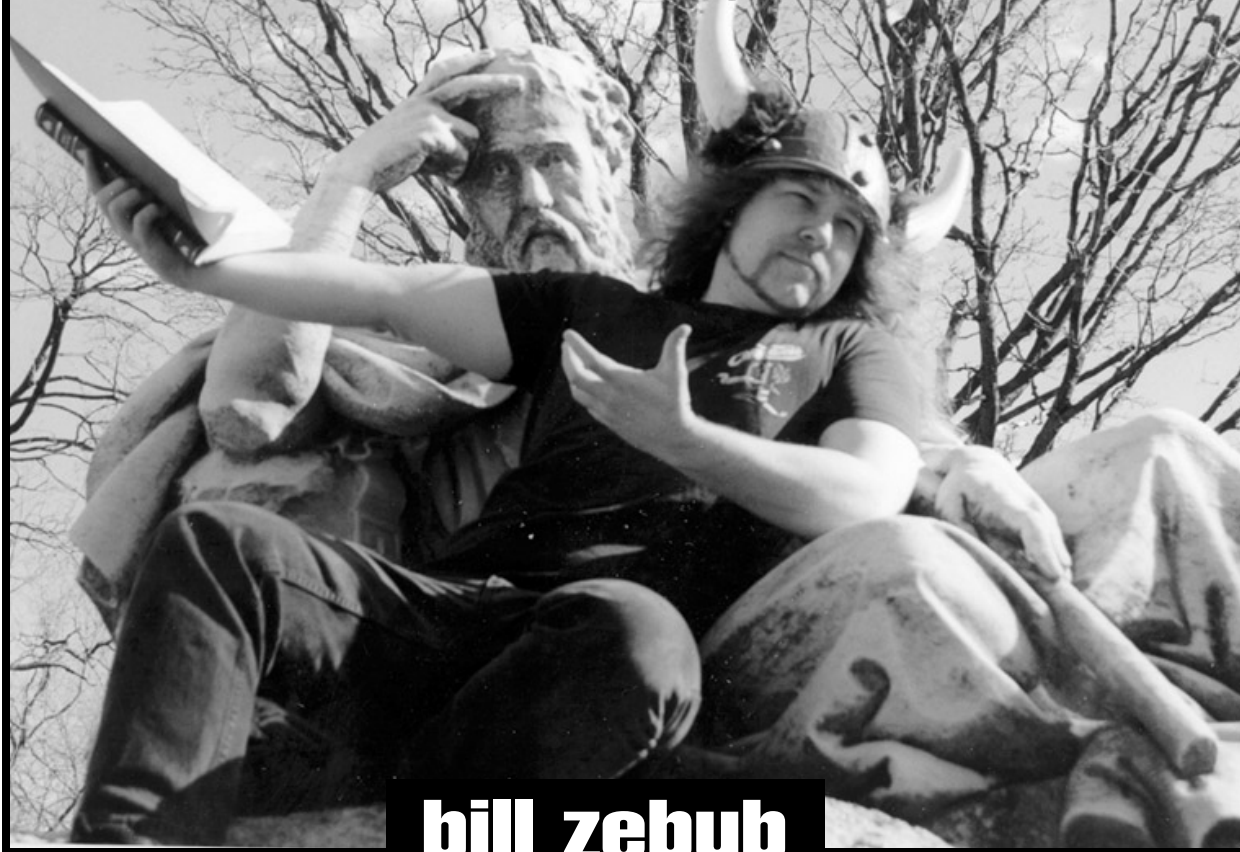


TELLER OF TWISTED TALES



bill zebub

"Just one more thing!" says Bill Zebub as I make ready to shut off the recorder and put a close to the already hour-long interview. Full of interesting stories about his movies and some great one-liners on a variety of topics ("Everyone who knows me thinks I'm an asshole. That's how you can tell if someone really knows me."), Zebub is the man responsible for numerous films with what can only be considered heavy metal content and subject matter, among them *Death Metal: A Documentary*, *Metalheads*, *Metal Radio—KCUF*, *Dirtbags*, *Kill The Scream Queen*, *The Crucifier*, and the outrageous *Stereotypes Don't Just Disappear Into Thin Air*.

His movies run the fine line between horrific and hilarious, are usually loaded down with naked women, great music and low budgets. Casting a combination of friends, actors and what may or may not be people he meets on the street, Bill Zebub oversees all of his own productions as Writer, Director, Producer, Camera Operator, Editor, etc. He's hell's very own Orson Welles.

Going under the assumption that because he cannot possibly make a "feature" film in the big budget, eye candy sense of the word, Zebub believes that what he has to offer instead is content. The kind which larger movies could not possibly bring to the audience. Some would call it politically incorrect, some would call it offensive, but more often than not Zebub is conscious of these borders and his crossing of them. It is this above all else that is the main appeal of his films. There's an air of spontaneity because there's no strict script, but at the same time there is an underlying intelligence that belies a sense of purpose and intent.

