

Welcome to BVS Reviews.

My name is Bruce Von Stiers. BVS Reviews is a monthly e-zine dedicated to reviews on a variety of media.

Since June 10, 1997, this site has been visited over 850 times.

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Designing Landscape

Bruce Von Stiers

I recently reviewed **3D Home Architect** and thought that something else was needed to go along with the house that I designed. What good is a new house if you don't have a nice yard and garden? So I used **LandDesigner 3D 4.5** to put together a great yard and awesome garden for my dream house. This program is from **Sierra On-Line** and is part of the **Sierra Home** series.

The program is easy to use. There is a main editing window for you to create your own design or modify an existing one. There are a series of pull down menus to help you. Various icons are on the desktop work surface to assist you in the operation of the program. A floating toolbar includes most of the shortcuts used in the program. The program features plants from the White Flower Farm.

When you start up the program a wizard is available.. It takes you through the basic design steps. It asks questions about the size and shape of your property. It then draws your property. Then you go to the Home wizard. This defines what the design of your house is. When everything is done, a property and house template is placed into your drawing.

From there you can add trees, plants and a garden to the drawing. This is done through the drag and drop method. Go grab a Evergreen tree and drop it at the corner of the house. Don't like it? Select it , right click the mouse to bring up the shortcut menu and delete it. After everything is all done you can look at your drawing in stunning 3D. There are rotation arrows so that you can see your drawing from all angles. There are also season icons to show what the property will look like at various times of the year. Also in this area is a growth icon that lets you see how a tree or bush will look like at maturity.

You can print out you design. The lists of materials and plants that were used in the drawing can also be printed. The Complete Plant Information report has all the database information on the plants used in the design.

To run **LandDesigner 3D 4.5** you'll need a 486dx/33 and a double speed CD-ROM derive. 8MB of RAM and 10MB of free hard drive space is needed also. Windows 3.1 or later needs to be installed on your computer. There is some nice music that can be listened to if you have a sound card and speakers.

This is a nice, easy to use landscaping program. Go and plant your copy today.

Somewhat Easily Painted

Bruce Von Stiers

Fractal Design has some cool programs like *Dabbler* and *Poser*. Their latest program is ***Painter 5***. Fractal touts this as the leading paint program in the world. As I haven't had a chance to sample all of the graphics programs out there, I don't know if this is an accurate statement or not.

Painter is a good program but I had a hard time getting it to load after I installed it. Why is that, you ask? The main interface would come up, but the floating palettes only had their frames. And you couldn't use any of the pull down menus. I had to close the program using the evil ctrl-alt-del combo. After grinding my teeth, yelling at the computer and pulling my hair out, I finally reached out to the Tech Support people at Fractal. The first e-mail I sent them either was ignored or got lost in the shuffle. The second one I sent was pleading with them to provide an answer. After that one they responded (maybe they felt sorry for me?) Their answer was that the program loads extremely slow and sometimes not completely if you have more than 300 fonts on your system. They suggested that I dump any fonts over the 300 mark into a separate directory for use at a later time. They also said that this was a problem that I'd have to just work around. They didn't seem to indicate that there'd be a bug fix for this problem. I wasn't real happy about the solution but I did as the techs suggested. The program finally worked. And guess what? It really is a great graphics painting program.

Just about everything that you use in Painter can be accessed from one of the five main palettes. The palettes are **Tools, Controls, Brushes, Art Materials** and **New Brushes**. The Tools palette carries the workhorse items such as cut, zoom, move or text. Controls lets you have a good hold on all of the tool functions. *The Brushes palette is where the meat of the program is.* There are about a gazillion different brushes available to use in Painter. And if that isn't enough, there are a lot of pug in brushes available through the New Brushes palette. The Art Materials palette gives you the various colors used in Painter and allows the user to pick weaves, gradients and paper.

Painter 5 comes with a 92 page tutorial. In this book, you learn how to clone an object, use the various brushes to paint with, utilize some special effect and print your drawing. The main Users's Guide is a small, spiral bound, 398 page manual that goes from learning the Painter interface to working with the Super Cloners. This is a program that takes the user way beyond the scope of the average paint program. With the various textures and effects, the sky is the limit on what you can design in Painter. When discussing the loading problem with a friend of mine, I was told that one of the main reasons that Painter is so popular is the massive amount of brushes and colors available for use.

