



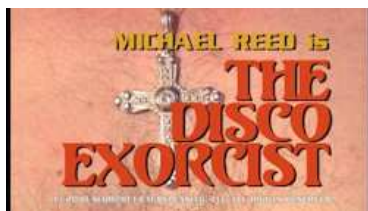
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Disco Exorcist, The (2011)

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Submitted by: **Brett Gallman** Date : 2012-06-13 23:14



Written by: **Tony Nunes (screenplay,)** and **Guy Benoit, Ted Geoghegan, & Ted Marr (additional material)**
Directed by: **Tony Griffin**
Starring: **Michael Reed, Sarah Nicklin and Ruth Sullivan**

Reviewed by: **Brett Gallman**

"I call the bitches of this world to rise up and get their revenge!"

For his latest nostalgia fetish piece, director Richard Griffith has tackled something that's more dead than the grindhouse scene itself: disco. **The Disco Exorcist** is actually his return to the dance floor after **Splatter Disco**, and his case of Saturday night fever doesn't come without a side of STDs and cocaine-fuelled delirium. This is an unabashedly sleazy and stupid throwback to seedy 42nd street theaters as seen from a comfortable and farcical distance, and the end result is a movie whose love for the era is palatable to the point of irreverence.

Rex Romanski (Michael Reed) is bigger than Tony Manero at his local disco scene. The only thing bigger than his pile of cocaine is the gaggle of chicks waiting to score with him. One night, he settles on Rita (Ruth Sullivan), and has lots of sex with her before becoming smitten, at least until porn star Amoreena Jones (Sarah Nicklin) strolls into his club and catches his eyes. Hell hath no fury like a woman scored for a whore, so Rita puts a hex on Amoreena *and* raises an undead army of the similarly scorned, and shenanigans occasionally ensue when she isn't banging Rex.



Like a lot of these faux-grindhouse homage films, **The Disco Exorcist** takes the **Planet Terror** route of focusing on the badness of these films and bringing it forth in the form of a spoof, I guess. It's kind of hard to tell what exactly the target is here unless it's just porno knock-offs and sexploitation. Unlike **Planet Terror**, **The Disco Exorcist** can't really get away with its approach because it, too, is a bad movie, at least at the script level. There's really just not a whole lot of ingenuity to the film, as the big joke is that Rex likes to have lots of sex. He also does drugs and raises the ire of another porn star that's fighting for Amoreena's affection (read: blowjobs). None of this is played for any imaginative laughs, as Griffin just coasts on the base crudeness of it all, and its

excess is tiresome and trite.

If you were to remove all of the sex in **The Disco Exorcist**, it probably wouldn't even exist. At one point, the characters actually visit a porno theater and there's an interlude featuring the film they're watching, and there's no real discernable difference between it and **The Disco Exorcist**. About midway though, you'll surmise that you're really watching a ridiculous softcore sexploitation flick with an occasional demented streak that results in severed cocks and other assorted manglings that actually feel like real plot points when compared to all the sex. The horror elements finally take over during the final sequence, which of course is replete with a take-off of **The Exorcist**, only all the foul-mouthed dialogue is coming from the mouth of a porn star who has probably said worse during one of her movies (or even during this movie). Some intermittent bits--like a trip to the Romanski's Catholic-guilt ridden home and a Jess Franco-esque stroll through mist-shrouded woods, are effective, but **The Disco Exorcist** is a largely monotonous parade of nudie gags and idiocy.



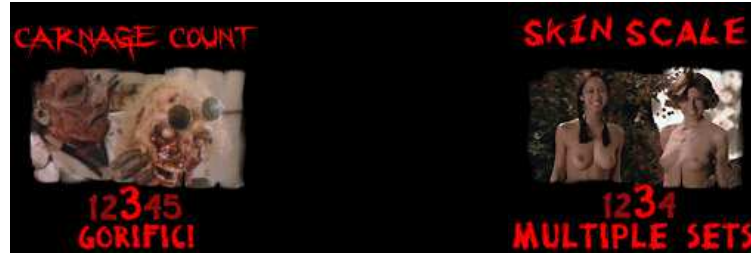
But of course it is, right? It's not like a movie called **The Disco Exorcist** has many pretenses, I suppose, but that doesn't really give it a pass to be this weak, especially since Griffin has actually crafted a pretty nice looking movie. His replication of the 70s is rather precise, right down to the fashions and the film's title card. Perhaps oddly enough, it doesn't actually look like a porno, but rather, a real movie, and even the fake, digital print damage and muted color



timing work pretty well in creating the illusion. However, that's all it is: a pretty illusion meant to coax nostalgia that'll hopefully help you overlook that there's only about thirty minutes worth of plot here that's mercilessly padded by tits, ass, and cocaine bumps. Maybe it'll work for some, but it's hard not to liken this

to dressing up a hooker and calling her an escort. Sure, she looks nice and is amiable enough, but, at the end of the night, you're still paying for empty, meaningless sex.

Griffin's scrappiness is admirable, at least. He's working with only \$20,000 and has managed to secure better than average acting for this sort of thing. The girls--even the porno star--manage to seem really sweet, and Reed is rather indomitable as Rex. I just wish Griffin had been so earnest in his writing of a script as he was in crafting the outrageous gags and recapturing the 70s aesthetic. There's just an unfortunate disconnect with the spirit of it all--in the end, **The Disco Exorcist** feels like someone's second-hand recounting of a grindhouse movie rather than an actual grindhouse movie, which is a problem with so many of these things. You can see how it works out for yourself by checking out Wild Eye Releasing's DVD next week, where you'll find a nice anamorphic transfer and a strong stereo soundtrack that will often convince anyone in another room that you're actually watching porn. Special features include a commentary with Griffin, a deleted scene, a teaser, and some trailers. If you even chuckled when you read the title of this film, then there's a good chance you'll find something to enjoy, at least until the joke begins to wear a little thin. **Rent it!**



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