

"SAUCY, SATIRICAL COMEDY...REAL WIT."
The New York Times
"TALENT, WIT...SHARP SATIRIC PERCEPTIONS."
Julich Critic

Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz
present A Troma Team Release

THE BATTLE OF LOVE'S RETURN



You can always keep a good man down!

Starring **Lynn Lowry**
With Roderick Ghysa • Andy Kay • Robert Walker • Ida Goodcuff • Bernard Brown • Stanley L. Kaufman, Sr.
Executive Producer Garrard L. Glenn • Produced by Lloyd Kaufman and Frank Vitale
Written and Directed by Lloyd Kaufman

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The 70s

You're Welcome, Feminists



Having wisely abandoned their unreliable *Big Gus* partners, Lloyd and Michael decided to form a new film corporation. Overwhelmed by the sheer number of business names already registered in New York State, they settled on "Troma", a term well known to Classical scholars as being the Latin for "Excellence in Celluloid". The partners sub-letted a broom closet from *McCall's* magazine as an office and set themselves up as independent film distributors, first of Lloyd's pre-Troma output of *Love's Return*, *Sugar Cookies*, and *Big Gus*, but it wasn't long before the company began picking up other people's movies. Their first was an S&M gore- and nudity-fest originally titled *Sardu: The Incredible Torture Show*, but the partners shrewdly renamed *Bloodsucking Freaks*.

"Torture porn" may be an overused phrase to describe horror movies but in *Bloodsucking Freaks'* case it's a wholly accurate plot synopsis. The movie is a coming-out party for kinky sadists. As Sardu, Master of Sardu's Theater of the Macabre says, "look in awe on a man who has turned all his fantasies into realities." Those dishing out the finger-cutting and eye-gouging do so with I-can't-believe-they're-letting-me-get-away-with-this-on-camera glee and even those on the receiving end scream and wail with the conviction of the converted. Hopefully after they spent the day's shoot having jumper cables attached to their nipples or having

their bare ass used as a dart board, somebody at least had the common decency to buy the actresses lunch.

The original distributors had trimmed the movie of almost all of these "objectionable bits,"; in other words, almost the whole movie. Troma changed only the title and put all the nipple-clamping and ass-darts back in. Of course, this was all the stuff the MPAA made the original distributor remove to secure an "R" rating. Lloyd and Michael restored the nasty bits but didn't remove the "R" rating and got caught by the Hollywood censor. As punishment, Troma had to publicly admit their malfeasance and remove any advertising that featured the "R" rating. In the end, it didn't matter. *Freaks* earned enough money in the trenchcoat crowd's theaters along 42nd Street for the company to move into some real offices.

Today, the world drowns in a never-ceasing ruptured sewer main of filmed content. But back when multi-theater cineplexes began to spring up around America, there were actually more screens for movies than there were movies to screen. Small distributors like Troma were happy to leased theater owners cans of celluloid filled with pictures and sound to round out their midnight slot or exploitation drive-in double-feature.

Another notable "pick-up" (as Team Troma refers to them) picked-up during this period was directed by Lloyd's brother and Michael's pal at summer camp, Charles Kaufman. *Mother's Day* is



firmly in the *Last House on the Left*/*Spit on Your Grave* sub-genre of pseudo-horror where the main fear is not of monsters or slashers but of sexual assault, and the constant threat of the same. If that sort of thing is up your alley, *Mother's Day* is probably the best of that bunch. It spends Act One building up its victims into likable characters you care about, and then, after horrors and humiliations are inflicted upon them, they do exact a spectacularly gory revenge on Mother & Sons. There are some genuinely chilling shots of one heroine being chased through the woods and the final-moment twist is especially striking.

But Michael and Lloyd didn't found Troma to distribute other people's movies: They founded Troma to take the money they

made to distribute other people's movies to finance their own. A Boston sub-distributor suggested to Lloyd a flick about a woman's softball team and their sex lives would make money. Michael and he wanted to do a comedy, and added as much cheesecake as they felt they needed to sell it overseas. With a script largely the work of Lloyd and brother Charles, *Squeeze Play*, the first true Troma production (as opposed to a pick-up made by somebody else) began shooting in 1978 with Lloyd at the helm solo, for the first time, really, since *Battle of Love's Return*.

