

## A Decade of Gay Porn Group Blog

In a novel collaboration, 13 top adult industry journalists have launched a group blog to discuss and celebrate the past decade in gay porn.

by Onan the Vulgarian

In 1997, after two decades of watching porn and almost one decade of writing about it, I had the temerity to think I could pick the best gay porn films of all time. That project took over a year. The choices were amazingly tough, with more than 100 titles on my "short list." To simplify decision-making, I adopted two rules:

- (1) the films had to be in print, and available on VHS;
- (2) I had to have re-watched the film within the past six months.

I read my decade's-worth of film notes and columns. Winnowing the list down to 75 or so was fairly easy, and my inability to locate some titles cut it even further. What might have been readily available in L.A. could be near-impossible to locate in Phoenix, such as most of the films of J.D. Cadinot. I also decided that the list would not include films released in 1998.

My research got an invaluable boost from Catalina Video and Bijou Video, which sent me countless screeners, and from Phoenix's Castle Boutique, which gave me carte-blanche to borrow films from their vast gay inventory. A year later, I had my list .

If I were to start over, would I pick the same 25 films? Probably not. Some films that were not available in 1997 now are, while others that you could find 10 years ago are out of print. So I'll let sleeping porn lie.

It is now 2009, and I'm ready to update that list by a decade. In those ten years, there has probably been ten times as much porn produced as in the years that came before, so I continually have to ask myself which filmmakers found new ways to look at sexual attraction and to present it onscreen. In what may be a departure from the strategies employed by the other participants in this groundbreaking group enterprise, I will start where I left off, rather than hew to a stricter interpretation of "decade" as being 2000-2009. In alphabetical order, then:

### 1. The American Way

D: Kevin Clarke  
Junior Studio, 1999

Director Kevin Clarke played a formidable role in carving out a niche for the twink as a viable erotic identity, and *The American Way* is the jewel in his crown. Clarke presents his youths as real people, using a semi-documentary style, then novel, in which the guys talk to the camera and discuss their lives and loves. Nineteen-year-old Christian Taylor practically reinvents blond as an atypical teen who's looking for love, stability and romance. Taylor is blindingly blond &mdash; all 135 pounds and 5'8" of him. Blond hair on his chest, belly, and freckled shoulders; blond down on his perfectly rounded (and deliciously fuckable) bubble butt and balls. In costar Ashton Ryan's words, he's "everybody's fantasy" &mdash; not to mention sexually sophisticated. One doesn't expect such youth and beauty to accompany virtuoso oral skills and top-bottom versatility. At the conclusion of his flip-flop with Ashton, the camera lingers lovingly as they grin, snap their 5 o'clock-shadowed jaws, and flap their tongues like playful pups. After being dumped, Christian tells us he learned to love himself until he had enough love left over to share. (One imagines guys lined up all the way to Taylor's Iowa hometown, hoping to share.)

Make it a double feature:

Clarke's *The American City*, another film to upset the porn appletart, was widely misunderstood. It opens with a shot of the Statue of Liberty and a parody of the poem (Give me your tired, your poor ..) engraved at the statue's base. This time, Clarke's youths embrace multiple cultures and nationalities. While *The American Way* presented an America of bounteous summer and ripe Midwestern youths with cornflower blue eyes and cornsilk hair, *The American City* presents a gritty urban America, with kids of all colors whose appearance might send you walking the other way, but whose carnal appetites are not so very different, after all. It's a bravura vision.

### 2. Buckback Mountain

D: Lawrence Roberts  
Buck Angel Entertainment, 2007

Buck Angel is a F2M transsexual. There were countless porn treatments of *Brokeback Mountain* (and most of them were forgettable) but *Buckback Mountain* really captures the spirit of the original and dares to put every detail on camera. It

has guts, it has heart and it makes you cheer for the two principal characters, who have a vast sexual territory to cross and who do it flawlessly (and make it very hot). The sex is scorching, the acting commendable, the videography exceptional and Jer Ber Jones' soundtrack award-worthy. Overlooked and misrepresented as "alternative" porn, Buckback Mountain is an example of brave and stellar filmmaking that deserves a prominent place in the porn pantheon.

