

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: ThanksKilling 3

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ThanksKilling 3

Directed by Jordan Downey

MVD Visual

99 minutes, 2013

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The original comedy-horror *ThanksKilling* (2009) grows on you, if you are inclined to extreme low-budget horror, like me. You might even find yourself using its catch phrase, "Gobble-gobble, motherfucker!" Its premise was that a killer talking/cursing turkey named Turkie was conjured by some angry Native Americans to kill the Pilgrims, and then resurrected by some 30-year-old high school students to raise havoc in modern times [reviewed [HERE](#)].

This *Part 3* is "the first movie to ship its own sequel," according to the DVD cover and publicity. Well, that's only partly true. Perhaps this is confusing out of context, but in this one, which is totally different in tone and plot, starts with a sci-fi scene from the DVD *ThanksKilling 2* (brilliant catch phrase: "In space, no one can hear you baste"). We then learn that all copies of that have been burned, sans one.

We are then introduced to Turkie, who is now living a suburban life with a turkey wife (with curlers in her comb!) and little tom. Of course, all of them are puppets, as Turkie was in the first film. When he learns about the destruction of the first sequel he knows he must set off to fetch the one copy to be able to control the world (*che?*).

Before I go on, I should state at this point that many of the characters in this film are puppets (unlike the first where it was only Turkie), including human and galactic characters. Sure this isn't the first puppet horror/fantasy piece of cinema, such as *The Dark Crystal* (1982), *Meet the Feebles* (1989), or even the more recent *Monster Puppet Massacre* (2010; reviewed [HERE](#)), but it plays well into the genre. Besides, it's that many less actors to pay on a small budget.

But the plot is only starting. We still have to meet all the other main characters, such as a hippie-type little girl being from another planet named Yomi (a puppet who looks like an escapee from *Fraggle Rock*) who is literally looking for her mind, Uncle Donny (Daniel Usaj), who created an infomercial product, dreams of opening his own amusement center called, what else,

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ThanksgivingLand, and wears a white British wig (as opposed to Whig, I suppose). His brother, Jefferson (Joe Hartzler, who is arguably the most natural actor of the bunch) also wears a wig and wants a long pike (rather than a butter knife taped to a stick) so he can be security at the Park. Their wheelchair-bound granny (a life-sized puppet that looks like anti-Israel Helen Thomas [d. 2013], who was a former and long-time member of the White House Press Corps) is a foul-mouthed rapper named Flowis. Then there is the robot guardian named Muff and his mustached bisexual puppet worm that sits on his shoulder (and is actually in charge of the two) named Rhonda, who makes bad worm puns. Plus there is a wizened and wise old turkey that's a mixture of Obi Wan and Gandalf.

Much like *The Lord of the Ring*, the film consists of the search – or actually the possession – of the fictional second part of the film. There's lots of elements of gore and horror, as well as light fantasy, dark fantasy, sci-fi, and lots of comedy, most of it groaners. There will be loss and there will be redemption, but at what cost? C'mon, no one cares, because this is actually a joy ride where we expect more candy than tofu.

Does it deliver? Well, I do admit I liked the more down to earth original better, which is saying something since that one cost \$3500, and this one was \$100,000 raised through a Kickstarter campaign. I have to posit that part of me wishes this was a totally different film than a *Turkie* one, but I also understand that building on an existing fan base is important when starting out.

Technically, it really is a much better film. The sets are better designed, the lighting and editing sharper, and *Turkie* looks more menacing. There are plenty of WTF moments, such as when you see from a fly's point of view, or sudden cartoons popping up, as with the first one, but it feels like there's something missing. Don't get me wrong, I do recommend this and especially the original if this kind of broad and raucous film is your speed, it's just a bit too, I don't know, linearly challenged. There is too much going on, perhaps. In the first, even though it was bizarre, the story of a turkey killing kids had a strong thread (including when someone didn't recognize that *Turkie* was not her father because he was wearing his hat and a Groucho mask). Now there are shorter and esoteric set pieces rather than a punsters dream.

Oh, there is still puns abound, that's for certain. In fact, built into the viewing is a drinking game, where you are suggested to have a shot or a drink of beer when certain events happen, such as *Turkie*'s one liners, Rhonda's worm word games, or when Flowis sniffs her fingers.

There are lots of extras, such as two commentary tracks by the two creators of the series (one on planning that is interesting in parts, and one on the more technical aspects of the creation of sets, puppets, lighting, and staging which was a bit more interesting. I would have liked a third that talked about the story more. Other extras include the full length infomercial that we see in the film, a Flowis rap video called "Sprinkle of Wrinkle," a stills gallery, the rules of the drinking game, a long making-off documentary which is essentially the building of the miniaturized set of *Turkie*'s home at the opening, and two of the film's trailers.

I would especially recommend this to those who have seen part one, but honestly, I am going to make an assumption that most of who will watch this already have. So enjoy, and if you're impressed, watch out for the new Kickstarter campaign that's bound to crop up.

Posted by [Robert Barry Francos](#) at 12:01 AM



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