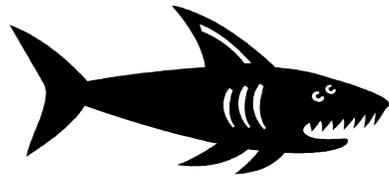


*THE INTRUDER* is one of two LVCA dvd donations coming into the Hugh Stoupe Memorial Library in July, 2013.

KINO KEN'S REVIEW OF THE DVD *THE INTRUDER*



THE INTRUDER United States 1962 black-and-white 80 minutes  
(shot in 1960)

Winner, Best Picture and Best Actor (William Shatner) at the Las Alamos International Film Festival

Recipient, Special Citation from the Venice Film Festival

17 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\* of possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points Key: 2 = superior 1 = satisfactory 0 = deficient

\*indicates outstanding performance or technical achievement

Points

Producer: Roger Corman

2 Director: Roger Corman\*

2 Editor: Ronald Sinclair\*

2 Cinematographer: Taylor Byars\*

1 Screenplay: Charles Beaumont from his own novel

2 Music: Herman Stein\*

2 Lighting: Lloyd Garnell\*

1 Sound: John Bury

2 Acting

1 Creativity

17 points

Locations: East Prairie, Sikeston and Charleston, Missouri

Principal Cast: William Shatner\* (Adam Cramer), Frank Maxwell (Tom McDaniel, publisher), Beverly Lunsford\* (Ella McDaniel, daughter of Tom and Ruth), Robert Emhardt\* (Verne Shipman), Leo Gordon\* (Sam Griffin), Charles Barnes (Joey Greene), Charles Beaumont (Mr. Paton), Katherine Smith (Ruth McDaniel, wife of Tom and mother of Ella), George Clayton Johnson (Phil West), William Nolan\* (Bart Carey, a bully), Phoebe Rowe (Mrs. Lambert), Bo Dodd (Sheriff), Walter Kurtz (Gramps, father of Ruth and grandfather of Ella), Oceo Ritch (Jack Allardyce), Jeanne Cooper (Vi Griffin, Sam's wife)

Made in 1960 as a current affairs potboiler, THE INTRUDER is producer / director Roger Corman's most intense and political film, a rare excursion into social issue drama by a maverick better known as a microbudget entertainer. There is no reason to doubt his sincerity about the film's purpose. He wanted to assert the necessity of obedience to law, regardless of personal reservations.

Perhaps due to her dependent status, Corman chooses not to employ reluctantly acquiescent Ruth McDaniels as his surrogate. She cannot wholly rid herself of inherited racist ideology vehemently expressed in the transparent bigotry of her dad. Instead the filmmaker makes his mouthpiece Sam Griffin, a marginally operating drummer who seems to find the small southern town of Caxton ideal as a regional sales base, though he certainly doesn't share the local Klannish ideology.

Sam's opponent in the film, both socially and domestically, is an imported demagogue named Adam Cramer, a spotlessly gleaming white-suited model of chivalry who arrives in town representing something called The Patrick Henry Society. This reactionary patriotic organization appears to function solely for the purpose of safeguarding the besieged civil rights of southern whites. Local paternal authority has been severely undermined by a progressive Jewish judge advocating and decreeing high school desegregation in Caxton. How repugnant! Whatever happened to state sovereignty?

Timing is everything. Into this cauldron of seething indignation steps seemingly unflappable Adam, preparing to launch a counteroffensive to complicate enforcement of the judicial mandate. With generously offered assistance from all

area white supremacists, Cramer sets out to accomplish a populist overruling of the judiciary. Somehow, this will be accomplished without bloodshed. You mustn't act like a bunch of unrestrained, lynch-happy hooligans, he cautions supporters. That wouldn't be cool, or modern. Just freely express yourself. After all, Caxton is part of a country founded on the principle of executing the unopposable will of the voting public.

