



The “U” Pages from Unborn to Urban

ULTIMATE DESIRES

See Silhouette.

the UNBORN

(1991) prod & dir: Rodman Flender; w/ Brooke Adams, Jeff Hayenga, James Karen. Teensiest bit o’ skin; a tidbit o’ gore.

This doctor has great success with solving infertility problems -- alas, the babies he helps to make turn out to be murderous little beasts. When Brooke discovers the doctor’s plan for a new master race, she tries to stop it before her own unborn baby kills her. The script starts out slow, but when it finally does pick up, it loses all credibility. The first part is carried mostly by Brooke’s rather strained performance as the pregnant lady gone bonkers, and the second part... well, the aborted fetus from Hell is kind of fun to watch, but does launch the flick into cartoon territory. It’s silly and overplayed, but mostly forgettable, except as one of the rare American examples of the Killer Baby subgenre.



the UNBORN 2

(1994 - aka *Baby Blood 2*) dir:Rick Jacobson; w/ Michele Greene, Scott Valentine, Robin Curtis, Leonard O. Turner. No skin; vague gore.

There’s a mysterious lady hunting down and blowing away certain babies -- meanwhile, a young mother worries that her odd baby who prefers fresh meat to milk may be next on the list -- it’s killer babies versus killer mommies! The script



tends to wander and it's more than a tad silly, but it manages to be a fun tale and for the most part the flick is well put together. They did put in some work on the kid-critter, but it is neither convincing nor scary -- more like a crudely animated geek-puppet. It's lightweight fun if you cut it some slack.

the UNDEAD

(1957) prod & dir: Roger Corman; w/ Pamela Duncan, Richard Garland, Allison Hayes, Billy Barty.

An experiment in hypnotic past-life regression goes awry and turns into a tepid & very mixed-up medieval melodrama about good witches, bad witches, and really weird film splices. Its only redeeming value is that it's easy to make fun of.

UNDEAD OR ALIVE

(2007) writ & dir: Glasgow Phillips; w/ Chris Kattan, James Denton, Navi Rawat. Teeniest bit o' skin; mild gore.

Two unlikely misfits rip off the crooked sheriff and team up with an Apache Kung Fu babe; but when the posse joins up with the local zombie holocaust, things get a little complicated. Yep, it's a Western Zombie Comedy -- and with an overload of gimmicks like that, it's rather too bad that most folk will simply dismiss the flick because of them. To my surprise, there was more than enough talent and skill here to make it a right fun film on its own merits. It tries a bit too hard in spots, but it's very well made and has a great cast. Nothing ground-breaking to be sure, but it's a refreshing change from the usual drivel.



UNDEFEATABLE

See the Cynthia Rothrock Page

UNDER LOCK & KEY

See the Women in Prison page.

UNDER THE GUN

(1995 - Australia - aka *Iron Fist*) writ & dir: Matthew George; w/ Richard Norton, Kathy Long. Brief full nudity; no gore.

A former hockey star who has had troubles with the law is now a nightclub owner and is being squeezed by creditors, the mob, the Asian mob, crooked cops, and slimy pimps. In



one hairy evening he tries to rip them all off and get out of town with his skin intact. Uh, huh. Inside of fifteen minutes, everyone on the planet is trying to cave his skull in. His only real ally is a female cop. Which brings us to one of life's sweet pleasures: watching world champion kickboxer Kathy Long kick unholy ass. She's only got two fight scenes here (as opposed to Norton's 57 or so), but they're brutal and realistically choreographed by Norton (although rather too tightly shot for my tastes). And as if that weren't enough, the rest of the cast is good, the music is decent, and the script is fast-paced and fun-packed. Okay, it is a lightweight romp that is occasionally silly -- but it's got loads of talent, skill, and a sense of humor. This is a low-budget gem with some large-caliber butt-stompin' that shouldn't be missed.

the UNDERSEA KINGDOM

See the Cliffhangers page.

the UNDERTAKER AND HIS PALS

(1966) writ & dir: T. L. P. Swicegood; w/ Warren Ott, Rad Fulton (aka James Westmoreland), Marty Friedman, Ray Dannis. No skin; mild gore.

A greasy diner that needs fresh meat and a sleazy undertaker who needs fresh business team up for a lot of killin' and a little cookin'. And the amazingly useless PI keeps losing secretaries to the operation. This has the beginnings of a fine, screwy black comedy, but too often veers into sight gags more appropriate to Gilligan's Island, and all of it is smothered with a good deal of padding. Still, it has its moments, and is a fun view.



the UNDYING MONSTER

(1942 - aka *The Hammond Mystery*) dir: John Brahm; w/ James Ellison, Heather Angel, John Howard.

