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Thursday, October 21, 2010

DVD Review: Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated (2010)



NEOFLUX PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD
REANIMATED



NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD: REANIMATED (2010)

"Art is Dead... Yeah It's All messed Up"

Wild Eye Releasing

RATED: Unrated

RUNNING TIME: 101 Min.

ORIGINAL DIRECTOR: George A. Romero

PROJECT CURATOR: Mike Schneider

CAST: Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea, Karl Hardman, Marilyn Eastman, Keith Wayne, Judith Ridley

SUMMARY: Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated is a mass collaborative artistic re-envisioning of George A. Romero's 1968 cult classic Night of the Living Dead. International artists and animators were invited to select scenes from the film and reinvent them through their artwork. Open to all styles, media and processes the results ran the gamut with scenes created in everything from puppet theater to CGI, hand drawn animation to flash, and oil paintings to tattoos. This cacophony of works was organized and curated across the original film's time line in order to create a completely original video track made entirely out of art. *(from NOTLDR.Com)*



FILM: It's generally known that George A. Romero's **Night of the Living Dead** fell into the public domain immediately following its theatrical release in 1968 due to a copyright snafu. So unfair, right? This is the man that created a seminal piece of cinema history. The visionary who ushered in the modern-age of the flesh-eating zombies to the masses. As the result of this unfortunate error pretty much anyone has been able to duplicate and distribute the film and profit from the Romero's labor. There've been hundreds of home video releases of this film throughout the years spanning the spectrum of quality from unwatchable to pretty decent. We've seen it recut as fan edits, rescored with new music, colorized and given fan commentaries. It's available on nearly every budget horror collection out there and Romero sees not a penny from 'em. Romero has had a hand in a few director approved editions including **Elite Entertainment's** Millennium Edition or the more recent 40th Anniversary Edition from **Dimension Films**. Both of these releases offer pristine transfers and great bonus features, additionally the Dimension release includes a great feature-length documentary called 'One for the Fire', a must-see for fans of the film. On the more novel end of the spectrum there is a colorized version that's been given the Mike Nelson **Rifftrax** treatment which is a fun time.

One release I would suggest you steer clear of is John Russo's blasphemous 30th Anniversary Edition released by **Anchor Bay Entertainment** that went so far as edit in newly filmed additional scenes and provided a new film score, really terrible stuff, a true atrocity.

So, here we have **Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated**, the massive collaborative efforts of 150 international artists each of whom chose their favorite scenes to animate in style, medium or process they desired. There's a bit of traditional animation, claymation, CGI, pen and ink, charcoal, stop-motion, machinima, and yet still more. Project curator Mike Schneider then assembled these snippets and edited them together laying the visuals down and syncing them over the existing sound elements from NOTLD. As per the original NOTLD this film is full frame and black and white. It's an original idea, I'll give it that.

Admiring the concept and actually watching the film are not mutually agreeable in my experience. I found the viewing experience fairly jarring and disjointed. There are 150 styles of animation going fighting for attention and they shift at such a pace that it made it hard to appreciate the classic tale of a small farmhouse and it's random assembly of occupants under zombie siege. As a personal preference I particularly did not enjoy the abstract renderings of the zombie masses. I've enjoyed a few motion comics over the years and what they have that this does not is a consistent and coherent art style that carries the story through.



DVD: The DVD from Wild Eye Releasing is a pretty packed affair. Presented in it's proper 1.33:1 aspect ratio with the original mono audio the image and sound quality are not very impressive but adequate. If you are a fan of the film there are over two hours of supplemental material to dig through. My favorite featurette is the Night of the Living Dead Box Art video wherein a fan of the Romero original has painstakingly collected hundreds of VHS covers, good stuff. The commentary with Mike Schneider and **Jonathan Maberry** is also a good listen, very informative and their love for NOTLD is quite evident.

Special Features

- Intro/Outro from horror-host **Count Gore De Vol**
- 3 Commentaries
 - Commentary with Mike Schneider and genre write **Jonathan Maberry**
 - "Making of" Commentary
 - NOTLD:R Artists "Call-In" Commentary

- Alternate/Deleted Scenes (5 min)
- Short Horror Films / Horror Comics
- Behind the Scenes: Animation Process (10 min)
- The Zombie Encounter Panel Video (79 min)
- Night of the Living Dead Box Art Video (32 min)
- ...and much more!



VERDICT: While I was intrigued by the concept of a NOTD mash-up of sorts I cannot say I was enamored with it's execution. For my tastes the tapestry was too uneven and I felt the jumbled assembly detracted from NOTLD's strong storyline. I would rather have seen a more traditional animated feature with more fluid animation and new sound elements or even a motion comic. That said I cannot not take away from the spirit and adoration that went into assembling this project and it is a unique take on the film that's been taken advantage of for over 40 years. Night of the Living Dead: Reanimated is available from [Amazon](#). ****1/2 (2.5 out of 5 Stars)**



**NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD
REANIMATED**



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NOTLDR TRAZER POSTER 1



Posted by McBastard at 12:21 PM 

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Labels: [Cult](#), [George A. Romero](#), [Mash-Up](#), [Zombies](#)

1 comments:



Root Rot said...

Stephen (JAFMP), Corey Graham, and I just talked about this last night.

October 21, 2010 4:04 PM

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This Day in Horror

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about it on the blog. Wanna submit content to the site?

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