Having established its theme and forces of antagonism in the film's opening sequences contrasting the poverty of rural blacks with more upscale, better-maintained white town residences, Corman elaborates using a series of stereotypes: piously nonviolent black minister, nymphomaniac spouse from the socially enlightened community of Los Angeles, black teenager with stolid determination to move with the times, aristocratic white racist exuding privilege, naïve schoolgirl speedily seduced by flattering attentions from an exotic mature male outsider. All evergreen characters readily identifiable by the viewer.

So why watch such a predictably plotted film? After all, it's a bargain basement, black-and-white 1960s drama with didactic set speeches and no probing of larger issues, such as housing segregation and racial integration of public transport, water fountains, restaurants, movie theaters, restrooms and swimming pools. Conspicuously absent are Freedom Riders and allies intent on obtaining for blacks their Constitutionally-guaranteed right to vote, a privilege circumvented by state exclusionary riders such as poll taxes and literacy requirements. Corman's drama presents the then-current situation as a simple unadorned duel between good and evil, the latter being maintenance of the status-quo Old Dominion. It's a fine snapshot gallery of prejudiced early 60s attitudes. As such, *THE INTRUDER* deserves preservation and viewing by a new generation of filmgoers who've never experienced the social tensions represented so provocatively onscreen here.

William Shatner's oily agitator, based on an actual journeyman propagandist active in the period, is his finest movie performance, an opportunity to alternately declaim and traduce, fascinating to watch in both modes. Adam Cramer is the kind of villain who alternately charms and repels. No wonder Sam cannot break free of him!

Performances by alluringly beautiful newcomer Beverly Lunsford as naïve teenager Ella McDaniel, Robert Emhardt as arrogantly stupid country squire Verne Shipman, Leo Gordon in the role of rough-hewn deus ex machina muscleman Sam Griffin, and William Nolan as tauntingly vicious racist Bart Carey are commendable, though not for restraint or subtlety. They offer dramatically convincing effectiveness, which is what ultimately makes movies memorable and involving. While a majority of the cast is comprised of nonprofessional locals occasionally exhibiting line reading anomalies, or, in the instance of the black preacher, a fixation with uninflected vocal delivery, the more than offsetting authenticity of their faces and casual slurs against perceived black enemies provides a vital, if ugly, tapestry to ponder and analyze.

Succinct, abrupt editing by Ronald Sinclair moves the film along at nearly breakneck speed. His work is ably complemented by the sledgehammer music score of Herman Stein, completely devoid of nuances but perfectly matching the direct abrasiveness of character actions and speeches.

While genuine Dixie locations would have added key ingredients of sublimated hostility cocooned in soft-toned courtesies and a more leisurely, graceful pacing, Missouri substitutes provided safely convincing replicas.

Lloyd Garnell's lighting is exemplary, showing us the smallest details in each frame. Black-and-white cinematography by Taylor Byars supplies optimal visual information without drowning us in inconsequential background clutter or disconcerting money shots that interrupt narrative flow. MOMA (Museum of Modern Art, New York City) has been duly impressed, as witness their 2011 screenings of a restored print.

Sporadic sound glitches are in evidence, as well as crosshair and splicing artifacts, but these are not so bothersome as to unduly distract.

The dvd includes an informatively clarifying discussion by director Roger Corman about the making of his film. It is a nine and three-quarters minute bonus. Unfortunately, there are no audio commentaries, bloopers (comic relief would have been welcome) or Criterion-style interpretive essays. But the feature itself is formidable enough to richly reward inquisitive viewers.

Highly recommended for screeners ages eighteen and older. Violence is depicted in realistic, though not gory, detail. There are no concessions to today's

political correctness in the dialogue, so be prepared to hear a battery of unvarnished racial slurs. Truth isn't always pretty.

The following two web sites feature extensive reviews of THE INTRUDER, with the second also containing excellent stills:

1. <http://jacksmoviepage.pizco.com>
2. [www.dvdbeaver.com](http://www.dvdbeaver.com)

For more information about the LVCA (Ligonier Valley Cinema Association), please visit the About Us section of our web site.