

Blu-ray Review: '80s Horror Gems 'From Beyond,' 'Phantasm II' Given Scream Factory Treatment

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 18, 2013 - 12:38pm

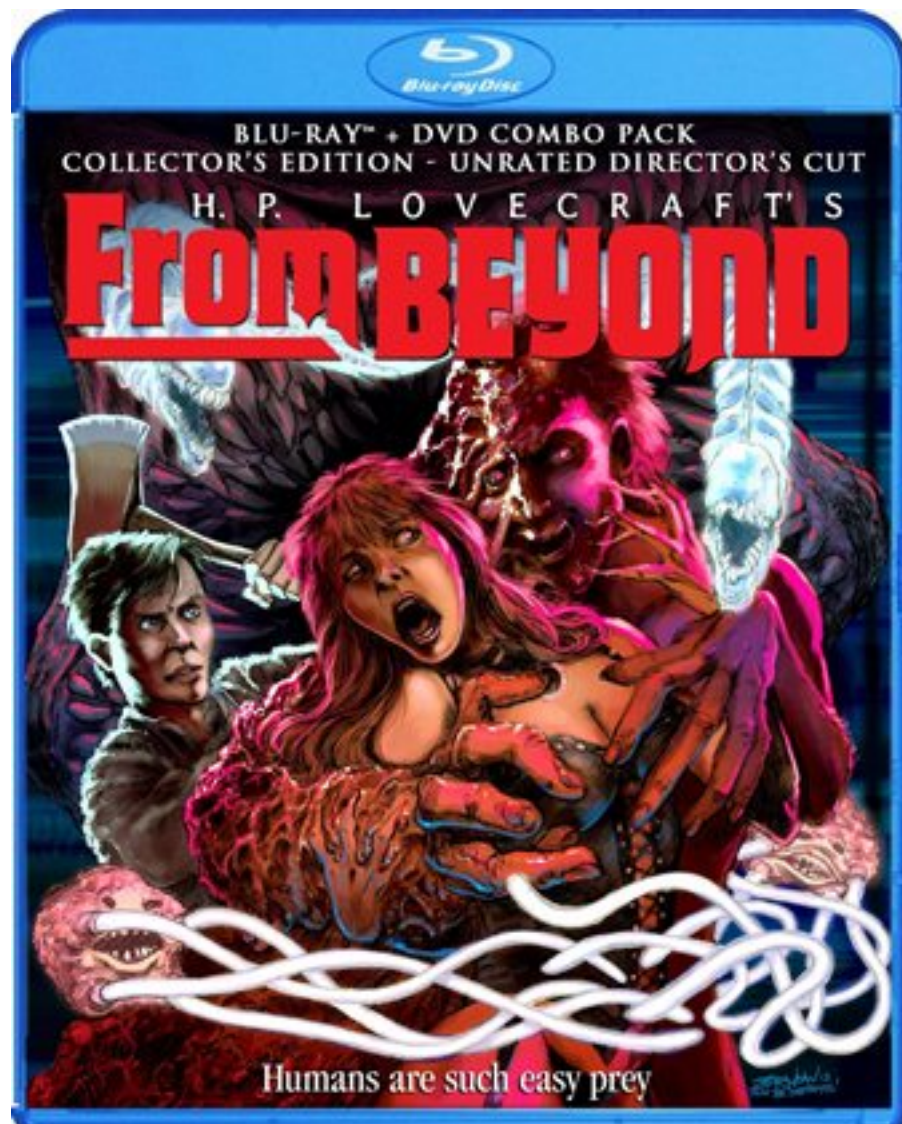
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CHICAGO – Real horror fans know the names Don Coscarelli & Stuart Gordon. They are two of the most important genre directors of the '80s, men who found ways to get their visions to the screen and redefined the cult horror film in general. Coscarelli made his biggest waves with the "Phantasm" films (and later with "Bubba Ho-Tep") while Gordon's biggest hit is probably still "Re-Animator," although is closely followed by "From Beyond." That sci-fi/horror masterpiece was just released in a lavish new Blu-ray edition with Coscarelli's attempt at studio game, "Phantasm II". Both are must-owns for horror fans.

"From Beyond" is the better of the two films but I must admit that "Phantasm II" is significantly better than I remembered. I had kind of lumped it in my memory with the inferior sequels and forget how much fun Coscarelli was allowed to have with his bigger budget while still staying mostly true to his twisted vision. The special features on the disc are great, especially new interviews with most of the key players. Coscarelli is a great interview subject, especially when he speaks about how Universal put the film through a test screening process and how that made it so much different than the first "Phantasm" in that it required it be so much more linear and how that worked for and against the film. It's amazing to me that something as weird as "Phantasm II" was a Universal film but it shows you how much the studios were trying to cash in on horror in the '80s.

The transfer of "Phantasm II" is a beauty too as are all the special features. It's a surprisingly great release for a film that's better than you remember.

Now, if you're as big of a Stuart Gordon fan as I am, "From Beyond" can't get much better than you remember. I love the way Gordon can take a source like H.P. Lovecraft and make it his own, filtering the themes in a way that makes the original proud but completely making it his own. And Jeffrey Combs is SO good here, completely committing to every element of a very demanding role. New interviews, a fantastic new cover, great special features, and an '80s horror classic. I shouldn't have to sell this one to you. You should already own it.



