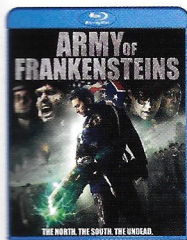


he goes to the supermarket she works at, only to discover her with the (super-fake) moustachioed manager. He's forced himself on her, but from Alan's perspective, it looks like she's cheating. In a fit, he runs to the back of the building, where he's beat up by thugs, and is subsequently saved by a Dr. Tanner Finski (John Ferguson) and his assistant Igor (Christian Bellgardt). The mad doctor uses the wounded Alan as part of his experiment but it goes awry, and sends them back in time to the Civil War, where a portal has opened and an army of Frankenstein's monsters have begun to leak out.



Although plot holes tend to go hand-in-hand with schlock pictures, *Army of Frankensteins'* major narrative holes (such as how they got to the Civil War and why) just feel amateur. Weak performances and store-bought special effects further detract from the film's fun concept. What could've been a blast of a love letter to B-movies, instead just feels too haphazard and thrown-together to warrant a watch.

RICHELLE CHARKOT

BITTER HARVEST

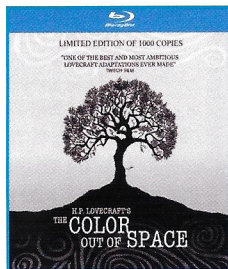
THE COLOR OUT OF SPACE

Starring Paul Dorsch, Jürgen Heimüller and Ingo Heise
Written and directed by Huan Vu
Brink Vision

Lovecraft's own favourite story was his 1927 tale "The Colour out of Space." It's been the inspiration for conventional monster cheapies *Die, Monster, Die!* (1965) and *The Curse* (1987) – but German filmmaker Huan Vu approached the story with more ambition, albeit a small budget, for his 2010 feature *The Color Out of Space* (German title: *Die Fabre*), making its premiere on Blu-ray in a limited edition (only 1000 made) run from Brink Vision.

The story is about a meteor that falls in the backwoods near a remote farm and gradually alters the environment and its people, until everything rots from within and the area is turned into a "blasted heath." The changes to Lovecraft's story are minimal: it's transferred to rural Germany just before WWII, with an awkward framing story – set in the 1950s – about a young American looking for his ex-soldier father.

While "The Colour out of Space" is one of the best horror stories ever written, hardly anyone could accuse *The Color Out of Space* of being among the best horror films ever made. It's a brave effort overall, excellent in some departments (the black-and-white cinematography, with touches of alien violet), but far from a definitive version. The film mostly succeeds in building



a mood of sombre expectation; it's well-acted, solidly directed and has fine CGI effects and visual concepts.

However, the scale of *Color's* effect is not fully visualized. One of the most inspired touches in Lovecraft's story is his depiction of the everyday world slowly turning inside-out into something alien and disgusting. *Color* is way too restrained to capture the body horror and cosmic terror. It really only hints at the drama of a family falling apart, their bodies crumbling, the sickly feelings of nature gone very, very wrong. That said, the film remains one of the best Lovecraft adaptations so far. It belongs to a dying breed of ambitious, serious low-budget horror films and should be respected for that.

Bonus material on the disc includes a lost scene, a 22-minute making-of featurette and two seven-minute ones covering the science in the film. Exclusive to the Blu-ray are some Lovecraft audiobooks, a trailer for Vu's upcoming Lovecraft adaptation *The Dreamlands* and a mini "newspaper" insert. Lovecraft fans still await that perfect adaptation, but *The Color Out of Space* is a step in the right direction.

DEJAN OGNJANOVIĆ

WORK SUCKS

BLOODSUCKING BASTARDS

Starring Fran Kranz, Pedro Pascal and Emma Fitzpatrick
Directed by Brian James O'Connell
Written by Dr. God and Ryan Mitts
Shout! Factory

Corporate vampires. It's an idea fresh enough to have fangs.

Unfortunately, despite a near-perfect opening that hints at events to come, *Bloodsucking Bastards* doesn't exactly hit the ground running and biting. That's not to say the jokes don't fly a mile a minute, it's just that they mostly fail to find traction at least until the monsters make them-

elves known and the blood starts painting the walls red.

The movie is set in a pharmaceutical marketing company where all the employee archetypes are present and accounted for. Token slackers? Check. Guys who never matured past fourth grade? Check. Resident porn fiend? Check. Hot HR girl? Check. Keener gunning for the big promotion? Check. This is likely why the office humour tends to fall flat: everyone is an over-the-top stereotype. Things get more interesting when Max (Pedro Pascal) is hired, stealing the coveted top marketing position from his long-time nemesis Evan (the aforementioned keener, played by *The Cabin in the Woods*' Fran Kranz). You see, Max is a vampire with some very unconventional ideas about how to get the company back on track. As employees either go missing or become the hard-working undead, Evan must end Max's initiative before it's too late.

The laughs ramp up after the 40-minute mark, when more emphasis gets placed on clever gags (for instance, how everyone Evan approaches about the vampire threat is already well aware of it) and witty dialogue ("Wikipedia didn't say anything about this," exclaims a character after a dead vampire explodes all over him in a shower of grue), instead of simply offering up hyperbolic sketches of office life. Unlike the humour, the gore gags consistently deliver. The exploding vamp corpses are hilarious and are put to good use during the epic final showdown, and the gearing-to-fight-the-bloodsuckers-with-office-supplies montage is a fun take on more typical arming-up sequences.

In short, viewers who stick with *Bloodsucking Bastards* past its uneven opening act will be rewarded with both guffaws and gore, as the film gives a whole new meaning to corporate downsizing.

MONICA S. KUEBLER



The Color Out of Space

