

Ryan's Reviews

Reviews of craft beer, and independent music and movies of any genre.

Caesar and Otto's Deadly Xmas (2013)

November 17, 2013 · by Ryan from Ryan's Reviews · in Movie Reviews ·

Description (from the DVD sleeve):

Caesar and his half brother Otto take on duties at Xmas Enterprises as Santa and his elf. However, the bodies begin to pile up when a fellow store Santa (CKY's Deron Miller) develops a vendetta against them, and he soon turns Caesar's list of Dinner guests into a list of Xmas-inspired victims! A cross between Scary Movie and Silent Night Deadly Night, C & O's Deadly Xmas takes the Christmas slasher into all new gruesome and hilarious territory. Features cult movie icons Linnea Quigley, Brinke Stevens, Lloyd Kaufman, Joe Estevez, Felissa Rose and Robert Z'dar.

Major Cast:

Dave Campfield as Caesar, Paul Chomick (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2839035/?ref=tt_cl_t2) as Otto, Deron Miller (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1197390/?ref=tt_cl_t3) as Demian, Ken MacFarlane (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1796688/?ref=tt_cl_t4) as Jerry, Linnea Quigley (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001643/?ref=tt_cl_t5) as Donna Blackstone, Summer Ferguson (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1897423/?ref=tt_cl_t6) as Allison, Avi K. Garg (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1819444/?ref=tt_cl_t8) as Drew

Special Features:

Three Commentary Tracks (Director, Cast/Crew, Actors), Behind the Scenes Featurette, Alternate Scenes, Short film: Piggyzilla, Short Film: Otto's First Job, Trailers, Bonus Short Film: The Perfect Candidate

Written and Directed by Dave Campfield (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0996586/?ref=tt_cl_t1)

If you are watching CAESAR AND OTTO'S DEADLY XMAS and expecting a horror film, you are about to be sadly disappointed. Then again, if you have looked at the DVD and read anything at all about the movie, and you are still expecting a horror film, you're probably

disappointed a lot in life. IMDb lists this movie as a “Comedy Horror” but really the only thing horrific about it is a little gore, which is at best slightly off-putting. This is not a scary movie.

Is that bad? No, not at all. C&ODX is really good at what it is: a really silly, campy, self-referentially bad movie that knows how bad it is. And is it bad? Again, no, because it plays on the fact that it knows it's bad. It knows that a flashback or dream sequence is a cheap scriptwriting device, and comments on it on most of the many dreams/flashbacks presented. It is this sort of very meta humor that makes C&ODX so good. It is cheesy, yes, but in a good way, and when you have good cheese you get camp, and that's a whole different sport.



It's the 80's. You can tell because: headbands.

Caesar is an effeminate, possibly gay (but probably not) struggling actor. Otto is his bumbling half brother (who looks almost old enough to be his Dad, or at least an Uncle). Together they make up a great comedy duo, along the lines of Jay and Silent Bob. Except neither of them really shut up. Caesar has had a fear of Santa ever since his family – in a horribly mean prank – told him the story of a Santa that cuts off penises with a chainsaw. Then there was a Santa with a chainsaw. I think for most of us that would have deep, long-lasing emotional scars, and Caesar is no different. He and Otto decide to get involved with Xmas International, a company that does, well, Christmasy stuff. And from there it goes downhill.



Never listen to your family's stories if your family is Lloyd Kaufman.

What I really enjoyed about C&ODX is the fact that it does not ever, ever take its self seriously. This is a bad movie that revels in its badness, this is a movie that really knows how bad it is but puts it in your face and says "Look at me!" I can get into that esthetic. C&ODX is a very much like a Troma film (blood and nudity [though just a tiny bit] and weird situations with a weird killer) but like the best Troma films (those of Lloyd Kaufman himself), it does not take itself seriously. It never really tries to scare you, it never puts up pretense that C&ODX is a art film or a important film or a serious film. C&ODX is here to get drunk on Christmas egg nog and have a few laughs at its own expense, like that Uncle everyone says they don't like yet they keep inviting to all the family gatherings because he's just so damn fun to be around.



Santa and his gay reindeer.

On the production side of things, C&ODX is actually a very well made film. It was obviously shot in HD buy someone that has good grasp of how filmmaking should work. There is a lot of nice visuals throughout, with decent camera movement and good composition of the images on screen. At times the lighting could use a bit of work, but it's never so bad as to detract from the film, and in some shots its actually really nicely done. The sound overall is well-recorded too, and I'm glad that as a low-budget offering, Campfield et. al. did not skimp on the sound. They took the time to record it right, and as a whole there are very few audio issues, especially for the budget sandbox C&ODX is playing in.



Not my posters!

