

DVD QUICKIES

Brief reviews and DVD news

Fans of the great Lon Chaney will be thrilled to learn that a new DVD edition of the 1923 silent classic *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* will see the light of day courtesy of Image Entertainment, who also gave us the restored edition of *Phantom of the Opera*. Image's 1998 disc of the Quasimodo tale has been long out of print, with only shoddy public domain versions available to the buying public. New features include: a high definition master from an original multi-tinted print; new symphonic score compiled by Donald Hunsberger; a digital stereo mix; an insert essay (as well as an optional audio essay throughout the film); a reproduction of the original souvenir program; gallery of original 3-D stills (3-D glasses included!); extensive gallery of 2-D stills including production shots, scenes and advertising materials; and behind-the-scenes footage of Lon Chaney out of makeup on the set. This could very well be the best re-issue title of the year.

Sam Katzman is a legend in the film industry. It would be an injustice to even start to mention his many production achievements (those curious to learn more about Mr. Katzman should locate the wonderful book *Lost in the Fifties: Recovering Phantom Hollywood* by Wheeler Winston Dixon). Sam's horror contributions to Columbia Pictures can be seen in the box set *Icons of Horror: Sam Katzman*. Four feature films: *The Werewolf* (see *Scream* #3 for a filmbook review), *The Giant Claw*, *Zombies of Mora Tau* and the underrated *Creature With the Atom Brain* come to DVD for the first time. At the price tag of less than twenty dollars, it's an incredible bargain.

S'More Entertainment's *Paul Lynde Halloween Special* DVD is a nostalgia buff's dream. It aired once on ABC in October of 1976. The program has been on wish lists for many years. Poor quality bootlegs have circulated, but we can now toss those bad copies in the trash. Lynde is his usual campy self. His special guests include 70's rock icons KISS, Tim Conway, Florence Henderson, Billie Hayes (in make up as Witchypoo) and a frail Margaret Hamilton (also dressed in full garb, reprising her role as the wicked witch from *The Wizard of Oz*). Lord only knows who thought to give Lynde a Halloween special, but I'm glad they did! It's a brilliant mess.

Shawn Costello's *Forced Entry* is an odd X-rated movie (to say the least). The film opens with a war veteran (Harry Reems) lying in a pool of blood after he commits suicide (his brain matter is spilled everywhere). We witness through flashbacks the reasons why the deranged soldier finished himself off—Reems' perverted thoughts are even more bizarre than his suicide! *Forced Entry* has to be seen to be believed. Previously available as a less than stellar Alpha Blue Video, E.I. Cinema's disc is much improved. The icing on the cake would be a re-issue of Costello's *Joe Rock Superstar*, however I doubt we'll ever see it materialize due to music rights.

Fans of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* will be happy to learn that the team of writers responsible for MST3K's success are back together again. Now known as The Film Crew, Mike Nelson, Kevin Murphy and Bill Corbett unleash their infectious brand of humor on 4 new Film Crew titles now available from Shout! Factory. *Killers From Space*, *The Giant of Marathon*, *Hollywood After Dark*, and *Wild Women of Wongo* are the first titles out of the gate. As *Scream* readers would expect, these films come with our highest recommendation. To learn more about The Film Crew, go to their website—www.filmcrewonline.com.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY . . . VCI's re-release of *Children Shouldn't Play With Dead Things* (35th Anniversary Edition), features a new commentary by Alan Ormsby, Jane Daly, and Anya Cronin; a tribute to director Bob Clark; two new music videos; and a photo gallery. Dario Argento's *Stendahl Syndrome* (2 disc set) gets the treatment it deserves (widescreen print; loads of extras) from Blue Underground. B.U. puts shame to Troma's previous DVD abomination of the film. Up next from Blue Underground is Jess Franco's *Cannibals*. MGM's *The Fly Collection* contains 2 titles already on DVD—*The Fly* (1958) plus *Return of the Fly* (1959), and adds the DVD debut of *The Curse of the Fly* (1965). A bonus 4th disc provides a Vincent Price biography, and the featurette: "Fly Trap: Catching a Classic." Our friends at MVD offer up *Lene Lovich: Live From Studio 54*, a 1981 concert featuring Lene in top form (a young Thomas Dolby is on keyboards). *The Roger Corman Collection* (MGM) brings together *A Bucket of Blood*, *The Trip*, *The Young Racers*, *The Wild Angels*, *Premature Burial*, *X: The Man with the X-Ray Eyes*, *G-a-s-s-s-s*, and the DVD premiere of *Bloody Mama*.

