

McBASTARD'S MAUSOLEUM

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2013

DVD REVIEW: BATH SALT ZOMBIES (2012)



BATH SALT ZOMBIES (2012)

Label: Aggronautix / MVD Visual

Region: 0 NTSC

Rating: Unrated

Duration: 90 mins

Audio: English Dolby Digital 2.0

Video: 16:9 Widescreen

Director: Dustin Mills

Cast: Brandon Salkil, Josh Eal, Ethan Holey, Dave Parker, Jackie McKown

Synopsis: The bath salts epidemic facing the southern and mid-western US has been stifled by an unprecedented government crackdown. This has led to a tremendous amount of surplus stock hidden by black market dealers, and a migration of those dealers to the northeast. In New

York City, potent strands have surfaced and have attracted the most devoted bath salt junkies. A young aspiring chemist has developed an even stronger batch... but something has gone horribly wrong. The new ultra potent bath salt batch has revealed a major side effect: It turns users into violent flesh seeking ZOMBIES!

The Film: Gotta love this slice of indie horror exploitation from the demented mind of Dustin Mills who brought us [The Puppet Monster Massacre \(2010\)](#). The idea is tore straight from the front page of the national news. You may recall last May that a deranged man under the influence of the street drug known as bath salts stripped down nude and stalked the streets where he attacked and ate the face off a homeless man in Miami. It was a shocking and ultra-violent event and Dustin Mills jumps on the timely and gruesome subject and filters it through his wonderfully psychotic mind.

The basic story has a few elements, the first being a super addictive strain of the drug known as bath salts created by a chemist known as The Chet (Dave Parker) and his partner "Bubbles" (Ethan Holey) who slings the cigarette form of the drug on



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the streets. The second elements is an ass-kicking Agent Forester (Josh Eal) of the DEA who's on a one-man mission to eradicate salts from the streets. Lastly, we have an unfortunate drug addict named Ritchie (Brandon Salkil) who experiences the awful side effects of the super addictive

salts first-hand, a ravenous hunger for human flesh.

Bath salt Zombies is definitely a low-budget affair but it's packed with wit, gristle and outrageous gore from pretty much the start to finish, for a lo-fi feature it looks pretty sweet, if peppered with some stylized but schlocky digital effects. The film starts off nicely with a fun animated anti-drug PSA about the menace of bath salts with awesome 40's style fast-talking narration, the style reminded me a bit of Jimmy Screamerclauz's *Where the Dead Go To Die* (2011), particularly when the winged-Satan shows up! It's a great start that really sets up what you're in store for here, a deviant drug culture zombie film that goes places you might not expect.

A lot of the thematic elements brought to mind some great trash cinema of yesteryear, it's a nice mash-up of ideas sourced from some classic horror dark-comedies. Not unlike the "super crack" from Frank Henenlotter's *Frankenooker* (1990) we get a super addictive drug with catastrophic effects, maybe throw in a bit of J. Michael Muro's *Street Trash* (1987) in there, too. The drug itself is made from a weapons grade chemical lost by the military en route to disposal that winds up in the wrong hands, that part brought to mind Dan O'Bannon's *The Return of the Living Dead* (1986). The film is not copying any one of 'em but instead shares a few common threads, I loved the way Mills mashes 'em up and brings an energy and attitude to the film that's undeniable, if anything it definitely carries with it the same spirit as these three films. The look of bath salt zombies are pretty simplistic but just effective enough, once they smoke the salts the junkies are stricken with a toothy-grin that reminded me of the Batman comics when the Joker would spread his Joker venom, only here the effect is compounded by a redness around the eyes and a lust for human flesh. The acting is a bit spotty but appropriate for the type of film we're watching and I loved the effects, some of the digital stuff was sub-par but, like the acting, appropriate for the low-budget zombie romp.



Add to the cock shredding, head ripping, and intestine spewing fun some generous female nudity and a raging punk soundtrack featuring The Dwarves, Antiseen, The Meatmen, The Murder Junkies and The Gaggers and you have a three-chord fueled drug addled

zombie massacre that makes for quite an entertaining watch, when it comes to low-budget face-eating cannibal films this is at the top o' the heap this year, a fun trashy zombie romp, good stuff. **3 Outta 5**

DVD Special Features:

- Audio Commentary
- Trailer (1:04)

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