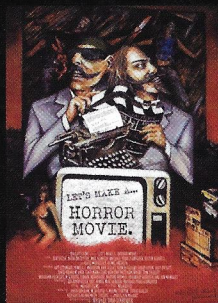


olently disintegrates. And in "Elmer & Iris" – the only segment with anything resembling levity – an elderly woman's forced retirement quickly devolves into fear and death. This is a powerful, soul-crushing film that redefines the definition of horror.

LET'S MAKE A... HORROR MOVIE

Michael Todd Schneider
maggofilms.com



Although I actually appear in this one, I picked it because Michael Todd Schneider is an immensely talented and fiercely independent filmmaker whose work defies easy categorization. His films are horrific, surreal and shot in a decidedly unconventional

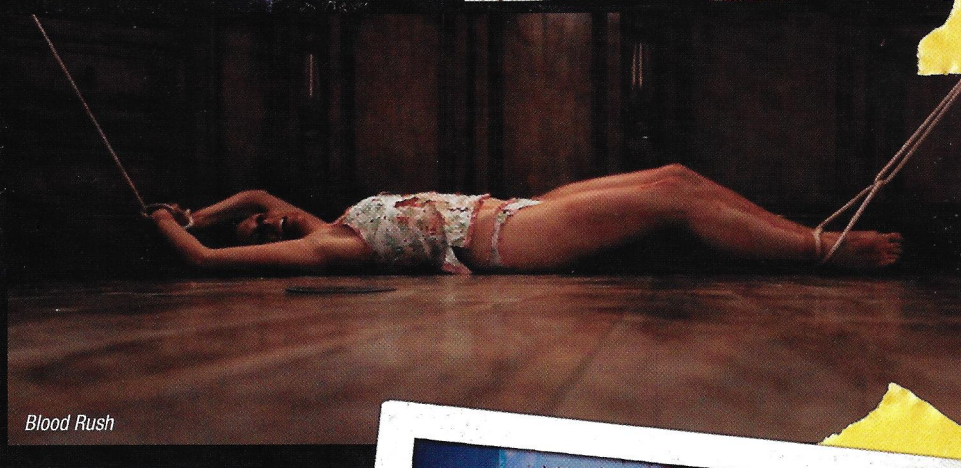
style he's termed "psychedelic dread." Never one to do anything in a linear or straightforward fashion, Schneider took behind-the-scenes footage from the making of *...And Then I Helped* (2010) and crafted a wholly fictional mockumentary on the creation of that film. It's a visceral view of the production of an

underground film that careens through dream sequences and bizarre set pieces to portray the trials, tribulations, fears and insecurities he experienced making his movie. Or maybe it's just Schneider putting the audience on, because he's always blurred the lines between fiction and reality in his work. Regardless, the end is devastating. Look for me interviewing him onstage after a screening of *...And Then I Helped* that I hosted.

Read *The Gore-met's* column in every issue of *Rue Morgue*.



Ground Zero



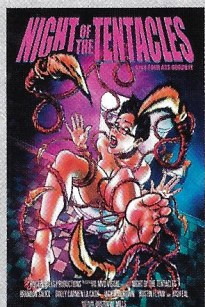
Blood Rush

PATRICK DOLAN

To paraphrase the *Godfather of Gore*, Herschell Gordon Lewis: independent films exist to show audiences what Hollywood can't. Although I'm sure he was referring to the content of the films – and more specifically gore – to me this statement refers to the production as well. Since indie horror doesn't need to recoup the massive investments that more mainstream movies do, the filmmakers can express themselves more freely, including the darkest parts of their imagination. Granted, this often means abysmal production values, illogical story structure and hair-pulling bad acting, but in return the viewer gets the artist's unfiltered vision. Remakes and mainstream trends don't tend to concern indie horror filmmakers; they've got a day job and kids to feed, and their pockets aren't deep enough to buy up rights to existing properties. Yes, I'm being cheesy and sentimental but these working-class heroes just want to show you something they love and hope you'll love it, too.

NIGHT OF THE TENTACLES

Dustin Mills
dmp.storenvy.com



After narrowly surviving a heart attack, reclusive slob Dave sells his soul to Satan for a new heart. The worse news is that it's also a tentacled monster separate from his body, which must be fed humans in order to keep him alive. The story takes place entirely in a claustrophobic triplex apartment, where there is no shortage of putrid personalities to feed on, but as more tenants are terminated, the vampiric vascular organ starts putting its feelers out for Dave's crush, who lives downstairs. Like a modern Frank Henenlotter

film, this frugal freakshow makes great use of tentacle puppetry, CGI splatter and its singular setting. Relatively new to the horror world, writer/director Dustin Mills has only been making films since 2010, but in the past four years he's directed eight features (with another one underway) and had a hand in six other productions. Building a fan base via the internet through social networks, blogs and a podcast, Mills has become a name you can trust for fun, gory films, with puppets, practical effects and D.I.Y. CGI.

Three questions for Dustin Mills:

Where do you find funding for your films?

Usually they are either self-funded or funded by pre-orders. *Easter Casket* and *Bath Salt Zombies* were funded by third parties, but they are the only ones so far. I have had a lot of success funding via pre-orders with my new Crumplehack Label. Both [of the label's upcoming films] *Her Name Was Tor-*

ment and *Snuffet* were completely funded that way.

Once you've made a film, how do you get the word out?

I used to do the whole press release thing, but it turned out to be a waste of time. Mainstream websites and even some websites that ought to care, don't really seem to. Now I just rely on Facebook, my mailing list and my established fans to help me get the word out. I think word of mouth is my best friend. ... I still have to supplement it with odd jobs (FX work, music videos, DVD authoring) but this year has already been better than the previous two. I am pretty optimistic about the future. I'm hot rich by any means, but I don't really need to be. I just want to keep making movies.

Advice?

Don't be a pussy. Pick up a camera. Make movies, not excuses.

