

Bob's Horrible Hookup to Horrifying Horror

Bob's Horrible Hookup to Horrifying Horror is dedicated to the best and worst in thrillers and b-movies. You may even stumble over a book or two...beware of the cryptarian, she's full of unpleasant surprises.

Read the best domestic battles at He Said/She Said, where Bob and her husband, FCEtier, both review the same titles. Sometimes they agree, and sometimes...

Sunday, September 19, 2010

Lights Camera Dead

On DVD

Oh, the horror of making a horror movie! *Lights Camera Dead* begins with actors reading for the writer and director (Steve and Ryan) of a horror film, *The Music Box* ("a feature-length film on V.H.S."). The actors are cast and filming begins. The very low-budget film is plagued by cheap sets and fighting among the cast and crew.

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The Music Box, a movie within a movie, is hilariously bad, yet not as bad as some of the horror films that have been released in the last few months. Two goth/witchy women, filmed in black and white, are involved with spells and zombies, and their voices are poorly dubbed.



The all-male crew has been induced to work for free (they're told there will be topless scenes). The director's girlfriend, Kari (Amy Lollo), is the peacemaker and tries to smooth ruffled feathers. Director Ryan insults Kari and every member of the cast. When Kari has had enough, she splits and the rest of crew follows.

The film is being scored by a drummer who isn't coming up with an eerie enough soundtrack to please Ryan (Wes Reid) and Steven



(J.C. Lira), and the editor refuses to work with the two any longer. So they do what any director and

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writer would do—kill the editor. Thus they are inspired to finish their film.

Ryan sends notes to the cast and crew members, and—in one of the best scenes in *Lights Camera Dead*—Kari imagines him trying to convince her to open the envelope, switching from cajoling to threatening and back. (The *worst* scene in the movie involves a crew member taking a bathroom break with full sound effects.) The notes are invitations to the preview of *The Music Box*, in a rundown house out in the middle of—where else?—nowhere.

Beer and popcorn are the refreshments, and the screening is in the backyard. Ryan tells his guests, all seated on metal folding chairs, that he took the footage already shot and made it into a short film that had been submitted to festivals throughout the country. When the film starts, a man in a zombie costume (Steven) comes running toward them and takes a large chunk out of a man's neck.

Cast and crew want to take the injured man to a hospital, but find the gas has been drained from their vehicles. Someone is filming the action and the body count begins.



Lights Camera Dead is a funny mix of horror comedy and mockumentary. The director and writer bicker while they are trying to off their victims—artistic differences. While they're being murdered, the actors are expected to recite lines (somewhere in there is a page stolen from *Bowfinger's* book).

It's all very silly, despite the horrific box art, and there are some clever lines when Steven and Ryan's egos clash. The acting and technical aspects are true to B territory, but there's fun to be had with the film's satirical qualities. It was directed by Tim Reaper, written by Tim Reaper and Monica Reaper.

Special features: trailers, two commentaries, and "The Music Box," a short film that is a gorefest with next to nothing in common with the film being made in *Lights Camera Dead*.

Bottom Line: Would I buy/rent/stream *Lights Camera Dead*? When in the mood for some goofiness, I'd stream it.



Is this music box winking at you?

Article first published as [DVD Review: *Lights Camera Dead*](#) on Blogcritics.

Posted by Bob at 11:54 AM 

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