



■ Savoy, as any Headpress reader knows, is a Manchester based publishing house that was once highly commercial but increasingly doesn't give a hoot outside of making quality work that pleases them. They don't dally with cultural labels and cannot be categorised as a part of a publishing movement; the tide on which they sail flows neither with the mainstream nor with the counterculture. The Savoy publishing schedule of recent years has lost none of its eclecticism, as evidenced in the beautiful reprints of Maurice Richardson's *The Exploits of Engelbrecht* and David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*, an unexpurgated edition of Colin Wilson's *The Killer* and new fiction in the shape of Lucy Swan's *The Adventures of Little Lou*. On top of it all Savoy have been propelling their own mythos with books devoted to themselves: Robert Meadley's *A Tea Dance at Savoy* (2003), DM Mitchell's *A Serious Life* (2004) and Jon Farmer's *Sieg Heil Motherfuckers* (2006), are all chronicles of the colourful and turbulent story of Savoy and its people, from early days with New English Library, being William Burroughs' UK publisher in

1979, working with PJ Proby in the 1980s, and beyond — interspersed with lashings of police harassment and busts. The latest addition to this canon is Keith Seward's *HORROR PANEGYRIC*, which is an appraisal of the three Lord Horror novels, written by David Britton and published by Savoy. The first of these, *Lord Horror* (1989), was met with cries of anti-semitism and went to court as obscene. (It was eventually acquitted.) The other two novels, *Motherfuckers: The Auschwitz of Oz* (1996) and *Baptised in the Blood of Millions* (2000), follow Horror, his cohorts Meng & Ecker, and history's damned as they make their way through a universe that at times appears to be our own. The novels are unapologetic in what they show, do and say. Seward regards them in the same light as Arthur Rimbaud's poetry, William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, Samuel Beckett's trilogy (*Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnameable*) and Michael Herr's *Dispatches*. They are high art, he says, masterpieces, particularly *Motherfuckers*. He makes a convincing case in a succinct thirty pages. The latter half of *Horror Panegyric* consists of extracts from the novels

HORROR PANEGYRIC

By Keith Seward

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CRAWLSPACE

dir: John Newland, US 1972

THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER

dir: Jeannot Szwarc, US 1973

DVD R1 Wild Eye
www.wildeyereleasing.com

themselves, which is the prose of the evocative and the surreal with the turn of a great phrase. It would be nice to think that Seward may convert the casual reader to his way of thinking — to our way of thinking — but it's unlikely the book will even reach them on a physical plane. A great shame. *Horror Panegyric* is possibly no more no less just another record on the Savoy jukebox, created for us to play to us what we already know. One day when it's all over this stuff will be a lesson heard in school.

■ The first two releases on the Wild Eye DVD label are vintage made for TV movies. *CRAWLSPACE* is about a young man with strange hair (Tom Happer), who attaches himself to a retired couple (Arthur Kennedy and Teresa Wright) after they loan him a book of verse by William Blake. They make him promise to bring it back, which he does, but he attaches himself to it and lives with the book in the crawlspace of their cellar. The couple coax the young man out to listen to records, but soon enough wish they hadn't. The film is a backwards take on *Whistle Down The Wind* and curious enough to hold the attention, even if nothing much happens but an ambiguous sideways glance whenever a commercial break is due. Wearing its inspiration on a very long sleeve, Wild Eye's second release *THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER* is almost a carbon copy of *Rosemary's Baby* and, despite being five years too late, it's difficult to figure why no one from William Castle Productions came running with a writ when it aired. The film makes no effort to embellish the story of urban black magic and devil kin, but it does provide a little cheer on a rainy Sunday and the cast is great, especially Shelly Winters.

