



## The “V” Pages from Valley to Vulgar

### the VALLEY OF GWANGI

(1969) dir: James O’Connolly; w/ James Franciscus, Gila Golan, Richard Carlson.

In 1900, a “wild west” circus touring in Mexico stumbles upon a hidden valley full of dinosaurs. Naturally, they lasso Gwangi himself (a T. Rex) and make him the star attraction of their circus with predictably disastrous results. The flick has good photography, some great fx from Ray Harryhausen, and a good score. However, before we get to the meat, we have to sit through a plodding horse opera. It eventually rewards us with a great climactic scene as Gwangi terrorizes a Mexican city. The studio heavily promoted the slim novelty of a Western film with dinosaurs, but for my money, the snazziest flash of originality here was the scene showing a T. Rex stomping around inside a huge cathedral. The film is slow and despite some vague novelty, it’s not at all original, but it’s still good fun for (forgiving) fans.





## VALLEY OF THE HEADHUNTERS

See the Jungle Jim Page

## VALLEY OF THE DRAGONS

(1961 - aka *Prehistoric Valley*) writ & dir: Edward Bernds; w/ Cesare Danova, Sean McClory, Joan Staley, Danielle de Metz.

Based on a Jules Verne Story, a low-flying comet sweeps two adventurers off to a prehistoric world. The plot is pretty much empty calories, just enough to provide the next excuse to show off their prehistoric gimmicks. And they do work hard at -- despite several yawning chasms of padding, they deliver a cheesy giant spider, an elephant in a shag rug, lizard fights, plus footage ripped from other "prehistoric" films, and for good measure they rip off a Japanese film, too. Still not satisfied, they even rip off H. G. Wells' Morlocks. And although we discover that cavegirls have swimsuits under their clothing, our intrepid photographer manages some mighty naughty camera angles thanks to a loose swimsuit top. It's sappy, low-budget Saturday matinee drivel that, frankly, is a lot of fun.



## the VAMPIRE AND THE BALLERINA

(1960 -- Italian: *L'Amante del Vampiro*) dir: Renato Polselli; w/ Helene Remy, Tina Gloriani, Walter Brandi. No skin, but some good negligee & leggy shots.

A troupe of dancers runs afoul of a pair of wigged out & slightly pervo vampires. It's Italian & therefore slow and mixed-up (and horrendously dubbed), but the photography is nice and although the dance sequences (modern jazz, not ballet) are a bit long, at least the girls can dance. I must admit it succeeds in being more

entertaining than the usual low-budget Italian vampire flick, but it would still be entirely forgettable but for a few terrific cheesecake shots.

## VAMPIRE ASSASSIN

(2005) writ & dir: Ron Hall; w/ Ron Hall, Merry Everest, Mel Novak, (Rudy Ray Moore cameo). No skin; no gore; not even a shred of talent.

An ex-cop becomes a vampire hunter and has lots & lots of slow, clumsy kung fu fights while stabbing vampires that shoot out electricity when they die. *Ow!* Ron Hall is here to prove that big black guys are not immune to dorkiness; he tries to become the next Blade, but winds up as Pee Wee Herman. I really have to emphasize here that this flick is not simply “bad” or

“amateurish” on the scale that I normally use such words. Seriously, it is nowhere near as well crafted as *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, and yet is only a fraction as funny. Stare in amazement at the inept photography, bad fake fangs, big egos, and fight scenes that would have been more convincing if performed by a kindergarten class. Add a script that’s the worst nightmare of any Creative Writing instructor, and non-actors struggling to deliver dialogue that’s little better than gibberish. It’s a mystery how such a pathetic failure of a film could have gotten a DVD release; and although that’s just fine for websites like this, it’s a damn cruel trick to play on innocent customers at the video shop.



## the VAMPIRE BAT

(1933) dir: Frank Strayer; w/ Lionel Atwill, Fay Wray, Melvyn Douglas, Dwight Frye.

