deeds in Rome, and stars daughter Asia and Udo Kier. Avati’s film is about an Italian woman (Laura Morante) who moves to Davenport, Iowa, to open a restaurant. Sounds simple enough—yet what follows involves a devious secret plot, a 15-year stay in a mental institution, murder, and suicide.

**TWO HEADS**
The Dardenne Brothers, who actually have first names (Jean-Pierre and Luc), have received funding from Euroimages to begin work on *Lorna’s Silence*, the story of a match made in hell: an arranged marriage between a drug addict and an illegal immigrant from Albania (Kosovar newcomer Arta Dobroshi). Dardenne regulars Jérémie Renier and Fabrizio Rongione also star.

**HALUCINOGENERATION**
Once upon a psychedelic time, an arch of counterculture dropped acid while writing a book. He later acknowledged the drug as inspiration for many of the things that happened in the novel. The man was Mr. Merry Prankster himself, Ken Kesey, and the book was *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. (Kesey first tried LSD at Stanford when he volunteered for a CIA-financed mind-control experiment.)

When the Pranksters famously embarked on a cross-country excursion in their own magic bus, the trip became the basis for Tom Wolfe’s bestseller *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Gus Van Sant, who dedicated *Gerry* to Kesey, and cast him in *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, will adapt Wolfe’s book. The screenwriter on the project is Lance Black, who’s made some very trippy contributions to *2001’s Big Love*, and is also collaborating with Van Sant on a Harvey Milk biopic.

Digital Goldmine Billed as “The YouTube of the Avant-Garde” since its late 2006 revamping, the Film & Video section of the online archive UbuWeb lets you view an ever-growing repository of hard-to-find experimental film and video works in streaming on-demand digital video. This treasure trove, curated by the independent media-provider GreyLodge, actually marks one of the more recent expansions of UbuWeb’s holdings. In 1996, Kenneth Goldsmith—artist, poet, and all-around indispensable instigator in the realm of avant-garde poetics (and now a U. Penn professor)—began the site as a small digitized compilation of out-of-print sound and concrete poetry. Still at the helm today, Goldsmith never ceases to stress his project’s anti-commercial commitment to free, un fettered access, and the financial and editorial independence that the pioneering distributional hub enjoys as a fully volunteer operation. Server space is generously provided by a host of cultural allies, such as New Jersey’s great free-form radio station WFMU, where Goldsmith has a regular broadcast slot as “Kenny G.”

Scanning the impressively diverse collection—organized by filmmaker (some 200 and counting)—and you’ll find North American avant-garde landmarks (from Maya Deren to Ernie Gehr to Jack Smith), gallery-art video (from Goldstein to Nauman), and scattered European rarities (the Medvedkin Groups, Godard’s Dziga Vertov period, Rouch’s *Les Maîtres fous*, Harun Farocki’s *Inextinguishable Fire*), most unavailable on VHS or DVD. (A “Hall of Shame” lists filmakers—such as Bruce Conner and Peter Kubelka—who have demanded that their material be removed.)

As UbuWeb acknowledges, what you’re getting is “a whiff of these films regardless of your geographical location.” It goes without saying that an ideal experience isn’t going to be had watching a squuzzy video dub of *Zorns Lemma* in a four-by-five-inch window. What matters is how the site’s wealth of offerings creates new opportunities for discovery. Now an inquisitive mind can stumble upon a film like Robert Kramer’s 1969 feature *Ice* or Arthur Lipsett’s 21-87, and a longtime admirer can more easily revisit them.—Paul Fieri

>> Heath Ledger and Tom Waits. These things write themselves sometimes ... The long-awaited second feature from Voyages director Emmanuel Pinti will be Nulle part, terre promise, yet another narrative of crisscrossing characters searching for their “promised land” across Europe ... Together at last: Kassovitz, Diesel, Depardieu. Yes, the director of Le Haine and nothing else you’ve heard of is putting the finishing touches on his futuristic thriller *Babylon A.D.*, which also features Michelle Yeoh as a kickboxing nun who mentors the film’s heroine on her race against time to save all of humanity.

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