

Ed D. Louie's "HIM"

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to bring any potentially new detectives up to speed on the basics of what has been found relating to this film.

The contents of this essay will feature:

- A basic summary of all known history of the film
- A brief plot synopsis based on accounts of the few who've been confirmed to have seen it
- The marketing and release of the film
- The revival of interest in the film
- Conclusions and a very basic summary of the key points.

It should be stressed that this document is subject to change as new information comes to light. Sources cited in this document will be listed below. If any of the links should happen to go down, or you have a general inquiry, I can be contacted at Jacktheconqueror@gmail.com.

Production

More or less nothing is known about the initial production. The film would've most likely been shot sometime between late-1973 and early-1974. The film was directed by Ed D. Louie and featured Gustav Von Will (also known as "Tava") in the role of Jesus. The film was first released on the 27th of March, 1974. In a conversation with Wakefield Poole, a pornography director who saw the film during its original run, he stated that "[it] was done on the very cheap.". This would lead me to believe that the film was probably shot in early '74 rather than late '73.

Plot Summary

Once again, not much is known about the plot. It can be assumed that the plot wouldn't be very complex. The basic summary is that the film is about a man who develops a fascination with the sexual life of Jesus Christ. There do exist reviews which feature descriptions of various scenes featured in the film.

The described scenes include:

- The opening credits are said to be played over a scene of "a stiff cock being licked by a very pretty white pussycat"^[1]

- A scene where the main character confesses to a priest about “having these dreams where I’m having sex with Jesus”. The priest starts to masturbate while the character describes his dreams. After achieving orgasm the priest states “My son, everyone is allowed to have their own fantasy”^[2]
- “A man beat[ing] off with a vacuum cleaner attachment”^[2]
- Various scenes of “men looking at their rectums with mirrors, measuring their cocks with rulers, making plaster casts of their testicles”^[2]
- Christ appears approximately three-quarters of the way into the movie. He is seen carrying a cross past the Pan-Am [now MetLife] building. He continues to carry the cross through the streets of New York. At this point, he is seen by the main character who “moves in for the fuck. Church bells ring and sunspots blind the camera.”^[2]
- “Cut to Christ hanging on a stop sign in SoHo. Close-up to Christ”^[2]
- This descends into “graphic anal probing”^[1]

Marketing and Release

The film premiered at the 55th Street Playhouse in New York City on the 27th of March, 1974. The film ran for just under two months, ending on the 23rd of May, 1974. It should be noted that the Playhouse seems to have exclusively played films in the 16mm format.^[3]

Several newspapers ran ads for the film^[4] with such blurbs as “Are you curious about HIS sexual life?”. There are also several documented reviews. The most commonly sighted reviews are Al Goldstein’s review for ‘Screw Magazine’^[1] and David Tipmore’s review for ‘The Village Voice’^[2] in which he goes on to claim the actor portraying Jesus was, in fact, his old apartment mate.

The film has also been confirmed to have been shown in various other locations. All confirmed screenings are listed below.

- 55th Street Playhouse, New York. March 27th – May 23rd, 1974.^[4] Returned for an approximately week-long run starting December 6th, 1974.^[5] Returned for a run lasting several weeks in January 1976.^[6]
- Bijou Theatre, Chicago. Run lasted approximately from January 31st – February 14th, 1975.^[7]
- David Theatre, New York. Approx. April 18th – May 1st, 1975.^[8] ^[4]
- Penthouse II Theatre, Pittsburgh. May 21st - 27th, 1975.^[9]
- Adonis Theatre, New York. c. 1975 – 1977.^[2]

There have also been claims of showings in various other theaters. These claims are (for the time being) mostly unverified and shouldn’t be taken as gospel.

- South Station Cinema, Boston.^[10] ^[3]
- Nob Hill Theatre, San Francisco – c. 1975 – 1976.^[11] ^[4]
- Ottawa, Canada.^[10]
- Scandinavia – c. 1978.^[10] ^[5]

It should also be noted that many of the advertisements listed here simply refer to the film as 'Him' rather than 'Ed D. Louie's Him'. This has led some to believe that these could theoretically be advertisements for an unrelated film with the same title, or perhaps a copycat film.

Revival of Interest

Being a small release in a very niche genre, the film was unknown during its run and completely forgotten once it left theaters. The film came back into the public eye when in 1980, it was mentioned in the book 'The Golden Turkey Awards' written by Harry and Michael Medved. The book listed the film as the "Most Unerotic Concept in Pornography". This was mostly ignored due to the Medveds' admission that one of the films listed within the book was completely fabricated. This led many people to believe that the film was a hoax. However, the film 'Dog of Norway' also listed in the book was the actual hoax.

For years, there had been rumors online about this film, with many still concluding that it must have been a hoax. Then in 2005, a man going by the name Billy A. Anderson uploaded the full review from 'Screw Magazine'. This seemed to quench any reasonable doubt. The film was most certainly real.