A small German town is terrorized by a vampire, but the level-headed young inspector is tracking the murders to a very mortal mad scientist. It’s a well played and serviceable little potboiler, but it becomes neither horror movie nor murder mystery, as the killer is revealed to the audience quite early on. We only have to sit & wait for our hero to stumble upon the truth and let things get resolved through the usual happenstance & circumstance. The script is weak and the editing is aggressive & crude -- the only thing that helps this flick survive the years is Dwight Frye, type-cast once again, as he puts on his best loony leer to play the village nutcookie. He provides a pleasant enough diversion to make the film worthwhile.



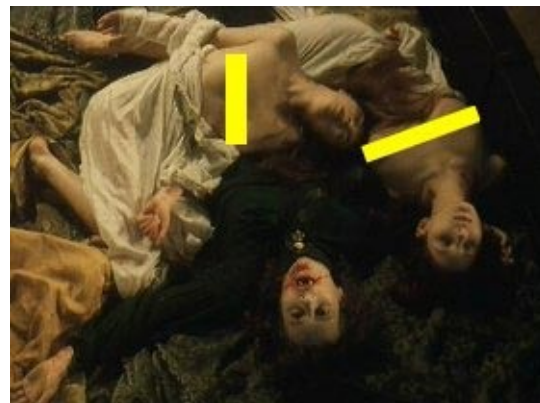
## VAMPIRE BEAST CRAVES BLOOD

See The Blood Beast Terror.

## VAMPIRE JOURNALS

(1996 - Full Moon) writ & dir: Ted Nicolaou; w/ Jonathan Morris, Kirsten Cerre, David Gunn, Ilinka Goya, Starr Andreeff. A little skin; a little gore.

A vampire with a conscience, complete with Sam Spade narration, tries to slay Eastern Europe's head fangmeister. A lightweight flick, but nicely done. The locations & photography are simply gorgeous, and the cast is quite good. However, the hero is a bit of a wimp and the flick lavishes so much attention on the bad guy that he becomes an object of perverted hero worship. The plot is pretty thin and is almost devoid of backstory, and the movie isn't about to give even the youngest viewer the creeps. But it does ooze a nice, decadent gothic atmosphere, and there are plenty of ladies that are treats to the eye. It's a nice flick if you're just looking for a stylish diversion.



## VAMPIRE LOVERS

(1970 - Hammer/API) dir: Roy Ward Baker; w/ Ingrid Pitt, Peter Cushing, Kate O'Mara, George Cole, Pippa Steele, Madeline Smith. One nice nudie scene, gore factor depends on whether it's the European or American cut.

The first in Hammer's Carmilla trilogy, and although it has less skin than *Lust for a Vampire*, it's one of Hammer's most overtly erotic films. Pitt is the unabashed and lustful lesbo vampire on the loose, preying upon the daughters of nobility. Cushing appears only in the introductory episode and again at the climax, the remainder of the movie forming an extended middle episode. It's oddly structured, but well paced, with good performances & not many boring bits. As a film, I liked it better than *Lust*, although the ending is very weak and undramatic. Actually, it is my hunch that this is a cobbled flick -- it has all the earmarks of being built around footage from another, failed film project.



## VAMPIRE VIXENS FROM VENUS

(1995) prod, writ, & dir: Ted A. Bohus; w/ Leon Head, Michelle Bauer, Theresa Lynn, J. J. North, Leslie Glass, (Charlie Callas in a cameo). Frequent brief boobie-flashings; no gore.

Venusians transform themselves into human sexpots so they can suck the life essences out of young men at the peak of sexual excitement. Meanwhile, a low-rent version of Inspector Clouseau tries to track them down. This tries to be a tongue-in-cheek T & A romp. But the humor is only partially successful, and there is relatively little 'T' and no 'A' at all. The cheap-ass special fx are fun to snicker at, 'though. If your standards are low enough, it's mildly amusing, but it's average fare with nothing special to recommend it.

## VAMPIRELLA

(1996) dir: Jim Wynorski; w/ Talisa Soto, Roger Daltrey, Richard Joseph Paul, Lee deBroux. A few flashes of skin.

