

" A CONVERSATION "

PRODUCTION NOTES

running time: 7m approx.
gauge: 16mm color
ratio: 1:33

written, produced, edited and directed
by Alvin Ecarma

Co-produced by Rich Porter and Seth Anderson

Photographed by Omer Ganai

Sound by Carlos Marimon

Script Supervision/Production Assist by
Julie Werenskiold

Prints by Colorlab

Starring
Mark Evans
as
"Neil"

Michael LaFetra
as
"The Street Punk"

and
Cash Flagg, Jr.
as
"The Badger"

SYNOPSIS

"My Dinner with Andre" meets "Enter the Dragon" when a costumed vigilante known only as "The Badger" rescues a pacifist street musician from a would-be mugger and the two engage in a philosophical debate over the pros and cons of non-violence. Witty dialogue and blazing kung-fu action ensue.

" A CONVERSATION "

AMUSING PRODUCTION ANECDOTES

"A Conversation" --- PRODUCED BY A MADMAN

As unbelievable as it may sound, the short film "A Conversation" was co-produced by a dangerous lunatic who goes uncredited. Director Alvin Ecarma recalls the amazing tale: "One of our co-producers was a fellow I had met in one of my production classes, and well, he seemed normal enough at the time and I hired him on as line producer. But as production on the film wore on, it became apparent that he was not in full capacity of his mental facilities as he started complaining about 'the maggots eating his brain,' attacking crew members, and eventually began beating stray cats with an oversized mallet....We threw him off the set and the last thing we saw of him was when he overturned a manhole cover and jumped into the sewer, yelling something about 'rejoining his mutated albino alligator brothers.'A week later, he had been shot to death in a pitched battle with a New York City S.W.A.T. team.

"A Conversation"-- DELIVERANCE AND SALVATION FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

The short film "A Conversation" could not have been completed had it not been for the guidance of legendary film director Alfred Hitchcock. How is this possible? Co-producer Rich Porter explains: "Things were looking pretty bleak right in the middle of production: actors missing cues, equipment breaking down, everything and anything that could have gone wrong did. I was just about to throw in the towel when I felt this presence from behind me and there he was: Alfred Hitchcock...I was floored and was barely able to stammer out a question when he placed a consoling hand on my shoulder and told me he was here to 'put right what once went wrong.' With his suggestions, we were back on schedule, the equipment sputtered to life, and I was able to feed the whole crew and the entire population of the Lower East Side with what I thought was only two fish and five loaves of bread....After it was all over, I turned to thank Mr. Hitchcock, but he had vanished into the crowd...The next day I found out that he had been dead for over twenty years."

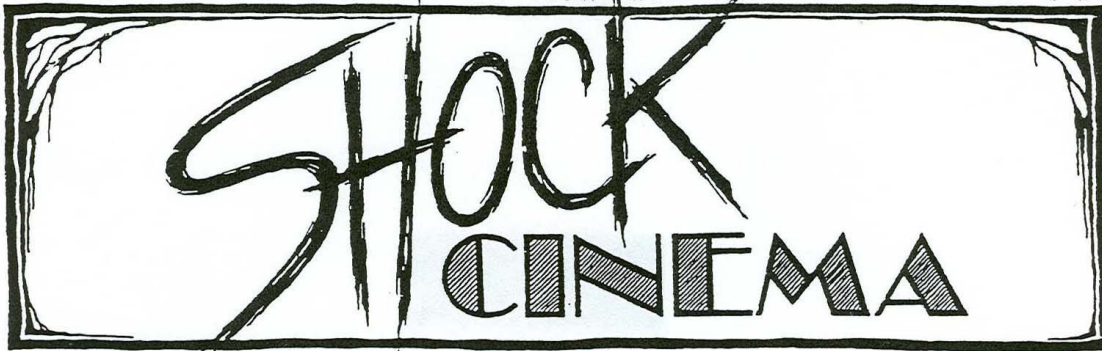
"A Conversation"--UTILIZING STATE-OF-THE-ART CGI

Although it appears that the short film "A Conversation" was shot in the streets of a typical American city, nothing can be further from the truth. In reality, the entire production was shot in a small shack outside of Calcutta, India. Indeed, the entire world as presented in the film comes from the use of the same cutting-edge computer graphics imaging that was utilized to bring the dinosaurs to life in "Jurassic Park." Recalls co-producer Seth Anderson "We did a cost-analysis of using CGI and shooting everything in India and it turned out it would cost ten and a half million Indian rupees or about a dollar and sixty-two cents American." And all the actors? "Sock puppets, believe it or not" says Anderson.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

