

STEPHEN ROMANO'S
SHOCK FESTIVAL:

The amazing "True Story" behind the scenes on 101 Of the strangest, sleaziest, most outrageous movies YOU'VE NEVER SEEN!

From the people who brought you 30 DAYS OF NIGHT, HELLBLAZER, THE PUNISHER and Showtime's MASTERS OF HORROR . . . a gritty, gory tribute to the exploitation films of the 70's and 80's that will BLOW YOUR MIND!

Acclaimed screenwriter/author Stephen Romano (THE RIOT ACT/MASTERS OF HORROR) joins forces with legendary comic artist/film designer TIM BRADSTREET (HELLBLAZER) and film actor/director THOMAS JANE (THE MIST, THE PUNISHER) to take you on a ride through the bizarre and shocking backalleys of a twisted Hollywood Babylon you've never dreamed of. It's GRINDHOUSE meets SPINAL TAP In 356 FULL COLOR PAGES, depicting an alternate universe of sleazy B-movie actors, producers, and directors, all struggling for the brass ring as they churn out the most shocking exploitation films ever made, packed with sex, gore and plenty of cheap monsters and psycho killers! SHOCK FESTIVAL is an unprecedented endeavor, two years in the making, depicting a fictional B-movie landscape that is as bracing and offensive as it is poignant and thought-provoking . . . and of course, it's a lot of fun, too, both for lovers of vintage "exploitation cinema" and readers in search of something wild and original to challenge their sensibilities. The epic 20-year story of SHOCK FESTIVAL is fully-illustrated with over 600 exclusive never-before seen movie posters, photos, lobby cards and much more, all created by Romano, Bradstreet and a talented team of award-winning artists, including Emmy-nominated animation director DAVID HARTMAN (STARSHIP TROOPERS:ROUGHNECKS, SPIDER-MAN) and MICHAEL BROOM (THE MIST, ALIEN VS PREDATOR REQUIEM). The book is co-branded by IDW and RAW ENTERTAINMENT. IDW is one of the leading independent comic publishers, who brought you 30 DAYS OF NIGHT, TRANSFORMERS and many other amazing books. RAW ENTERTAINMENT is the brainchild of artist Tim Bradstreet, who serves as art director/designer and illustrator on the project, and Hollywood actor/director Thomas Jane, who appears in the book as the wild and crazy B-movie tough guy Elliot Swann.

"We wanted to do a book that was a complete fabrication, but remain completely true to the spirit of these films we love," says creator Stephen Romano. "Basically what you are looking at is a sort of "historical novel" that uses the period and the art styles of movie posters to tell a compelling story. That was the challenge of SHOCK FESTIVAL. It's an epic tale disguised as a garish, over-the-top work of "psychotronic" film journalism, guaranteed to stun the most jaded people out there."

"SHOCK FESTIVAL is packed-full of the most bizarre, obscure, monster movies, blaxploitation films, slasher flicks, and perverted sci-fi celluloid masterpieces no one has EVER seen," says co-publisher/artist Tim Bradstreet. "From the super sexy STARFIRE BEYOND THE GALAXY to the nauseating UNIVERSE OF BLOODY ZOMBIES, the book makes you grin with delight at the idea of a parallel universe of trashy films that

should have existed. We loaded this thing with never before seen movie poster art, lobby cards, and movie stills. Romano is your stalwart and intrepid guide, lending first hand accounts of this lost galaxy of auteur and maverick directors, drug fueled lunatic actors, and a kaleidoscopic journey through their sleazy world behind the scenes. Stephen invited me in to lend my artistic eye to the whole thing and as such, his earlier effort with the book has been overhauled in a HUGE way for the better. We're all very excited about this and Tom (Jane) loves what we've done with it. I'm very proud of what Romano has accomplished.”

