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Info:

- ▶ **Disc Grade:** B
- ▶ **Reviewed Format:** DVD
- ▶ **Rated:** Not Rated
- ▶ **Stars:** Phil Caracas, Murielle Varhelyi, Maria Moulton, Tim DeVries, Ian Driscoll, Josh Grace, Jeff Moffet
- ▶ **Writer:** Ian Driscoll
- ▶ **Director:** Lee Gordon Demarbre
- ▶ **Distributor:** Eclectic DVD
- ▶ **Original Year of Release:** 2001
- ▶ **Retail Price:** \$19.95
- ▶ **Extras:** audio commentary; outtakes; deleted scenes; gallery; interview segments; trailers

JESUS CHRIST VAMPIRE HUNTER

Holy action hero! JC gives the vamps a right cross!

By BRIAN THOMAS March 18, 2003

As has been well documented, Jesus of Nazareth has been misquoted and misrepresented by his followers for two thousand years. It's about time someone got back to promoting the two-fisted Fightin' Jesus the kind of hero that won't cop out when there's danger all about. The kind of hero the people of today can believe in. Canadian filmmaker Lee Gordon Demarbre answers the challenge with this self-financed production that borrows inspiration from '70s and '80s action flicks. This isn't the first movie to connect vampires with the New Testament **DRACULA 2000** and John Carpenter's **VAMPIRES** are two recent examples but it sure is the most fun.

In the new millennium, evil has grown so strong throughout the world that vampires are able to walk around in the daylight. A cult of vampires is growing in Ottawa and in accordance with current fashion, most of their new recruits are lesbians. Unable to deal with the crisis themselves, the punk clergymen of the city turn to the recently returned Son o' God (Phil Caracas) for help. An vampire attack on the beach is enough to convince the Man to put aside passing holy judgment and building his Father's kingdom until after he deals with the Undead problem.

The first order of business is a trip to the barbershop, where J.C. gets a nice buzz cut so he's ready for action. A song and dance number fails to rally the public to his cause, but Jesus gets some help from inner city priest Father Eustace (Tim DeVries) and curvy Vatican troubleshooter Mary Magnum (Maria Moulton). Trailing vampire queen Maxine Schrek (Murielle Varhelyi), Jesus and Mary discover that new skin graft techniques developed by Dr. Praetorius (Josh Grace) are behind the new nosferatu tolerance for the Sun. Some victims are more suitable for the doctor's experiments than others, and Schrek and her partner Johnny Golgotha (screenwriter Ian Driscoll) have been raiding the local Lesbian Drop-in Center for raw material. Finding the undead too strong to beat with only His mortal kung fu ability, Jesus calls in some heavy duty help in the form of masked Mexican wrestling champ Santos (Jeff Moffet).

The idea alone is ingenious enough to draw interest across multiple strata, and fortunately Demarbre delivers a movie to back it up, not mean enough to overly offend Christians, but not bland either. There's a bit of graphic gore and blood, but none of it is realistic enough to spoil the mood. And unlike the legion of "erotic lesbian vampire" movies that have been churned out over the past few years not to mention narrow-minded "Christian family entertainment" in all its forms - this one is actually supportive of such "alternative lifestyles."

Besides, how many action heroes are nice enough to heal an enemy's throat after cutting it?

The quality of the 16mm filming is relatively poor, about on the level of **ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOES** or **SURF NAZIS MUST DIE** not slick enough for Sundance, but fine for Tromadance, and the humor is sharp enough to overcome the budgetary constraints. One suspects the main reason that the vampires can stand the sunlight in this picture is to minimize night shooting Demarbre seems to have definite problems lighting his scenes. He wisely opts for dubbing in post-sync dialogue and sound effects, sidestepping the audio nightmares that defeat many low budget filmmakers. Amusingly short for the role (at least by common perception), Paul Caracas who also stars as Demarbre's spy hero Harry Knuckles in a series of films -is very good in the lead, playing Jesus as a nice guy with a job to do, just cocky enough to be comfortable with his position. He also does a good job with the amateurish but enthusiastic martial arts scenes. The action, which boasts some decent stunts, is spiced up with vintage sound effects, and the entire film benefits from the funky synthesizer soundtrack (usually a soundtrack no-no).

The end title sequence set to a peppy tune called "Everybody Gets Laid Tonight" that sounds precisely like most Christian rock includes numerous outtakes, but over 18 minutes more are to be found in the DVD extras, which are narrated by Demarbre, Caracas, Driscoll, and company. They're also on hand for a full length feature commentrak. There's also an extended version of the song & dance sequence. Other extras include an interview section with cast & crew, the trailer, an image gallery (see the writer mopping up blood), and an extremely generous 40 chapter marks. The digital transfer quality of the footage included in the extras is very poor, with the image often breaking up into tiles.

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All I can say is, I HAVE GOT TO SEE THIS MOVIE!! LOL. Sounds excellent on so many levels.

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