It's the old family curse and a murderous monster is hanging about the lonely manor. A sharp scientist from Scotland Yard pits his test tubes against a killer who may be man, beast, or something in between. Whilst it is entirely derivative, padded with dead-end plot threads, and more full of red herrings than any fishing boat, it is nonetheless an effective little potboiler. Tight direction, great photography, and rapid pacing not only make it fun, but give the old formula a touch of class.



UNEARTHLY

(1957) prod & dir: Brooke L. Peters; w/ John Carradine, Allison Hayes, Myron Healy, Tor Johnson.

A mad scientist uses unwitting patients as guinea pigs in his pursuit of the secret of immortality (he only succeeds in making various yucky monsters, of course). Mostly, it's a dog of a flick -- but it pays off in a few spots and it's fun to heckle. And Carradine gets to ham it up; his presence is the only thing that carries the bulk of the film.

UNHOLY ROLLERS

See the Claudia Jennings page.

the UNHOLY THREE

(1930 - remake of the 1925 silent version) dir: Jack Conway; w/ Lon Chaney, Lila Lee, Elliott Nugent, Harry Earles.

Dumping their shoddy carnival sideshow, the ventriloquist, the strong man, and the midget use their unique talents to run a burglary ring in the big city. But when one of their operations turns bad, they frame an unsuspecting chump for their crimes. It's a fine production, but the beginning suffers seriously from some hammy attempts at comedy, and then the thing devolves into a sappy crime drama with a romantic bent. The three principle schemers make a very strong cast, but they're all rendered mediocre by the material. It is hard to say whether they are saved or simply upstaged by Lila Lee, who steals the show as the gang moll with a soft heart for the innocent bystander. Vaguely interesting (mostly if you're interested in seeing Chaney in drag), but not actually good.



UNINVITED

(1988) prod, writ & dir: Greydon Clark; w/ George Kennedy, Alex Cord, Clu Gulager. No skin; mild gore.

Some nasty Wall Street crooks on the run from the SEC get out of the country aboard a luxury yacht -- along for the ride are some vacationing college kids and one cute li'l pussy cat -- actually, a mutant cat that crawls out of its own skin to go on murderous rampages. It's clumsy and clichéd, the effects are laughably cheap, and the script is purest formula. Nonetheless, it is kind of fun to watch. That's partly due to the true hero of the flick, the killer kitty, but also largely due



to Cord and Gulager, who ham their way through their roles with great gusto and a commendable lack of shame. Silly fun with a mutant cat.

the UNKNOWN

See the Silent Movies page.

UNKNOWN ISLAND

(1948 - in CineColor) dir: Jack Bernhard; w/ Virginia Grey, Philip Reed, Richard Denning, Barton MacLane.

An over-zealous scientist, his fiancé, a washed-up ex-marine, and a shifty sea captain track down the lost island of dinosaurs -- things go really bad and then we see a titanic battle between the island's two most fearsome predators, the T. Rex and the vicious *Giant Sloth*... huh? Oh, well; the rubber-suit dinosaurs are just adorably silly -- as special effects, they're not even up to the standards of the era by a long shot. Other than the beasties, the flick is well made and well played, even though the script & characters are pure distillation of formula. It's slow moving and predictable down to the last "Aargh", but the googly-eyed dino's more than make up for it.



UNKNOWN WORLD

(1951 - aka *To the Center of the Earth*) dir: Terrell O. Morse; w/ Bruce Kellogg, Otto Waldis, Jim Bannon, Marilyn Nash.

In search of the ultimate bomb shelter, a crackpot scientist & his crew take an earth-boring tank deep underground. They philosophize, squabble a bit, and a couple of people die only because otherwise absolutely nothing would be happening. Then they philosophize, stare at stalactites, and philosophize some more. Finally, they find an underground world which is really nifty until it blows up on them -- so they go back in the tank-thing and philosophize some more. Mmm, sleepy... it was really tough to keep my eyes open through this thing -- it's mostly just people staring at pictures of Carlsbad Caverns and waxing philosophical. The effects aren't bad considering the era, and the drill-tank is sorta nifty, but oh, my word, the script is a vast empty chasm of clichéd, soul-baring monologues -- positively mind-numbing.



the UNNAMABLE
the UNNAMABLE 2

See the Lovecraft page.

UNSEEN EVIL

(1999 - aka *The Unbelievable; Unseen*) dir: Jay Woelfel; w/ Richard Hatch, Tim Thomerson, Cindi Braun, Frank Ruotolo. No skin; mild gore.

