

## ZOMBIE-RAMA!

**AAAH! ZOMBIES!** (2007) ♂♂1/2

D: Matthew Kohnen. Matt Davis, Colby French, Julianna Robinson, Michael Grant Terry, Betsy Beutler, Richard Riehle, Tracy Walter. 90 mins. (MVD) 11/10

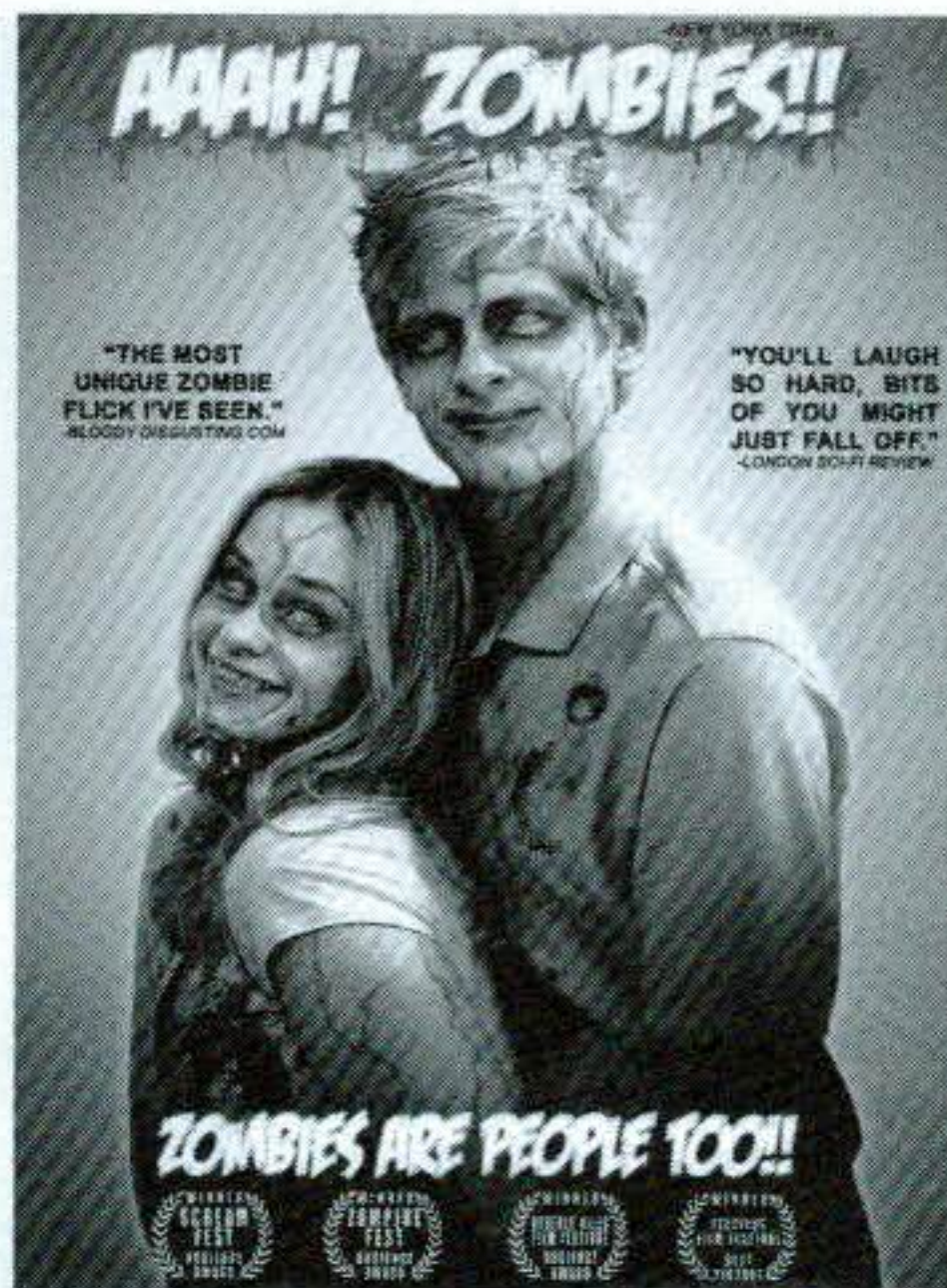
Like **Colin, Aaah! Zombies!** (originally titled **Wasting Away**) adopts a Living Dead POV, albeit from a comic perspective. When four young bowling alley employees consume glowing green contaminants accidentally dumped by an errant military waste disposal truck (roughly a la **Return of the Living Dead**), they immediately transform into zombies. The hook here: They still think they're human and only appear as zombies in the eyes of the living. Director Kohnen and his co-scripter sibling Sean don't quite milk the max from their existential Zombie as Other premise but they do yield their fair share of laughs. To help viewers along (and honor zombie progenitor **Night of the Living Dead**), the Kohnens switch to black-and-white whenever our protags are perceived as zombies. Refreshingly, only one of our transformed quartet, Mike (Davis), is a card-carrying jackass; his ex, Vanessa (Robinson), is fairly sensible, while courting couple Tim (Terry) and Cindy (the fetching Beutler) are downright sensitive. Vet character thespians Riehle and Walter, as an army colonel and bowling alley worker, respectively, add to the fun in choice cameos, while French is solid as a military op-turned-zombie who organizes our living dead foursome into a super-strong fighting unit. Even at 90 minutes, **Aaah! Zombies!** runs a bit long, but the Kohnen Brothers exhibit enough invention to make this one a decent bet for zomcom fans.