On the 11th of February, 2010 a blog post^[10] was published online by a man going by the handle 'KrakenSlayer'. The post contained extensive detective work through Google's News Archive service. As a result, it contained the various ads for the film. This blog post became something of a rallying spot for all who sought information on the film. Soon after, 'KrakenSlayer' was contacted by Vincent 'Vinny' Parrillo, the former partner of the late Tava. Vinny provided a photo of Tava in character as Jesus.^[12] It is unknown whether it was a production still or an actual frame from the movie.

Around 2014, film critic Phil Hall had begun making claims that he had found some new information about the film's elusive director which would be available in his book '[In Search of Lost Films](#)'. My partner and I emailed him personally and asked if he was willing to share anything. He provided us with a link to purchase the book which we hastily procured. The book stated that Hall had interviewed a man by the name of Wakefield Poole. We contacted Poole as soon as we could. He confirmed to us that he "saw the film when it played the 55th St Playhouse. I remember it was made by a Chinese man who was an uncle of Frank Lee, the owner of the playhouse. [He] was called Mr. Louie. He managed the theater during a period of 2 years. His job was included in the 4-wall agreement. I'm sure everyone connected with the film is long gone. You might Google Frank Lee. He owned the Canal St Theatre in NY. which showed [Chinese] films only. It might be dusting in the basement of that theater".

We had also contacted the author of the 2010 blog post. He shared with us a news article about a man named Frank Lee currently running a theater in California. The article stated that Mr. Lee was taking after his father 'Frank Sr.' who had owned several theaters, including theaters in New York.

We quickly found Mr. Lee's official website^[13] and contacted him asking if he was related to the man who owned the 55th Street Playhouse at the time. He said yes. We asked for a personal email address in order to ask some questions more directly. We were provided with an address (for the sake of his privacy it shall not be reprinted here) and sent our questions. He stopped replying after that. We received an email from a Robert Lee at one point, which stated nothing more than his email and phone number. The contact page has since been removed from Mr. Lee's website. We have tried contacting Robert Lee by phone, but have not received a response as of writing.

Conclusions

There is still very little to go on regarding the whereabouts of the film, and there are still a lot of mysteries regarding its production, content, and release. We have a few leads, but nothing concrete. It's possible that the film may never be found. It might be the case that only one print was ever struck. It's probably either long gone, or collecting dust in a film canister in the basement of an old neglected theater. Although it might be possible that clips from the film would have been edited into other pornos of the time, or sold as 8mm home versions. Footage such as the vacuum cleaner masturbation could have been sold in porno catalogs for special interest audiences.

So, to summarize the basic information listed above:

- Directed by Ed D. Louie.
- Staring Gustav Von Will [A.K.A Tava].
- Produced late '73 – early '74.
- The film was initially released at the 55th Street Playhouse in New York City on the 27th of March, 1974. This run ended on the 23rd of May, 1974.
- The film would most likely be in the 16mm format.
- The film also played in various other theaters during the mid-70s.
- Fell into obscurity before being listed in 'The Golden Turkey Awards' (1980).
- Believed for years to be a hoax before various reviews and advertisements appeared online approximately between the years of 2005-2010.
- There are known living relatives of the film's director who seem (at best) hesitant to talk about the film.

Citations

[1] 'Screw Magazine' Review by Al Goldstein [\[Text\]](#) [\[Scans\]](#)

[2] ['Village Voice' Review by David Tipmore](#)

[3] ['Screw Magazine' listing for the 55th Street Playhouse](#)

[4] [Various advertisements from the film's original New York run](#)

[5] [Various advertisements from The Village Voice, November – December 1974](#)

[6] [Advertisements from The Village Voice, January 1976](#)

[7] [Advertisement from the Chicago Tribune](#)

[8] [Advertisement from The Village Voice, April 28th, 1975](#)

[9] [Advertisement from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, May 21st, 1975](#)

[10] [The Blog Post](#)

[11] [Extensive forum post on vintage pornography, including claims of a West Coast showing of the film](#)

[12] [Various images of Gustav Von Will \(A.K.A Tava\) including a photo in character as Jesus](#)

[13] [Frank Lee's website](#)

Notes

[1] Ads featured in New York Times, April 18, page 23, and May 1, page 48. Archives not available to me as of writing.

[2] Screening not technically verified. Information provided to me by Vincent Parrillo.

[3] Ads said to be featured in a copy of the Boston Phoenix. Archives not available to me as of writing.

[4] Ads said to be featured in a copy of the San Francisco Chronicle. Archives not available to me as of writing.

[5] Possible misidentification of 'Jeg så Jesus dø' (1975)

Further Reading

Extensive forum posts regarding the film:

[1](#)

[2](#)

[Various images of the 55th Street Playhouse](#)