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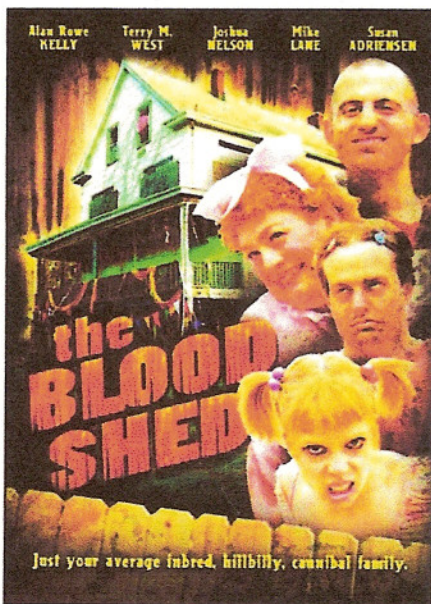
MIST

It's
coming!



Filmmaker Alan Rowe (*I'll Bury You Tomorrow*) Kelly is a unique force in the genre, and his new low-budget movie **THE BLOOD SHED** (Heretic) is a twisted but smoothly blended combination of terror and dark comedy. Kelly wrote, directed and stars in the story of the inbred Bullion brood, who live in a Texas Chainsaw-style house beyond civilization: the frighteningly hilarious "12-year-old girl" Beefteena, her brothers Hubcap (Mike Lane) and Butternut (Joshua Nelson), papa Elvis (Terry West) and tagalong friend Sno-Cakes (Susan Adriansen). Within the first few minutes, a neighborhood bully is literally ripped in half by the siblings, and this is only the beginning. More victims are doomed to mess with the wrong family, and the bloody fun doesn't stop till the very end. The Bullion players are all terrific, working together seamlessly to draw many a disturbed laugh. With well-placed shocks, moments of suspense and shameless gore, *The Blood Shed* is quite the enjoyable ride.

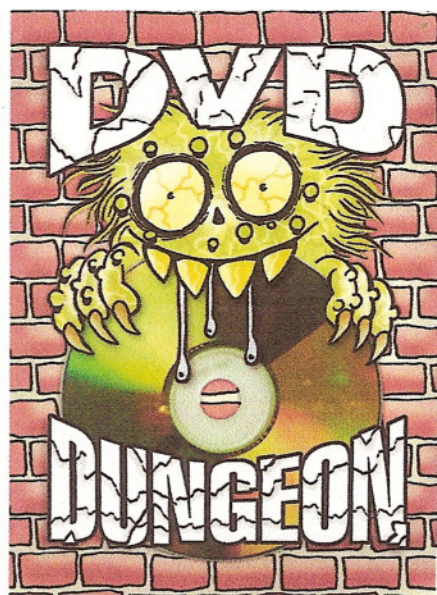
Feature-wise, the disc is not stingy, but could offer more. Sound and picture quality are surprisingly good for the small budget, and a com-



mentary by Kelly, DP Bart Mastronardi, actors Jerry Murdock (who plays an unfortunate sheriff) and Katherine O'Sullivan and composer/music supervisor Tom Burns offer a good amount of trivia, background information and laughs, with Kelly mediating the conversation well. Unfortunately, we don't get to hear enough from the rest of the cast/crew or see much behind-the-scenes action; there are 10 minutes of making-of clips in the trailers section, but for a film this fun to watch, a more in-depth view is desired.

DVD RATING:

WINGRAVE (Fat Cat/Tempo) sets itself up to accomplish a lot. Written and directed by Ahmed Khalifa, it's the first English-language horror film from Egypt—an intriguing factor from the start—and promises a dark, suspenseful tale of haunted houses and minds. Ashraf Hamdi plays the title character, a young parapsychologist dealing with personal demons as he confronts otherworldly powers. He enters the lives of two friends when they request his help with a seance, and thus begins the first



of three separate but related stories. There are creepy, intense ideas floating around each one, but they remain spectral, never really coalescing in a tangible way. This is because *Wingrave* is intended to be "stylized" as a silent film/"visual book," which only diminishes the entertainment value. We never see any real action; when it does occur, it's written out on screen instead of shown, as is the majority of the dialogue. At the end, we're left wondering when the actual plot took place.

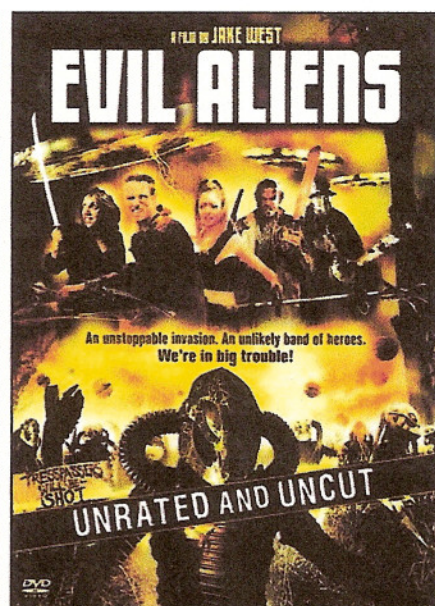
The soundtrack consists mostly of music, but its quality is at least strong. The picture can be a tad dark but is clear overall, and the 1.78:1 widescreen is at times a bit too narrow for the text—though there should be less of it to begin with. There's also a trailer that implies far more action than we actually see, a few deleted scenes that don't add much and a half-hour making-of that's more interesting than the feature. Khalifa's audio commentary is informative and a decent listen, but more voices would have added some variety. *Wingrave* had great potential; now let's see if other Egyptian horror can live up to it.

DVD RATING:

—Audrey Quaranta

Like *Black Sheep*, **EVIL ALIENS** (Image) is a grue-soaked mix of fright and fun from overseas (in this case the UK), set at a farm (in this case on a Welsh island) besieged by vicious predators (in this case...well, evil aliens). The opening shot sets up the cheeky—in both senses of the word—tone, and writer/director Jake West assembles a collection of quirky human characters and splattery setpieces with a pace that rarely flags. The slick widescreen transfer occasionally betrays the image's hi-def roots and CGI FX, but that's not a problem given the overall heightened reality and exaggerated tone, and the digital 5.1 and Surround soundtracks deliver the aural goods.

What's unfortunate is that the feature doesn't receive the supplemental backup it deserves. West's only presence is behind the camcorder of *A Guided Tour of Life Creations*, a swift trip through the FX house where we get to see assorted gore and extraterrestrials in progress. A collection of extended/deleted/unfinished



scenes contains amusing bits of character business, a couple of shots that are bloody revolting and in-references ranging from M. Night Shyamalan to *The Weakest Link* (remember that one?), and there are also bloopers and...that's it. All this feels like the appetizers to an extras feast that never arrives, and while the movie alone is worth the purchase price, that drops the overall rating to:

DVD RATING:

Both **BLACK ROSES**, director John Fasano's 1988 follow-up to *Rock 'n' Roll Nightmare*, and Synapse's DVD release of it suffer a bit from their lack of *Nightmare* star Jon Mikl-Thor's singular rock-god-in-his-own-mind presence. Instead of victims, here a heavy metal band—the Black Roses of the title—are the villains, possessing all the 20something "youths" of a small town and unleashing assorted rubbery-looking monsters on the adults (including future *Sopranos* star Vincent Pastore in a scene added during postproduction to beef up the creature quotient). It's all very cheesy, campy and remarkably colorful and sharp for a 20-year-old cheapie, and the fine 1.78:1 image is backed by Dolby Digital 2.0 stereo that rocks as hard as it can.

