

Unearthed Documentary 80 Blocks From Tiffany's Re-Released After 25 Years



(November 24, 2010) – Brooklyn, NY – Five Day Weekend and Traffic Entertainment are proud to announce the release of 80 Blocks From Tiffany's, director Gary Weis' 1979 documentary about the South Bronx and its gang culture. The previously unavailable film is now out on DVD, marking the first time it has been offered to the public in decades, and is accompanied by a handful of exciting bonus features.

Director Gary Weis was still working as a short film creator for Saturday Night Live when he came up with the idea for 80 Blocks after reading a Jon Bradshaw article, "Savage Skulls." Published in a 1977 issue of Esquire Magazine, the piece centered on two gangs based in the South Bronx at the time – the Savage Nomads and the Savage Skulls. Weis became infatuated with the story and, soon after striking up a dialogue with Bradshaw, he convinced SNL producer Lorne Michaels to help him produce the film. Just two years later, in 1979, Weis and Bradshaw brought a camera crew to speak with members of both gangs, along with police officers, community activists, and civilians.

Despite its role as an important and unflinching portrait of a profoundly interesting time in New York and, as pointed out by The New York Times, hip hop's cultural history, 80 Blocks was, for many years, impossible to find, only briefly available as an educational VHS release in 1985. In the time since its initial release, the documentary has gained an overwhelming cult status. With little to no news coverage over the decades since its release dedicated fans continue to buzz about the

film, especially now that the internet has provided fans common ground to fondly look back not only the documentary itself, but the era that it captured so vividly. The Times, in their recent coverage of its release, noted that copies of the documentary have been known to sell for up to \$300 on eBay, a seemingly staggering figure until one considers the depth of its reach.

For the first time in 25 years, the film is easily available to the public on a DVD including interviews with producer/filmmaker Weis and director of photography Joan Churchill, as well as a 40 page book comprised of the original "Savage Skulls" article, an essay by David Hollander, and artwork by Julian Allen. Publications such as New York Press and the Amsterdam News have called the film a "time capsule," but even without the element of nostalgia, 80 Blocks holds up as a portrait of a subculture that might have otherwise been forgotten, as well as an important moment in cinema.

Check out the official 80 Blocks From Tiffany's trailer:
[youtube]71yLEfRpsKo&[/youtube]