

KILLING M-ON

Issue One

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SAM RAIMI

INTERVIEW

NEWS ON EVIL DEAD III & IV

EYE STABBING ON FILM

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THE DEAD NEXT DOOR

ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS

THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM.

&

ARGENTO'S FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET.

JORG BUTTGERIET

INTERVIEW





THE SAM RAIMI INTERVIEW

by Alex J. Low

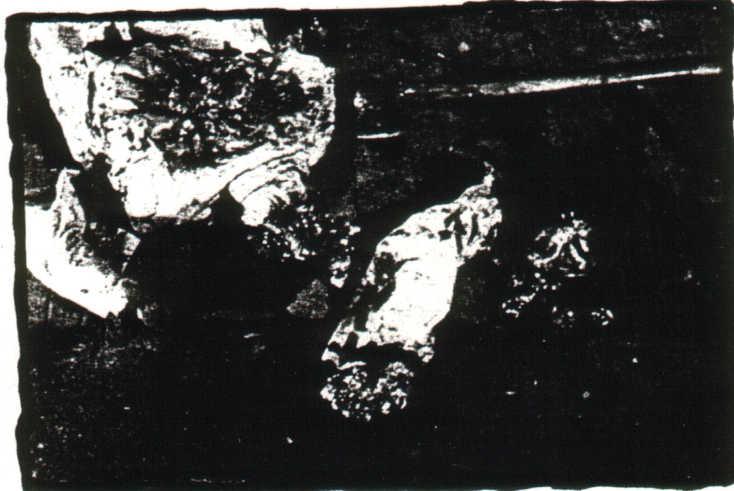
In 1982, with friends and a minuscule budget of around \$300,000 Sam Raimi created one of the goriest, most-exciting, funniest horror films of all time, *THE EVIL DEAD*. Raimi is currently busy at work on the third *EVIL DEAD* film entitled *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, which will be released next year.

Raimi begun his fascination with film making at a very young age. Around twelve years old he was using a video camera principally as a way of telling jokes. From there he went on to make many shorts, including "Six Months To Live" with Bruce Campbell in High School and "The Happy Valley Kid" with producer-pal Robert Tapert at college. If you get the chance to see these rare short films take it as they are excellent pieces of entertainment and forerunners to the splendid and unusual techniques that make Sam Raimi one of the most creative film makers of today. It was indeed the thirty-minute short "Within The Woods" that Raimi and co. eagerly showed to as many financiers as they possibly could to make the now classic *THE EVIL DEAD* - the story of five fun-loving American kids who decide to spend a weekend in an isolated cabin in the woods.

It's a simple tale of love, evil spirits, death, dismemberment and blood - lots of blood! For in the cabin they discover a tape recorder and the Book Of The Dead which contain the words that can resurrect the dead. One of the spells is recited and the spirits of the dead awaken and begin to possess the woods and then, one by one, our helpless heroes.

THE EVIL DEAD stood out from most low-budget horror films of the time because it was fairly well acted, contained some amazing special and make-up effects lots of gore and was directed with splendid flair and originality by the man in question.

Five years later Raimi and crew made the long-awaited sequel *EVIL DEAD II: DEAD BY DAWN* and once again covered the screen in blood and goo. *EVIL DEAD II* had over ten times the budget of the original and this showed with better more extravagant special



effects and some brilliant visuals. The only quibble with this funnier, less scary follow-up was that it was more a remake than a sequel but this is not a fault of the actual film as one must consider how few people would have seen the original.

Sadly the film was not the commercial success producer Dino DeLaurentis had hoped for. In America this was at least in part due to the film's self-imposed X-rating which meant(as I'm sure most readers know) that major cinema chains would not play the film as an X puts a movie in the same league as porn. However, it faired well in Europe and, like the original installment became a big video hit.

In between the two EVIL DEAD epics, Raimi ventured into slapstick comedy with CRIMEWAVE. An over-the-top, zany piece of film making, CRIMEWAVE shows more than any of Raimi's feature films to date just how much he is influenced by the Three Stooges. Originally titled THE XYZ MURDERS this ambitious project was Raimi's first major film, backed by Embassy Pictures. Co-written by Raimi and the equally talented Joel and Ethan Coen(BLOOD SIMPLE, RAISING ARIZONA)it tells the offbeat tale of two rat exterminators who also happen to be compulsive murderers on the loose in Downtown Detroit. Even with some truly witty moments and several delightful and colourful scenes, CRIMEWAVE was a disappointment and the whole OTTishness became somewhat hard to bare after a while. It was also a bad experience for Raimi himself as the studio interfered with the finished film and as Mr. Raimi would like to forget this so will we.

