

# Indie Horror Films

All genres of suspense, terror, and horror will be reviewed by Richard Gary. His address to send preview copies supplied upon request to rbf55@msn.com.

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## DVD Review: Fear the Forest

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### Fear the Forest: Unrated Edition

Written, produced and directed by Mathew Bora  
Radiant Pictures  
110 minutes, 2009 / 2013  
[www.radiantpicturesent.com](http://www.radiantpicturesent.com)  
[www.MathewBora.com](http://www.MathewBora.com)  
[www.centralfilmcompany.com](http://www.centralfilmcompany.com)  
[www.lostempirefilms.com](http://www.lostempirefilms.com)  
[www.mvdvisual.com](http://www.mvdvisual.com)

One of the aspects I love about independent horror films, more than any other genre, is when you say "Boy, this is a bad film," it does not mean avoid it. That being said, boy, this is a bad film.

Shot like a crisp version of VHS-type of video, rather than digitized to look like film, the writing is atrocious, the creature looks like a gorilla suit, and the acting is more wooden than the Pennsylvania/New Jersey border Mountains in which it is filmed. And yet...

Years after a series of killings by a rumored Bigfoot (which we see in the extended prologue), and the aftermath of a bunch of yahoo hunters (going *huntin'* rather than hunting, as a comedian once made the distinction) try to earn the \$2.5 million (really?) bounty on the creature, a group of five overage college students (I'm guessing) and a dog decide to go to those very woods to camp out. They are led by Matt (director Matthew Bora), who looks about 10 years older than everyone else, to the area via canoe. We know they are being watched by someone or something by the orange-hued POV camera.

Needless to say, they fall prey to the creature – I'm not telling you anything you don't know already, right? Not that most of them are of any great loss. Most of the three guys are just, well, stoopid. They make the Tony Manero crowd look like they stepped out of *Big Bang Theory*. They disrespect their girlfriends,

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act like buffoons among themselves, and make you want the Bigfoot to kill them just to get rid of them. For example, one of the women finds some human bones, and they laugh at her, rather than checking it out themselves. Yeah, I want these clowns to have my back.

And how stupid is this group? No one brings a cellphone. Really? Even in 2009, the thought of someone in their teens or early twenties not having a cell phone seems so unrealistic to the point of unreliability. Another proof of the questionable writing? The number of days in the woods keeps jumping by two. They go up there, and the next sign says "Day 3," then "Day 5," followed by "Day 7," etc.



*Ah, these mid-twenties teens...*



*Anna Kendrick*

And when some of the group is on the run, they meet up with a couple of backwoods guys, including one named Bubba. Near the Catskills? Really? The main character, Barbara (Anna Kendrick), despite being a blackbelt, is manhandled often before semi-fighting back, when she should easily have kicked their machismo-sans-masculinity asses. And Barbara's father, the New York State governor, takes nine days to send a rescue crew? And what happened to the dog? And then there's over-the-top Kyle...

What I find amazing is the sheer size of the cast, including extras. There must be dozens of hunters, bit players, families, reporters, radio DJs, government staff, party guests, gratuitous mean girls, and so on. The budget for this film, according to IMDB, is approximately \$500,000. I don't see it. Even with the huge cast, renting a camera,

hiring the music and having a British company (!?! design the creature, I have to wonder where all the money went.

Let's talk about the gritty now. When it comes to blood and gore, well, there is a little blood, but nothing big, and certainly no body innards. There is one quick topless flash, but that's it. As for the big, expensive monster costume from overseas, well, I think Matthew got ripped off. There are plenty of effects artists in the States, not to mention in New York alone, that could have done a much better job, even with the animatronic head. Mostly, it looks like a '50s creature features man-in-a-suit more than a terrifying beast. So why is it the "unrated" version? Is there a rated version? Must be *PG-13*, or a very soft *R*, as it is

There are some cool extras here, the major one being a 50-minute *making of* documentary that folds in interviews with the director, crew and some of the cast, and how the creature was created from thought to actuality, among many other topics. It remains interesting throughout it's time. Then there is the deleted scenes, which includes the bloopers, and the trailer, along with a few other bits.

Now, to answer the first paragraph, do I think you should go see it? Hell, yeah. While not so-bad-it's-good, there is definitely a fun spirit to the film that would make a nice evening with the buds over some popcorn. Just don't choke while you are amused by it all.

I have not seen any of Matthew Bora's other work, but I get the feeling that he is possibly "up and coming" as he claims on his bio, and I think with the right people guiding and mentoring him, he might get somewhere.

Posted by Robert Barry Francos at 12:01 AM

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