The system requirements for ***Painter 5*** include the need for 16 MB of RAM. You will need a 486DX computer, but a Pentium is recommended. You'll also need Windows 95 and a CD-ROM drive. For the Mac people, you'll need a Power Mac, System 7.5, 12 MB of RAM, 20MB of hard drive space and a CD ROM drive.

With the exception of the loading problem, I was impressed by what ***Painter 5*** has to offer. It is a program that anyone from novices to professionals can work with. And if that isn't enough, the packaging is way cool. ***Painter 5*** comes in an actual paint can.

Arty Flyers

Bruce Von Stiers

There are so many different programs to create flyers and cards. **Print House** from Corel and **Print Shop** from Broderbund are two good programs. I thought that I'd take a look at *Print Artist 4.0* from *Sierra On-line*. It's part of the *Sierra Home* series.

The first thing I liked about *Print Artist* was that it had a fairly decent **Instruction** manual. The first 58 pages deal with getting you started, some tutorials and some troubleshooting tips. The rest of its 264 pages have the graphics included in the program printed in black & white. It would have been nice to see the graphics catalog in color, but just having it included in the manual was nice. The next thing that I noticed was the ease of use. Once you bring up the program, it moves through a series of menus to start the project wanted.

You can use a graphic supplied with the program or provide your own. You set up a directory to store your imported graphics. *Print Artist* maps the imported graphic from its directory and doesn't store it as part of the document. The bad thing about that is if you move the graphic to another directory, *Print Artist* won't be able to find it to place in the document. File formats that can be imported are Photo CD, JPEG, TIFF, EPS, PCX, BMP and WMF.

Illustrating With Adobe

Bruce Von Stiers

Adobe's flagship product is **Illustrator**. It now has released version **7.01** of **Illustrator**. I thought that it would be worth taking a spin around the block. I found that Illustrator is probably the best drawing program I have ever worked with.

*As this is a memory hogging program, you'll need **16MB** of **RAM**, although *32MB is highly recommended*. I would suggest that you keep about **100MB** of hard drive space free for the stuff that the program will drop out to *Virtual Memory*. You can use this program on a 486 machine but it is run better on a Pentium or Pentium Pro. You'll need a CD ROM drive as well. The Mac version also comes bundled on the CD. The Mac people will need a 68030 processor machine or a Power Mac. 16MB of RAM will be required along with System 7.5 or later.*

Some people gripe about new versions of products. "[My version 4 works just fine. What is so new and great about version 7.01?](#)" Well, I'd tell the Doubting Thomas that there are a whole bunch of new things that have been added to Illustrator.

There is this real neat [Gradients](#) palette that allows for smooth blends between colors. The angle is easy to set and the gradient can be linear or radial. The radial gradient makes some wild looking swirls. The [Paragraph](#) and [Character](#) palettes let the user control a whole lot of text functions. You can control the kerning, point size, vertical shift and letter spacing. You can convert any Illustrator drawing into a bitmap file. Then you can add *Photoshop filters* to create various effects. You can drag and drop between Adobe products. If you have a cool drawing that needs to go on a web page, drag it from Illustrator and drop into Pagemill.

I found that the best new feature was the multiple levels of undo. I don't know how many time I have worked on a drawing only to decide to make changes. If you are on step 21 of your drawing and need to go back to step 9, it might be a bit tricky if not for the multiple levels of undo.

I could go on about what **Illustrator** does and how it compares to other programs, but I won't. I will say that although a novice like myself can get overwhelmed by this program, it is probably the best of it's kind on the market. If you want to create professional looking drawings, get **Illustrator 7.01**.

A False Spy

Bruce Von Stiers

Grant Whitaker is a behind the scenes guy in a Senate race. When his candidate is revealed as being corrupt, Grant is devastated. He searches for a new career. It comes from a friend. Join the C.I.A. So Grant embarks on a new career as a spy for the C.I.A. This is the beginning of *The Acolyte*. It was written by *David Compton* and published by **Simon & Schuster**. The Acolyte has **398** pages and lists for **\$23.00**.

Even though the C.I.A. is not allowed to work within the United States, Grant is assigned to keep an eye on the National Security Advisor, Randall Jenkins. There is a traitor in the upper reaches of government and Jenkins might be him. Through his cover as Jenkin's aide, Grant meets Kate Mallotte, a senior staff member of the C.I.A.