Well, it finally got made and it doesn't totally suck. Rather than filling a horror mold, they made it into a low-budget hi-tech action/adventure flick. Vampirella in a space ship pursues her father's assassin from Draculon -- on Earth, she teams up with a top-secret anti-vampire SWAT team. The acting is okay, for a Wynorski piece, with a nice hammy performance from Daltrey. The script is refreshingly intelligent and devoid of the usual clichés. And there's some fun bits of subtle humor if you look for them (like the vampire-hunting cops, who wear SWAT-style gear with crucifixes embroidered on their black caps). The flick is sorta fun, if you don't mind that there is no effort made to be faithful to the atmosphere of the original.

## VAMPIRES: LOS MUERTOS

(2002 - aka *John Carpenter's Vampires 2*) writ & dir: Tommy Lee Wallace; w/ Jon Bon Jovi, Cristián de la Fuente, Arly Jover, Darius McCrary, Diego Luna. No skin; no gore.

A freelance Slayer in Mexico is contracted by an anonymous client to assemble a team -- but all his potential teammates are being slaughtered before he can get to them. He ends up facing down the master vampire with a kid, a priest, and a young half-blood girl who keeps her vampirism in check with AIDS medicine. Um, ya know, that sounded kinda stupid -- and I guess that's the long and the short of it. It's not badly made at all, it just lacks anything in the way of imagination, originality, or excitement. John Carpenter is listed as executive producer, and it is not actually a sequel but a spin-off of *John Carpenter's*



*Vampires*. On the surface it seems to be a polished production with a decent budget -- but look closer and you'll notice the script is just a string of vapid clichés and is sprinkled with both slow spots and downright stupid spots, the photography is dull, and the characters are just cardboard standees. Ho-hum.

## VAMPIRE'S NIGHT ORGY

(1973 - Spain - aka *Orgy of the Vampires; Grave Desires*) dir: Leon Klimovsky; w/ Jack Taylor, Dianik Zurakowska, Charo Soriano. A little skin; a little cartoony gore.

A busload of folks get stranded at an isolated Spanish village -- one by one they discover that it's populated only by vampires & ghouls. Fundamentally, this is just a formula gig with a few random topless peeks to keep our interest. The overall quality isn't bad, but it sports a grotesque soundtrack full of nightclub music. As a saving grace, it has a little screwy imagination (the village wants to keep its visitors happy & unsuspecting, but they have no food -- so they lop limbs off of each other to provide meat for the guests) and some nice ooky-spooky scenes that separate this from the usual dreck.

## VAMPYR: The Dream of Allan Gray

(1932 - France/Germany - aka *The Strange Adventure of David Gray; Castle of Doom*) dir: Carl Dreyer; w/ Julian West, Maurice Schutz, Rena Mandel.

A young adventurer arrives in a small town and discovers that it is ruled by a vampire who has enslaved the people with help of animated shadows and a corrupt physician. As befits the subtitle, this whole movie plays like a dream sequence. It is moody and very atmospheric, with an almost Lovecraftian flavor. As befits a French film, however, it doesn't always bother to make sense. But it does generate a wonderful aura of spookiness and the camera-work is simply brilliant. Get your dose of artsy-fartsy and vampire flicks all in one shot.



## VAMPYRES

(1974 - Britain - aka *Satan's Daughters; Daughters of Dracula; Blood Hunger*) dir: Joseph Larraz (José Ramón Larraz); w/ Marianne Morris, Anulka (Anulka Dziubinska), Murray Brown. A little softcore porn, some blood (varies by cut).

