspired to be like those intelligent Westerns,” says Lambert, “And while *The Scarlet Worm* delivers plenty of traditional genre excitement, we're so pleased that we're not being lumped in with the low-budget action Westerns coming out these days.”

Judging by the latest advanced review, the *Scarlet Worm* filmmakers hit their mark:

“Lambert's script rises above ... by investing depth and texture into the characters, their relationships and the serpentine history they all share. He also invests much time in crafty dialogue, bringing a wordsmith's touch to the expected profane, macho insults but also weaving in exchanges that are shockingly philosophical.”

–*Schlockmania.com*

THE SCARLET WORM

SELECTED PRESS

"...ultraviolent stuff that even Sergio Leone wouldn't dare touch ...
screenplay accentuates character and dialogue as much
as it does taboo perversity..." -FANGORIA MAGAZINE #306

"...one of the best movies you'll see soon ...
reinvents the Western...
transcends its meager budget to show fledgling
filmmakers what can be achieved ...
a ballet of blood and pain and hurt and soil."
-fangoria.com

"...WORM just might be the most
satisfying fun I've had
watching an independent movie
of any genre in what seems like ages."
-Wopsploitation Blog

FILMMAKER ENDORSEMENTS

"...explores Religion, Spirituality, Morality,
in a classic Western drama, fraught with
unexpected twists and creative soliloquies
... the practical gunshot effects were outstanding;
when someone gets shot you feel it."
--(Tarantino editor) Joe D'Augustine

"Dark, edgy, and riveting ...
A welcome return to a type of
film-making that we rarely see
any more. Iconic performances
from Montgomery Ford and
Dan van Husen."
-Mark Goldblatt
director, THE PUNISHER
& editor, TERMINATOR 2

FESTIVALS



"...reminds us why we started a film festival
in the first place: To discover what
Hollywood doesn't want us to discover.
This is true independent filmmaking.
Dirty, brutal...and poetic.
THE SCARLET WORM."
-Telluride Horror Show

"Presented, as it should be, in beautiful
Cinemascope ... Mix this with a huge dose of the
Coen Brothers' style and Sam Peckinpah's ... blood-splattered
'70s westerns and you have THE SCARLET WORM."
-Lund Fantastic Film Festival.