

Indie Horror Films

All genres of suspense, terror, and horror will be reviewed by Richard Gary. His address to send preview copies supplied upon request to rbf55@msn.com.

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DVD Review: The Hunt

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The Hunt

Directed by Thomas Szcepanski
Full Screen
74 minutes, 2010 / 2012
MVDvisual.com

I have seen a lot of disparaging films coming from Europe over the past few years that deals with violence, nihilism, gore, disturbing messages, and a story that somehow involves the porn industry in some fashion. A *Serbian Film* immediately comes to mind, for example.

The latest was actually completed in 2010, but somehow only made distribution in the New World recently. There isn't even an IMDB page for it, and it's not listed under the director or actors' names. Hmm.

Filmed in French with subtitles (and, I am assuming, in France, though I guess it could be Belgium?), although there are actually whole swathes of this movie that have no dialog, so it's not like you have to worry about reading the translation, right?

The basic premise is that a scandal reporter, who is stuck writing bestiality porn (see?), is told by his editor it's find a story for her to buy or it's buh-bye. Through information from his girlfriend (a dominatrix, of course), he finds out that something salacious is happening at a mansion in the woods in which rich people partake. Shades of *Hostel*, one may think, but actually it is yet *another* remake of *The Most Dangerous Game*. Really?

I will definitely give it that there are some modern (culturally speaking) touches, bringing in that bleak tendency that central Europe has been favoring for its storytelling over the past few years. In other words, it is unpredictably predictable. You may not see exactly what is going to happen coming, but you'll probably know somewhat where you'll be by the end. Perhaps I've watched too much *CSI*, *Law and Order*, *Mystery Theatre*, etc.?

Let me say that the movie is actually beautifully shot, with loving care to shadows, light, angles, and the like, and the gore is handled well (I'm guessing a mix of prosthetics and digital). The acting is also right where it should be, especially when so much of this is silent (other than an annoying instrumental soundtrack) so there is a lot of reliance on facial features.

However (you may wanna duck now), even at the short length of 74 minutes, I found this long and

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tedious. Despite the gore and body count, I was bored most of the time and had to really concentrate not to do some scanning. It's a good 40 minutes before anything in the story starts to take real shape, not counting the opening, which would have been perfect as a short.

By the time things picked up, I already didn't care about the main character, who is dragged down to the level of the game participants as he varies between hunted and hunter, or vice versa.

Sure it's a beautiful looking piece of art, but there is just too much lack of originality, pacing, and real story as opposed to numerous artsy shots of the sky through the trees.

Hopefully, what happens (or doesn't happen) at the end does not mean that a sequel is in the works. It's rare a film makes me feel like I've wasted my time, even those with zero budgets, but this is certainly one of them.

Posted by **Robert Barry Francos** at 12:01 AM

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