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## Gila

2012

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Apparently *Gila* is supposed to be some kind of remake of the 1959 flick *The Giant Gila Monster*. Having not seen the original 1959 film I don't really have a huge amount to work off, so I just dive right in and see what this updated version I guess has to offer. The cover art to the film already has me weary and thinking this is prime SyFy film fodder right here and I am not going to get any gem in the form of *Sharknado*. Right as the film begins I have to say this is probably the fastest I have seen a film unleash its monster and it is not pretty. In *Gila* we have a giant slow moving pile of CGI birthed garbage that again looks like a craptastic computer game from the nineties, it is hard to watch already and the acting already makes me question my existence in watching this film.

After the meeting with the monster, we get treated to some fancy car races which is what teens probably did for fun back in the fifties long before video games and Facebook. The race takes place between the hot rod racing small town hero of our film Chase Winstead (Brian Gross) and his arch rival Waco Bob (Jesse Janzen). Through out the film you see these two clash off and on which comes off loudly when usually horror films dealing with some monster terrorizing a town seems to hog up all the films attention, the rivalry between these two does a decent job of giving another dimension to the film and a little more depth than your average monster flick.

Funny thing about this film is you have a giant monster thrashing around town and no one suspects anything till about half way through the film when some people of the town turn up dead, random explosions, and obvious physical evidence, and even a saliva sample found at a scene that was tested to confirm suspicions. The group of actors in this film is relatively unknown but I did appreciate the fact they brought in the star of the original film Don Sullivan who has not been in a film since the sixties, and Kelli Maroney takes on role of Deputy Wilma. I appreciate seeing Kelli in this due to her also being in cult classic films like *Night of the Comet* and *Chopping Mall*.

As the film reaches near the end the Sheriff of the town and Chase hit up an old war veterans home and raid his armory like room of highly illegal weapons to try and combat the giant Gila monster. Their first attempt fails but the second time around chase makes a sacrifice that would make any classic car lover cringe at what he does.

Usually anything that is a remake or a throw back turns out terrible, this film was actually pulled off decently and had an ok story even though it was previously laid out and easy to follow with *The Giant Gila Monster*, the film also did a good job on getting the fifties era feeling to it but I think what they added to the ending of the film was a bit cheesy and one of my only complaints along with the horrific CGI monster we see in the film. I decided

to check out a bit of the original film just to see which monster was worse, and in the fifties version they obviously use an actual Gila monster but do great camera tricks to give it that gigantic monster effect and also the use of black and white greatly helps too, where as in the current version the movement and looks of the monster are really terrible and dumb down the film sadly.

I would also like to point out who ever was in charge of creating the title menu and dealing with the bonus features should be fired and never work in this field again, it is incredibly hard to navigate and generally when you scroll over the desired item it becomes highlighted, here you have to just guess what your clicking because there is no way to tell them apart. The bonus features were pretty weak as you just have a poorly done slide show, a brief story about the original film and some music videos.

Generally I would tear apart a film like this due to the horrible CGI I had to bear witness to but thanks to a decent story and a film that wasn't set in a horribly annoying time period it actually worked out to be watch able, if you do enjoy good nods to the classic fifties drive in films *Gila* does an okay job in that department.

-Derek-

Directed by:  
Jim Wynorski

Written by:  
William Dever  
Steve Mitchell  
Jim Nielsen  
Paul Sinor

Cast:  
Bruce Munson  
Adrienne Atkins  
Bryan Patrick McCulley  
Brian Gross  
Chase Adams  
Madeline Voges  
Christina DeRosa  
Callie Burk  
Terence Knox  
Kelli Maroney  
Don Sullivan

DVD Features:  
Aspect Ratio: 1.33:1  
Audio: English Dolby Digital Stereo  
Original trailer  
Slideshow  
The original Gila monster  
The Mushroom Song  
Gila Trailer