



SCREAM

**THE
HORROR
MAGAZINE**

**Issue 2
£4.50**

FRANKENSTEIN

Boris Karloff's Classic Examined

PUPPET MASTER

Director David Schmoeller Talks

THE DEAD

Directors Interviewed

PLUS: Zombie Flesh Eaters, Grimm Up North, The Beyond, Video Nasties, Jake West & Marc Morris Interview, Books, Competitions, News, Reviews, Blood, Guts, Gore & More!

I was very lucky

to be able to attend every day of Manchester's Premier Horror Festival Grimm Up North which spanned the entire Halloween weekend from the Gala Opening on Thursday 28th through to Halloween night on Sunday 31st October 2010.

The Dancehouse Theatre located on busy Oxford Road in Manchester was a fantastic location for the festival, oozing that old cinema charm. Built as a cinema in the 1940's it currently is owned by a dance school, it's nice and close to the city centre for transport with plenty of local pubs and bars for drinks after a long day of film viewing.

It's not a new crisp, glitzy, neon Odeon or Cineworld which the world has become filled with, homogenized and built from template across the country. The Dancehouse had a real charm and character, outside the iron gates of the theatre, which gave it just the hint of entering a crypt, they had a few zombies, who throughout the festival lurked up and down the block scaring passers-by. Inside there was a small foyer with a massively high ceiling in which they had set up Xbox 360's with their pre-release exclusive game Splatterhouse for people to play.

One thing I couldn't believe about the Dancehouse was how big it was on the inside. It had almost TARDIS like dimensions as it just seemed to keep going and going with windy halls, one of which led to the Breakout Room high up above the buzz of the busy Oxford Road, I couldn't fathom where this room was actually located in the building.

The main theatre was another floor above the cafeteria. It had an old art deco decor and dim lighting which lent the room a suitably gloomy feel during the film screenings and was a truly satisfying location for a horror film which became suitably creepy for the later screenings. Just outside the main theatre was a small bar where you could grab a glass of wine or beer.

Over the course of the 4 days they aired 25 films, 2 documentaries and ran 3 seminars between the main theatre and breakout room, more than enough to satisfy any horror film lover, what I found most refreshing was the great variety of countries being represented on the festival screens, films from Canada, Australia, France, Greece, Hong Kong, Korea, Mexico and Denmark which really gave Grimm an International flavour.

Here are the films which were a highlight of my festival experience, many of them not released until 2011:



The Last Man on Earth (1964, USA & ITA) **Directors: Ubaldo Ragona & Sidney Salkow**

Now even if you haven't seen the *The Last Man on Earth* you should be aware of this film starring horror icon Vincent Price which is based upon one of my favourite novels *I Am Legend* by Richard Matheson. What made this particular screening unlike any other was that the film was accompanied by live music from electronic duo Animat. On the whole I thought their performance was quite good and added a dreamlike quality to the film that isn't present in its original format. Not all their music choices worked for me, such as Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' playing when we first see the undead appear on screen. It did get a chuckle from the audience so I think they achieved the effect they were looking for, but personally I feel they let the song drag on a little too long. On the whole it was a unique experience and if you have an opportunity to catch Animat I would encourage you to take the time to see an old classic in a new light.

Outcast (UK)

Director: Colm McCarthy

James Nesbitt plays Cathal, (in a role unlike any other you are likely to have seen him in) a man determined to track down his former lover Mary to kill their son Fergal who he feels is borne of evil and needs to be destroyed. Cathal is aided by Mary's brother Liam. Mary grew up in insular Irish community where the beliefs and traditions of the Celtic people are very real and demand fear and respect. Mary flees to Edinburgh with her son and hides on a rundown council estate where she tries to protect Fergal using a mixture of magic and intimidation. I really enjoyed this film with its fresh perspective on old themes. *Outcast* has a bleak and realistic feel even though it deals with an unusual and not often seen world. It feels like you are glimpsing behind the curtain into a

world which could actually exist on the backstreets of our urban landscape. I can't help but feel that this is the sort of film that directors like Mike Leigh would have made if he'd decided to make genre films. Tom McCarthy who co-wrote the film with his brother Colm was at the festival and said that they did find influences in films like *The War Zone* or *Nil By Mouth*.

Reel Zombies (CAN)

Director: by David J. Francis

I found this Canadian mockumentary extremely cheap, poorly cut, badly acted and yet still thoroughly enjoyable. It's a horror comedy done on a shoestring budget (which shows) but there are some genuine laughs to be found in this film. The basic premise is that Producer Mike Masters has a brainstorm for a new chapter in their z grade horror franchise 'Zombie Night' using the current predicament to their advantage, the predicament being that there has been an actual zombie apocalypse! Mike gets the old team back together (or what remains of them) to make *Zombie Night 3* using real zombies to save on special effects costs. He and Director David J Francis can't help but see the potential gains for making the first horror film to be released once their world gets back on its feet.