Make it a double feature:

Doug Jeffries' turned Brokeback Mountain into Bi-Back Mountain, a bisexual partner-swapping romp in which the two guys from the main stories also have ladies in their lives. Jeffries' version pays lip-service, at best, to the original but offers good chemistry between the two leads, then-newbie Tommy Blade and Dean Campbell, and lots of sexual perms and combs.

### 3. Decameron: Two Naughty Tales

D: Lucas Kazan

Lucas Kazan Productions, 2004

In the 100 stories of Boccaccio's Decameron, seven women and three men from Florence take refuge in the country to escape the plague that was ravishing Europe. Over the course of ten days, each of them tells one story per day. Director Lucas Kazan takes two of Boccaccio's tales and adds a gay twist, giving us a narrator who reads the original stories and embellishes and updates them. Kazan's Decameron is the best possible combination of location, score, cast, camera and narrative. The word "naughty" in the title is key to enjoying the film, because there is glee in almost every frame. And what music! The energy and the surprises in Andrea Ruscelli's score add terrifically to the film's impact. It's one of those fortuitously perfect combinations, like port and stilton. There is joy, too, in Kazan's direction, from the jaunty opening credits to the hearty meal the four reaffirmed friends share at the end. Kazan often uses character and camera to tell different versions of the same story simultaneously, and he does it here to perfection.

Make it a double feature:

Kazan's first blockbuster hit and his all-time bestseller is Hotel Italia, which I urged him to consider renaming Hotel Genitalia. Adorable Dario D'Alba discovers his sexuality in his final summer in Genoa before leaving home for college. This unfolds under the watchful eye of his father, awakening long-buried sexual longings in the father, as well.

### 4. Descent

D: Steven Scarborough

Hot House, 2000

Descent marked Aiden Shaw's return to video and his retirement from it. It's a film that defies reviewing, being largely devoid of story and heavily laden with symbols. It has the logic of a dream. Shaw is in some kind of prison of the imagination, awaiting the last great fuck of his life, his cock dripping precum while images of impending death fill the screen. With startling set designs and an approach to filmmaking as an acid trip, Descent is visually sumptuous &mdash; and that includes the cast. The sex is as powerful as the imagery, which, taken together, blur the boundary between sex film and art film.

Make it a double feature:

One typically associates director Steven Scarborough with darker sex &mdash; leather, fisting, rough sex &mdash; not with films like Descent or with fluffy vanilla themes. But few directors can turn out perfect confections like Trunks 5, with flawless models, spank-me tan lines, an aquamarine pool and jism flying in all directions. Scarborough has distilled the essence of men, muscle, water and sunshine into an endless, white-hot seismic orgasm.

### 5. Horse: Fallen Angel 5

D: Bruce Cam

Titan Media, 2004

When Christians on horseback were first seen in the New World, the natives thought these terrifying apparitions, these horses with riders, were a single creature. Horse: Fallen Angel 5 presents a darker view of that metaphor, blurring the distinctions between man and beast, in a tour de force of erotic filmmaking that fetishizes the horse like nothing since Anthony Schaffer's play Equus. The artistic and sexual vision of director Bruce Cam and his creative team, and the meticulous art direction, are a wonderment. It is not often that you can describe a porn film as being mythical, but this is one of those times. If Hieronymus Bosch were to return to life and make a gay porn film, he would make Horse.

Make it a double feature:

If the Marquis de Sade wrote a porn script for Cirque du Soleil and Guillermo Del Toro directed it, you might get something very much like Cirque Noir, the first of Titan's three (so far) circus-themed films. It's an astonishing sleazefest that may repel you but will not permit you to let go of your dick. The sets, make-up, costumes, styling and lighting are at once dark and brilliant. The sex has a moth-and-flame compulsion. Here's a film that's imitative of nothing, a true original.

