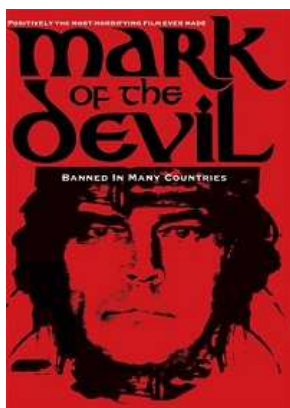




Mark of the Devil

REVIEWED BY: Kami Posted on 18/11/2013



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Filed in Austria and starring a young Udo Kier and an old Herbert Lom as the apprentice and master witch hunters, Christian and Lord Cumberland respectively, this trashy knock off of Witch Finder General kicks off with a wagonful of nuns being raped and slaughtered so you just know it's going to be a classy historical epic from here on in.

Local witch hunter Albino (Reggie Nalder and no he isn't an albino) is enjoying the power that comes with his job and after tarring and feathering a priest and burning a nun he is a little pissed off when a "new sheriff" in the shape of Lord Cumberland hits town and take over his turf. He's even more pissed off with Christian who has stopped Albino from having his way with the buxom tavern girl Vanessa (Olivera Vuco) who has caught both their eyes but fancies the young brooding Christian over the scarred ugly Albino. Albino has already been busted for not actually having any indictments, confessions or proof for any of the many, many people he's condemned, burnt, tortured or tarred and feathered (because of course you need these things to make torture, killing, burning etc legal in the eyes of god and all that) so he's not a happy non-albino Albino.

Not that Christian notices or cares because whilst preparing a local castle for the imminent arrival of his Lord and mentor Cumberland, he's also looking down Vanessa's blouse, frolicking with nature and spending quality time with our bar wench. Albino meanwhile is planning his revenge. If he ain't gettin' it then no one is and sure enough Vanessa is declared a witch (with an indictment this time) and locked up in the dungeons by the horny but impotent Cumberland. Meanwhile a young baron is brought to the castle to be cleansed of his sins and to sign over his estate to the church, a nun who was raped by her bishop is tortured so she'll declare it was the devil and not the lord bishop and poor old Christian begins to doubt his mentor's faith and methods.

With a few handy victims we can now commence the b-grade torture and mutilation, beatings, burnings, the rack, thumbscrew, tongues torn out, even a totally off the wall water torture... it's all here in glorious low budget goodness. Now we look at it and go "meh" but for 1970, this was pretty heady stuff... nasty, violent and guaranteed to offend and upset.

When the power mad Albino and his buddies bust in on a young couple having a bit of morning nooky things go a little wrong and Albino soon finds himself called before Cumberland where an argument results in Albino being strangled and Christian being witness to the murder. If he didn't doubt his mentor beforehand he certainly does now. Of course having the sheila you fancy being locked up should have been enough, let alone watching the torture of a young baron being accused of devil worship and being offered a pardon if he would just sign over his estate but now with the cover up of Albino's demise, well let's just say that the relationship between mentor and apprentice is strained. It's only when a couple of puppeteers are arrested and declared devil worshippers despite Cumberland knowing they are innocent, (the old bugger just wants the wife to pull his strings!) that Christian finally rebels, freeing his buxom babe and unwittingly signing his own death warrant. You see the buxom and bouncing Vanessa calls the townsfolk together and they storm the castle, missing the wily Cumberland but getting hold of a stupified and battered Christian. True love was never meant to be easy it seems, especially if you are a witch finder apprentice and a buxom bar wench. This ain't no sound of music finale let me tell you that.

With bad dubbing, an intrusive soundtrack, some truly daft lines, Udo's gaze, Olivera's bounce, the water torture skit, burnings, beatings, tongues torn and all that b-grade old skool 1970s blood and guts this is a film that deservedly has a nasty and cheesy reputation. Back when it first came out, you got a vomitbag when you walked into the cinema and the good folk at Cheezy Flicks have continued that tradition! You might just need it.

DISC DETAILS:

DIRECTOR(S): Michael Armstrong | COUNTRY: West Germany | YEAR: 1970 | DISTRIBUTOR(S): Cheezy Flicks Entertainment | RUNNING TIME: 96 minutes | ASPECT RATIO: 1:33:1 | REGION: 1 / NTSC | DISCS: 1

EXTRAS:


- Trailers from Cheezy Flicks
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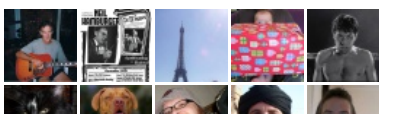


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