The comic nature comes from the standard behind-the-scenes filmmaking stereotypes portrayed in this somewhat trying situation. A costume department stealing outfits off the bodies of the living dead, craft services scrounging for food only to be met with a leading lady who complains about the menu being too 'carb heavy' and a hillbilly team of zombie wranglers who devise a hockey stick and rope combination for keeping the 'extras' in check. Of course it's clear from the outset that things are going to end badly for the crew, but the journey of them getting there is amusing enough to keep your attention.



Evil in the Time of Heroes (GRE)

Directed by Yorgos Noussias

This is the sequel/prequel to *Evil* or *To Kako* (noteable as the first Greek zombie film). It picks up where the original film left off and if you've seen the original you'll be wondering how in the hell do they get out of that?! Well you'll either be sorely disappointed or have a chuckle as the film uses a throwaway line that echoes that same sentiment without explaining in the least. *Evil in the Time of Heroes* is a fun film with loads of shocky-splatter and quirky characters but it may be a bit crazy for some audiences, the plot doesn't make a whole lot of sense and it continually jumps between different characters and timelines from the present day (or 5 years in the past if you do the maths) to 2800 years ago. The ancient sub-plot is highly underused and is really only there to explain the later appearance of actor Billy Zane (yes, Billy Zane!) in an odd role as immortal zombie killing mentor as it doesn't really resolve the origin of the plague other than a few vague references to the never ending battle between good and evil repeating itself through time. There is a good film in here somewhere and perhaps with more time in the editing room it may have emerged on screen. There is a lot of experimentation from the director as well, and on the whole the film is an enjoyable mess.

Amer (BEL/FRA)

Directors: Hélène Cattet & Bruno Forzani

Widely touted as a homage to the films of Dario Argento and Mario Bava meant I thought this film would be a bit disappointing to me as the Italian horror/thrillers aren't usually my sort of thing, Lucio Fulci being an exception. So I was very surprised when I really loved this strange and beautiful exploration of a woman's life glimpsed through three vignettes, each with its own unique texture.

You can see the influences of Argento, Bava and other giallo films, but *Amer* is even more exotic and strips away all but the barest of plots, taking you on an abstract visual and auditory journey, the focus is on the detail; tight almost macro shots of skin, hair, eyes and sweat predominate through the film giving the overall experience an intimate and very highly sexual piece of filmmaking.

The first chapter of the film is for me the most successful, and is perhaps the one most directly influenced by Argento. It examines Ana's loss of her grandfather, her black lace clad and hugely creepy grandmother who terrifies Ana with her coarse and rasping breath, and her shocking and violent first experience of spying on her parents having sex.

In the second chapter we find Ana as a teenager walking into town with her mother to do the shopping. The camera is almost obsessive in the way it follows Ana's blushing bosom, the light cotton dress which is strikingly translucent in the summer sun and the way Ana routinely chews on her long dark hair. Her mother's jealousy is palpable as Ana turns heads from every man within her vicinity.

In the third and final chapter Ana is an adult returning to the derelict and immense house she grew up in, the house being so reminiscent of the one featured in Argento's *Deep Red* (also shown at Grimm Up North) that I wondered whether it was the same building.

The vast majority of the tension is presented through the merest suggestion of sexual violence which oozes from the men who surround Ana. This is not your ordinary horror film, more art house cinema, but I urge any true horror aficionados to seek it out especially if they enjoy the Italian films in the genre.

Bedevilled (KOR)

Director: Jang Cheol-Su

Bedevilled was I think my favourite film of the festival and is an expertly crafted South Korean revenge tale. It opens in Seoul where a young woman Hye-Won fails to identify three men she sees raping a local woman, at work in a bank she has outbursts of anger which eventually leads to a forced vacation. Hye-Won decides to travel to the island home of her deceased grandfather for a much needed rest. You think the film will focus on her but once she arrives on the island the films focus changes to that of her childhood friend and island resident Kim Bok-Nam. The island is populated by only nine people who include Kim Bok-Nam's husband, his brother, mother, father and aunt's. Nam is treated as the lowest level of servant by almost everyone on the island and the domestic violence suffered by her at the hands of the islanders is treated as an everyday occurrence and downplayed as something which is simply to be endured or perhaps even deserved by Nam.

