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SATURDAY, 28 APRIL 2012

## DVD Review - Bong of the Dead (2011)

**Bong of the Dead**, 2011.

Written and Directed by Thomas Newman.

Starring Simone Bailly, Mark Wynn and Jy Harris.



### SYNOPSIS:

The world is in disarray as zombies have taken over, but stoner buddies Tommy and Edwin have figured out a way of benefiting from the apocalypse.



I was umm-ing and ahh-ing about when I'd finally get round to watching **Bong of the Dead** – I was not expecting much, and thus getting it watched was not a top priority, but I finally stuck it in the DVD player, and well... read on.

When reading the tagline on the DVD menu – "There will be bud!" – I would expect the film I am about to witness to be a stoner comedy, **Half Baked** with zombies perhaps. What I wouldn't expect (or at least would hope would not to be the case), is an hour and a half snore-a-thon with no laughs, and no heart.

**Bong of the Dead** opens with an old man painting a garden gnome. Fair enough. He takes his beloved painted gnome to his garden, and places it with all his other painted gnomes. He may need to get out more, but this is the least of his worries, as a suspiciously shaped, CGI disaster of a meteor hurtles down and knocks him out of the way. Curious, the old man, unscathed, approaches this mysterious object, and next thing we know, the meteor opens and a green smoke comes out of it. Skip ahead, and the guy has boils over his head which pop to reveal green pus, blood coming out of all visible orifices, and saliva hanging onto his lips as he leans over to attack his loving wife. Bodily fluids are used in total excess here – total unnecessary excess. Here are our zombies, and as their TV tells us, there's a lot more where they came from.

I want to take the opportunity now to talk about the opening credits after this scene. A comic book style aesthetic is adopted, and it works to an extent. The problem is the soundtrack accompanying it. It's a mess. A series of irritating sounds that I can only assume are designed to make sure you're still paying attention. This style of soundtrack is unfortunately consistent throughout the film, with the music often (especially earlier on) being so frustrating that it does distract from the scene. But it's OK - many of the scenes require a distraction because they are even more frustrating.

The comic book look is adopted again throughout the film in the form of indicators (e.g. 6 months later... etc.). These could have been made to look more comic-esque to really define them, but alas., like many elements of the film, they fall short.

My main gripes with **Bong of the Dead** are aplenty. Firstly, it tries to be funny, and fails miserably. I did not crack a single smile throughout. The dialogue is cheesy (but not in the good, fun way), and the

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Thefallen83

acting, particularly from our two lead stoners, is what I refer to as "overacting". You heard of it? That shouting overemphasis of every line that has you reaching for the remote to turn it down (or off, if you aren't reviewing a screener!). With lines such as "Hey vaginaface, eat this!", there's really nothing to be garnered from the script or the way these ridiculous lines are performed.

My second issue with this film (although it feels like my first reason actually covers two or three issues) is just how stupid it is. Sure, for a stoner movie you aren't expecting a masterpiece, but writer-director Thomas Newman must have not only been incredibly high when writing this trash, but he must have also assumed his whole audience were going to be so high that they wouldn't realise how lazy it is, especially as a zombie flick. I expect my zombie films to have some sort of social commentary, or at the very least a likeable character. Any of that here? No.

I can only assume that Newman was going for some B-Movie sleaze - but even there he fails with this one. I understand there may have been budget restraints, and according to IMDb, many people told Newman the film would not be possible to make - but even using cheap effects, and still managing some vaguely interesting achievements (e.g. a complete bloodbath towards the end of the film), something tells me these people were really only trying to protect his feelings.

Now I feel for lack of balance I should pick out some positives from the experience of watching **Bong of the Dead**. I will say, that as the plot progressed it did become ever so slightly more engaging, but it never rose above being considerably less than average. That's sort of a compliment, right?

If you really feel the need to catch this movie, just for the curiosity, then by all means go ahead. Even if it's just for the scene near the end where a pregnant zombie gives birth to a zombie foetus, that another zombie then picks up and eats.

Flickering Myth Rating - Film: ★ / Movie: ★

Cat Fyson

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Bex Henderson

If the film wasn't funny this review makes up for it, I was smiling the whole way through reading.

04/28/2012 11:39 AM

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Cat Fyson, Blogger of film, tv, product reviews and more.

Aww thanks, that's so sweet. Glad you enjoyed it. But yeah, the film was definitely not at all funny!

04/28/2012 11:33 PM in reply to Bex Henderson

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Ron

I'm going to have to disagree here, respectfully of course. I think The Dark Knight Rises has a much more serious tone than The Avengers. Sure, more advanced technology comes up and things may look...

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Ron

I honestly couldn't have said it better myself Getanaccount. Christopher Nolan is an exceptionally talented writer and director, and like you said, proved with Inception that he doesn't need...

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