#### 6. Legionnaires

D: Jean-Marc Prouveur  
Oh Man! Studios, 2002

Update Herman Melville's Billy Budd and set it in the French Foreign Legion instead of aboard a ship, and you have Legionnaires. It's like watching a film by Godard. The carnality is as brutal as the physical deprivations of the desert outpost where most of the action takes place. Giovanni (the Billy Budd character) is the innocent who throws the fragile equilibrium of the soldiers' sexual needs out of kilter and Sam Griffiths, brilliant in a non-sexual role, is the outpost Commander who knowingly lets the carnage proceed to its tragic conclusion. Brilliant filmmaking and a wonderful example of how sex and narrative can enhance each other, by a director nobody ever heard of before. Legionnaires is a film woefully overlooked in the USA.

Make it a double feature:

Prouveur's Spanish Fever, from 2004, assembles nine of the hottest guys in Barcelona for an all-sex feature whose unifying conceit is the sexual fantasies of Lee Jaguar and the guys he shares an apartment with. Take one every four hours and call me in the morning.

#### 7. Men Amongst the Ruins

D: Kristen Bjorn  
Kristen Bjorn Productions, 2004

Kristen Bjorn turned to magical realism for Men Amongst the Ruins, in which a ruined cathedral where men cruise for sex is transformed into a sexual paradise. The ruins are haunted by a palpable awareness of all the sex that has taken place there. When we see men carnally engaged, amidst luxurious settings that cannot be possible in these crumbled cloisters, we must wonder if we are privy to some splendid erotic past or if the fabulous informs the present, and if men having sex cause the ruins to flower again. Woven through the sexual connections is a chase, in which a traveler (Slava Petrovich) who has had his belongings stolen is followed by a local (Max Veneziano) who has found his passport and wishes to return it. The sexual tension of the cat-and-mouse chase is almost unbearable but their inevitable coupling will make you swoon.

Make it a double feature:

The author of Dangerous Liaisons observed in 1782 that "revenge is a dish best served cold" but Bjorn's Skin Deep begs to differ. His recipe for vengeance has lots of ingredients: models worthy of Mt. Olympus, dramatic settings, sucking, fucking, rimming, pissing, fisting, foot play, food play, orgies, double penetrations and large insertable objects. Not to mention a riveting sit-fuck in which the top (Jordi Casal) remains so motionless that the bottom (Bruno Jones) is virtually enacting a solo with a living cock as dildo.

D: Michael Lucas, Tony Dimarco  
Lucas Entertainment, 2006

Many years ago I called Michael Lucas the Fellini of porn because of the detailed way in which he depicts relationships and because of the way in which those relationships are tied to time and place. So it was ironic when Lucas stepped boldly into the shoes of that great Italian director, updating Fellini's 1960 classic, La Dolce Vita ("The Sweet Life"), and doing it with style and class. A loving homage, complete with fountain scene, Michael Lucas' La Dolce Vita is about the emotional toll taken on a man by a life encumbered by nothing but tinsel: fashion, celebrity, parties, paparazzi. Besides raising the bar for porn, La Dolce Vita narrowed the divide between adult and mainstream cinema. Excoriating sex, exquisitely filmed by Tony Dimarco, who also wrote the screenplay, and a valentine to New York City, with enchanting views, many aerial, of skylines, streetscapes and landmarks.

Make it a double feature:

Michael Lucas was unhappy when his 2007 comedy, The Intern, completely overshadowed what he felt to be the superior film, Gigolo. In a long letter to the industry, he wrote, "Gigolo is a serious feature that was raved about. The Intern is a cute comedy. What went wrong? Where is the common sense? I want the answers." But The Intern was so deliciously wacky, with sparkling dialog, wicked sight gags, colorful art design, pitch-perfect performances and ferocious sex that how could you not love it?

