

She Knows the “SCORE”

Written by Lianne Spiderbaby
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Lynn Lowry is known to many fans of vintage horror cinema as the lovely co-star of George A. Romero's *THE CRAZIES*, David Cronenberg's *SHIVERS* (a.k.a. *THEY CAME FROM WITHIN*) and other films, but you can now see a different, er, side of her thanks to Cult Epics' new DVD/Blu-ray release of the sexploitation classic *SCORE*. starring the lovely Lynn Lowry. Radley Metzger's movie is one of the most pivotal and downright erotic features of the early-'70s exploitation period.

SCORE takes place in a small European town where married Jack (Gerald Grant) and Elvira (Claire Wilbur) set out to seduce the young, beautiful and naive couple Betsy (Lynn Lowry) and Eddie (Calvin Culver). Sex drips from Jack and Elvira's pores; they have plenty of experience and use role-playing, drugs, alcohol and other tantalizing strategies to get Betsy and Eddie into bed. By the end of the weekend getaway, Elvira enjoys a lesbian romp with Betsy and Jack and Eddie's desires are fulfilled in a full-blown gay action sequence. Despite the super-sexed plot, Metzger keeps it classy; the editing, setting and cinematography are well-crafted, eye-catching, and artistic.



Still, *SCORE*'s most endearing and attractive aspect is Lowry herself. Her dazzling, doe-eyed face and waiflike figure define innocence, and she is the perfect prey for seductress Elvira. Even after Betsy is seduced, there are still traces of naiveté and curiosity within her newfound sexual nature, and throughout, Lowry shows no inhibitions in front of the camera. Fango caught up with Lowry recently to ask her about *SCORE*, her terror credits and her longevity as an actress.

FANGORIA: What attracted you to *SCORE*, and what was it like being on the set?

LYNN LOWRY: I wanted an opportunity to work with Radley Metzger. I had seen *THE LICKERISH QUARTET* and *THERESE AND ISABELLE*, and I just felt he did beautiful work, and all of his films had an incredible, erotic feel to them. I thought he would be amazing to work with. The set was great, other than the fact that I had to work with Clair Wilbur, who was extremely difficult. She really disliked me from the minute we flew out to Yugoslavia to start

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filming. She thought that Radley favored me, and I was getting all of the close-ups. It made shooting very difficult, because I have all of these love scenes with her; we were both really acting there, because we both didn't like each other very much!

FANG: Did you ever have mixed feelings about SCORE's content?

LOWRY: I had done a film with Lloyd Kaufman for Troma called SUGAR COOKIES, which dealt with a lot of sex and nudity. I was naked in that quite a bit, so when I went to do SCORE, I was much more comfortable. I thought the script was really funny, and I was told at the time that it was going to be an R-rated film; there wasn't going to be any explicit sex in it. Claire and I didn't do anything X-rated. However, it turned out that the two lovely men in the film [Grant and Culver] got really excited during their scene, which I was not around to see, and they performed hardcore sex. When the film came out, I was shocked. I was doing an NBC soap opera [HOW TO SURVIVE A MARRIAGE] at the time, and SCORE came out in a theater on 42nd Street in New York City, and I was terrified that the producers of my show would see it, and I would be fired.

After that, Radley released the softcore version, so that whole issue was put to bed until very recently, with the release of the uncut DVD/Blu-ray. I'm OK with the hardcore version coming out now, and I've gotta say, the gay sex scene is really hot!



FANG: Can you recall any funny or awkward moments on the SCORE set that could be used for a blooper reel today?

LOWRY: [*Laughs*] There was a scene where Claire was supposed to give my character amyl nitrite. Radley actually had some, so he asked me if I'd like to try it, and he would film it. I took a whiff of this stuff and of course, it made me feel really wonderful. I got really involved with Claire, joking around, and I completely messed up her hair! She had spent three hours doing her hair and makeup, and she was so pissed at me for messing up her look. I don't think she spoke to me for about a week after that!

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FANG: Your first film, 1970’s I DRINK YOUR BLOOD, is straight-up exploitation: sex, drugs, violence, Satanists, the whole lot. How did you come to be involved with this project?