—The Phantom

**ASTRO-ZOMBIES M3: CLONED** (2010) ♂♂1/2

D: Ted V. Mikels. Fletcher Sharp, Donna Hamblin, Scott Blacksher, Shanti, Ted V. Mikels, Tura Satana, Francine York, John Carradine. 104 mins. (Alpha Video) 10/10

Dr. Stephanie DeMarco (Hamblin), granddaughter of the great Dr. DeMarco (Carradine), heads an experiment in recreating the original Astro-Zombies to be used by the government in times of war. Meanwhile, a cloning machine sets loose a wild pack of machete-chopping Astro-Zombies, and Sabrina Kincaid (York) is called to deploy the Doll Squad and save the day. While Stephanie is attempting to domesticate one of the Astro-Zombies, her bosses are trying to start a bidding war among countries that want this new technology. The monsters are unleashed on backyard barbecues and run wild in the streets while the Doll Squad hunts them down with specially made explosive darts. Mikels appears in two



roles, as a general and his insane twin brother. This is a fun sci-fi/action flick made with the kind of heart and humor missing from most exploitation films today. (Watch for the cameo of a toy robot in the slaughter of a toy-shop worker, recalling the "war of the robots" from the first film.) It is also one of Mikels' best-looking films. Footage of Carradine is recycled from the original. Extras include outtakes, behind-the-scenes footage and a commentary with Mikels. For more, see TVMStudios.com.

—Rob Freese

**WOKE UP DEAD** (2009) ♂♂1/2

D: Tim O'Donnell. Jon Heder, Josh Gad, Krysten Ritter, Meital Dohan, Daniel Roebuck, Wayne Knight, Christopher Emerson. 84 mins. (Sony Pictures) 10/10

While not exactly a field day for Heder haters, **Woke Up Dead**, which began life as a series of webisodes, stacks up as an unremittingly lame zomcom attempt. The soporific action revolves around unfortunate young computer drone Drex (Heder), whose suddenly pulse-free state, apparently the result of ingesting a mysterious pill, actually endows him with enhanced abilities rather than your more traditional zombie traits, like rotting flesh and brain starvation. Lending our hapless hero dubious help are his fat roommate Matt (blatant Jack Black wannabe Gad) and cute, perky med student Cassie (Ritter, sort of a Zooey Deschanel Lite). The three zip about modern-day L.A. in search of a cure for Drex's condition, all the while being monitored by a sinister agent (Roebuck). Also onboard is erstwhile **Seinfeld** regular Knight, as Drex's office nemesis. The living death metaphor for growing up and accepting dull adult responsibilities is getting a tad stale in general and is downright deadly here. Extras include behind-the-scenes footage and an interview with Heder, who also produced this pallid affair. ♂

—The Phantom

## Phantom Pheedback (continued from page 5) ZOMBIE NATION?

To the (so called) editor,  
With your minions of fact-checkers I can't believe it was accidental that in your review of the **True Blood** videodisc you identify Tara and Lafayette as siblings. They are in fact cousins. Worse yet each of their mothers has appeared time and again on the show. Perhaps your reviewer Mr. Nahmod spends an inordinate time in the bathroom due to the strong emotions of the series. In which case I would suggest going the way of adult diets and diuretics, the methods I have found to be effective. On another note many have taken note of the younger generation of Americans having become enamored of their cell phones, texting with their dingleberries (or whatever they call them) and other hand-held electronic monstrosities, and have remarked on their negative effect on our society. None have noticed that these devices are preparing our children for a future existence as zombies. Working in the heavily trafficked area of 7th Avenue and 34th Street in NYC it is easy to see mindless youth walking blindly through the stream of walkers and crossing streets mindlessly. Ask a youth about this use of such devices in public they will explain that they are multi-tasking. If one of these multi-tasks is "walking" they are terrible and should go back to uni-tasking. It seems obvious to this reader that these electronic "aids" are softening young minds, preparing them for the coming zombie age. This brings me to **VideoScope** which seems, for its own dubious reasons, to be strongly aligned with preparing the US for zombification. Your current issue celebrates the fact. Next I expect you to take advertisements for edible products that increase the tastiness of American brains! Take note there are Americans unsympathetic to your intents. We are organized, and we will fight the threat of zombism to the Motherland, but first we're working on finding Obama's birth certificate.  
—Captain Stanley, NYC

## THE BEAST OF TIMES

Dear Mr. Kane,  
I just learned of your website while reading an article about G. Romero's **Night of the Living Dead** and wanted to drop you a line thanking you for your work on **The Monster Times**. When I was a kid in 6th grade, building monster models and reading horror comics in my bedroom, I always looked forward to **TMT**. It was a great magazine (although I couldn't bring myself to pull out the posters and hang them up because it would have wrecked the magazine) with lots of fun and educational stuff (like **The Monster's Bill of Rights**) in each issue. There's some good memories connected to that old mag.  
—S. Thorn, via e-mail  
<http://mysite.verizon.net/vze136nhf/>

We likewise greatly enjoyed cutting our genre-film fangs on that 1970s terror tabloid. Glad to hear the 'zine still has its followers.

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