From Beyond was released on Blu-ray on March 5, 2013

Photo credit: Scream Factory

"From Beyond"



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

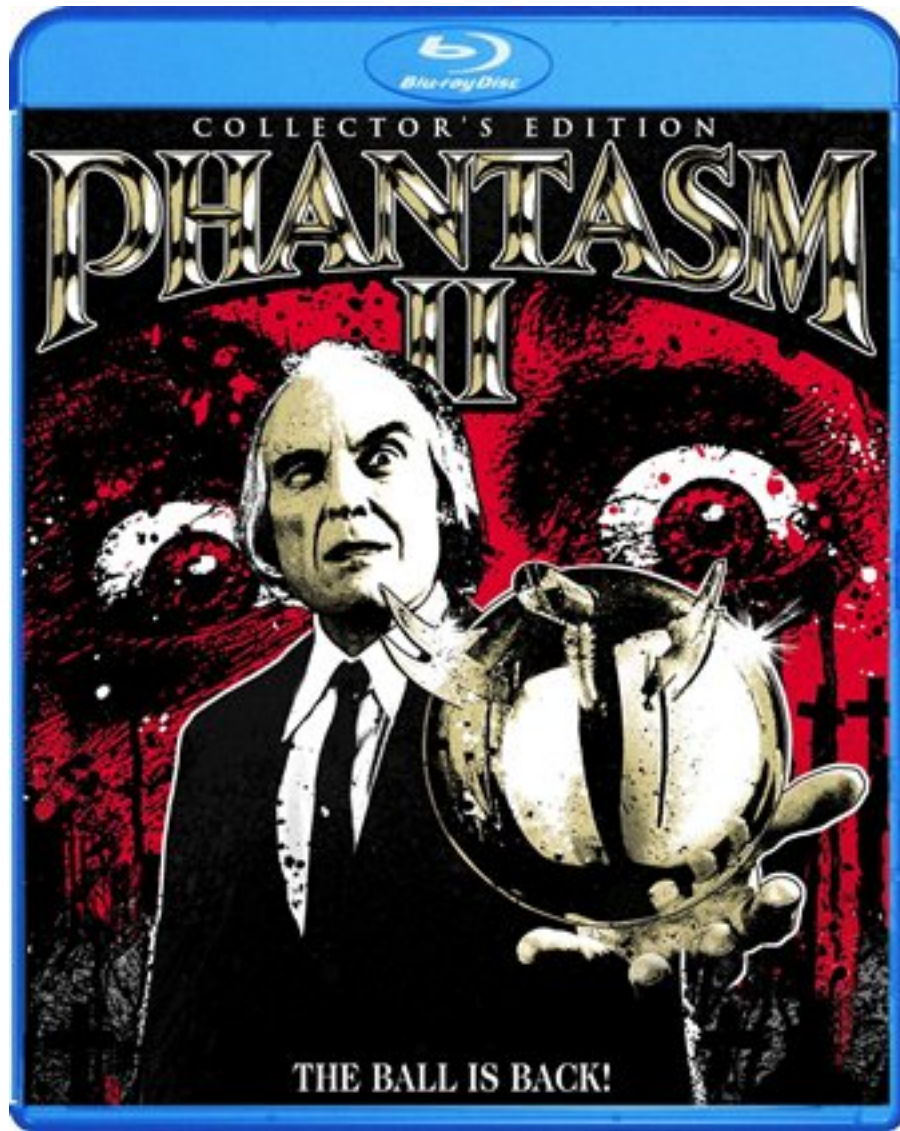
Synopsis:

H.P. Lovecraft's classic tale of suspense became "a grisly amalgam of sex, shock and satire" (Newsweek) in the hands of the creators of Re-Animator. And now, armed with shocking never-before-seen footage and special features and on Blu-ray for the first time, this "bloody good entertainment" (Time) has evolved into one of the most gruesomely riveting film experiences of all time!

The Resonator, a powerful machine that can control the sixth sense, has killed its creator and sent his associate into an insane asylum. But when a beautiful psychiatrist becomes determined to continue the experiment, she unwittingly opens the door to a hostile parallel universe... and to the deviant behavior within the human psyche. With its victims becoming creatures who feed on - and become aroused by - human brains, the Resonator is the ultimate man-made monster. And now something's gone horribly wrong and no one can turn it off!

Special Features:

- o Audio Commentary By Director Stuart Gordon And The Cast
- o New Interview With Barbara Crampton
- o The Director's Perspective Featurette
- o The Editing Room: Lost And Found Featurette
- o Interview With Composer Richard Band
- o Photo Gallery
- o Storyboard-To-Film Comparisons With Introduction



Phantasm II was released on Blu-ray on March 5, 2013

Photo credit: Scream Factory

"Phantasm II"



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

Synopsis:

The Tall Man is back with a vengeance in Phantasm II, the second chapter in the cult classic Phantasm series!

Released after seven years in a mental hospital, Mike convinces his old pal Reggie to join forces with him to hunt down and destroy The Tall Man once and for all. Mike's visions lead the two to a quiet little town where a horde of flying killer balls aim to slice and dice their gruesome way through everyone.

Exploding with special effects, unparalleled thrills, horror and suspense, Phantasm II climaxes with a blood-curdling conclusion that you have to see to believe.

Special Features:

- o Audio Commentary With Director Don Coscarelli and Actors Scrimm and Reggie Bannister
- o New Interviews With Don Coscarelli, Angus Scrimm, Reggie Bannister and Paula Irvine
- o Original Theatrical Trailer

"From Beyond" and "Phantasm II" were released on Blu-ray on March 5, 2013.



[11]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [12]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [11]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 17 2024 - 9:56pm):

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