Sam Raimi's forth film, DARKMAN, is in my opinion his most accomplished work yet. Liam Neeson gave an excellent performance as a scientist who has almost perfected synthetic skin and ends up using the process on himself once he is defaced by an evil property dealer. As I'm sure you've all seen it(and if you havent - why not? I want to know!) I can only advise you to watch it again and again, as it only gets better with repeated viewing and you'll spot something new every time(whether it be an in-joke or John Landis's cameo appearance). DARKMAN shows that with a bigger budget and a bigger cast Raimi doesn't collapse under all the pressure but simply excels.

Raimi is not only a talented film maker he is a talented film star making his name as a rather decent actor, mostly in friends' movies. He played the Manson-type killer in Josh Becker's underrated THOU SHALT NOT KILL... EXCEPT... where he hammed it up so much you really started to believe he was mad. He was also the unfortunate butcher who got butchered in Scott Spiegel's INTRUDER and the newscaster in MANIAC COP. Most notably he was recently credited as the "Snickering Gunman" in Joel and Ethan Coen's excellent gangster-thriller MILLER'S CROSSING(the performance of his career where he mercilessly guns a man down and subsequently gets blown to pieces!), not to mention the Hitchcock-like cameo appearances he makes in all his own movies.

As mentioned earlier Raimi is currently at work on ARMY OF DARKNESS. The continuation of THE EVIL DEAD saga it sees our antihero Ash(Bruce Campbell) transported to the Middle Ages to become the saviour of the people. The film certainly sounds promising with make-up effects being handled by Alterian Studios





"Don't worry dear - one of my arms is bigger than the other."



Arm-wrestling a bed post isn't much fun.

and KNB Effects who done DARKMAN, and boasting a bigger budget than any previous Sam Raimi movie.

Raimi simply loves films and film making and is now, quite rightly, regarded as one of the most talented visual story tellers in the world. He is a hope for all aspiring film makers, having never attending film school and getting where he is today by sheer determination and hard work. Basically, we love you Sam!

COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT "EVIL DEAD III: ARMY OF DARKNESS"

ARMY OF DARKNESS is a tale of love, laughter, and terror. A thrilling, chilling, rock 'em, sock 'em, rollercoaster ride of screaming terror. The story of one man's plummet to the depths of despair and his rise to greatness. Yet at the same time it's a kind of cheesy B-picture fit only for the worst grind houses in neighbourhoods so bad I wouldn't send my attorney into.

WHAT PLANS DO YOU HAVE FOR AFTER "ARMY OF DARKNESS" ? WILL THERE BE A FOLLOW UP TO "DARKMAN" WITH BRUCE CAMPBELL ?

After ARMY OF DARKNESS, I will be writing an adventure picture and a comedy. Currently no follow up to DARKMAN is planned.

WHO IS DOING THE SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR "ARMY OF DARKNESS" ?

There are many different EFX groups. In the make-up field: Alterian Studios headed up by Tony Gardner, and KNB Effects headed up by Bob Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger. In the world of mechanical EFX: Vern Hyde, Gary Jones and a group of Detroiters create the physical mechanical illusions on the set. They include lightweight, plastic chainsaws that run and smoke but are safe; flying rigs and explosions, etc. The optical EFX are supervised by Bill Mesa who employs the Introvision process to achieve optical FX illusions. Peter Kleinow is doing the Stop Motion Animation.

ARE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE MAKING MOVIES WITH YOUR OWN MONEY OR A STUDIO'S ?

Money is money. Money helps. It allows a film maker more shooting time, more effects, larger orchestrations for the music track and the like. However, like a diseased kiss it brings along

its own strain of plague. When the studios give it to you, it feels good at first, but later the symptoms begin to appear. They exact their pound of flesh creatively.

APART FROM "THE THREE STOOGES" WHAT ELSE HAS INSPIRED AND INFLUENCED YOU ?

Like all writers, I have been influenced by my own banal life.

HAVE YOU ANY FAVOURITE FILMS OR DIRECTORS ?

Some of my favorite movies are: THE TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE, THE HAUNTING, TAXI DRIVER, APOCALYPSE NOW, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, PATHS OF GLORY, METROPOLIS, LA STRADA, A TRIP TO THE MOON, WITNESS TO THE PROSECUTION and the list goes on. I like

most movies I see. I'm a very easily entertained audience member. Some of my favorite directors are John Houston, Alfred Hitchcock, Kurosawa, Joel and Ethan Coen and Fritz Lang.

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR VERY GOOD AND VERY FUNNY BIT PART IN JOEL AND ETHAN COEN'S "MILLER'S CROSSING" ?

