

EDITED BY RANDY HARWARD



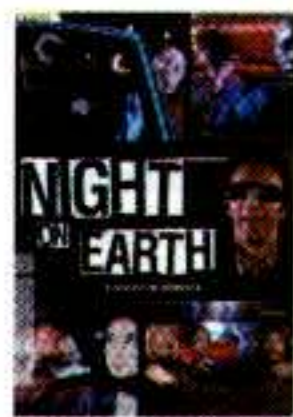
PARADISE FOUND

Heading straight to paradise with the meter off

STRANGER THAN PARADISE
(CRITERION COLLECTION, 89 MINUTES)

NIGHT ON EARTH
(CRITERION COLLECTION, 128 MINUTES)
www.criterion.com

Existentialism and food-fucking



If *Stranger Than Paradise* is Jim Jarmusch's slow-moving flipbook of snapshots representing downtown Manhattan at its slovenly finest, then *Night on Earth* is this the white-haired auteur's taxi-bound lost weekend. *Paradise*—with its blank stares, cool emotionalism, spare dialogue and bleakly shadowed spaces—was a one-film revolution. It not only captured moment, place, people and attitude perfectly (East Village bohos, before devils shopped for Prada), it represented all that Godard and Truffaut defined during their version of New Wave Cinema. It gave the world John Lurie's dark deep voice (we only heard him skronk in the Lounge Lizards), Richard Edson's smirk (we only heard him drum in Sonic Youth), and brought Screaming

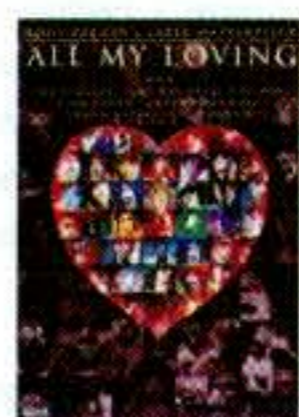
Jay Hawkins back to ferocious death-waltz prominence.

Night on Earth was a tad more problematic, but its charms have grown since 1991. The existential five cities/five cabs thing feels less cleaving, and though smudgy Winona Ryder is an annoyance, the calm and collected likes of Armin Mueller-Stahl and Gena Rowlands are a joy; the chatterers like Giancarlo Esposito and Rosie Perez are coyly funny; Jarmusch's crustiest clown, Roberto Benigni, is divine in his smallest-ever dose (as it should be). And it's the only film, pre-*American Pie*, to discuss food fucking with rich, passionate humor and a straight face.

Special features: *Stranger Than Paradise* is expanded to two discs including Jarmusch's first feature, *Permanent Vacation* (1980, 75 min), newly restored; a 1984 German television clip with cast-and-crew interviews (for both films); a behind-the-scenes Super-8 film by Tom Jarmusch; trailers; and a book featuring Jarmusch's notes on *Paradise*. *Night on Earth* features a Jarmusch vs. fans Q&A; a 1992 Belgian television interview; and lyrics to Tom Waits' songs from the film. A.D. AMOROSI

ALL MY LOVING
(MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS, 52 MINUTES)
www.mvdb2b.com

Giving the Beeb what they want



In 1967, with Swinging London exploding around them, the venerated BBC had to admit it was a bit behind the British pop music explosion. It tapped Tony Palmer, Cambridge graduate and friend of John Lennon, telling him "We need a film that explains it." Palmer duly complied, but the Beeb found the result so disturbing, it took them a year to air it. Seen today, *All My Loving* is a bit too portentous at times, especially when war footage is utilized (as when images of a Vietnamese man being executed are blithely paired with "Yellow Submarine"). But at a time when "pop" was mutating into "rock," Palmer's serious approach is a welcome change from the usual condescension that's prevalent in covering rock music even today. In addition to great footage of Cream, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, and the Who, among others, Palmer also

interviews nonmusicians involved in the industry, leading to great moments like an American jingle-writer explaining how he'd sell the Mona Lisa via pop music ("...as if it were a package of peas") and author Anthony Burgess pontificating "Youth is not wise! Youth knows nothing about life!"

Special features: Making-of featurette with Tony Palmer, portfolio of Ralph Steadman cartoons.

GILLIAN G. GAAR

WASTED ORIENT: A FILM ABOUT JOYSIDE

(PLEXIFILM, 92 MINUTES)
www.plexifilm.com

Cow pussy (awesome)!



Whatever punk was to Americans and Brits, it's now a brand, with the real McCoy a legend, even a fairytale. But in China, a country so doggedly attempting to shed its coarse Red coat (but just as determinedly trying to keep its finger on the shoelaces of its population), it's alive and well. Kinda.