

It Came From the Video Store

BY WILL DODSON
Features Editor

I selected this week's flick, "Street Trash," because it had a cool box cover like every other movie I rent. This one was slightly more intriguing than most because it depicted a guy melting while sitting on a toilet. Bright lettering reads: "The grossest movie ever made!" I had no choice but to watch.

I was immediately rewarded. Scene 1 features a naked guy. Running. Have you ever seen a naked guy run? It's funny.

I'm not sure there's much of a plot, but from what I gather, some fat guy is selling liquor that he found in the corner of his cellar to vagrants. This liquor, Viper brand, apparently makes people melt.

First some guy melts on the toilet (I think that's where the box cover artist drew her/his inspiration). I didn't realize humans had so much day-glo blue in them. Next another guy melts, but not before vomiting yellow stuff on an innocent bystander. The vomit apparently is not good for the complexion, because the bystander's face twists into a visage very similar to that of the Toxic Avenger.

Speaking of the Toxic Avenger, the bad guy mayor from that movie who weighs about 652 pounds plays a necrophilic mechanic who gets syphilis from a body he finds in a junkyard. I don't know why he's in the movie, but I'm very excited to finally be able to mention necrophilia in my column.

And if that cameo isn't cool enough, the guy who plays Jeffery Franken in "Frankenhooker" (one

of the greatest movies of all time) is also featured in "Street Trash." He seems to be a low-level member of the Mafia, but I don't know what that has to do with the movie either.

I think the plot is secondary to the special effects, kind of like "Star Wars," except instead of lasers and spaceships it's vomit and melting people.

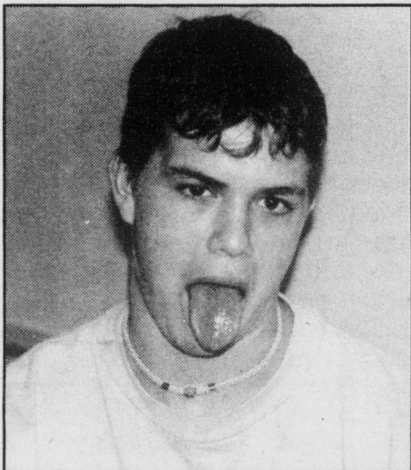
Even without a plot, though, "Street Trash" does have some extremely cool scenes.

Example #1: the good guy cop beats up some guy because he's wearing an ugly jacket. After the cop knocks the guy down, he shoves his fingers down his throat and pukes on him. Who needs Miranda rights?

Example #2: Somebody says, "I'd just like to know what you're doing with all that chicken in your pants."

Example #3: This is probably one of the single greatest moments on film. A man gets a certain vital portion of his anatomy severed from his body by a mean junkyard dweller. The poor guy tries to get it back, but a gang of junkyard people play "Keep Away" with it. The scene features several close-ups of the severed member flying through the air that are strongly reminiscent of "2001: A Space Odyssey's" opening scene with the flying bone. When the guy finally regains possession of his anatomy, he jumps onto a school bus to get a ride to the hospital. The kids are a little traumatized. I must have hit the rewind button a dozen times.

Rating: Although this movie made about as much sense as boycotting a free newspaper, I give it my recommendation because, well, it's really gross. Plus, three words that equal fun are "penile keep-away." See you next week.



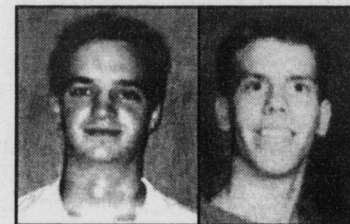
Becca Lee

I'm the firestahtah! I'm the instigatah!

Carter and Morscheck Go to the Movies

◆ This week: Jonathan and Peter review *Shall We Dance?*

BY JONATHAN
CARTER
Features Film Critic



BY PETER
MORSCHECK
Features Film Critic

The first hint that *Shall We Dance?* may be a good movie is that it's playing

Shall We Dance was produced by Daiei, the same company that brought us the *Camera* movies.

There's no giant rocket-powered turtle in this movie (unfortunately), but I must say that Daiei's production values have increased tremendously since the monster-fighting days, because they've made a well-acted, well-directed, and well-choseographed film.

The main character is Mr. Sugiyama, a businessman who has become bored and unsatisfied with his life. He decides to secretly enroll at a dance school to try to save himself from depression. At first Sugiyama shows the awkwardness that most of us would have if we tried to dance, as well as the fear of being found out by his family and co-workers. But he soon overcomes his problems and learns how enjoyable and meaningful dance can be. Near the end of the movie Sugiyama participated in a competition, but it's not the climax and he doesn't even win. The point is that it doesn't matter if you win as long as you enjoy what you're doing.

The movie is in Japanese with subtitles. At first it's distracting having to glance down at the bottom of the screen every time someone speaks, but after a while looking at the subtitles becomes an almost subconscious effort. The main problem with the subtitles is that the grammar and sentence structure is perfect, which makes the characters seem to speak unrealistically.

My lack of knowledge about dancing was the main reason I didn't enjoy the movie more than I did. The characters went on and on about the joys of dancing, but I couldn't get into it because I've never been interested in dancing. The movie just didn't appeal to me. But if you're interested in dancing or Japanese films, you might want to give *Shall We Dance* a try.

in Greensboro at all. Not to be too harsh on our fair metropolis, but I have a hunch very few Japanese films are shown here, and even fewer Japanese films about salvation through ballroom dancing. Yet, that is precisely the theme of this movie, a fascinating study of a businessman's rekindled lust for life once he secretly starts to take lessons in ballroom dance.

"Secretly" is the key word here because in Japanese society it is apparently awkward for a married couple to be seen dancing in public, let alone for a person to dance with anyone not their spouse. Thus, when Mr. Sugiyama begins staying out late every Wednesday to dance, his wife, suspicious of an affair, hires a private detective to shadow him.

The detective discovers that, while Mr. Sugiyama may have begun the lessons in order to get close to a beautiful young instructor, he is soon seduced instead by the power and energy of ballroom itself, so much so that he trains for the national amateur championship.

This movie is amazing, filled with humor, poignant characters, and infused with the energy of dance. The tension between Sugiyama's training for the competition (reminiscent of similar scenes in *The Karate Kid* and *Chariots of Fire*), and the inevitable confrontation with his neglected wife ("It may have only been dancing, but it was still an affair!") combined to keep me enthralled.

Similar to the boxing in *Rocky*, dance is not the primary focus, but merely the means through which the characters grow. Don't pass this one over simply because you don't like dance or hate the idea of "reading" a movie (subtitles). This movie is a prime candidate for the Best Foreign Film Oscar.