A pair of lesbian vampires in a cool old mansion lure wayward travelers to their deaths. There are two ways to



take this flick. In the opening scene, the two girls are mysteriously shot to death. Most descriptions I've read consider this the beginning (understandably), and for some reason the girls turn into vampires. But this leaves the film totally devoid of storyline. But there's another explanation -- the opening scene is the actual climax of the picture, what follows explains who killed them & why. The girls weren't true vampires, they were psychotic serial killers who *thought* they were vampires, and they let one of their intended victims escape alive. At least this way, there is some plot. Either way, we're probably over-analyzing what is just a thin excuse to show a little muff-diving and throat-slashing. And although those scenes are graphic, they're also brief, even in the uncensored version. And to insult us, the film has several hints that there is some "hidden mystery" going on -- but no, those are just red herrings, random gimmicks to trick the audience into thinking the film is more interesting than it actually is. Still, it's filmed with style & energy, and is sort of fun to watch. But for a film with this kind of notoriety (in Britain it was heavily cut & still received an 'X' rating), it was a bit of a disappointment.

## VAMPYROS LESBOS

(1970 - Spain/W. Germany - aka *Heiress of Dracula; Lesbian Vampires; Sign of the Vampire*)  
dir: Jesus Franco; w/ Ewa Stromberg, Susann Korda (aka Soledad Miranda), Dennis Price, Paul Muller. Some skin; no gore.

Dracula's mistress winds up in modern Istanbul, where she preys exclusively on women, until she falls for a blond bombshell from Germany -- all of this squeezed in between dance numbers. Okay, of all the things that I might have expected from a Jess Franco flick, I never suspected that he would put me to sleep. Okay, there's some snazzy photography, a tidbit of softcore porn, and some amusement watching Franco himself portray a demented sex-fiend (self-portrait?). But despite that, the film remains a wandering, shallow, utterly nonsensical and agonizingly slow cowpie of a movie. The imagery is far from Franco's best, the symbolism is laughably overdone, and the nudity is more clumsy than erotic. I know -- a lot film fans praise this movie. If they can honestly enjoy this tripe, I'm happy for them... but it's still tripe.



## the VAULT

(2005) dir: Ric Moxley; w/ Laci Szabo, Bas Rutten, Diana Lee Inosanto, Paul Logan. No skin; no gore.

A muscley chump and his estranged daughter are in a museum when it gets invaded by big, burly bad guys



who shout a lot. The chump turns out to be a kick-ass super-thief, and so you can guess the rest, I'm sure. Well, it's a dreadful flick, but I have to give kudos to the players; the cast of kickboxers and pit fighters did quite credible work. Sadly, they did it all for a dumb-as-a-rock script, crappy photography, lousy sound, and cartoonish CG effects. And all of that was cut together by a director who thought he could make some swooping quick-cut stylish action flick out of it. *Bleh*. The whole production is inept and juvenile; the only bright spot at all is champ cage-fighter Rutten's performance as the mad-dog heavy. But a film this lousy is enough to force a submission even from him.

## VENOMOUS

(2001) dir: Ed Raymond (Fred Olen Ray); w/ Treat Williams, Mary Page Keller, Hannes Jaenicke, Catherine Dent. No skin; no gore.

When terrorists blow up a government lab, they unwittingly release the products of an illegal experiment in biowarfare: rattlesnakes that inject not venom, but a deadly disease. Years later, earth tremors bring the lethal rattlers to the surface and they attack a small town. Naturally, the evil Army officers behind the whole thing try to cover it up. What it really amounts to is a crude but faithful carbon copy of *Outbreak* superimposed over the top of an average snake-attack movie. The script is painfully silly and although the cast is decent, their characters have less depth than paper dolls. If they cut 80 minutes from the running time, it might be tolerably entertaining.



## VERCINGETORIX

See Druids.

## VERSUS

(2000 - Japan) writ & dir: Ryuhei Kitamura; w/ Tak Sakaguchi, Hideo Sakaki, Chieko Misaka. No skin; buckets o' gore.