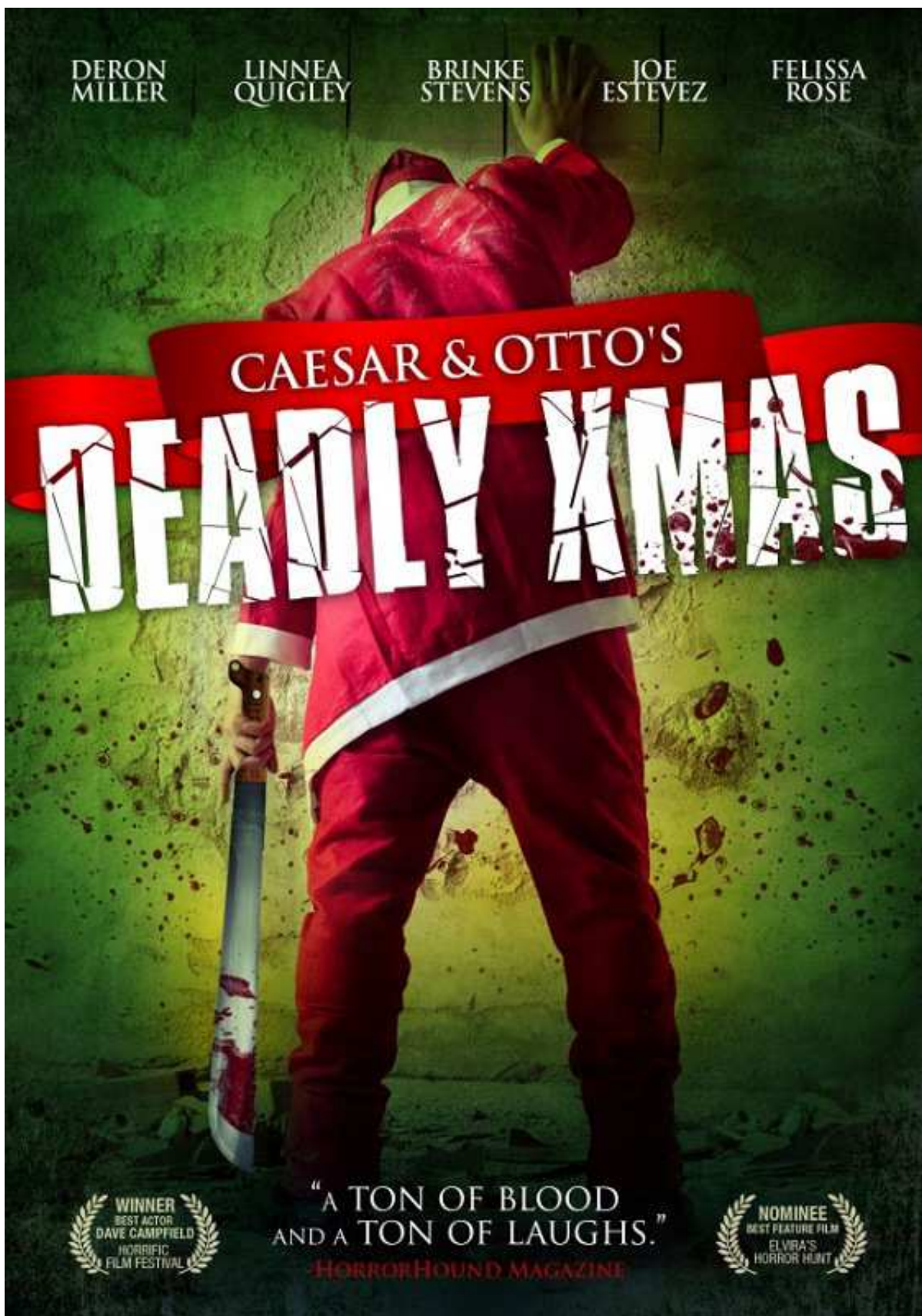
Overall, is C&ODX a perfect film? No, of course not. There are a lot of small weird bits with the plot that go places unnecessary. There are a lot of the bit players whose acting is not that great. There are just things here and there that still remind you that C&ODX is a low-budget, made from a lot of love but not a lot of money kind of movie. Are there more pros than cons? For sure. The acting as a whole is really good (especially the leads and Summer Ferguson), the production overall is above average for a low-budget film, and most importantly, C&ODX is really damned funny. Laugh out loud funny. While not a horror (no matter how much blood they stick on the cover), C&ODX really delivers the bag full of presents when it comes to the comedy and was just a really enjoyable film to watch. I look forward to what Campfield comes up with next, and while I enjoy these characters I really hope he doesn't pigeonhole himself within their world because I believe that he is a talent that could do so much more. In the meantime however, I am looking out for the next Caesar and Otto (mis)adventure.

Overall 8 / 10

C&ODX on the IMDb: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1681372/>
(<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1681372/>)

C&ODX for sale: <http://www.wildeyereleasing.com/xmas/xmas.html>
(<http://www.wildeyereleasing.com/xmas/xmas.html>)

C&ODX site: <http://www.caesarandotto.com/> (<http://www.caesarandotto.com/>)



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