As Grant and Kate work together, they become involved. They try to hide the relationship so that they won't get into trouble. Then Grant and Jenkins go to Europe. A murder occurs and Grant is a suspect. As he is on the run, Grant encounters his former European lover, Stephanie Becker. She tries to help him escape.

But people are not who they seem to be. And the situations turn out badly for Grant. There are several twists and turns that the reader must sort through. And there are a couple of different sub plots going at the same time. They come together in the end to make this a first rate suspense novel.

Fiery Detective

Bruce Von Stiers

Ridley Pearson has written *Chain of Command* and *Hard Fall* which are both great thrillers. Mr. Pearson's latest work is titled *Beyond Recognition*. It is published by **Hyperion Press** and has **480** pages. It 's list price is **\$22.95**.

Lou Boldt is a sergeant on the Homicide squad of Seattle P.D. He is called to the scene of a fire that looks like arson. A woman died in the fire. Was it as homicide? As Boldt searched for the answer he is joined by Daphne Matthews, who is the Police Department's psychologist. The more they search for clues, the less the case makes sense.

There was a different kind of accelerant used in the fire. Along with the Fire Marshall's investigative unit, Marshall's Five, they begin to track the cause of the fire. Then another arson occurs, killing yet another woman. And a Marshall Five investigator gets a note from the killer.

Thrown into the mix is a boy named Ben. His mother took off and left him with a mean stepfather. Ben is constantly being beaten by his stepdad. He finds solace in his friend Emily. She is a fortune teller, who Ben helps out in her scams.

This book moves along at a fairly quick pace. Just when you think that the case is wrapping up, something else happens. The Marshall Five investigator becomes a suspect and Ben is hunted by someone who might be the killer.

The dust jacket for *Beyond Recognition* states that two years of research went into the writing of this book. I can believe that statement. There is a lot of detail about fires and accelerants that you can't find just anywhere. The technical aspects of this novel make it a good read.

Beyond Recognition shows that Ridley Pearson is a good writer. It is entertaining and informative. I believe you'll enjoy reading it.

A Novel Detective

Bruce Von Stiers

Arthur Hailey has written about auto racing, airplanes and hotels. Now he has written a book about the police. The book is called *Detective* and is published by **Crown Publishers**. It has **400** pages and lists for **\$24.00**

Meet Malcolm Ainsle. Malcolm is a sergeant on the Miami police force, assigned to the Homicide squad. A serial killer that Malcolm caught wants to meet with him. Malcolm only has a few hours before the serial killer is executed. As Malcolm races to the prison, the story unfolds surrounding his life and the case.

Through a particular set of circumstances, Malcolm had become a priest. Dissatisfied with the priesthood, he resigns and eventually end up entering the police force in Miami. Along the way he meets and marries Karen, who is originally from Canada.

A person is killing and mutilating people. Several bodies stack up, including the parents of a City Commissioner. Malcolm catches the killer red handed and solves the murders. Or does he?

The book flips between the present and the past in a series of flashbacks. The murder case is detailed along with Malcolm's involvement with the Commissioner.

There is also a heavy handed discussion of theology. I don't feel that Mr. Hailey needed to go that far into the defrocked priest's views on Christianity. It didn't really add anything to the story and makes me question Mr. Hailey's motives.

Once again, the bad guys were easily picked out early in the story. But you aren't sure of the motivation until much later in the book.

Detective is an average mystery. I had hoped for better from a great writer like Hailey.

Dreamy Mystery

Bruce Von Stiers

I just finished reading *Mirage*. This book combines memory research with virtual reality. It was written by **F. Paul Wilson** and **Matthew J. Costello**. *Mirage* is published by **Warner Books** and lists for **\$23.00**. It has **374** pages.

Julie Gordon is a research scientist. Her latest project is a virtual reality program. It takes the user on a virtual ride through the subject's mind. Julie is starting to work the bugs out of the program when she learns of her identical twin's coma. After discovering that there is no possible recovery, Julie decides to use the VR program to help her sister. She begins to explore her sister's mind through the VR program.