Um, nothing I say will adequately describe this flick. But I'll give it a shot -- some Japanese mobsters and a couple of escaped convicts meet in a forest that turns out to be an ancient, haunted place. When they have a disagreement and someone gets killed, the corpse rises up seconds later as a zombie. And pretty soon more zombies are crawling out of the forest -- and these buggers remember how to use guns and karate and stuff! For a variety of reasons, everyone wants to shoot everyone else



and they're trying to do that while defending themselves from the zombies. And that's just the first part of the flick before we learn that it's all been arranged to continue a centuries-old grudge match between good & evil. And on top of that, it's really funny, too. Although the flick borrows nearly all of its elements from other films (*Beyond*, *Demons*, *Matrix*, etc.), it somehow manages to be startlingly original. The action kicks major butt, the cast is exceptional, and the camera work is exciting and original -- although the editing may occasionally kick your brain three feet to the left. This flick is a jaw-dropper in a good way, and one of the most exciting and fresh new films I've seen in years. Red-hot gun barrels, blood-crusted swords, and zombie slapstick -- ooh, damn... excuse me, I gotta go back and watch that again.

## VICIOUS

(2003) writ & dir: Matt Green; w/ Tom Savini, Brian Bremer, Melanie Parker. No skin; mild gore.

Some young campers go fishing in the territory of a wacko military guy who shoots at people -- but he's really only collecting meals for his pet toothy monster, vaguely explained as some sort of bio-warfare experiment gone loose in the wild. Despite a low budget, the production quality is decent overall, and the cast put in good work, Savini in particular.



However, the plot only makes sense if you squint at it real hard, and the pacing is not merely slow, it's tedious. The script is completely predictable, the costumer came up with the most wretched excuses for military uniforms I have yet to see, and the monster is one of the cheapest, worst-looking CG critters ever put on film -- it would have been more convincing if they had pasted it together out of cardboard. The flick is dull, annoying, and what talent there was in it was utterly wasted.

## VICTIMS!

(1985?) prod & dir: Jeff Hathcock; w/ Ava Kauffman, Robert Exelrod, Lonny Withers, Ann Richardson. A tidbit o' skin; a flicker of gore.

Okay, we start out with a string of violent death scenes that give us a little nudity & gore before the opening credits -- and no, they have absolutely nothing to do with the rest of the flick. As we begin to realize just how crappy a movie this is, it dawns on us that the plot involves four babes who are off for a geology trip in the desert -- wearing as little clothing as possible. Naturally, they run afoul of a pair of whacked-out Vietnam



vets and we get a weedy little Rape & Revenge story that's capped by half-baked attempt to portray the injustice of the justice system. *Ick*. Anyhow, the acting is mediocre - which comes as a pleasant surprise compared to the photography, sound, & music, which are hopelessly inept. And the script has all the appeal of a three-headed lamb in a jar of formaldehyde. This flick is so badly made, it feels like a deliberate insult.

## VIKING QUEEN

(1967 – 7 Arts/Hammer) dir: Don Chaffey; w/ Don Murray, Carita, Donald Houston, Andrew Kier, Patrick Troughton. No skin, but some nice cheesecake.

There are no Vikings in this thing, but there some Druids who worship Zeus (!?). Anyhow, it's a turgid tragic romance involving a Briton queen, a good Roman, & a bad Roman. The enlightened Roman governor is pushed out of the way so the bad Roman can drive the locals into revolt. And so they do. And so just about everyone dies. It's got some pretty scenery (filmed in Ireland), but the rest of it is a thin, watery melodrama.



## VIOLENCE IN A WOMEN'S PRISON

See the Women in Prison pages.

## the VIOLENT YEARS

See the Ed Wood page.

## VIRGIN APOCALYPSE

See Anger.

## VIRGIN HIGH

(1990) prod & dir: Richard Gabai; w/ Richard Gabai, Linnea Quigley, Burt Ward, Traci Dali. Linnea gets to flash a couple times, but that's all the skin there is.

Three guys use elaborate strategies to score with the girls trapped in an all-girl Catholic school. Such a reliable premise should carry us through a bunch of bad gags & lots of shower scenes. But really all this film does is serve as a vehicle for the producer/director to show off in front of the camera. To be fair, it's not badly done, but the formula (and the implied promise to the audience) calls for low humor and gratuitous T & A, not a showcase for Gabai's impression of a 90's Fonzie.

