

Fan Appreciation no.1

Bryan Hogue: Co-owner 'Black Lodge Video'



Interview by Shara Lorea Clark

'..A place of almost unimaginable power...a power so vast that its bearer might reorder the Earth itself to his liking...This place I speak of is known as the Black Lodge - and I intend to find it.' - Windom Earle

A Black Lodge has been found in Memphis, Tennessee. Though Deputy Hawk warned those passing through the Lodge to do so with perfect courage lest their souls be annihilated, people have passed through this Lodge for over a decade, souls still intact.

Opened in 2000 by *Peaks* fans Bryan Hogue and Matthew Martin, Black Lodge Video is a Memphis gem. The rental store's on-street sign shows Agent Cooper peeking through red curtains, and its shelves feature a selection of thousands of obscure and classic movies in all formats, including many VHS. The films are organized by directors, countries, themes and genres, and there's a permanent space for David Lynch's work.

How did your first *Peaks* experience affect you?

Bryan: My first exposure to it was strange. I caught one episode midway through season two - the one where the horse appeared in the living room. It made no sense. When the whole series was released, I watched it all in one run. For that day and a half, I existed in *Twin Peaks*. It was a heavy, concentrated experience. The ending is so crushing and cool and heart-breaking. From there, I became pretty obsessed with it. Matt, my business partner, was into it too, which was one of the things we connected on.

How did this fascination with *Peaks* translate into naming the store Black Lodge Video?

Matt and I collected VHS and had built up a healthy collection. When we decided to open a store, we knew the name had to be something that meant a lot to us. We were *Peaks* freaks for years and wanted to give it props.

The Lodge is on Cooper Street. Coincidence?

After we chose the location, a week passed before I thought, '831 South Cooper...Black Lodge Video...holy shit!' It's at Cooper and Evelyn. Evelyn was the woman James Hurley visited. Also, the place across the street, that's Palmer Real Estate. We've got all kinds of little *Twin Peaks* nods around us, but it was complete coincidence.

'Fellas, coincidence and fate figure largely in our lives.' - Agent Cooper

Chapter 4

The Owls Are Not What They Seem: Cultural Artifacts of *Twin Peaks* Andrew Howe

- In its quirky characters and complex storylines, *Twin Peaks* (1990–91) hit upon a formula that would later be cultivated by other American television shows, many of them housed on cable channels where the darker side of human nature could be more fully explored. The show resuscitated interest in the paranormal, serving as a bridge between earlier series such as *Route 66* (1960–64) and *The Twilight Zone* (1959–64) and later shows such as *The X-Files* (1993–2002) and *Lost* (2004–10).



Fig. 1: Collectible mugs identical to those from which Sheriff Truman and his deputies drink coffee (via www.dudebox.com/blogs/news/6180762-twin-peaks-mugs).

Its idiosyncratic style and mysterious content resulted in unforgettable characters and plot developments, and the show quickly began to accrue the full sweep of cultural objects that often accompany a cult favourite. Despite the popular and critical success of the first season, however, the second saw a marked decline in support and the show was soon cancelled. During that time period, a loyal fanbase was formed, and lobbying efforts resulted in a distribution deal with New Line Cinema to release a prequel, *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (Lynch, 1992). In this, *Twin Peaks* joined a short list of television franchises such as *Star Trek* (1966–69) and *Firefly* (2002–03) that, due to the size and engagement of their fanbase, parlayed cancellation into cinematic release. For a series that was cancelled

after only thirty episodes to become such an institution is strange indeed, but it has continued to enjoy a high level of cultural penetration several decades after its release. This continued relevance is nowhere more evident than in the cultural objects that surround the show. It is in this arena of artefacts that the fields of fashion, economics and fan culture combine to create a richness of legacy, impacting popular media in ways that are both profound and lasting.

