

Blu-ray Review: 'Blue Velvet' Retains Mesmerizing Power, Features Lost Footage

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 9, 2011 - 11:44am

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CHICAGO – Being a child of the '80s, I can vividly remember when David Lynch's "Blue Velvet" took the world by storm. I was too young to see it in theaters but I would be an early teen when the decade ended and the film made a stunning number of lists of the best films of the previous ten years. I could finally see what the fuss was all about on VHS. I would never be the same. There are a few movies I can point to and say, "That shaped the way I look at film." "Blue Velvet," recently released on Blu-ray to celebrate its 25th anniversary and complete with 50 minutes of never-before-seen deleted scenes, is one of those movies.



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

What more is there to say about "Blue Velvet"? Some have theorized that the majority of the action of the film is actually meant to be interpreted as a dream, and, while there's some evidence to support that, the theory more likely comes from the fact that the movie feels more like an actual nightmare than nearly any other drama of its era. Regularly (and correctly) ranked as one of the best films of all time, "Blue Velvet" is a timeless neo-noir, the ultimate film about what lies just beyond the white picket fences and perfectly-cut lawns. It's a word that's thrown around far too often but "Blue Velvet" is a masterpiece.



Blue Velvet

Photo credit: MGM

"It's like the song "Amazing Grace." The footage was lost but now is found." — David Lynch

If you're interested in a 25-year-old Kyle MacLachlan film on Blu-ray than you probably agree with attaching the m-word to it, and, therefore, got a little giddy at the proposition of nearly an hour of deleted scenes. The story goes that Lynch prepared a much-longer version of the film that ran 3.5-4 hours but was contractually obligated to deliver a two-hour cut of the film. That left a LOT on the cutting room floor but Lynch and others have claimed for years that the material was truly lost. According to The Guardian, a tech worker at MGM turned into Nathan Drake with the lost material and tracked it down to a warehouse in Seattle. And now it's available on Blu-ray. Amazing.

But is the deleted footage any good? Overall, the footage includes one more legendary scene with Frank Booth (Dennis Hopper) and it's always great to see more of one of the most remarkable villains of all time. The most notorious deleted scene opens the set and features a

woman who set her nipples on fire — supposedly a talent she possessed that she informed Lynch about and he had to shoot for the movie. She even says, “Motherf**ker, you’re really going up in flames this time!” What a great Lynchian line.



Blue Velvet was released on Blu-ray and DVD on November 8th, 2011

Photo credit: MGM

All in all, most of the deleted footage is atmosphere of Jeffrey’s life. Much of it was unlikely to ever make it in the film in such raw, unedited form, but it’s fascinating stuff. It’s an interesting mix in that I don’t think I would exactly re-insert a single scene (although would include edited versions of a couple) given how perfectly paced the final film is but seeing Frank Booth nearly kill a man on a pool table while half-naked women dance nearby is a Lynch fan’s dream come true. With the recent death of Mr. Hopper, it has an even eerier feel. The lost footage seems to be chronological (although I can’t say that for sure) except the nipples/Frank scene is right up front for good reason — it’s the most jaw-dropping of the new footage.

As for the other footage, it starts with several scenes revolving around Jeffrey’s leaving school (with an unrecognizable Megan Mullally as his girlfriend) and returning home (all of which are interesting but unnecessary as I like that Jeffrey is more of a cipher in the actual film). There’s also a thematically fascinating scene in which Jeffrey witnesses a date rape in progress and stops it — something that would have tied in greatly to the rest of the film. Overall, a large portion of the new footage centers on Jeffrey’s home life, something that feels like it was better implied than seen. We don’t really need to see Jeffrey having breakfast with his mother and aunt, even if it does make the tedium of his home life more pronounced. Still, watching this footage has an added-dreamlike effect in that the movie itself is such a celluloid nightmare and the footage was gone for so long. It’s like a recovered memory.

The most interesting footage, outside of that opening scene, involves a date between Jeffrey and Sandy in which they go to an act that includes nothing but a dog eating from a bowl on-stage followed by a horrible stand-up accompanied by a two-man band and a belly dancer, along with a stunning rooftop sequence in which Dorothy threatens suicide, which would have added some depth to her character. Both of these scenes could have stayed (except maybe shorten the stage numbers a bit) and enhanced the dreamlike quality of the film.

As for the film itself, it looks incredible in HD and it’s shocking that this is only the second Lynch work to hit the format (after “Dune”). We need them all. And if there’s a tech worker out there searching for 50 minutes of deleted scenes from “Wild at Heart” or “Lost Highway,” God bless you.

Synopsis:

Beneath the surface of small-town security lies a dark domain where innocents dare not tread and unpredictability is the norm. It is the haunting realm of Blue Velvet. Spawned from the mind of David Lynch (Mulholland Drive, “Twin Peaks”), Blue Velvet is a “shocking, deeply disturbing... startling mixture of the heartfelt and the horrific” (Newsweek).

Clean-cut Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) realizes his Mayberry-like hometown is not so normal when he discovers a human ear in a field. His investigation catapults him into an alluring, erotic murder mystery involving a disturbed nightclub singer (Isabella Rossellini) and a drug-addicted sadist (Dennis Hopper). Soon Jeffrey is led deeper into their depraved existence... to the point of no return.

Special Features:

- o Newly Discovered Lost Footage
- o Mysteries Of Love Documentary
- o Original Siskel & Ebert Review

- o Vignettes
- o Trailers/TV Spots
- o A Few Outtakes

“Blue Velvet” stars Kyle MacLachlan, Laura Dern, Hope Lange, Isabella Rossellini, and Dennis Hopper. It was written and directed by David Lynch.



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