From there on the book takes you through twists and turns as you learn about Julie and her sister, Samantha. Thrown into the mix are the girl's uncle Eathan and Samantha's IRA boyfriend. A suspicious death occurs that drives Julie to uncover the truth behind Sam's coma.

For you techno junkies out there, this is a cool VR book. For the mystery fans lurking around the corner, it is a mediocre thriller. The bad guy is easy to figure out early on. But as with any mystery book, half the fun is to see if you were right in guessing the bad guy. Strap on your VR headgear and go play.

Computer Killings

Bruce Von Stiers

Take Intel's early Pentium problem and add in Three Mile Island. That's the start of *Exposure*, a new novel by **R. J. Pineiro**. An algorithm in the Microtel Perseus chipset is causing malfunctions in some equipment. Unfortunately, the equipment controls the reactors in a nuclear power plant. The reactor core is breached and a disaster worse than Three Mile Island occurs.

Pamela Sasser is an associate professor of computer engineering at Louisiana State University. Eugene LaBlanche is a senior professor of nuclear engineering. Together they discover that the Perseus chipset could be the cause of the nuclear disaster. Professor LaBlanche dies suddenly and Pam is left to try to confront Microtel by herself. She finds herself pursued by killers.

Preston Sinclair is the chairman of Microtel and a presidential candidate. He will stop at nothing to insure that the Perseus problem remains a secret. Along comes Harrison Beckett, who is a professional assassin. He is told the Pam is a traitor to the U.S and must be killed.

As Beckett chases Pam around the country, more is revealed about Sinclair and Microtel. And you discover about Beckett's past. The F.B.I. is also interested in the people surrounding Microtel. There is a lot of surveillance and counter-surveillance amongst all the players. Once the shooting starts, the bodies start piling up.

Does Pam get to tell the world about the Perseus chip? Does Beckett succeed in killing her? Does Sinclair get elected President? Sorry, I can't reveal the answers. But I will say that this is a good mystery. I'm sure that you will enjoy reading this book.

Exposure is published by *Tom Dohery Associates* and lists for **\$23.95**. It has **319** pages.

My Buddy The Serial Killer

Bruce Von Stiers

Stewart “Hoagy” Hoag is a novelist and ghostwriter extraordinaire. He sometimes gets himself involved in murders. Such is the case in *The Man Who Loved Women To Death*, the latest Hoagy book. It was written by **David Handler** and published by **Doubleday**. It has **292** pages and lists for **\$23.95**.

Someone is killing young pretty women in New York City. Calling himself The Answer Man, he is sending Hoagy written descriptions of the murders. He wants Hoagy to co-author a book about the murders. Soon Hoagy begins to suspect his oldest friend, Tuttle Cash, of the murders.

Tuttle, or King Tut as he was known, had been a minor sports icon sometime back. He had practically destroyed everything and everybody in the course of his rise and fall in celebrityville. His wife quietly divorced him after Tuttle beat so bad that she had to have reconstructive surgery. His life is such a mess that when Hoagy comes to see him, Tuttle is contemplating suicide.

Hoagy, along with police detective Romaine Very, try to track down the killer before he can strike again. He is badgered by Cassandra Dee, an ambitious infotainment reporter. He is also concerned for the safety of his ex-wife, the actress Merilee Nash and their infant daughter Tracy.

Just when Hoagy is ready to solve the case, a tragedy occurs that makes him realize how fragile life really is. He goes on to solve the case with the help of Merilee.

This is another great installment of the Hoagy Hoag series. I hope that Mr. Handler plans to continue writing about Hoagy. He would be sorely missed.

Issuing A New Bond

Bruce Von Stiers

Every since I was a kid I have followed James Bond. I think the first Bond movie I saw was *Diamonds Are Forever*. I read all of the Ian Fleming Bond books. I read John Gardner's Bond books as well. Fleming's estate chose well when they allowed Mr. Gardner to continue the series. Now there has been a new author added to the mix. His name is **Raymond Benson**. The title of his entry into the world of James Bond is called *Zero Minus Ten*.

In the outback of Australia a nuclear device is detonated. Nobody claims responsibility. The Chinese are about to take over Hong Kong . This is the infamous 1997 Hong Kong turnover from the government of England to the Communist Chinese. Someone is killing off key people connected to the EurAsia Enterprises Ltd company. Bond is sent to Hong Kong to discover the cause of the murders. The turnover of Hong Kong is to occur in ten days, hence the title Zero Minus Ten.