ALVIN ECARMA was born in 19[REDACTED] in Washington, DC. Even from an early age this energetic tyke amazed one and all with his razor-sharp wit, his incredible strength, and his ability to eat live sheep whole. He attended primary school at Our Lady of Mercy, a small coed Catholic school in the suburbs and later went to the Jesuit-run Gonzaga College High School in Washington, DC. All through this period, Alvin was an exemplary student, excelling equally in History and English, but chose to focus most of his attention on making short films with the high school's film society, quickly becoming its president. Dark times were soon to follow, however, when he made the fool-hardy decision of attending Penn State. Even now the cries of the tortured and near-dead wailing out from the University's gulag haunt his ears. Later escaping with the aid of a talking car and a cleverly disguised chinchilla masquerading as Penn State football coach Joe Paterno, Alvin fled to New York University, where he made more short films, wrote screenplays, and was generally appreciated by his peers and faculty, except for the ones that considered him the spawn of Satan and the illegitimate fourth cousin to notorious Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. During the course of his studies, Alvin worked on the 19[REDACTED] Sundance™ award-winning film W[REDACTED]E. Uncharacteristically tight-lipped on the subject, all Alvin will say about his traumatic two-and-a-half week stint on the film is that "The shoot was long, painful and I think a grip was killed." Recently graduated, Alvin continues to write and has taken up a day job genetically engineering a breed of headless, wingless chickens as an alternate food source for the planet's starving millions.

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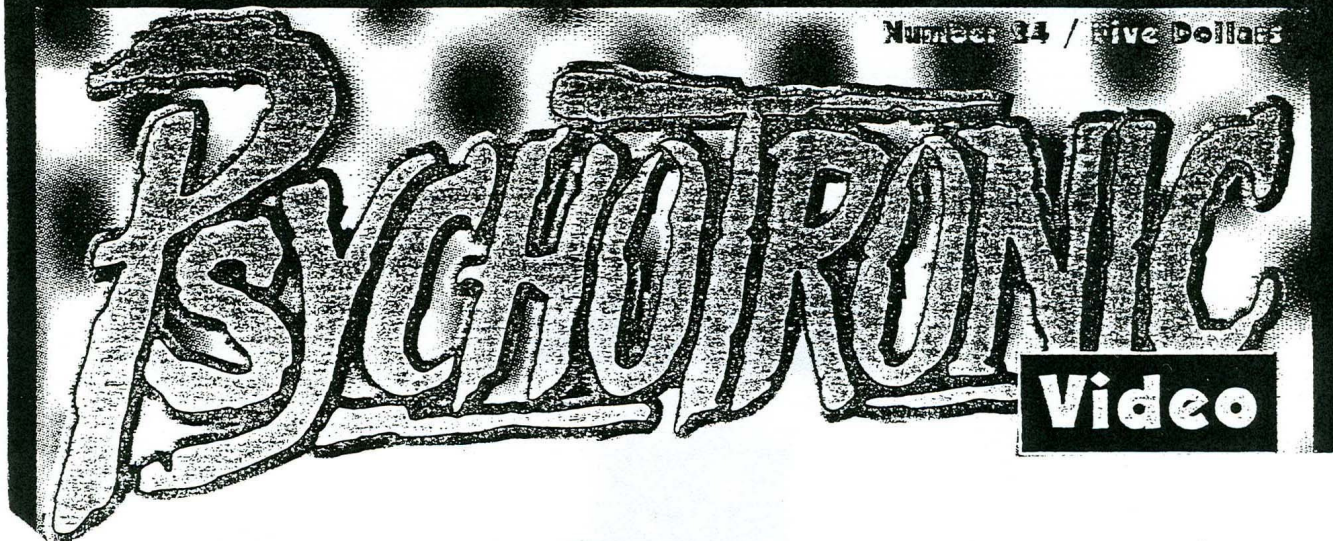
NUMBER 8

\$ 5.00

...Instead of the dreary, introspective swill that's pumped out as most college projects, **A CONVERSATION (Alvin Ecarma, [REDACTED])** is loads of fun. Shot in 16mm, it begins like any New York City slice-of-lifer, with a longhaired street musician (Mark Evans) muscled by a leather-jacketed asshole (Mike Lafetra). Just as things look bleak, up pops The Badger ("Cash Flagg Jr."), a superhero vigilante in a ridiculous red & blue costume, ready to beat the bejesus out of this "vermin". But instead, the musician and the superhero have a brief sociological argument about violence begetting violence (even quoting Sophocles and Neitschze), until finally giving into the joy of justified bloodshed. This is a near-perfect short film, even putting The Statler Brothers' "Flowers on the Wall" to better use than Tarantino did in PULP FICTION. All in all, a brilliant idea pulled off with subversive wit, while prompting more pure joy in only six minutes than any two hours of Hollywood-induced diarrhea...

FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE PSYCHOTRONIC VIDEO GUIDE!!!

Number 34 / Five Dollars



THE DAMNED AND THE DEMENTED!

By **ART BLACK**

. Genuinely enjoyable in every way is Ecarma's sly 1975 short **A Conversation**, with clever writing, effective acting, and assured direction. Produced at NYU, concept by Mike Baron.