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Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated

Score: **65%**
 Rating: **Not Rated**
 Publisher: **Wild Eye Releasing**
 Region: **A**
 Media: **DVD/1**
 Running Time: **101 Mins.**
 Genre: **Horror/Classic/Animated**
 Audio: **English**

Features:

- Special Introduction from Count Gore Del Vol
- Commentary with Horror Scribe Jonathan Maberry
- Second "Making of" Commentary Track
- NOTLD: R Artist Call-in Commentaries
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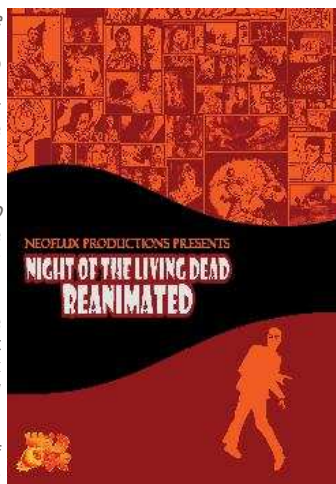
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If you haven't seen the original 1968 *Night of the Living Dead* from renowned director George A. Romero, then there is no reason for you to continue on with this review. For the other 98% of the horror-loving population, here's your chance to re-envision the classic through the eyes of over 150 artists with different styles and interpretations of the film.

After dusting off and viewing my original *NOTLD* DVD to refresh my memories of one of the greatest of all time, I then popped in the newly-released **Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated**. Taking the original audio from what is undoubtedly the most influential zombie movie ever created (arguably one of the most influential horror films as well), NeoFlux Productions takes the classic to a completely new platform with a scene-for-scene recreation using the various sources of artistry at their disposal. However, drawing from the creative minds of numerous artists - each with their own style - proves to be both a great tribute and a hindrance to the quality of the original film at the same time.



The reason for my mixed emotions comes strangely from the vast variety of artist styles and talents. Because this is a selling feature for **Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated**, it should be looked at critically. With art ranging from traditional stills/storyboard frames and animation to newer CG technology like Flash and videogames recreating the classic scenes, the variety is seemingly endless. On its surface, the premise of this remake sounds great (if not a bit *too artsy-fartsy*), but in practice the collaboration felt more disjointed than connected into one full story.

It's not to say that the art was bad (it should be known that I am a CG artist myself). In most cases, I enjoyed the stylized scenes and any of the traditional animation. The parts that didn't do it for me were the puppets, Barbie dolls, and still images. I'm not one to squash artistic freedom, but this is called **NOTLD: Reanimated**, is it not? I truly expected a fully-animated endeavor, so the final result was a bit of a disappointment at times. However, for fans of different styles, there is certainly something for everyone. Tributes to the styles of new classics such as *South Park* and Ren & Stimpy are also included. The 3D and videogame scenes were quite interesting as well by loosely recreating the settings from the original nightmare. My favorite scene, by far, however, was an extremely old-school-looking pixilated (mostly) text-based RPG that recreated the dialogue as it was being spoken.

In fact, it was almost more interesting to see some of the behind the scenes features showing how a few of the artists came up with their creations. The extra showing one fan's *NOTLD* VHS/DVD box art collection was actually very interesting as well because I never

realized how many different versions of the film (at least in a cover art sense) there are. That just shows the exploitation of public domain, but it was still a cool collection nonetheless.

There are a number of special features included in the **Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated** DVD, all of varying styles and qualities. The most notable feature (which is also nearly the same length as the film) is The Zombie Encounter Panel, in which notable zombie experts discuss the film and its influence over horror culture. Unfortunately, the panel was recorded with a camcorder in which the videographer can't sit still, as well as uses a terrible audio system of passing a mic back and forth. Some of the content was interesting enough, but the length did feel like it dragged on forever and the quality of the footage drove me a bit crazy. This isn't limited to the Bonus Features, unfortunately.

The quality of the main movie is also of poor quality at many times. It's understandable that the audio is a bit low in fidelity as it is ripped from the original 1968 film directly, but the video suffers dramatically in some cases. The result is that there are often blocky compression artifacts present throughout the feature film, distracting enough that it takes away from the artistic expression that the creators were trying to get across. One positive regarding the video is that the creators choose to retain the Black & White video and 1.33 Aspect Ratio of the original film.

Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated was an semi-interesting work of art that fans of both different animation styles and of the original George Romero film will probably enjoy as a rental (if available). Certainly, my score includes bonus points for embracing something ambitious, but at the end of the day, it's hard for me to recommend shelling out hard-earned cash for this one without first taking a peek at what you're actually getting.

-Woody, GameVortex Communications
AKA Shane Wodele

Related Links:

Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated Official Website
Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated on IMDb.com
Night of the Living Dead on IMDb.com
Night of the Living Dead (1968) - Full Movie on YouTube.com

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