There have few changes from the style that Ian Fleming set forth. It helps that Mr. Benson is a Director of the *Ian Fleming Foundation*. He has maintained the integrity of the Bond heritage while bringing the timeline of the series to 1997.

Zero Minus Ten is a good book. It's fast paced and easy to read. Any James Bond fan will want to read this book. Even if you haven't ever heard of James Bond and his 007 classification, you'll find this an interesting read. It goes into a lot of detail regarding the turnover of Hong Kong and how England gained possession of the island in the first place.

Zero Minus Ten is published by **G.P. Putnam's Sons** and is *copyright dated 1997*. It has **272** pages and lists for **\$22.95**.

A Vengeful Trek

Bruce Von Stiers

William Shatner has been An actor for upteen years. He has been a novelist for a few years too. His latest book is part of the ongoing **Star Trek** series and is called *Star Trek:Avenger*. It joins Shatner's other Trek books, *The Return* and *The Ashes of Eden*. Shatner also writes the *Tek War* series. *Avenger* is published by **Pocket Books** and has **370** pages. It lists for **\$23.00**. **Judith Reeves-Stevens** and **Garfield Reeves-Stevens** collaborated with Mr. Shatner on this book. Their credits include working with Shatner's previous Star Trek books and being story editors for the *Phantom 2040* animated television series.

There is a planet called Chal at the edge of the Klingon and Romulan border. It has been overcome by a deadly virus. Commander Christine MacDonald of the Federation is trying to work with the people of Chal as the top relief mission person. A stranger comes to her with herbs and leaves that will cure the virus. This strange is James T. Kirk, long thought dead. He begins to work with Commander MacDonald to find the source of the virus.

Spock learns some disturbing news about Sarek's death and tries to investigate. Captain Picard and the crew of the Enterprise-E try to stop a young Vulcan couple from leaving a virus infected planet. The ship the couple have stolen explodes and Picard tries to determine what has happened.

These are the three main plots of *Avenger*. They finally mesh together to make for a good ending to the book. You get to learn more of Kirk's past. You learn that Sarek may or may not have been part of a underground conspiracy to get rid of the Federation.

This is an entertaining book. It reads pretty fluidly, developing complete sections of each subplot before moving on. Shatner does assume you have some Trekkie knowledge as he doesn't delve into the complete resumes of Kirk, Spock, Sarek and Picard. It's a must read for any Star Trek fan.

Unleashing Java

Bruce Von Stiers

In my thirst for knowledge of the Internet, I've been reading a lot of different books. One of the latest books that I've read is *Java 1.1 Unleashed*. It comes from **Sams.Net** and has **1469** pages. It's kind of hefty in both price and weight. The cost of Java 1.1 Unleashed is **\$59.99** and it *weighs over 5 pounds*. It was put together by **Michael Morrision**.

Unleashed starts out by giving you the background of Java and introducing the tools that are needed to work with it. It then moves on and goes into the basic elements that Java code is made up of. The way Java is set up reminds me a lot of the C programming language. The expressions, operators and classes are very similar in both languages.

You are introduced to the various *Standard Packages*. These items are bits of written code that can be used over and over again. They are usually portable between machines and often times can be used on more than one operating system. The *Abstract Windowing Toolkit (AWT)* package is used to create and implement those nifty, neat *GUI's (Graphical User Interface)*.

There is a section dedicated to programming the AWT. You learn about Graphics and Animation programming with Java. Dialog boxes are easy to make up once you learn all the proper ways to code them. The book goes through the Networking end of Java and how it interacts with different systems. Database design and coding is covered. Integrating Java with ActiveX, VBScript and JavaScript are discussed.

The book comes with a CD ROM disc. This disc is chock full of source code from the book. Want to use the scrolling marquee code listed in the book? Go grab it off the CD. There are also various utilities and demo products on the CD. There is also a section of Macintosh Java products on the CD.

Java 1.1 Unleashed is not exactly a book for beginners. It grabs you by the collar and throws you deep into the realm where newbies fear to tread. It is a good book for those who need more than just a few words like "*it works because it does*". I still don't understand some of the book, so I'll eventually have to reread it. That will probably be a rainy day when there's nothing good on TV.