Hoping to rob a Native American tomb, they wake up an invisible (mostly) flesh-rending beastie from space. Scream & run. The production has a very juvenile feel to it, but there's enough talent on both sides of the camera to make this fun enough. It does have some cheap-o CGI and more than a few non-essential plot points, but it only really falls down at the ending -- it doesn't have one; it just sort of wanders off on a few random tangents until we get to the end credits. Tolerable if you bring enough slack. (And there's a much worse semi-sequel in *Alien 3000*.)



UNSTOPPABLE (2004)

(2004) dir: David Carson; w/ Wesley Snipes, Jacqueline Obradors, Adewale Akinnouye-Agbaje, Kim Coates. No skin; no gore.

A black-ops vet with trauma issues is mistaken for a G-man by the bad guys -- now the bad guys who are really good guys are chasing him and the good guys who are really bad guys are chasing him -- and he's been drugged with a hallucinogen so he can't really tell who he's shooting anyway. And yes, it carries on with similar contrivances throughout. Ah, well -- it's a decently crafted flick with some budget and a good cast; and the attempt to make Bulgaria look like the States succeeds better than most. But what's not mediocre in this thing is just too typical to bother with. Leaving no reason at all to waste time on this one.



BAD CINEMA DIARY

UNTAMED WOMEN

(1952) dir: W. Merle Connell; w/ Mikel Conrad, Doris Merrick, Richard Monahan, Mark Lowell.

Shot down over the Pacific, a WW2 bomber crew discovers a prehistoric island filled with chorus girls. The script slogs slowly through all the expected characters, dances, misunderstandings, flirtations, sexist remarks, and then some guy whines about how his mother treated him ...? (Perhaps the screenwriter was working out some personal issues there.) Despite a painfully low budget, the flick fulfills the usual contractual obligations of giant lizards and a destructive volcano. Kind of a sluggish flick, really, but there's enough stupid dialogue and cheap props to keep it entertaining.



URBAN MENACE

(1999) dir: Albert Pyun; w/ Snoop Dogg, Big Punisher, Ice-T, T. J. Storm, Fat Joe. No skin; a little vague gore; a whole lot o' bad words.

Umm, there seems to be a hint of a plot about an inner city vigilante who's attacking & disemboweling thugs & street-bosses; meanwhile there's another vague plot element involving betrayal & redemption among the kingpin's soldiers. Hidden in here is some good material for a Rap song, but not enough for a whole damn movie. And I think Albert may have lost it on this one. He films this whole thing like some museum piece. His high-contrast, soft-focus photography is accompanied by a soundtrack of Gangsta Rap and dialogue that's mostly a stream of poorly delivered vulgarities. The acting varies from intense to incompetent, but there are actually a few nice moments in the flick, if you can sit through the whole thing (honestly, once Fat Joe & Big Pun start trying to deliver their lines, most viewers will make a desperate lunge for the 'eject' button). The one moment that shines for me is near the end, when the vigilante -- who may or may not be supernatural -- finally attacks the bosses' stronghold and thugs leap at him from all directions and he wastes them all in a silly but wonderful & surreal ballet of violence. Careful observers will note that many scenes involved characters that were filmed separately but spliced together later, and like most Pyun flicks, it was filmed in Eastern Europe. Yah, it's crap, but there's something weirdly captivating about the whole thing. This flick is like getting smacked in the forehead with a two-by-four -- unpleasant, but curiously hypnotic.

The Bad Cinema Diary™ - 6th edition July 2009

This file is part of the Bad Cinema Diary™ eBook; it is copyright ©2009 by Bruce V. Edwards, all rights reserved.

The Bad Cinema Diary is copyrighted but provided free of charge. These files are published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License; see

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

For the latest editions and access to all the files, visit the Bad Cinema Diary at

<http://www.cathuria.com/bcd>

Icon Glossary:



Good Stinker -- These are the films where a good deal of the entertainment comes from filmmaking incompetence; fun to watch in spite of themselves.



Goopy Gore -- These films exhibit distinctly above-normal quantities of unpleasantly abused body parts.



Naughty Nudie -- Films with this flag feature frequent and/or explicit nudity (almost always female) beyond that normally found in your average T&A flick.



Butt Stompin' -- These films feature at least one superior violent fight or shootout scene that will get the testosterone pumping.



Gold Star -- These are the flicks that I felt reached above their expectations or at least pleasantly surprised me; they may not always be actually good flicks, but I did find something in them worthwhile.



Blue Max Medal of Really Goodness -- These are flicks that I not only enjoyed, but I think are actually quite good films (not always the same thing).



Lethal Cinema -- These wretched viewing experiences go beyond being merely bad to become genuine sources of pain and regret; they should be avoided by all but the most masochistic trash cinema veterans. Don't say I didn't warn you.