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Banshee!!! (2008)

By: [Devon Bertsch](#) on May 7, 2010. [Share](#) [Comments \(0\)](#)



Synthetic Cinema | Region 1, NTSC | 1.78:1 (16:9 enhanced) | English DD 5.1 | 85 minutes

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The Movie

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Credits

Director: Colin Theys
 Starring: Ashley Bates, David McCarthy, Kevin Shea, Kerry McGann, Iris McQuillan-Grace, Troy Walcott
 Screenplay: John Doolan, Gregory C. Parker, Christian Pindar
 Country: USA

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Scream gets a lot of crap for making it fashionable to have characters in horror movies spout witty dialogue. This is a bit unfair, because as anyone who's seen early entries in the **Friday the 13th** series can attest, people that think they're funny when they're not has long been a staple in the horror genre. I think what **Scream** did was instead of having one "comic relief" character in the film, anyone in the cast might throw out a joke. This trend is annoying because being funny requires talent, so when a movie like **Banshee!!!** introduces a whole slew of would-be comedians with worse timing than a broken Casio, I get nervous. Fortunately most of these jokers get killed quickly and the film focuses on that traditional horror conundrum: Being stuck in a house while something that wants to kill you is trying to get in.

Banshee!!! starts in the 70s, but then cuts into the present day and a group of college kids are heading out into the woods for a bit of spring break camping. I figured they must be community college kids because at least one of them still lives at home with her parents in the area, but someone else mentions going to school for four years, so it must be some prestigious university located in Hicksville that they're attending. Anyway, the banshee(!!!) takes one of the kid's form and then starts cutting the group up. This isn't a banshee(!!!) content with just wailing when someone's about to die, this banshee(!!!) wants to be the one to end that person's life, preferably in a violent fashion. The remaining college kids hole up with a dude that seems like a redneck, pumped up version of George Carlin and his

nephew. Trapped in not-George's house, they all try to figure out a way to survive. The situation doesn't seem to worry the people too much; one character, a "funny" guy like I was mentioning before, behaves in a completely unbelievable manor, constantly tossin' out lame jokes in an attempt to wedge laughs into the film. Some of the others act so chirpy and unconcerned I expected them to break out in a round of Kum Bay Ya despite the fact they never got to set up their camp, let alone their camp fires.

The acting in **Banshee!!!** varies; some of the cast are shocking but thankfully most of the leads are passable. One of the actors introduced later in the film actually has some comic timing, and it's no coincidence he's the one responsible for the film's lone genuinely funny line. It's not the only joke that works as there is also an elaborate cut away gag that feels a bit out of place, but gets some kudos just for being so elaborate. The movie's actually at its funniest when it's playing things straight, because these are some of the stupidest characters ever put to celluloid. Maybe their thickness is to help cover plot holes (wouldn't do to have characters asking about things that don't make sense), but I doubt it. The biggest laugh from me was when a character decided a chair would be more lethal than a shotgun, and that sequence was played completely seriously.

Aside from the humour, the movie is competently staged and filmed. There're some plot holes, so the script isn't all it could be, but at least the script keeps the film moving along briskly and offers plenty of fodder for the banshee(!!!). A lot of fuss is made about wearing ear plugs to stay safe from the creature, but I didn't understand why because everyone seemed to be able hear through the plugs anyway, and the banshee(!!!) doesn't often kill with its scream. Because the banshee(!!!) is more of a claws on kinda monster, there's some okay gore. I also dug the banshee(!!!) facial design. The monster's full body shots aren't too bad either, despite being CG, which is no mean feat on a low budget film.

The film is certainly silly, and a climactic rock show merely highlights this. Even with all of its flaws, I liked it because at least it wasn't another fucking vampire movie.

Video

I don't think it's the fault of the transfer, but **Banshee!!!** looks grainy in darker scenes and the colours seem slightly overly processed. Otherwise the print is clear.

Audio

There's a 2.0 and 5.1 mix. The 2.0 is useless and sounds really flat, particularly when music is on. The 5.1 isn't fabulous either, but the 2.0's sound actually annoyed me, so the 5.1 is preferable. Both tracks distort when there's yelling. Again I think the lacklustre mixing is more a flaw with the source than the transfer.

Extra Features

The DVD includes the film's trailer; bloopers *and* outtakes; a few minutes of deleted scenes; a trailer for **Assault of the Sasquatch**, which seems to have a similar cast to **Banshee!!!**; and a commentary. I found it odd that there was a bloopers extra and an outtakes extra, and I'm not really sure what the difference between the two is. I also found it odd that I enjoyed the bloopers, but by the time I started on the outtakes I was over flubs. The commentary track is with four of the dudes involved. They offer plenty of info and keep the pace lively to hold the listener's interest. They're mildly amusing guys that seem to be having a good time and they're clearly proud of their film.

The Verdict

Movie		Fair
Disc		Fair
Overall		Fair

Banshee!!! is an okay monster movie with stupider than average characters. Turn the brain off before turning the DVD player on and it's enjoyable enough.

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