9. The Servant

D: Thor Stephans  
Stable Entertainment, 2000

As I hurriedly wrote to director Thor Stephans after watching The Servant, "It's simply fucking brilliant!" Based on the

novel by Robin Maugham (nephew of Somerset), *The Servant* is a story of moral decay in which an impeccable servant, played by Dean Phoenix, and his aristocratic employer, played by Blake Harper, gradually trade roles and identities. The eroticism and decadence at the story's core mesh perfectly with the Savannah, Georgia location. You will be riveted from the opening shot. Dean Phoenix gives one of the best porn performances of all time as the servant, and it's matched by an insightful script by Donald Von Wiedenman, phenomenal music by Rock Hard, crafty direction, and eight sex scenes that will test the limits of your libido. Derek Cameron has never been lovelier or more seductive. The sordid sexual scenarios are reminiscent of themes in the Carson McCullers novel, *Reflections in a Golden Eye*, which script writer Von Wiedenman also planned to turn into a porn film (but never did).

Make it a double feature:

Originally conceived as an adaptation of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, director Thor Stephans' *Sex Psycho* drifted far from its inspirational source as it evolved. Stephans told me in an email, "But it will still have a shower scene and one of the stars will die towards the middle." Didn't happen. But *Sex Psycho* is porn of the highest caliber, with a doozie of a screeching violin score by Rock Hard that's a homage to Bernard Hermann's original and a Hitchcock-esque cameo by the director. Here's a piece of woo-woo trivia for you: the screenplay for Hitchcock's *Psycho* was written by a guy named Joey Stefano. 10. *To the Last Man*

D: Tony Dimarco, Ben Leon, Chris Ward  
Raging Stallion Studios, 2008

*To the Last Man* is not just porn stars in cowboy drag, it's an authentic vision of a bit of violent, bloody American history with sex on a scale to match. The Pleasant Valley War was fought in Arizona between 1883 and 1892 and resulted in over 40 deaths, including cold-blooded murders, the killing of children, and a lynching. It was the longest and bloodiest feud in American history and it so horrified the country that it delayed granting of statehood to Arizona for more than 25 years. *To the Last Man* was filmed at a remote Arizona ranch located where the Pleasant Valley War actually took place, except that in Raging Stallion's story, the feud erupts over water, not livestock. Rarely has there been a porn production whose visual expanse is so vast and sweeping. Yet in spite of vistas that threaten to dwarf the mortals who intrude on them, directors Ward, Leon and Dimarco have created larger-than-porn characters and, equally importantly, blazingly cineramic sex. Everything in the film is authentic, including the 125-year-old ranch where most of the filming took place, the 100-year-old graveyard that's used for a funeral in the film, and the 1,000-year-old Native American ruins. Antton Harri is branded with an actual branding iron from the Flying V Ranch, where one of the Pleasant Valley killings took place, and in the DVD extras, Ricky Sinz and Scott Tanner have a double-solo at the creek behind what remains of the Flying V Ranch. *To the Last Man* is a prodigious piece of filmmaking, unlike anything in porn history. Circle the wagons.

Make it a double feature:

I'm going to duck the radar of predictability here (Grunts) and recommend that you take a look at *Mirage*, a story about rival archaeologists out to rob an Egyptian tomb that has been lost for millennia. The tomb set (props courtesy of eBay) is terrific, as is Dirk Jager's menacingly sexy performance. There are plenty of sex scenes in the 2-DVD production, including a DP, and several models are versatile, but the two opening orgies, one oral and one anal, are pure sexual rapture. Honorable Mentions

Jett Blakk writes consistently fascinating screenplays and he's equally at the top of his form no matter what the genre &mdash; comedy, thriller, spoof, drama, fantasy &hellip;. He also probably holds the record for the highest number of performers nominated for acting awards in his films. I will single out one film, *Unspeakable*, because it tackled an exceptionally risky subject (an escaped Nazi war criminal) and consequently went largely unheeded. But check out his astonishing oeuvre.

