

Blu-ray Review: Spectacular Criterion Edition of ‘Dazed and Confused’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 3, 2011 - 10:22am

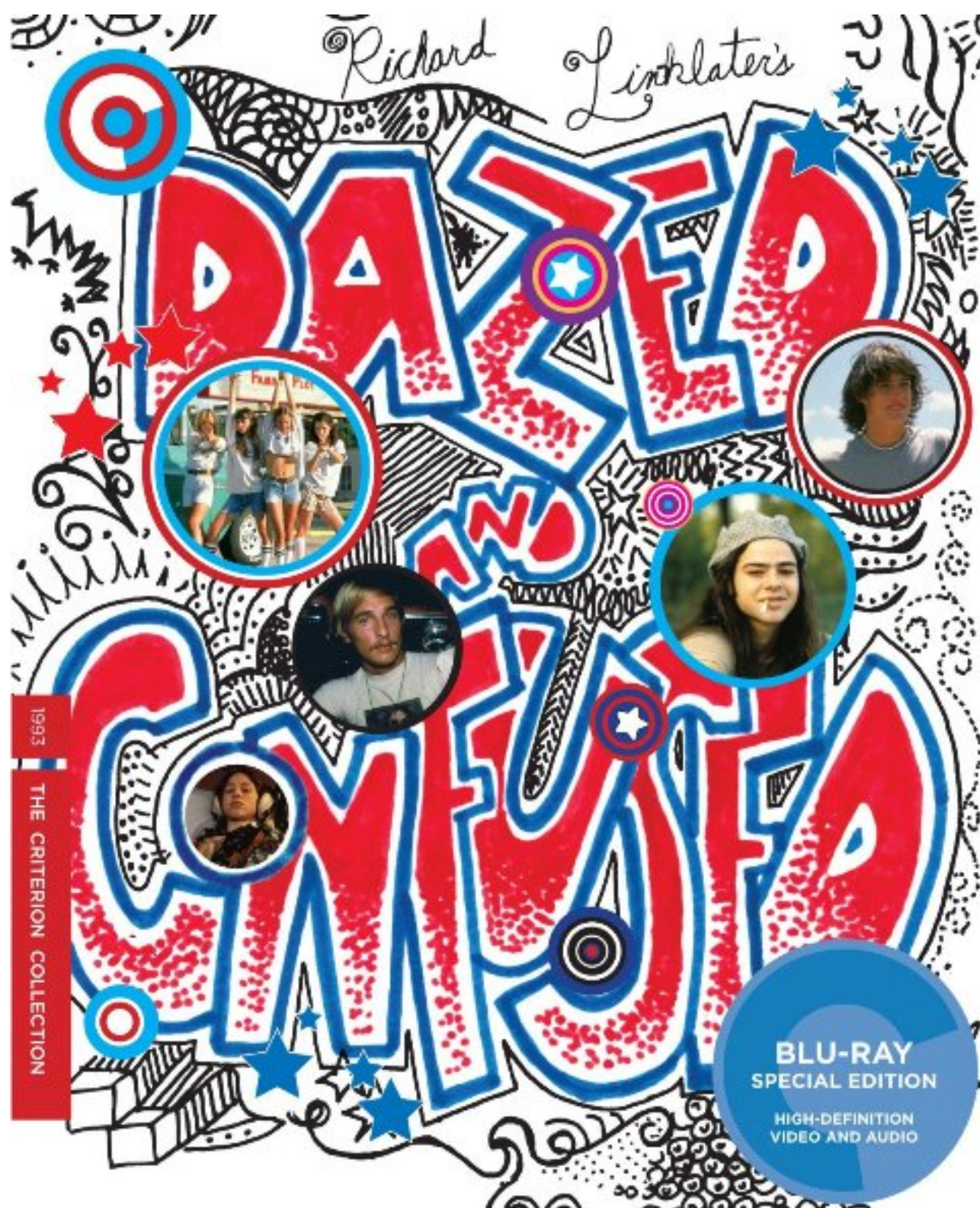
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CHICAGO – Richard Linklater’s “Dazed and Confused” is not just a fun comedy, not just a clever slice of nostalgia, and not just a stoner movie. It is, without question, one of the best films of the ’90s. It passes through nostalgia to something more like a time machine, in a way not that dissimilar to George Lucas’ “American Graffiti.” A deeply personal project from one of our best modern writer/directors, “Dazed and Confused,” recently released on Criterion Blu-ray and re-released on Criterion DVD, gets better with each passing year. And this stellar edition, one of their most lauded on standard DVD, is the only way to really experience the film. There have been Universal-released editions of the film with half (or less) of the special features, dull transfers, and even annoying packaging. Spring for the Criterion version.



