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Fan of the Dead

2008

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Most people these days consider documentaries to be kept within the confines of the special features section of movie releases, short and to the point we mostly hope, they are kept pretty trim and run no longer than half an hour. In *Fan of the Dead*, this would appear to be some kind of documentary tackling quite a few films from George A. Romero and keeping it a little under one hour for its running length.

A seemingly young amateur Frenchman Nicolas Garreau grabs a camcorder and travels to America to spend three days hitting various film locations for various classic Romero films. Before this film can even begin sprinkles of irritation rain down just like *in Return of the Living Dead* with the toxic rain as a toxic combination of a terrible voice over covers up Garreau's native tongue as he speaks, this literally comes off as some bad CNN interview with a translation on top.

Then begins the slow process of becoming more of a ride along as you see the various locations Garreau hits and gets excited like a fanboy getting just too overly happy. Garreau will take you to various places like the basement from *Night of the Living Dead*, the massive storage facility that was made to seem like a military bunker in *Day of the Dead* and of course the infamous Mall used in *Dawn of the Dead*, with a few other tidbits thrown in as well.

Seeing the actors talk with passion about a film that happened twenty-five years ago that is a huge cult classic to many makes up for the horrible voice over job you deal with in the first half. As an added bonus the actors take a large group of fan along with Garreau to the very mall *Dawn of the Dead* took place and even with a token improv zombie performance going up the escalator that was super cheesy but will be eaten up by any Fanboy.

Once the climax concludes it simmers back down to Garreau enjoying his final moments on his three day sight seeing of the dead. It concludes with a visit to the location of the *Night of the Living Dead* re-make by Tom Savini.

It takes place on a spooky manor which Garreau professes is so eerie that he does not want to be around when the sun sets as the

owner comments that visitors seem to share that same idea. It was a decent way to wrap up the documentary.

For production values in *Fan of the Dead*, they get tossed out and changed for straight up guerilla film making, as this seems unscripted as the content comes as it goes, sometimes lucky and sometimes just filler that has to be there for the sake of filling it up. Considering this is a documentary, don't expect much in the special features department at all. If anything there is a very embarrassing photo section that has various shots that are horrendously pixilated to the point of where you think you are looking at screen shots for an old Nintendo game. I don't ever think I have seen a slide show pixilated like this before so it holds a first for that. If anything they could have tried copying Horrorhound magazines idea where they visit various horror film locations and do a then and now for classic scenes, and of course done this in a higher resolution to avoid the pixilation, har har.

Also for bonus features Cheezy Flicks does an awesome job of mixing upcoming releases with some vintage drive-in commercials that really pay tribute to the old previews you would see before a movie.

Overall this is not terrible but it is far from great, it has some small redeeming parts that counteract the horrible that go hand in hand with this project. With so many things on the re-make chopping block this is something that I think could really be done much better. Perhaps in the future with *Survival of the Dead* rising from Romero's tomb of films, Garreau could take a second shot at making a documentary of the next three Romero films that take place right after *Day of the Dead*, that would be interesting who knows maybe he could even toss in a nod to the late Dennis Hooper from *Land of the Dead* while he is at it. This documentary was made almost seven years ago, so perhaps he might be able to come up with a better presentation this time around. Taking on the new trio is also a subject that is rich because Romero busted out 3 Zombie films in less than five years where as it took him seventeen years just to make the first trilogy of Dead films. Only the future can tell where Garreau takes his passion for the walking dead.

-Derek-

Directed by:
Nicolas Garreau

Written by:
Olivier André

Cast:
Ken Foree
David Emge
Jim Krut

DVD Features:
Aspect Ratio: 1.33:1
Audio: English Dolby Digital 2.0
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