I was very lucky to get that part. I have known the Coen brothers since 1980 when Joel was an assistant editor on THE EVIL DEAD and Ethan was a statistical accountant at Macy's. We have written together and have been the best of friends for many years. I believe they felt I had a puggish face that worked for that particular moment of the film. Plus, I told them that I would wring their miserable necks if they didn't give me the role.

WHAT IS IT LIKE FOR YOU BEING A DIRECTOR HAVING TO GO IN FRONT OF CAMERA AND TAKE DIRECTIONS ?

I learn a lot about directing by being an actor. To properly direct a crew you must have a certain understanding of all jobs, so you can better direct them.



Not the man he used to be



Don't play pool with this gal...

WHERE DO YOU THINK HORROR MOVIES OF RECENT YEARS HAVE GONE OFF THE RAILS ? THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE MANY SCARES AROUND JUST A LOT OF SPECIAL EFFECTS.

ARMY OF DARKNESS



I don't know. It's possible that when leaving the theater after watching a good scene of suspense, we don't remember the construction of the sequence as much as a particular moment of visual interest. These are usually the special effects moments. As they are the most vivid



single image. So we forget that it wasn't just the special effects that thrilled us. Some film makers, and I'm guilty of this, just concentrate on the climax without properly building a solid foundation beneath it. These climaxes are sometimes just special effects shots.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET TOGETHER WITH BRUCE CAMPBELL, SCOTT SPIEGEL, AND OTHER FRIENDS FROM THE DAYS OF YOUR INDEPENDENT MOVIES TO WORK ON A MAJOR BUDGET MOVIE ?

Sure. We work together on a lot of things that never see the flickering light of the movie screen. Currently Scott Spiegel is directing a comedy entitled THE NUTTY NUT. I think it should be a blast. Scott, Bruce, Ron Zwang and myself have all worked on the script. He is production right now.

AND FINALLY, THE INEVITABLE QUESTION : WILL THERE BE AN "EVIL DEAD IV" ?

Please be seated. I have some bad news. It is very possible that the main character, Ash, will not survive ARMY OF DARKNESS. I wish it wasn't so, but he's in a pretty tough jam and it looks bleak. Let's hope and pray.

Keep your fingers crossed that Ash survives. Maybe we'll find out more on this and other ARMY OF DARKNESS stuff in the Bruce ('Ash') Campbell interview next issue (Hint, Hint!! - buy the damn thing!). By the way, UIP plan to open ARMY OF DARKNESS in the U.K. late next summer, or even sooner!!



Cleveland Smith : Bounty Hunter

SHORT CUTS

starring Bruce Campbell and Sam Raimi.
written by Josh Becker and Scott Spiegel.
directed by Josh Becker.

The opening shot of this action-adventure-romantic-comedy sees Bruce Campbell as our elusive hero, Cleveland Smith, striking a match in a darkened cavern and then being chased and squashed by a rolling bolder. He(somehow!) manages to escape to the woods only to be pursued by the local headhunters. The film is interrupted by a talking fish at this point and when we return to the action, Cleveland accidentally stands on top of a sea-monster and subsequently falls into a swamp. Enter the nasty Nazi played by(who else?) Sam Raimi. Cleveland escapes this nasty bugger's evil clutches by attaching his handy bullwhip to a passing airplane only to be foiled by a towering oak.

From here Cleveland falls into another sticky situation, namely the headhunters' cooking pot and uses his ventriloquist techniques to save Sandy, the damsel in distress. We then discover his quest was for a special pair of pants - the "WADERS OF THE LOST PARK"!! But all does not end well as Cleveland falls into a seemingly bottomless pit and that nasty Nazi returns to capture Sandy. How will Cleveland survive? What will happen to Sandy? We may never know.

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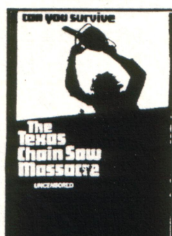
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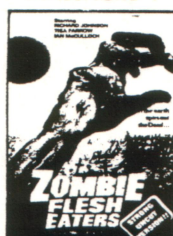
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Obviously a spoof on RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, the dialogue is extremely funny and witty, direction is superb, Campbell is excellent as Cleveland Smith and there's some brill stop-motion effects. A masterpiece of short film making. The opening credits say this is Episode 35, well I only wish I could get to see the other 34!!
(USA, 1982, 9 mins) ALEX J. LOW.

NEXT ISSUE

Scott Spiegel's killer-lawnmower-on-the-loose short - TORRO! TORRO! TORRO!

AND

THE BLIND WAITER starring Bruce Campbell.

SO DON'T MISS IT!!!