## the VIRGIN OF NUREMBERG

(1963 - Italy - aka *Horror Castle*; *Castle of Terror*; *Terror Castle*; *Back to the Killer*) dir: Anthony Dawson (aka Antonio Margheriti); w/ Rossana Podesta, George Riviere, Christopher Lee. No skin; mild gore.

On her first visit to her husband's ancestral castle, the young bride soon discovers that someone there is a wiggled-out freak who makes a hobby of slaughtering unfaithful women (the title refers to an iron maiden where said ladies are perforated). It's a big, silly Italian spook/suspense show accompanied by an out-of-control orchestra that throws fits at the slightest provocation (even lighting a candle is sufficient excuse for a dramatic music cue). There are a few slow bits and Christopher Lee's part is small and essentially disposable, but the plot almost makes sense and there's enough cheese and even a tidbit of sleaze to spice things up. There's deformed loonies, hungry rats, and a lady who just has to walk around in the middle of the night and poke her nose in all the places where a mad axe-murderer might be.



## VIRGIN SACRIFICE

(1959 - aka *Fury of the Jungle*) dir: Fernando Wagner; w/ David DaLie, Antonio Gutierrez, Angelica Morales, Fernando Wagner. One tidbit o' skin; no gore.

Armed only with a spear, the Great White Hunter battles the nasty jungle natives who want to sacrifice his sweetums. Well, actually, he wanders his way slowly through a travelogue of Guatemala, trips over a couple of Jungle Jim gimmicks, and acts studly a lot. This flick puts its only exploitation value right up front, hoping to lure the audience into sitting through the rest of this sleepy sludge, waiting in vain for more nudity. The production is clumsy, but not bad enough to be truly funny, and although there's stuff in here worth heckling, it's hardly worth staying awake for.



BAD CINEMA DIARY

## VIRGIN WITCH

(1972 - Britain - aka *Lesbian Twins*) dir: Ray Austin; w/ Patricia Haines, Neil Hallett, Anne Michelle, Vicki Michelle. Frequent nudity; no gore.

A psychic girl & her sister run away to London to become models -- alas, they are ensnared by a pagan coven. But the psychic girl turns the tables on the coven and proves herself a true witch. The flick is quite slow, in a polished British sort of way, and they even sneak in a musical number. But there's a neat story here, even a dash of originality, and the nudity helps stave off boredom. It also shows how a good witchcraft story can be told without a single special effect. I rather liked it -- sort of like British food: bland but satisfying.



## VIRGINS FROM HELL

(1987 - Indonesia - aka *Maidens Revenge*) dir: Ackyl Anwary; w/ Nina Anwar, Harry Capri. No skin; smidgen o' gore.

Biker babes shoot up the local drug lord's operation, but wind up as his abused slaves; and then there is the escape and commando thing with a bunch of stuff blowing up for inadequate reasons. Built on a WiP boilerplate, with gang war and action flick elements tossed in a la carte -- even allowing for Indonesian restrictions on nudity, this is an awfully thin-blooded attempt at exploitation. It plays a lot more like a cheap newspaper comic strip. But to make up for the lack of real sleaze, they do provide quite a lot of plain old dumbness, including a selection of firearms that look like they were glued together from leftover car parts. It's a silly piece of fluff that's actually rather fun.



## VIRUS (1980)

(1980 - Japan, etc. - aka *The End; Day of Resurrection; Fukkatsu no hi*) dir: Kinji Fukasaku; w/ Chuck Connors, Glenn Ford, Olivia Hussey, George Kennedy, Masao Kusakari, Edward J. Olmos, Henry Silva, Bo Svenson, Robert Vaughan. No skin; no gore.

A nasty germ warfare experiment gets out of control and wipes out the human race. The only survivors are the



researchers in Antarctica -- and if that wasn't bad enough, they then face nuclear death from automated retaliation systems that are still ticking. The script is childish and incredibly clichéd, but actually tells a decent little story. It's cobbled together from multinational footage and stock footage and features a cast of every B-list TV star who would take a check -- but still manages to paint a very good low-budget picture of a disintegrating world. The second half of the flick -- dealing with the survivors -- lets us down a little by sinking into a maudlin quagmire. It suffers a lot from the miniscule budget and trite dialogue, but it's still fun to watch.