Listen To The Message

Bruce Von Stiers

4 Him has been around for a while. Their music is some of the best contemporary Christian music I've ever listened to. The latest release from **4 Him** is called *The Message*.

Lay It On The Line is asking you to not hold on to material things and let God lead. All of the wealth and importance doesn't matter in the end. **The Measure Of A Man** speaks about the true character of a person. It doesn't matter how your peers judge you. One of the lyrics goes "*what's in the heart defines the measure of a man*".

Some of the other songs are **Land Of Mercy**, **The Message**, **All The Evidence I Need**, and **A Lot Like You**

I recently watched a **Drama Team** perform using the song **Greatest Story Ever Told**. *It was pretty awesome.*

Even if you're not into "Christian" music, give this one a listen. It will be well worth your time.

Listening For The Moment

Bruce Von Stiers

I have liked **Kenny G**'s music every since I heard **Songbird** for the first time. His music is easy to listen to and the style is generally light and breezy. The latest work by **Kenny G** is called ***The Moment***.

The songs include *The Moment, Passages, Havana* and *Always. That Somebody Was You* features vocals by **Toni Braxton**. *Everytime I Close My Eyes* was done with **Babyface**.

The other cool songs are *Eastside Jam, Moonlight* and *Northern Nights*.

Add this CD to your collection. You won't be sorry.

Down At The Ranch

Bruce Von Stiers

I spied this CD the other day in the *Country* section. It was called **The Ranch**. I took it home and listened to it. Surprisingly, I had heard one of the songs on it. The name of the song was **Hank Don't Fail Me Now** and it's about a guy who is depending on old Hank's *Cheating Heart* song to get him out of a jam.

There are other sad love songs like *Tangled Up in Love* and *My Last Name*. There are a couple of boot scootin' numbers like *Walkin' The Country* and *Some Days You Gotta Dance*.

The Ranch is **Peter Clarke** on drums; **Keith Urban** on keyboards, ganjo, guitars and lead vocals; and **Jerry Flowers** on bass and background vocals.

The Ranch is a pretty good group. They fit in well with the new type of Country groups like the Tractors. This CD is fun to listen to. Saddle up your horse and go lasso yourself a copy of it.

Man Eaters

Bruce Von Stiers

I recently picked up a video called *Cannibal Women In The Avocado Jungle Of Death*. I thought that the film would be like the **Attack of The 80 Foot Woman** (which I found silly, but good). Instead I found something that would barely make it on **USA Network's Up All Night** lineup (*or maybe it already has?*)

On the outskirts of Southern California is the Avocado Belt in which most of the world's Avocados are found. Within this jungle region are a group of women who are cannibals. They are supreme feminists and feel that men are only good as foodstuffs.

Enter Margo Hunt (**Shannon Tweed**), a noted anthropologist and feminist. The government wants her to go into the jungle and try to stop the cannibals who call themselves the Piranha Women. They also want her to find out what happened to Dr. Kurtz (**Adrienne Barbeau**) who was sent to the jungle earlier. Margo takes along Bunny (**Kara Mistal**), one of her students. They are helped by the jungle explorer Jim (**Bill Maher** of **Politically Incorrect**). **Barry Primus** has a small role.

The video is from **Guacamole Films** and **Gary Godstein Productions**. It was copyrighted in **1988**. It has a run time of *90 minutes*. It carries a **PG-13** rating *due to a topless river scene* with the Piranha Women.

This is a very stupid video. It doesn't even come close to the average T. & A. stuff that's out there. Don't waste your time watching this unless you really like Bill Maher or just can't get enough of Shannon Tweed.

A Bank Job

Bruce Von Stiers

A few years ago **Geraldo Rivera** had a prime time special in which he opened a safe that was sealed in an alcove at a abandoned hotel in Chicago. The safe was supposed to belong to Al Capone and contain millions of dollars. I think that is where the people responsible for *Dillinger And Capone* got their story line. This film stars **Martin Sheen** as John Dillinger and **F. Murray Abraham** as Al Capone.

This film wants you to believe that Dillinger's brother was the one actually killed at the Biograph Theater in Chicago. He gets to the west coast and starts a new life. After a few years one of his old gang members shows up and wants to talk. John walks into a trap and barely escapes. Two renegade F.B.I. agents are after him. When he gets home, he finds that his wife and step-son have been kidnapped. He is to go to Florida to reclaim them . Who has his family? Al Capone does and wants Dillinger to pull a bank heist for him.

