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### Bong of the Dead (2011)

So what would you do to survive in a world overrun with zombies? Find shelter, arm yourself, or horde supplies? Sounds like a great idea. That is unless you are Tommy and Edwin who decide to hang out in their apartment and smoke some weed. And not just regular weed, but super weed grown with fertilizer made from zombie brains. But all good things must come to and end. Eventually they run out of weed and need to grow more, which requires more zombie brains. That calls for a road trip to collect what they need. Along the way they run into a power hungry intelligent zombie ready to wage war on humanity as well as a beautiful survivor named Leah. Much weed is smoked, alcohol is consumed and zombies put down. Sounds like a fun time.

So when I'm offered an independent zombie movie to review for the site I feel that I sort of have to check it out. I mean honestly most of them are terrible and I have to find a tactful way of letting you guys know this without being a creep to the filmmaker. Sometimes I fail at this and don't feel too bad about it... Lucky for me Bong of the Dead isn't going to be one of those reviews.

Now if you couldn't already tell from my plot synopsis this is kind of a silly movie. Our main characters are stoned out of their minds for much of the duration, so much so that their bong should have gotten top billing! The pacing of the movie is very good and we get some funny zombie action right away. I did have a concern that we had a random encounter with a lead zombie to pad the plot, but it ends up being very important to the finale. As soon as I saw that I realized that this was a pretty well thought out script and that director/writer Thomas Newman did the one thing that I wish other filmmakers would. Have a solid script that you have the resources to shoot before making your movie. My only complaint is that we get a couple of strange sequences of random images that reminded me of the old Monkees T.V. show. But that is a minor complaint.

Oh I suppose I have another complaint and that is at times the dialogue is a bit rough and almost come off like a bad Cheech and Chong impression. But this is far outweighed by how much fun the characters are. Tommy and Edwin are loveable goofballs that I wanted to root for. Whoever cast this movie made a great choice in our leads, actors Jy Harris and Mark Wynn. They have great chemistry with each other and the actors are appealing to the audience. Plus comedy isn't easy so the fact that they have perfect timing and manage to deliver the jokes perfectly is huge for the movie to work. If only every independent filmmaker could collect a cast like this.

Lets talk special effects. Now I could complain about some of the CGI and rubber body parts that get tossed around in Bong of the Dead. But then again for the miniscule budget that this movie had I'm very impressed. We get some nice looking zombies, gallons of blood spraying, and some fun gross out bits. I've seen a ton of these low budget zombie movies and this one is right at the top when it comes to effects work with very little money. In the end I'd have to say this was an outstanding job.

A movie like Bong of the Dead isn't going to be for everyone. The horror "fan" that thinks the Saw franchise is the bees knees or loves how innovative the Final Destination movies are might not get this one. But as a guy that watches far too many zombie movies (but I'll never stop damn it!) I dug Bong of the Dead. So if you get the chance to check out this fun stoner zombie comedy do so. You won't be disappointed.

3 out of 4

reviewed by John Shatzer

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