

Blu-Ray Review: Criterion Inducts Terry Zwigoff's 'Crumb,' 'Louie Bluie'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 19, 2010 - 8:35pm

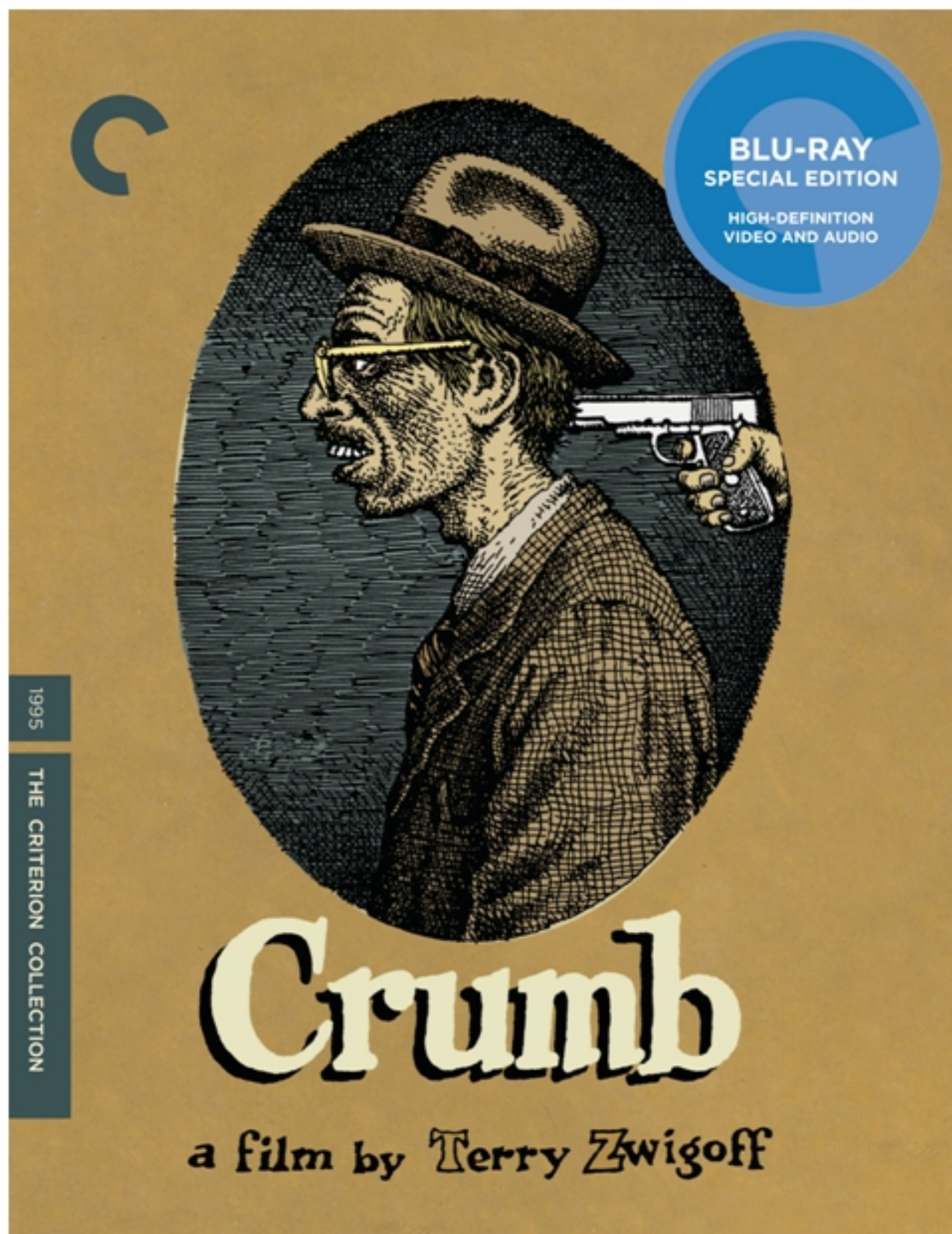
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Crumb](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Howard Armstrong](#) [6]
- [Louie Bluie](#) [7]
- [Robert Crumb](#) [8]
- [Roger Ebert](#) [9]
- [Terry Zwigoff](#) [10]
- [The Criterion Collection](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]

CHICAGO – Terry Zwigoff's "Crumb" is one of the best documentaries ever made. It's that cut-and-dry. I can still remember first seeing Terry Zwigoff's brilliant dissection of art, sexuality, and eccentricity and when the Criterion Blu-ray release made its way to my desk I was stunned to realize that the film was already fifteen years old. It's still amazing.



