

Jim, the World's Greatest

(aka: "Story of a Teenager")

US : 1976 : dir. Don Coscarelli & Craig Mitchell : Universal : 91 min

prod: Don Coscarelli : scr: Don Coscarelli & Craig Mitchell : dir.ph.:

[Robbie Wolcott](#)

Gregory Harrison; Rory Guy; Marla Pennington; Karen McClain

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω	□	≠	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Brotherly love, mk 1

source: The Universal Story

The Universal Story comment:

"Written and directed by Don Coscarelli and Craig Mitchell, who were both 17 when they initiated the project and 22 when it was finally completed, **JIM, THE WORLD'S GREATEST** (also known as **STORY OF A TEENAGER**) was a commendable first feature (shot for \$150,000) about high-school life, which starred Gregory Harrison (right) as a student living an unhappy existence with an alcoholic father (Rory Guy) and an abused younger brother (Robbie Wolcott, left) whom he has to protect. He also has romantic problems and cannot decide between Marla Pennington and Karen McClain. Characterisation was not the strong point of the screenplay, but the film did come to life in the sequences that concentrated on various campus rituals. Don Coscarelli produced and, keeping

it in the family were D.A. and S.T. Coscarelli as executive producers. (91 mins) "

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Coscarelli's an interesting fellow, and fraternal love would seem to be a recurrent theme in many of his films. This one was followed up in 1979 by the low-budget fantasy/horror thriller "**PHANTASM**", which became sufficient of a cult hit to warrant a couple of sequels years later. The original is the one to catch of course, and features a determined self-reliant boy of 12 as the central character, living alone with his adult older brother. Despite a negligible budget, a cast of unknowns and a wildly implausible plot, it displayed more invention and po-faced humour than a whole limepit-ful of Hammer productions.

In 1982 Coscarelli hit the big time, budgetwise at least, with "**BEASTMASTER**", essentially a progeny of some drunken caresses between the **Tarzan** and Sword & Sorcery genres, in which a lifeless Conan-alike who can mind-meld with animals defeats Evil and gets the (loincloth-clad) girl. However, the hero is joined on his quest by a (loincloth-clad) boy, Josh Milrad, who transpires to be not only the disinherited prince of the realm but his own kid brother. "**BEASTMASTER**" was a silly and overwrought film – but then so are most **Tarzans** – and this did not prevent it spawning a sequel of its own.

Nothing else is known of Robbie Wolcott. As a footnote, you'll observe how "**JIM, THE WORLD'S GREATEST**", while clearly a small picture, has vanished off the map entirely, though made less than 25 years ago by one of the major US studios. What hope then for modest European productions of the 1950s?

See subject index under **ALCOHOLISM, CRUELTY / NEGLECT / MALTREATMENT** and **SCHOOL** (which apparently have "campuses" in the US).