## VIY, or Spirit of Evil

(1967 - Russia) dir: K. Yershov & G. Kropachyov; w/ Leonid Kuravlyov, Natalya Varley, Alexei Glazyrin. Based on a story by Nikolai Gogol. No skin; no gore.

A rowdy and sinful young seminarian encounters an old witch and beats her near to death. The next day, he is mysteriously summoned to the side of a dying young girl -- yes, the very same witch. Now he is forced to spend three nights alone with the bewitched corpse with only his shaky faith for protection. This is a delightful old-fashioned ooky-spooky folk tale complete with howling corpses and demons from hell with too many eyeballs & nostrils. The tale unfolds rather slowly; much of the middle portion is padding -- but even that is atmospheric and nice to watch; and the cinematography is just gorgeous. Humor is provided by the seminary itself, portrayed in politically correct fashion (for the USSR) as a gang of faithless wastrels. But when it comes time for the young philosopher to pray over the corpse, we're treated to flying coffins, giant hands, and demons crawling down the walls. If you like old-school fairy tales, this is one of the best I've seen on film.



## the VOID

(2001 - Canada) dir: Gilbert Shilton; w/ Adrian Paul, Amanda Tapping, Malcolm McDowell. Teeny-weeny bit o' skin; no gore.

A silly scientist and his new super-collider accidentally create a miniature Black Hole. Oopsies. Of course, that's not until the end of the flick. Until then, we've got to slog through a slow, weedy little melodrama involving the usual romances & conspiracies. Naturally, I expected moronic science, but I also got moronic characters, moronic scripting, and a physicist who just happens to run the most efficient gang of assassins on the continent. Finally, for



those who managed to stay awake, we get to see the bad people sucked into a simplistic special effect. The only thing truly special here is that the title is such an amazingly accurate description of the flick.

## VOODOO DOLLS

(1990 - Canada) dir: Andre Pelletier; w/ Grace Phillips, Nathalie Gauthier, Howard Balaban. A teeny bit o' skin; a little blood.

Well, the new girl arrives at a private school for girls in Louisiana and, well, they all sort of have the usual adolescent shenanigans. Oh, yeah -- and sometimes something spooky and vague happens and some people sort of die. I guess it had something to do with an old voodoo tradition. Or maybe the ghost. *Oog*. This thing has some promising material for a short film (if only it had gotten past the "vague notion" stage and progressed to being an actual idea), and the production quality is pretty good. But I have rarely seen a more complete and pathetic failure in the storytelling department. Actually, the first five minutes (a black & white flashback to an incident a generation earlier) is pretty darn neat. After that, just hit the "eject" button and jam your finger in your eye for the next seventy minutes -- you'll have just as much fun and save wear & tear on your video gear.



## VOODOO ISLAND

(1957- aka *Silent Death*) dir: Reginald Le Borg; w/ Boris Karloff, Beverly Tyler, Murvyn Vye, Elisha Cook, (Adam West in a bit).

A famous scientist goes to a remote Pacific island to debunk a voodoo myth -- so of course, he runs smack into carnivorous plants and sourpuss natives. The older lady on the expedition succumbs to the "Lagoon Principle", being the B-movie law which states that whenever a female, traveling alone, encounters a tropical lagoon, she will immediately strip and dive in. The younger lady gets attacked by a toothy plant that I swear looked for all the world like it was trying to take a chunk out of her right boob. In the end, not a lot happens really. Under producer Howard Koch, this little flick takes on a big-budget gloss, which only partly mitigates the snail-pacing of the script. It's quaint, the man-eating plants are fun to watch, and the cast is good -- there's just not a lot else here.

