

# Horror on the Horizon: Eviltion (Chris Conlee, 2008) DVD Review

Published by Steven September 22nd, 2009 in Movie Reviews NEW (2000 & Up).

## Eviltion

DVD Release Company: Music Video Distribution (<http://mvdb2b.com>)

Language: English

Length: 91 Minutes

Image: Color

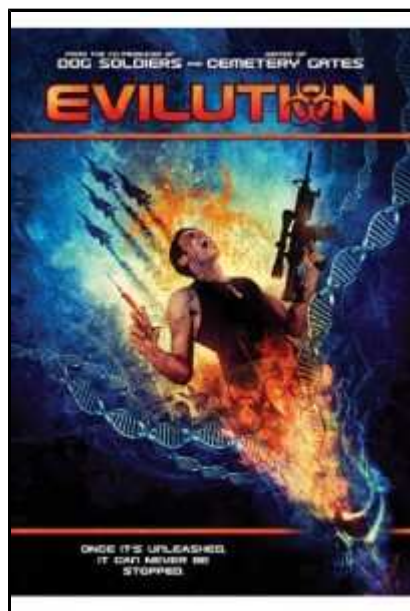
Year: 2008

Rated: R (Bloody Violence, Language and Some Sexuality/Nudity)

Release Date: November 17, 2009

*"Kids and their damn horror movies!"* — Mrs. Harris (Jeannie Epper)

### MOVIE REVIEW



**It only takes one** die hard horror fan to see how a movie can rip off three genre classics and become enraged by it, sending contagious fury throughout the many mediums of blogs, articles and forums all over the world wide web and, maybe even, in official print. However, it is rare, and I do mean very unusual, to have the rip offs as a production intent to be homage without it being obvious. **Eviltion** acknowledges its predecessors subtly with a cast of strong b-movie actors and a solid script that delivers intense carnage and mayhem - a more than welcome treat to that, or any, die hard horror fan.

After witnessing the horrific effects of an alien life form being used in an U.S. Army experiment to create a super army of undead soldiers, United States Science Captain Darren Hall barely escapes with his own life and steals a portion the alien life form before the army decides to annihilate the experimental complex in Iraq in order to stop the undead effect in spreading. Darren goes into hiding at the Necropolitan, a run-down apartment complex, where he conducts his experiments on the life form, trying desperately to

reverse the undead effect and, perhaps, communicate with life form. His fruits of reversal and communications prove useless as the life form is pure evil and has an extreme hate for humankind. As an outbreak spreads throughout his building, the tenants take a next step in the chain of evolution - or should I say evilution and turn into blood thirsty cannibals. Darren, retrieval expert Sargent Collins and a small group of survivors are trapped, tapered off from the outside world and must stop the cannibals from spreading their horrors into the street population.



Legendary stunt woman Jeannie Epper taking matters into her own hands

The cast is the most interesting mob of b-actors to have come together for such a film. Many are well known faces, recognizable to even the casual movie goer. Some are legendary in their own right or profession. There is a coming together that works well enough here that can't be ignored. Veteran support actors Noel Gugliemi and Guillermo Díaz, along with the **Donnie Darko** rabbit James Duvall, are the thug comic reliefs as well as a vehicle for the turn of events. They remind me as a Hispanic version of The Three Stooges - three immature grown men who can't lead a normal life and have no problem smacking each other to put one of them back in line. Gugliemi, who plays as the character Random, resembles Moe - the leader of the "gang." He takes everything from his compadres only to give to himself the advantages. His greedy gang life role becomes an ironic turn of events when he is the first one exposed to the cannibalistic attributed life form and where he was once worried about living to make as much money as possible, he now has no desire for wealth but a desire for blood. A desire to live through violence which is what gang life is, right? So, remember kids, gang life is no life.

What really was a disappointment was the lead male cast of Darren Hall played by also producer Eric Peter-Kaiser. Sure, he looks the part - a geeky scientists - but he is dry with no emotion. It isn't entirely his fault either. The whole character is bland, seemingly almost useless as it's only importance is to bring the life form to the States and some how muck up to create a gigantic blood bath of a mess. He has a love interest played by the very talented and well-endowed Sandra Ramírez. The whole love story subplot is painfully unnatural and doesn't drive the main story along like it should. The only exception, however, is at the end when there was a true moment of the subplot coming atop for air to breathe and thank my lucky stars that it did because it made the ending, and the main story, ten times better.

