

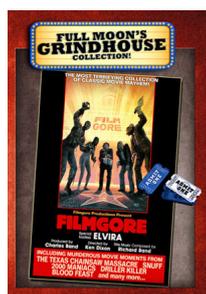
“FILMGORE” (DVD Review)

Written by Michael Koopmans
Monday, 26 December 2011 17:59



“Well, guys and ghouls, you axed for the most specdracular display of fearworks to ever splash across the screen. So are you ready to undertake this venture?” If you indeed are grave enough to do so, let me introduce you to 1984’s FILMGORE, the midsection of a mix-tape trilogy which began with 1981’s THE BEST OF SEX AND VIOLENCE and ended with 1986’s ZOMBIETHON, all recently reissued on DVD on Charles Band’s Full Moon label.

Concocted by producer Band and director Ken Dixon, all three were originally released under Band’s Wizard Video banner and shared a similar short shelf life, slip into obscurity and recent infamy due to modern interests in VHS collecting. They all string together bite-size versions of Wizard-licensed films, but only one contains the hex appeal of Cassandra Peterson. And only one can claim to be written by the late, great Forrest J Ackerman. Which also means only one contains more outdated puns than a stack of moldy old *Famous Monsters of Filmland* issues.



The “film” opens with not one, but two completely different title sequences, as if to settle a debate that had two winners. The first is the FILMGORE box logo preceding an almost 10-minute surf-rock-scored montage of clips you will see again, rewrapped for later segments. The second, and my personal favorite, is shot on video and loops the same two shots which zoom their way through a couple of miniature hallways accompanied by a very fantasy-felt MIDI track, culminating in a barely legible title card. We’re then introduced to our mistress of scaremonies, Elvira, sitting on a massive demon throne by candlelight. It’s a pleasantly eerie setup, until she opens her mouth.

If you get this far, you’ll be treated to a precisely 20-minute condensed version of Herschell Gordon Lewis’ BLOOD FEAST, followed by a 15-minute best-of-Tobe Hooper’s THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE and 10 minutes of Abel Ferrara’s DRILLER KILLER. If you’re familiar with the films (and you should be), it’s interesting enough to watch them from this unique, hodgepodge perspective. The remainder of the segments vary in length, but average out around the six-minute mark and include: the always entertaining ASTRO-ZOMBIES (which was recycled for ZOMBIETHON), the rarely entertaining CARNIVAL OF BLOOD, DRIVE-IN

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MASSACRE, DR. JEKYLL'S DUNGEON OF DEATH, Don Dohler's forgotten gem FIEND and another H.G. Lewis classic, TWO THOUSAND MANIACS! Last but certainly not least, the final 15 minutes are devoted to a few quick clips from SNUFF, including the infamous ending in its entirety. Which is nice for viewers unfamiliar with the film, because the finale is the only part worth watching.

If this sounds at all appealing to you, let me warn you that Elvira ruins the subpar experience by popping in every few minutes with a one-liner that may or may not be relevant to anything that just happened on screen. This may be blasphemous to some of you fright fans out there, but I've never really been a big Elvira fan. And given her terrible, on-the-fly quips that were more than likely groaners even 20 years ago, you can see why her random commentary made me rather watch SNUFF in its entirety.

Available now from Full Moon's [official website](#) as part of its new Grindhouse collection, FILMGORE is sure to please any gorehound who finds that plot just gets in the way. I also can't help but recommend this one to curious fright fans out there, mainly due to its rock-bottom \$10 pricetag and nostalgic personality. However, that low cost comes with a few drawbacks, mainly the VHS transfer quality—which, come to think of it, adds to the nostalgia factor—as well as the lack of special features aside from a quick introduction from Band. It's entertaining enough for a single viewing, but it's nothing specdracular—though hey, at least I just added a new word to my vocabulary!