Indeed, the loyal fanbase has done more than just maintain the profile of the series, driving a primarily second-hand market in *Twin Peaks*-themed memorabilia, which has grown during the 20 years since the show's cancellation. T-shirts, mugs, calendars, character trading cards and other articles of popular culture continue to mediate cultural consciousness, impacting even those who have never seen a single episode. Many of these collectibles first appeared during the 1990–1991 run, although some were produced for various anniversaries, most recently the show's 20th. Other objects have subsequently been created by graphic designers seeking to capitalize upon continued interest in the series. The advent of the Internet made it that much easier for fans to buy and sell such items. The second-hand auction site eBay has at any given time several thousand items for sale from the *Twin Peaks* universe, many of them intersecting with fashion so that fans are able to proudly display their identification with the series and its characters by wearing a T-shirt or drinking coffee from a mug decorated with an identifiable character or icon. What has resulted is a market-driven proliferation of items that has served to advance the iconography of *Twin Peaks*, and perhaps even mediate which dimensions of the show have grown in currency.

Memorabilia can be separated into object type, such as articles of clothing (T-shirts and hats), fashion accessories (pendants and necklaces) or utilitarian objects (postcards and mugs). This chapter, however, will examine divisions based upon the object's con-

Fan Appreciation no.2
Pieter Dom, founder and webmaster of
WelcometoTwinPeaks.com



Interview by Marisa C. Hayes

Marisa C. Hayes: What inspired you to start WelcometoTwinPeaks.com, aside from, as you so nicely put it on the website, 'filling the doughnut hole in your post *Peaks*' life'?

Pieter Dom: *Twin Peaks* rewired my brain. I first watched it at the tender age of eleven – recorded every episode and rewatched it at least two times until the next one aired – and the show definitely shaped my views on life, aesthetics, storytelling, surrealism, humour... Then in the mid-90s, I used to run a *Twin Peaks*-themed BBS (think of it as a dial-up website only one person at a time could visit) called Garmonbozia. Obviously, that resource died with the rise of the Internet, but I always kicked around the idea of bringing it back. In 2011, I finally bit the bullet, knowing that it would require a lot of time and effort to build an audience, and ultimately a community, of *Twin Peaks* enthusiasts. Needless to say, I enjoy every minute I invest in it.

It made sense to start in the same year as the 20th anniversary of the show, but even more so, I was inspired by its ever-growing influence on today's culture, from colour combinations in fashion, to samples in pop songs, to references in visual art. I felt the urge to demonstrate that even though more than two decades have passed, *Twin Peaks* is still relevant.

MCH: Can you describe your first experience with *Twin Peaks* for our readers?

PD: I remember it very well. The week the pilot was to air on Belgian television, our TV guide had the striking, blue-toned face of the dead Laura Palmer on its cover, along with the bold words: 'MURDER, DRUGS AND PROSTITUTION'. When my dear mum saw that cover, she ordered me not to watch it. Luckily, my parents were out the night it aired and my brother and sister, both in their late teens, didn't mind. The three of us were *mesmerised*. Instantly hooked. And when my parents came back home, we turned them onto the show too. It became a family event and we used to discuss everything that happened. Actually, to this day, we've never stopped talking about it. Only a few months ago, my sister and I organized a *Twin Peaks* themed flash mob at my brother's wedding. Yes, we'll go that far.

MCH: Do you have a favourite *Twin Peaks* character? Why?

PD: Dale Cooper is the obvious choice here. With him, Mark Frost and David Lynch created the perfect TV show character in every possible way. But at the end of the day, I wish Big Ed was my uncle. He's just aces.

The Dream Logic of *Twin Peaks*
Kelly Bulkeley

Fig. 1: 'I'll see you in my dreams'
(Bobby Briggs).



Fig. 2: Sarah Palmer, the unwilling
prophetess.



colorfully glazed donuts that Lucy creates each night to greet the Sheriff and his men in the morning. These references allude to the happy, playful dimensions of dreaming.

Then Laura's battered corpse washes ashore, and a much darker and claustrophobic tone takes over the references to dreaming. Ronette barely survived the attack that killed Laura, and now she is trapped within her own neurologically damaged mind, unresponsive to the outside world, her eyes darting under her bruised eyelids as if she were in rapid eye movement sleep, unable to escape the nightmare reality of what happened to her and Laura.