Here's what happened when I asked him how he got his start in filmmaking:

Bill Zebub: It's funny that you ask that because I was actually going to prepare a fake story for you, completely sensational. I learned that from a couple people who are in popular bands whose biographies are totally fictitious, but I won't do that. The truth is kind of strange anyway.

When I got a video camera for Christmas, for some reason I kept going to the Willowbrook Mall and interviewing hot girls. And I told them that I'm a sociology major and it was going to be on Montclair TV, which didn't exist at the time.

Within three or four questions I would start getting very stupid, and I've only had a couple girls leave at that point. It wasn't crude stupid, I must have appeared mentally ill. I don't know if it was the pressure of having the camera on, or if I was just incredibly charming and handsome that kept them answering the questions.

But I kept doing these things until I had two hours of tape, and when I had two hours of tape I would give all the girls copies, it wasn't really

meant to be distributed by anyone else. I think because this off the cuff absurdity that developed my *Grimoire* interrogation style for the magazine.

I was out one night at Pathmark in Clifton and these derelicts I've always known pulled up, and it was really late, for some reason I wanted a midnight snack and I had the video camera and fake beards in the car and to this day I have no idea why I bought fake beards. I didn't do anything other than interview girls at malls.

So we decided to go out and about and we got lost in some hick towns and we just kept going everywhere as the Oak Ridge Boys with the fake beards. 'We don't know how to sing, but we know what kind of donuts to buy.' Anyway, after that we started doing stuff that you're familiar with watching 'Jackass.'

And there was this giant Halloween party in this mansion and everybody who was in on the hijinks and the Oak Ridge Boys was there and I asked the owner of the house if we could sneak into the room and I could show them the material and little by little people were trickling into the room and watching and the room was packed.

We actually went into the proper living room and people were asking me how they could get copies of this stuff. It was really surprising to me because I only thought this stuff was funny to me and whoever else was in the video.

It was hard to find stores to let me put tapes in there on consignment and my editing was just VCR to VCR and there's no control in that so sometimes you cut too much or you don't cut enough. It didn't really matter because they weren't skits.

When I graduated to skits, I turned my back on the 'Jackass' stuff because I thought I was improving. I went from the interviews to the 'Jackass' stuff to the skits and now I really regret not having the business sense back then because I don't know if the world was ready for something like 'Jackass,' but I could've been rich today, and if I return to that it's going to be a little suspicious. But I am going to do a 'Jackass' kind of movie, I think I've explained the history of all that, but the full-length movies.

I went to the Chiller Theatre Horror Convention. I had avoided it for a long time because I'm not a nerd, and I didn't see the point of going to a horror convention, but someone told me people go there and metalheads go there, so I basically just went to give out *The Grimoire* and leave it on tables and I got rid of thousands. I noticed that the Chiller Theatre Horror Convention was like my dream flea market.

I didn't really see any celebrities, I just saw all sorts of vendors who had soundtracks to H.R. Puffnstuff or whatever. All these movies that

I've been looking for and could not find. Of course they were bootlegs, I don't understand how they didn't go to jail.

After going there two or three times, I bumped into somebody who introduced me to his girlfriend who goes under the name Darian Caine, she was in that movie *Playmate Of The Apes*. So she let me sell my videos at her table, I had just like a little corner, but eventually she told me I couldn't sit behind the table anymore because I got drunk and scared the customers away.

Yeah, I'm a loud drunk, but it wasn't me scaring normal customers away, she has certain customers, I guess you could call them perverts. They're the archetypal perverts who are very spooked by any male presence, so it takes all day for them just staring at her to walk up to her and ask for an autograph or to buy a movie, and me being there does not help.

But beyond letting me have a corner of her table, she was also in a skit or two of mine. She told me that it was important to have booby girls in the movie and that the movie doesn't have to be good, as long as it has boobs people will buy them.

I wasn't looking at worldwide sales, I was just looking at Chiller Theatre and maybe selling movies through my magazine. And again, they were not professionally dubbed, they were just VCR to VCR on demand.

I know this is a long story and you'll probably find a way to paraphrase and put it into two sentences, but the time came to make a full-length movie because I wanted to put something together and present it to one of the companies that put out Darian's movies. She assured me that it would be really easy if I had these big name scream queens.

They were my friends, these scream queens, and I paid them, but not their normal day-rate, but they were also not naked in my movie. It felt really weird to have a girl you've known as a friend take all of her clothes off in front of you and do what you tell her to do. Too much power. Couldn't deal with it.

There have been skits that I've made that were too long, and some skits were bad, and I know that. I didn't want to make a movie that was bad. If a skit is bad, five minutes are lost, big deal. But a 90-minute bad movie is too much heartache, so I actually read a book by Syd Field and it was about screenwriting and all of a sudden the fog cleared and *Metalheads* was my first movie.

And it had Darian Caine and Susie Loraine, who played the part of a 15-year old-girl the evil metalhead got drunk and had his way with. But of course, after all that, I became very comfortable with naked women. (laughs)

In addition to his films, Zebub is also known as Professor Dum Dum on 91.1 WFMU and is the publisher of *The Grimoire Of Exalted Deeds*. For more information, log on to www.thegrimoire.com