Remember a long time ago when I mentioned that this film homages three very well-liked classic horror films? Let me speak about that for a few. I hate comparing movies to other movies for it is really unfair to compare any current b-movie with hardly any cult following or notoriety to a film, or films, that have been around for twenty-or-so years, one even less, and are widely known by cast, crew, and title. Well, I'm about to break my own methods. These three films I speak of are **Re-Animator**, **Invasion of the Body Snatchers** and **28 Days Later**. Now, there is only one instance of gratuitous tribute when the Necropolitan's The Manager references these possessed cannibal bodies as something similar to **Invasion of the Body Snatchers**. Yeah, the said concept is basically exact but, also, I think any half-minded wit

could come to that conclusion. As far as **Re-Animator** goes, the homage there is the presentation of the alien life form. Having a brilliant yellow or orange color (I'm a bit color blind, sorry!), it is a liquid, stored in a medicine bottle and used to re-animate dead tissue - sound familiar? Even Darren Hall has similar Herbert West features about him - scrawny, glasses, a social misfit - but he does bring new qualities to the table like his charm and his ability to care for others - West has neither. Lastly, we come to **28 Days Later**. The infected tenants turn into the same type of monsters as you would see in the Danny Boyle film and this is the strongest, and most evident, indication of homage displayed.



No escape from the infected!

Though the cannibals sprint, growl, spew black ooze and bite into warm flesh in the same manner as those in **28 Days Later**, they do differ slightly in their movements and not for the good of the film either. I like to call them "*parkour cannibals*". Are you familiar with the term "*parkour*"? It is a recent, nearly suicidal, new craze that involves athletic agility and a set of balls as big as the moon. The men and women who do parkour scale and jump buildings without any aid of straps, ropes, pulleys or each other. These cannibals were doing just that - flipping off humvees, doing vaults over rails, etc. There was a certain zaniness about it that should have solely lied with the Hispanic Moe, Larry and Curly.



The Manager and the alien life form.

The Necropolitan set does wonders for **Eviltion**. Once a thriving real life hospital that helped the living stayed alive now was a complex of closure and death in fantasy. It radiated the feeling of claustrophobia to the max. There is no open field to run in - the hallways were tight, making any chance of a pass inoperable. The art department did an amazing job fixing up the place to have that gang land ghetto and never has once seen the dust broom of a maid look. The Necropolitan is classy yet decadent. Nathan Bexton plays as The Manager of the Necropolitan. He, like his construct, is crude and classy. There was a strong Val Kilmer odor coming off his character. His mannerisms, his sarcastic remarks and even his

appearance yelled Val Kilmer - it is a weird thing to point out but, hey, these are things I notice. I'm not saying it's a bad thing either because his role is malignant and all those qualities make great face with that.

The overall review of **Evilution** ranks high. Take everything mentioned and tack on buckets of blood with pivotal moments of gratuitous nudity and there is horror party just begging for cult status. Long time editor and first time director Chris Conlee really came through with **Evilution** as a whole. I see the makings of a b-horror great in the near future. **Evilution** unleashes a blood curdling evil presence that sticks with you, even when you go to sleep at night.

## DVD REVIEW

Music Video Disctribution's single DVD release comes in anamorphic widescreen which, personally, takes away from the impact and the mood. It stretches out too much of the scenes. If your going for a claustrophobia setting, remove the anamorphic widescreen and it will definitely create that *the-walls-are-closing-in* feeling. There is Dolby Digital sound and it provides adequate range for action-packed scenes. However, the dialogue suffers immensely. The volume stayed low most of the time. This could be a result as an error in post-production. The extras include commentary, a trailer and a 27 minute behind-the-scenes look at the making of **Evilution**. The in depth documentary honors those cast and crew and you get to hear their thoughts about the film.

The overall review of the DVD ranks moderately low. With such a great film, there should be a better version of the widescreen format and of Dolby sound setup to back it up. Films like these are one out of ten, perhaps even twenty, and should deserve a higher caliber treatment. As for the DVD cover art, it is eye catching and relates to everything you might see in the film. If I were to walk into a rental store, the chance of me picking this up as a blind buy, based on the story and art alone, would be very likely. So, make sure you pick this up when it hits the streets on **November 17** and let the blood run scared!

All images and logos provided by Evilutionthemovie.com and Music Video Disctribution.





SHARE AND ENJOY These icons link to social bookmarking sites where readers can share and discover new web pages.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

## 1 Response to “Horror on the Horizon: Evilution (Chris Conlee, 2008) DVD Review”

1 **John Silverstone** Sep 22nd, 2009 at 12:26 pm

All you Horror Fans out there can pre-order the Evilution right here:  
<http://www.seeofsound.com/p.php?s=BDVD0400>