Team Troma learned many valuable lessons on *Squeeze Play*, not the least of which was to always shoot nude scenes first, so if your actresses change their mind and refuse to take their clothes

Bored Yet?

Lucky for you there's a built-in flipbook of a terrifying car crash. This stunt from *Sgt. Kabukiman N.Y.P.D.* (1990) turned out well enough that Troma has used it in so many subsequent movies it's become almost as much of a company mascot as Toxie himself.



A Troma Team Release

"The Wedding Party"

starring

Robert
DeNiro

Jill
Clayburgh



You are cordially
invited to attend
"The Wedding Party"
for Josephine and Charlie

a film by

Brian De Palma

Wilford Leach

Cynthia Munroe

"...has style, charm and humor galore. It's a pleasure to see!"
—N.Y. Daily News

"Like a dipper of fresh spring water... something fresh and funny!"
—N.Y. Times

"One of the most charming, gayest, most frothy and inventive pictures in a long time...
this wedding takes the cake!"

—Gene Shalit

Mother's Day



LLOYD KAUFMAN and MICHAEL HERZ PRESENT

THE FIRST TURN-ON!

IT'S ALWAYS THE WILDEST!



FEATURING
PERTHOUSE PET
OF THE YEAR
SHEILA
KENNEDY

complete
unrated
edition



ONLY
ONCE
IN A
CENTURY
CAN
SUCH
EVIL
LIVE...

BLOODSUCKING FREAKS

A FILM BY ROEL BEES

He'll steal your hearts,
your women, your booze,
and anything else you ain't
got locked up or nailed down.



ALBERT T. VIOLA'S

PREACHERMAN

ADAM HESSE: WARREN BROWN ESTY F. DAVIS, JR. W. HENRY SMITH KERRY KRISTEN
AMOS HURLEY THE PREACHERMAN DIRECTED BY ALBERT T. VIOLA WRITTEN BY DAVID S. GARDNER
PRODUCED BY LLOYD KAUFMAN MICHAEL HERZ EDITED BY ROBERT T. FORD COSTUME DESIGNER LYNNE KATZ MUSIC BY JIMMYE L. HARRIS
DISTRIBUTED BY TROMA FILMS INC. 1984

off, you can recast her without damaging the rest of the film. The leads objected to the movie's wet t-shirt contest centerpiece, and refused to wear anything but thick, nipple-concealing outerwear. The disasters of *Big Gus* and the like had worn away Lloyd's confidence; the cast sensed his insecurity, and exploited it.

Nevertheless, the film made it into the can. Troma shopped *Squeeze Play* around for a major distributor, but were turned down everywhere, and so began distributing it themselves. Even the Boston distributor whose idea it was in the first place rejected the movie for not having enough sex. They took *Squeeze Play* to the Cannes Film Festival to look for international booking, only to discover the hard way that no one outside the United States has any clue what a softball is.

Finally, deliverance came in the form of an unexpected call from a Norfolk theater owner who needed to book a last-minute replacement second feature to follow the Peter Falk comedy *The In-Laws*. *Squeeze Play* was a surprise hit in Virginia and repeated

its success across the country. Though critics generally turned their noses up, audiences loved the raunchy humor. When *Squeeze Play* sold to television for a million bucks, Troma could buy its own building — women's softball quite literally put them on the map.

Troma picked-up more pick-ups and produced a few more sex comedies — *Waitress!*, *Stuck on You*, and *The First Turn-On*, which features the screen debut of Vincent D'Onofrio — but it didn't take long for the major studios to sniff money. Soon horny teenagers flooded America's cineplexes in movies with bigger budgets and better scripts: your *Porky's*, your *Meatballs*, your *Going All the Ways*, squeezing out Troma. Though *Waitress!* made money, both *Stuck on You* and *The First Turn-On* disappointed at the box office. Troma looked like it was finished before it was even really got started.

But soon it found a bubbling vat of toxic green sludge called Opportunity.

And Troma jumped right in.