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

Linklater says on the great commentary track that his goal the whole time was to make a film “*like we just dropped a camera down at this moment and this was the reality.*” There’s no better way to critically assess why this film works as well as it does. It’s because it never feels like a film. It feels like a memory, a reality, a slice of teenage life in a transitional time, not just between junior high and high school but in one of the most transitional times in the country’s history — the mid-’70s. This was a time about so much more than pot as Nixon, Vietnam, and cultural revolution hung heavy around every action, even for high schoolers. But Linklater never focuses on any of that. He doesn’t overly focus on anything, merely seeking the reality in the moment. “Dazed and Confused” is one of the best “memory” movies ever made.



Dazed and Confused was released on Criterion Blu-ray and re-released on Criterion DVD on October 25th, 2011

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection

And Criterion gives it the treatment it deserves. The HD transfer is stellar but it's the special features and even the nifty packaging that truly allow the set to stand out. Linklater's commentary is stellar, from the opening insight of the fact that paying for the credits song ("Sweet Emotion" by Aerosmith) eclipsed the budget of his previous film, and there's a spectacular documentary about the making of the film called "Making Dazed," which features a number of interviews with cast & crew both on-set and at the film's ten-year anniversary. It's amazing to revisit and remember how many people got their start here from Matthew McConaughey to Ben Affleck to Parker Posey. And they all remember the making of the film as fondly as kids remember their last days of junior high. The set is rounded out by audition footage, deleted scenes, the original trailer, and a great booklet with essays by Kent Jones, Jim DeRogatis, and Chuck Klosterman along with recollections by the cast and crew.

Synopsis:

America, 1976. The last day of school. Bongs blaze, bell-bottoms ring, and rock and roll rocks. Among the best teen films ever made, Richard Linklater's Dazed and Confused eavesdrops on a group of seniors-to-be and incoming freshmen. A launching pad for a number of future stars, Linklater's first studio effort also features endlessly quotable dialogue and a blasting, stadium-ready soundtrack. Sidestepping nostalgia, Dazed and Confused is less about "the best years of our lives" than the boredom, angst, and excitement of teenagers waiting... for something to happen.

Special Features:

- o Audio commentary featuring director Richard Linklater
- o Making Dazed, a fifty-minute documentary by Kahane Corn
- o Rare on-set interviews and behind-the-scenes footage
- o Footage from the ten-year anniversary celebration
- o Audition footage and deleted scenes
- o Original theatrical trailer
- o Booklet featuring essays by Kent Jones, Jim DeRogatis, and Chuck Klosterman; reprinted recollections of the filming from cast and crew; and character profiles from the Dazed And Confused companion book; as well as the original film poster by Frank Kozik

"Dazed and Confused" stars Wiley Wiggins, Parker Posey, Milla Jovovich, Jason London, Joey Lauren Adams, Ben Affleck, Matthew McConaughey, Adam Goldberg, and Rory Cochrane. It was written and directed by Richard Linklater. It was released on Criterion Blu-ray and re-released on Criterion DVD on October 25th, 2011.



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Source URL (retrieved on *Apr 24 2024 - 3:50pm*):
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