LOWRY: I always wanted to be an actress. I went to New York City to pursue that, and I saw the audition listed in a paper called *Backstage*. So I went to the audition, and I was the very last person to get there that day. The director, David Durston—who sadly passed away this past year—was getting ready to leave, and literally he turned to me and said, “My God! You’re gorgeous, I have to have you in this movie!” Durston had already cast all of the parts, but he made one for me as a mute hippie. That film really changed my life because I had an exciting adventure on it. I fell in love with the cameraman and we had a wonderful time together; I was introduced to rock ‘n’ roll music, and things I had never been around before. Everyone was terrific to work with.



FANG: Exploitation features, horror films—it was a man’s world back then, and one could argue that it still is today. What was it like working with predominantly all-male production crews and directors, especially on films like SCORE that were so sexual in nature?

LOWRY: Once I had been nude in front of everyone, and the crew had been shooting several scenes for hours, nobody really paid attention anymore. It was uncomfortable the first time I had to do it, but everyone always treated me like a lady, and with respect. I’m a good actress, and I give 100 percent, so I’ve never really had a problem with working on any of the films with anyone.

FANG: SCORE is very tasteful in terms of how women and sexuality are depicted. The film focuses on aspects of female pleasure, and perspective. When you were filming SCORE, did you feel that this was important for your character, and important to Metzger?

LOWRY: [Screenwriter] Jerry Douglas certainly intended for the film to be empowering for women, and we wanted to show that women could be as free and sexually adventurous as men. When women have sex, they are often considered sluts, and I think SCORE really turned

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that around, and showed that sex is great, and fun, and not a degrading act.

FANG: It took special, strong and open-minded women to act in the exploitation films of the 1970s. Actresses like yourself are truly extraordinary and important in the history and progression of American cinema. If you could make a list of survival tips for actresses working in exploitation pictures, what would be included?

LOWRY: The only advice I would give an actress who was playing in a horror or exploitation film, or any movie for that matter, is that you have to really own your craft, you need to study, you need to treat it like it's an art.



FANG: Congratulations on your award for your role in BASEMENT JACK! Tell us about that.

LOWRY: I was really concerned about doing that role [a wickedly evil mother who tortures her son by electrocuting him]; I really didn't have any experience to pull from. The director, Michael Shelton, was phenomenal, and he trusted my instincts. I wanted the character to be sick psychologically, rather than just nasty; I wanted to give her another dimension. It was really freeing to play someone who was so malicious! I won Best Supporting Actress for that film at the Terror Film Festival in Philadelphia. I also just won an award for Best Actress at the Yellow Fever Film Festival in Ireland for GEORGE'S INTERVENTION as well!

FANG: When you started acting, did you ever imagine that you would be so popular with horror and exploitation fans? Reflecting back on your diverse body of work, is it what you would have expected?

LOWRY: Not at all. I wanted to do Broadway. I had my own theater group in New York called The Production Company. I never thought I would be a horror genre star, and I certainly never thought the movies I did in the '70s would last as long as they have! It's a real treat for me that my early films have been rereleased and become so popular.

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FANG: What are you currently working on? What are your plans for the future?



LOWRY: I am working on a remake of I DRINK YOUR BLOOD, and I think we have a very interesting twist to it that will capture the '70s period. I'm very excited about that! I have another movie coming out called THE SUPER, directed by Brian Weaver and Evan Makrogiannis, which is going to have a very gritty '70s feel as well. I recently produced a film called SCHISM, which is playing at festivals now. I'm very busy, I'm very happy, and I love working!

Also watch for Lowry in more upcoming projects: Dante Tomaselli's TORTURE CHAMBER, Steven Corron's PRAY TO GOD and an upcoming film by Hernan Hernando in which she'll play a vampire queen. Lowry would like to thank her fans, whom she loves and appreciates very much! Visit her at www.lynnlowry.com, and send her an e-mail; she would love to hear from Fango readers, and always answers her fan mail!

{comments on}