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Bong of the Dead (2011)

Posted by [anythinghorror](#) on August 23, 2011 · [5 Comments](#)





I enjoy when zombie films (and horror films in general) make some kind of commentary on modern day life. The original *DAWN* and *DAY OF THE DEAD* films had something to say about out-of-control consumerism and bureaucracy (respectively). But ya know what else I love? Horror films that are gory and have no message other than, “Hey look how gory I am.” This is what indie horror filmmaker Thomas Newman set out to do with his **BONG OF THE DEAD**, and he succeeds on every level. *BONG OF THE DEAD* follows two stoners after the zombie apocalypse hits, and Newman isn’t using the zombies here as metaphors for society or The Establishment. Newman’s zombies are just that — zombies, and they wanna kill and eat human beings. The zombies here are metaphors for *fucking zombies*, and this in itself is refreshing. Let’s see if the film as a whole succeeds.

The film opens with a meteor slamming down into the backyard of Victor (a Hulk Hogan-looking Vince Laxton). Victor ignores everything in the “What not to do When a Meteor Crashes in your Backyard” handbook and cracks it open and touches the goo on the inside. Hours later Victor is rather goeey looking with huge, pus-filled pimples on his head. After his wife brings him dinner he has other ideas for a quick bite, and the pre-credit opening ends in a very disgusting scene of husband and wife sitting on the couch enjoying a warm meal in front of the TV. This is a scene that you won’t soon forget, and, as mentioned, this is all before the credits roll!!



2 Stoners & a hottie having fun during the zombie apocalypse.

Welcome to Thomas Newman’s zombie world. After the credits, which look like an old E.C. comic come to life, we fast forward 6 months in the future and meet Edwin (Mark Wynn) and Tommy (Jy Harris), two stoners who really don’t seem too be all that worried that they’re living in the middle of the zombie

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apocalypse. Unlike other films where the government is completely useless, here it managed to round up and dump all the zombies into designated “danger zones”, well away from the bigger cities. This allows Edwin and Tommy to pursue their passion whole-heartedly ... which is smoking bud. Lots of bud. No seriously, I mean A LOT of bud.



There's nothing like eating on the couch in front of the TV!!

At one point Tommy voices concern that they're gonna run out of weed, but Edwin (who resembles one of Ben Stiller's alter ego characters) assures him that he's got everything handled. It seems Edwin synthesized a super growth serum from the brain of a dead zombie. It literally makes the pot plant grow in front in them at an alarming rate and to a very large size (not to mention the high off of it is primo). Only problem is, there aren't any zombies in their sector and he's already gone through his serum. So in the great tradition of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Bonnie and Clyde, Thelma and Louise, and Bill and Ted; our “heros” pack up some gear and head out to the danger zone to round up some fresh zombie brains. For these two, coming face to face with hungry zombies is better than facing a bud-free, sober future.



They may be stoners., but they also came to play!!

The first quarter of the film is meeting and getting to know Edwin and Tommy, and Newman does a really nice job with their characters. If you're looking for a serious zombie flick then look elsewhere. Newman isn't going for a horror-comedy here; he strives for (and nails) more of a comic book/graphic novel feel. There's of course a lot of comedy in BONG OF THE DEAD, but it's achieved the same way Peter Jackson achieved his humor in DEAD ALIVE. Both filmmakers create a bizarre world where anything could

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often does, happen. We get some funny montages of Edwin and Tommy getting stoned and carrying on, and I'm not really a fan of the montage in films, but here it works. The violence and gore are also very over-the-top and juicy.



This zombie is affectionately called "Vagina Face" (Gabriel Medina).

Once they get close to the danger zone they have car troubles and run into bad ass-hottie, Leah (Simone Baily). Leah lives alone in a bar/gas station and is handy with both power tools and weapons. After an initial reluctant friendship, they all get pretty tight as Leah agrees to help them find some fresh zombie brains. Just wait until you see the weapons the group builds. Remember the lawnmower scene in DEAD ALIVE? Yeah, well multiply that by 100!! And just to make sure you're paying attention, Newman also throws in a subplot about sentient zombie Alex (Barry Nerling) who's building up an undead army to wipe out the remaining pockets of humanity. Is this one bizarre? What the hell do you think! Is it different? You know it is. Is it fun? No, it's actually *tons* of fun!! Newman is one talented, and focused filmmaker who's been working on BONG OF THE DEAD for several years now, funding it with his last \$5,000 and serving as the film's sole writer, director, composer, editor, art director, digital f/x artist, and as one of the producers.