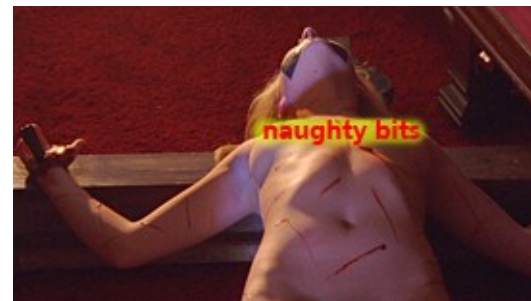


## VOODOO MOON

(2004) writ, prod & dir: Kevin VanHook; w/ Eric Mabius, Charisma Carpenter, Rik Young, (Jeffrey Combs, Dee Wallace in bits). Teeny tidbit o' skin; mild gore.

A pair of psychic siblings finish off a grudge match against an ageless evil. She draws prophetic pictures while he uses a combination of Catholicism and Voodoo to battle a nondenominational devil who splits his time between smooth-talkin' and pretending to be

Jason. Well, given allowance for the budget, this is reasonably well made with a reasonably capable cast, but things go downhill fast from there. We have a juvenile and witless script with shallow characters and a climax more exciting than the one in the phone book. The whole supernatural angle turns out to be a vague smokescreen trying to conceal the fact that the bulk of this is just the same old Stalk & Slash junk (with extra flashbacks). And in the end, all their "spiritualism" boils down to is having the good guy and the bad guy float in the air and shoot lightning bolts at each other. (sigh) It beats watching reruns of Gilligan's Island, I suppose.



## VOODOO TIGER

See the Jungle Jim Page

## VOYAGE TO THE PLANET OF PREHISTORIC WOMEN

(1968 - aka *Gill Women of Venus*) dir & narration: Derek Thomas (aka Peter Bogdanovich); w/ Mamie Van Doren, Mary Marr, Paige Lee. No skin; no gore.

Space explorers arrive on Venus and piss off the mermaids. Once again re-using the Russian footage of *Planet of Storms* previously ripped for *Voyage to the Prehistoric Planet*, we get another hatchet job; this time layered over with the director's moody narration. Most of the flick is the Russian film (suitably hacked up); Bogdanovich adds in a few brief scenes of babes in tight pants and clamshell bras who frolic on the beach, eat fish, and pray to their gods to cause a volcano. The amusement here is vague at best, and if you've seen the previous rip-off recently, this one will be just too dull for words.



## VOYAGE TO THE PREHISTORIC PLANET

(1965) writ & dir: John Sebastian (aka Curtis Harrington); w/ Basil Rathbone (not really), Faith Domergue (not neither).

Astronauts land on Venus and shoot some critters. Actually, a Russian sci-fi flick (*Planet of Storms*, 1962) gets chopped up and badly dubbed for American TV. The repackaging is completed by making up American names for the Russian cast and splicing in some superfluous American footage that looks like it required a production schedule of about three hours. The result is an inane trifle -- the Russian flick does look pretty good, but the plot we're left with doesn't actually go anywhere. These guys land on Venus, attack a couple of plants, shoot some lizard-men, crack a few jokes, and go home. Nothing actually happens, and the interruptions for the American stars are just idiotic. However, it's mildly amusing and the cosmonauts have a snazzy hovercar and a big, hulking robot that are fun to watch.



## VULGAR

(2002) writ & dir: Bryan Johnson; w/ Brian Christopher O'Halloran, Jerry Lewkowitz, Ethan Suplee, Matthew Maher. No skin; a quick peek of gore.

A two-bit rent-a-clown lives the life of the complete zero -- and then he gets raped by some prison-gay SM freaks. But he finally makes it to the big time -- and now that he's rich, the gay rapists want some more of his action. Okay, the gay rape scene is, well, vulgar, and the cast puts in exceptional performances. But for a movie that tries so hard to be revolting, it actually chickens out in a lot of places. And lacking any writing ability beyond homophobic gay rape, the director resolves the plot through a quick series of convenient accidents. Ultimately, the flick delivers nothing beyond the chance for some actors to strut their stuff. Most of the time it's bleeding dull -- and even when it's not being dull it's still tedious and predictable. It's a juvenile attempt at bad-boy filmmaking that should just be swept down the gutter.



The Bad Cinema Diary™ - 6<sup>th</sup> edition July 2009

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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.