She dreams of running away to Seoul with her classy and city-bred friend but is continually rebutted when she brings up the topic with Hye-Won. Nam's history on the island is barely mentioned and only alluded to in flashbacks we see of Nam and Won's childhoods but it's left to us to draw our own conclusions about what may or may not have happened.

The whole film shifts gear after a failed escape attempt by Kim Bok-Nam and the repercussions for her and the rest of the islanders are immense.

I loved this film and its initially subtle but then increasingly intense depictions of island life gone wrong. In recent years we have seen Asian horror rise to popularity with the likes of *Ringu*, *Ju-on* and *The Eye* being remade as competent but lacking American imitations. *Bedevilled* ranks up there with these original films and betters them in many ways, so don't be surprised if you see it being reimaged by David Fincher or Guillermo Del Toro in a few years time for a Western audience who would rather not strain their eyes to read the subtitles.

=====

Grimm Up North was an immensely enjoyable way to spend the Halloween weekend and I would urge anyone who loves Horror or film in general to add this to their festival schedule for next year and become a regular while it's still a relatively intimate experience compared to other festivals.

Grimm is still a fledgling and independent festival and it truly deserves greater support to gain a foothold in the British and European scene.

EDITORS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Armed with his press pass lanyard, *Scream* editor Richard Cooper gives his thoughts and memories on the recent Grimm Up North Horror Film Festival.

Over the four days I was in Manchester for festival & film director Simeon Halligan's now famous Grimm Up North it was a combination of watching films and attending seminars. I'll come on to the films later, but to first focus on the seminars first. I attended two seminars during the festival and to me, the locations for them seemed somewhat reminiscent of being back at secondary school but with the feeling that you very much wanted to be there.

The room was set out with a huge overhead projector for film trailers and related footage and the chairs were all put out in lines either side to seat 50-odd people. It made it extremely personal, a one-on-one with the special invited guests.

The first seminar I attended was with writer and director Paul Andrew Williams (London To Brighton, The Cottage, Cherry Tree Lane) Williams was very well received by attendees and given high praise for attending the festival even with his foot in plaster after a recent break.

Many of the seminar attendees were obviously film students and very much into making a career in filmmaking, so Williams was constantly bombarded with questions and people asking for advice. The whole 90 minutes or so was immensely enjoyable with Williams running off numerous funny stories and anecdotes.

The other seminar I attended was aptly named 'Adaptations' and featured well known British authors Ramsey Campbell, Christopher Priest, Christopher Nolan and David Moody discussing their own experiences and careers on getting a book adapted for the big screen. The highlight for me was meeting and chatting with David Moody, such a lovely talented guy.

Now onto the film screenings. Film-wise, I saw many, some good, some great, some bad, some forgettable and one awful. In this case, I am going to just feature the great.

The film I was most eager to watch throughout the festival was *Primal*. Combining survivalist horror with the creature-feature, *Primal* promised to be an intriguing blend of some of my favourite sub-genres.

The brainchild of writer-director Josh Reed and writer-producer Nigel Christensen, *Primal* is the latest in the recent wave of

MOVIES, GAMES, GUESTS AND MUCH MORE...



GRIMM UP NORTH

MANCHESTER'S PREMIER HORROR & SCI-FI FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 28th - 31st
The Dancehouse, Manchester

www.grimmfest.com

Australian horror thrillers, and shows what happens when a band of hard-partying young Aussies encounter a deadly aboriginal legend. If you love your blood and gore along with several fast paced action and chase sequences that rank up there with some of Hollywood's big budget projects then look out for it in on DVD in 2011.

The other film worth a watch is *13 Hrs*. The film is directed by talented newcomer Jonathan Glendening combined with the producers of the action-gore-fest *Dog Soldiers*. The film tells the story of Sarah Tyler (Isabella Calthorpe) who returns to her troubled family home in the isolated countryside, for a much put-off visit. As a storm rages, Sarah, along with her family and friends hole up for the night, cut off from the outside world. But something emerges from the driving rain and

darkness. Something that holds a dark secret so devastating that, in one night, it could wipe out the entire family.

The film impressed me with its pace, the special effects where we see plenty of gore and guts as well as a birds-eye view from the creature itself and also how the film only uses one or two locations throughout but does a fine job in doing so without getting overly familiar. Another highlight was the films director and several cast members from *13 Hrs* came onto the stage and took part in an audience Q&A. Great stuff! *13 Hrs* is already out on DVD now ... If you like monster movies, lots of teens screaming with plenty of blood and gore then you'll surely enjoy it.

All in all I have to say that Grimm Up North was such fun and enjoyment, thank you Grimm Up North! See you next year!