Donna, meanwhile, is struggling with ambivalent feelings about her newfound love with James. She learns at the beginning of Episode 3 that she had awakened her parents with her crying during the night, even though she doesn't remember it now. She tells her mother, 'It's so strange, like I'm having the most beautiful dream and most terrible nightmare all at once.' Donna's paradoxical sensation resonates with the integral polarity of *Twin Peaks* itself. From a rational waking viewpoint, a feeling like Donna's makes no sense. But it does make sense within the more expansive logic of dreams.

The worst victim of disturbed dreaming is Laura's mother, Sarah Palmer. At the same time of night when Laura was killed 24 hours earlier, Sarah lies on the living room couch and closes her eyes. She immediately slips into a clairvoyant dream of a gloved hand unearthing the broken heart necklace that James and Donna had just secretly buried. The pilot ends with Sarah's echoing scream as she bolts awake in a panic. In Episode 3, Sarah's fragile grasp on waking reality breaks entirely as she holds Donna's hand and hallucinates the face of Laura, crying 'My baby! My baby!' This psychotic rupture of consciousness leads Sarah to a sudden vision of killer BOB, the ultimate nightmare villain of *Twin Peaks*, crouched at the foot of Laura's bed. The intensity of Sarah's traumatization has exposed her to collective nightmare forces that are loose in Twin Peaks and threaten everyone in the community. In the midst of her anguish and loss of sanity, she has become an unwilling prophetess.

In the pilot and Episode 3 we already see the kaleidoscopic themes of dream and nightmare that will pervade the series as a whole. Dreams as expressions of sexual desire, as prophecies, as warnings, as doorways to other realities, as traumatic symptoms, as shared fantasies – all of these themes are already in place at the beginning of the next episode, the 'dreamiest' of the series.

Fig. 3: Agent Cooper, the
shamanic virtuoso dreamer.



Agent Cooper's deductive technique

Episode 4 is the oneiric epicentre of *Twin Peaks*. It establishes FBI Special Agent Dale Cooper, the hero of the series, as a virtuoso dreamer and master interpreter of hidden signs and occult symbols. We already know from the pilot and Episode 3 that Agent Cooper embodies the paradox of polarity. Authoritative, competent and supremely well-groomed, Agent Cooper is also surprisingly passionate, naïve and childlike in his appetites. He is sent to Twin Peaks to solve a crime that involves a crossing of borders, spanning multiple jurisdictions; his job is to catch those who transgress boundaries. In Episode 4 we discover that Agent Cooper is in fact a kind of shaman detective, who moves comfortably through many realities and receives guidance in his investigations from intuitive, extra-rational sources of information.

This episode begins on Sunday morning, two days after Laura's body was found. Agent Cooper assembles the Sheriff, Deputies Hawk and Andy, and Lucy for a lesson in dream-inspired divination. After everyone has enthusiastically amplified their senses with doughnuts and coffee, Agent Cooper extends his wand-like pointer and flips the blackboard to reveal a map of Tibet. He briefly recounts the history of the Tibetan people and their spiritual plight in order to provide a context for a dream he had three years ago, which left him 'filled with a desire to help them'. Agent Cooper goes on to say:

I also awoke from the same dream realizing I had subconsciously gained knowledge of a deductive technique involving mind-body coordination operating hand-in-hand with the deepest level of intuition.

Agent Cooper goes on to demonstrate this method, which consists of standing sixty feet, six inches away from a glass bottle (the distance between a baseball pitcher's mound and home plate), taking a rock in his hand, speaking the name of a possible suspect to the rock, then throwing it at the bottle.

Most discussions about dreaming in *Twin Peaks* focus on Cooper's dream at the end of Episode 3, but I believe this scene presents a much more radical challenge to the waking world status quo of the show's audience. Agent Cooper employs a method of crime-solving that utterly defies rational analysis – or, more precisely, it extends the mind be-