Stephen Davies stars as Cecil, Capone's butler who is sent with Dillinger to Chicago for the job. **Catherine Hicks** is Dillinger's wife, Abigail. **Don Stroud** co-stars as a member of Dillinger's old gang that he recruits to help on the heist. The supporting cast includes **Sasha Jensen, Michael Oliver, Jeffrey Combs** and **Michael C. Gwynne**. **Clint Howard** has a cameo role.

Dillinger And Capone is from **New Horizons Home Video**. It was produced by *Roger Corman* and *Chris Peschken*. It was copyrighted in 1995. It has a running time of *1 hour and 35 minutes*. Because of it's violence, the film carries an **R** rating.

Dillinger And Capone is a middle of the road film. It has good acting, but the plot is a little thin. But the film does play the *What If* game pretty well. What if Dillinger didn't actually die and tried to recover Capone's millions? Watch the film to find out the answers.

Family Man

Bruce Von Stiers

Turner Home Entertainment has some really good movies that they've released on video. The one I just finished viewing was *Abraham*. It is part of a series that Turner calls *The Bible Collection*. **Richard Harris** stars as Abraham and **Barbara Hershey** co-stars as his wife, Sarah. The film is not rated and is 2 hours 20 minutes long.

Abraham is a shepherd whom God calls upon to be a leader. Abraham is to lead his people to the Promised Land of Canaan, where they will live for many generations. Along the way there are obstacles for Abraham and his people to overcome. They attempt to live in Egypt but the Pharaoh (**Maximilian Schell**) wants Sarah to be his own wife. Pharaoh is cursed and forces Abraham's people to leave Egypt. And Abraham's nephew Lot decides to live in Sodom, even though it is a wicked city. The ultimate trial for Abraham is when God tells him to sacrifice one of his sons on the alter.

The supporting cast includes **Vitorio Gassman** and **Carolina Rosi**. *Abraham* was produced by *Lorenzo Minoli*. It was written by *Robert Mckee* and directed by *Joseph Sargent*. It was copyrighted in 1994.

This is a good film about the story of Abraham. Turner Home Entertainment has indeed made a truly powerful movie from the bible.

Shooting For Vic

Bruce Von Stiers

Vic has been in a mental institution and is coming home. He is said to have gotten better. His only problem is the he is a gangster and wants several people dead. Starting with Mickey Holliday (**Jeff Goldblum**) and ending with his girlfriend Grace (**Diane Lane**), Vic has a long list of people to kill.

This is the story line of *Trigger Happy*. **Richard Dreyfuss** stars as Vic and **Ellen Barkin** co-stars as the sultry Rita Everly. **Henry Silva** is "Sleepy Joe" Carlisle and **Gabriel Byrne** is Ben London. **Gregory Hines**, **Kyle MacLachlan**, **Billy Idol**, **Burt Reynolds** and **Angie Everhart** all have small roles in the film. There are cameos by **Joey Bishop**, **Paul Anka** and **Richard Pryor**. **Larry Bishop** shows up as a hired killer.

Ben London is trying to set things up for Vic's homecoming. This includes finding Grace, who was last seen with Mickey. Saying that he's now with Rita, who is Grace's sister, Mickey claims not to know where Grace is. This sub plot, along with others about Vic' people trying to grab power before he comes home, dominate the film. There is also a sub plot that has Mickey playing quick draw with opponents for side bets.

Trigger Happy is from **United Artists** and produced by *Dreyfuss/James Productions* along with *Skylight Films*. The producer was **Judith Rutherford James**. It was written and directed by **Larry Bishop**. It has a *running time of 92 minutes* and carries an **R** rating.

I should never believe the blurbs on the covers of video boxes. Quotes on the box call the video a goofy gangster movie and that you need your sense of humor. I actually found the film pretty lame. How many times can a person be shot and still stand up? If you're a Richard Dreyfuss fan or gotta watch anything with Ellen Barkin it, then watch this film. If neither apply, don't waste your time. Watch a good comedy like Dreyfuss's *The Goodbye Girl* or mystery like Barkin's *Sea Of Love*.