George Duoy practically invented a new genre, and after capturing gayporn by storm, he introduced Lukas Ridgeston and captured the same world again. Whoever says lightning never strikes twice in the same place obviously is not familiar with *Bel Ami*. One of my favorites is *An American in Prague*, which stars Johan Paulik and an American youth named Chance. They are magical together as over the course of four days, they meet, tour Prague and Budapest, and become friends and lovers. Their experiences are at once innocent and sexual. They live at that incandescent age where they can effortlessly pass back and forth between the world of boys and the world of men &mdash; with all the knowledge, perquisites and secrets privy to each.

One of the staple set-ups of porn is the gay youth who lusts after his straight best friend. In *Prague Buddies*, William Higgins dealt with this in a novel way that was all the more explosive sexually for catching the audience unawares. When friends Pavel Korsakov and Jirka Kalvoda get caught in a downpour while walking home from the gym one night, they take refuge under an overturned rowboat. While the rain slams and the thunder rumbles, Pavel says to Jirka, "Women are not worth loving. Love me instead." It becomes a fantasy perfectly realized.

*Wrong Side of the Tracks* racked up GayVN awards for Best Picture, Best Director (Chi Chi LaRue), Best Actor (Johnny Hazzard) and more, but the studio's decision to release this as a two-parter added bloat that diluted the impact, and the not-one-but-two alternate endings suggest that the script writer wasn't sure what he wanted to accomplish. But you have to be smitten by Hazzard's hard-lovin' loser who, abandoned and sexually abused by his family, quickly learns that his body is valuable currency. When love enters, in the person of Chad Savage, Johnny is ill-equipped to handle it. LaRue is

a giant among directors; he can do the sexual storm trooper thing (Bolt and the Link series) and can effortlessly dash off film after film, but Wrong Side of the Tracks shows a more deliberate and thoughtful side.

What George Duroy does for Eastern European models in their youth, Csaba Borbély does for guys who are well into manhood. In fact, Borbély practically put Eastern Europe on the gayporn map. Duroy was there first, but we associate Duroy with a type whereas we associate Borbély with a region. His early films emphasized sport (gymnastics, martial arts, sailing, boxing). Then it was costume and set (gypsies, gangsters, cops, soldiers, pharaohs, gladiators). But he always had models you couldn't tear your eyes away from. Borbély discovered Lucio Maverick, Claudio Antonelli and Julian Vincenzo, and he gave Bel Ami's Filip Olivier new life as Roberto Giorgio. Borbély's men are the ne plus ultra of European porn; so many of them have performed together so often, their physical comfort and intimacy onscreen makes for fluid filmmaking and perfect chemistry. Blazing Waters: A Dalmatian Adventure is one of Borbély's best. It's a two-part film whose scenes take pace in and around water, with the models doing their own stunts: snorkeling, scuba diving, jet-skiing, whitewater rafting, kayaking and more. It will leave you covered with foam.

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Please read what the other group blog participants have to say:

- JC Adams of Gay Porn Times ([www.gayporntimes.com](http://www.gayporntimes.com) )
- Mark Adams of VidioView ([markadamsvidioview.wordpress.com](http://markadamsvidioview.wordpress.com) )
- The editors of Fleshbot ([gay.fleshbot.com](http://gay.fleshbot.com) )
- The editors of GayPornBlog ([www.gaypornblog.com](http://www.gaypornblog.com) )
- Butch Harris of ManNet ([www.mannet.com](http://www.mannet.com) )
- Mark Kliem of Lavender Lounge ([www.lavenderlounge.com/blog](http://www.lavenderlounge.com/blog) )
- Billy Masters ([www.billymasters.com](http://www.billymasters.com) )
- Jason Sechrest of JasonCurious ([www.jasoncurious.com](http://www.jasoncurious.com) )
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