“I work a lot in the film business and so I know my way around Hollywood,” says Romano. “So I’ve combined that insight with some real stories (highly fictionalized, of course, with all the names changed) and my love and knowledge of B-movies and the people who made them in the 70’s and 80’s. I invented a rouge’s gallery of whacky characters and created this odd story, which begins in 1970 and ends in 1987. I’m also a character in the book. I’ve fictionalized myself on the fringes of the whole thing, like the way William Goldman did in his original novel version of THE PRINCESS BRIDE. I’m a nerdy journalist who tracks down his heroes and eventually gets to make his own movie at the end. One of my editors said this book reminded him of BOOGIE NIGHTS in the way that there’s so many characters going at once and how it sort of paints a portrait of this perverted, extended family of weirdo drug-addict movie directors and actors. But it’s not written like a novel. It’s all done in a very quick style, entirely in the voice of film journalism, as we recount the making of each movie in the book, both in review and retrospect. Sometime I describe scenes from the films that inform the narrative, other times there are behind-the-scenes “interviews” with each key player. And it’s very visual, too. There are hundreds of illustrations that show you what these films were like. Movie posters and other promo items for exploitation films were very different back then, and the more garish art styles allow us to really create a sense of being there—as if you are reading a history book of these movies. Nothing like it has ever been done.”

SHOCK FESTIVAL pulls no punches in its sordid examination of the period, with raw and confrontational subject matter that is definitely not for children . . . or the more politically-correct set.

“Everything I do has to be really about something,” explains Romano. “There has to be some sort of message or throughline that I can relate to. Even the work I did on MASTERS OF HORROR (the critically-acclaimed Episode One: INCIDENT ON AND OFF A MOUNTAIN ROAD) was, on some level, very challenging. We asked questions of our audience and let them hang there, rather than tying it all up in a neat little package. On SHOCK FESTIVAL, there were lots of opportunities to touch on important social issues by way of exploitation films which are important to me as an artist. For example, how far is too far? If you look back at the early history of “Blaxploitation films”, you’ll find a lot of really offensive stuff—or at least offensive by today’s standards. But when did that standard change? Where did the line get drawn? My book not only examines that issue, but offers a really over-the-top satirical spin that will have at least one or two people thinking a little more. And hopefully a lot of people will laugh, too. Of course,

other people will just be offended. But I'm not here to be polite. This is SHOCK FESTIVAL, baby."

The book has already become something of a phenomenon, with a successful "create your own grindhouse movie" contest online at DREAD CENTRAL and a custom SHOCK FESTIVAL art studio which provides amazing retro-style movie posters for independent filmmakers. "At Dread central, our contest gets over a million hits a day," says Romano. "And there is a lot of excitement about my art studio as well. The SHOCK FESTIVAL movie posters are even being featured in a new upcoming horror film from Joel Silver, the big-time DIE HARD guy. The movie is THE HILLS RUN RED, and I hear it's a bruiser. It's about a cursed movie and so they did a deal with me to get my posters in the theater lobby and on the walls of the hero's apartment. That film will be out next year from Universal. Meanwhile, on October 21 and 22 of this year, we'll be having a big release bash for SHOCK FESTIVAL here in Austin at the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, which will be a two day mini-festival of some amazing exploitation films and trailers—you know, the stuff that inspired us to do SHOCK FETSIVAL in the first place."

The book will be released on OCTOBER 25 from IDW and RAW in a deluxe oversized 9X11 coffetable hardback edition, with 356 FULL COLOR pages. It is available now at 30% off the retail cover price (\$39.99) at Amazon.com.

PRAISE FOR STEPHEN ROMANO AND SHOCK FESTIVAL:

"SHOCK FESTIVAL is one of the greatest homages to B-cinema ever undertaken!"
--FANGORIA

"SHOCK FESTIVAL is stunning! A milestone achievement!"
--DREAD CENTRAL

"(STEPHEN ROMANO) brings a fresh, unique voice that is firmly grounded in the genre's history, yet daring and different than anything that's come before. His words have weight. His stories have impact. You will not be disappointed."
--BRIAN KEENE

New York Times Best-Selling Author of GHOUL and CITY OF THE LIVING DEAD

"Stephen Romano writes likes on fire, and not just with some fancy notion like 'the muse' or 'the lord.' No, he writes like someone just SET HIM ON FIRE!"
--JOHN SKIPP

New York Times Best-selling author of THE SCREAM and THE LONG LAST CALL

"His voice is polished, clean, powerful . . . this is a guy with a vision, a dark and mesmerizing worldview . . . brutal, full on street cred, sharp, insightful, human, authentic, asskicking, but smooth and altogether pure."
--TOM PICCIRILLI

Bram Stoker Award Winning author of HELBOY: EMERALD HELL

“God bless you, Stephen Romano. For you have recognized what we all should know:
the whole of the human race has sinned.”

--JOE R. LANSDALE

New York Times Best-Selling Author of THE TWO BEAR MAMBO