There's no way this zombie is gonna eat a newborn ... right?

For a low budget film the f/x are damn impressive. The film doesn't hold back on the blood or gore, and on one day, in *one* scene, a fire hose sprayed out over 800 gallons of blood (I'm smiling from ear to ear right now). There's also a nice blending of practical and digital f/x, and you'll be glad to know that all the zombie's are done practically, and the zombie make up looks fantastic. This is a very gory and juicy film that completely satisfies the blood/gore hound in us all.

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The only two negative things I can say here is that the soundtrack seems to have been “laid down” on the film, which gives it a kind of dubbed feel. There were also a few spots where the film seemed to drag on a little bit and which would’ve benefitted from another round in the editing room. But these times were few and far between. This is overall a fast-paced film full of bizarre humor, gore, and a strong cast that really pulls it all together and makes it all work. Thomas Newman is a talented filmmaker that I certainly hope we see more from in the future. Newman has promised to keep me updated on BONG OF THE DEAD’s distribution (it’s still making the rounds on the festival circuit), and I’ll definitely let you all know when it becomes available. I had a lot of fun with BONG OF THE DEAD; don’t miss it!!



The zombies look fantastic & never lose their heads!!

My Summary:

Director: Thomas Newman (& writer, etc ...)

Plot: 4 out of 5 stars

Gore: 9 out of 10 skulls

Zombie Mayhem: 4 out of 5 brains

Reviewed by Scott Shoyer

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[August 25, 2011 at 7:35 am](#)

An excellent review of an excellent movie. Rumour has it that next month the movie will be released onto DVD for us fans.

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- [anythinghorror](#) says:
[August 31, 2011 at 9:34 am](#)

I hope you're right Zombie Movies!! BONG OF THE DEAD deserves the biggest release it can get. Really fun flick

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2. [Robert Zombob Banning](#) says:
[August 28, 2011 at 9:58 pm](#)

I will definitely be getting this one!!

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- [anythinghorror](#) says:
[September 1, 2011 at 1:32 am](#)

It's a fantastic film Robert!! I got a screener in the mail, but as soon as it's available I'm still gonna buy a copy just to support it!! I definitely wanna see a part 2 😊

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the sequel. This is obviously the second in a trilogy and does a great job setting up the mythos of ChromeSkull (played by Nick Principe). Rob Hall's script and directing is crisp and he actually outdoes himself in the gore content from the original (yeah; hard to believe). As long as Hall is around, the slasher genre will never die!! 4. BONG OF THE DEAD (dir. Thomas Newman; my review) [...]

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Derek being very English w/ his tea & scones!!

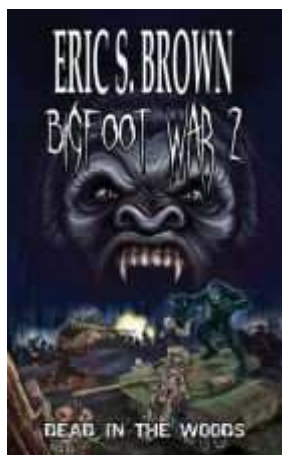
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This is a "must read" that is excessively violent & gory!!

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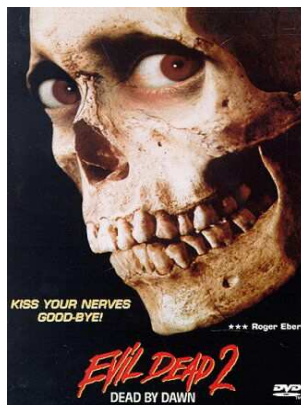
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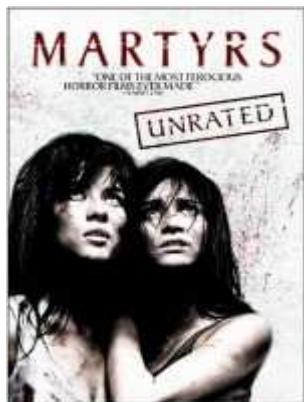
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