Blu-Ray Rating: **5.0/5.0**

Zwigoff clearly started out with the intention of documenting the unusual life of a unique artist but, like a lot of great documentarians, he not only captured lightning in a bottle with "Crumb" but turned his subject's singular story into a relatably universal one. Criterion has released Zwigoff's breakthrough film on Blu-ray while also simultaneously releasing his earlier doc "Louie Bluie" on standard DVD.



Crumb was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 10th, 2010

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection

The breakthrough "Crumb" chronicles the life and art of the notorious Robert Crumb, a cartoonist who became a pop culture sensation. What Zwigoff learned in his dissection of Crumb's inspirations and artistic ability was that eccentricity often runs in the family. Funny, devastating, and insightful, "Crumb" is as unique a documentary as its subject matter. If you've never seen it, you owe it to yourself to catch up. If you have, check it out again. You'll get something new out of it every time. It's a perfect choice for Criterion's documentary collection that includes great docs like "Gimme Shelter" and "For All Mankind." Like those films, this is one of the most important documentaries ever made.

And the Blu-ray release from Criterion treats one of the best films of the '90s with the respect that the film deserves. The release include a new, restored digital transfer that was approved by Zwigoff himself. This is not the kind of HD transfer that anyone will use to show off their new TV and the full-frame/monaural nature of the release may surprise some but Criterion has always been more concerned about the right treatment not just the flashiest.



Louie Bluie was released on DVD on August 10th, 2010

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection

The release also includes two audio commentaries including one with one of my personal icons and a champion of the film from day one — Roger Ebert. He's joined by Zwigoff on a recording that was originally done in 2006. The other track features Zwigoff alone but it was recorded in 2010. Just hearing the director comment on the film anew a-decade-and-a-half after its release is a gift to documentary lovers. The Criterion Blu-ray also includes more than fifty minutes of unused footage, a stills gallery, and a booklet featuring an essay by film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum and artwork by Charles, Jesse, Mason, and Robert Crumb.

Criterion has had a spectacular year with amazing releases for "The Red Shoes," "Stagecoach," "Red Desert," and more. And what they have to come in the next four months is downright breathtaking. Don't let "Crumb" get lost in the shuffle of the more high profile titles. It's going to be one of the best of the year.

There have been some grumblings that Criterion could and should have merely includes "Louie Bluie" as a special feature on the "Crumb" release. The film only runs 60 minutes and could have, I suppose, been a very-special feature and saved Criterion collectors some significant dough. They didn't go that route for whatever reason and have released "Louie Bluie" as a DVD-only stand-alone release.

"Louie Bluie" is Zwigoff's first film and also tells the story of a unique artistic voice. His subject this time is Howard "Louie Bluie" Armstrong, a member of the last known black string band in America. The film is fascinating as a prelude to the unique pop culture personalities that Zwigoff would explore for the next quarter-century of his career.

The DVD release includes a new, restored high-definition digital transfer approved by Zwigoff, a commentary by the director, over thirty minutes of unused footage, illustrations by Howard Armstrong, a stills gallery, and a booklet featuring an essay by film critic Michael Sragow.

"Crumb" and "Louie Bluie" were both directed by Terry Zwigoff. "Crumb" was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 10th, 2010. "Louie Bluie" was released on DVD on August 10th, 2010.



[13]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [14]
Content Director
[HollywoodChicago.com](#)
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [13]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 6:21am):
<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/11575/blu-ray-review-criterion-inducts-terry-zwigoff-s-crumb-louie-bluie>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/crumb>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/howard-armstrong>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/louie-bluie>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/robert-crumb>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/roger-ebert>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/terry-zwigoff>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-criterion-collection>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [13] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>