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Banshee!!!

MVD Visual // 2008 // 86 Minutes // Not Rated
Reviewed by Judge Daryl Loomis // February 19th, 2010

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If Judge Daryl Loomis knew it only took sound to hallucinate, he wouldn't have wasted his college years.

Note: This is a pre-release review. **Banshee!!!** will be available for purchase on March 23rd, 2010

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The Charge

By the time you hear it...you're already dead.

The Case

An old Irish legend, the dark Connecticut woods, and a group of hapless teens on spring break; it sounds like the setup to a second-rate horror flick. Surprise! That's exactly what we have in **Banshee!!!**, a creature feature that generates plenty of excitement from its heavily-punctuated title, but not quite enough in its actual production. It has a workable premise and some decent effects, but that quickly gives way to unlikeable characters and goofiness to the extreme and, ultimately, it sinks.

Two stories converge into a story of people trapped in a house battling a banshee from Irish lore. First, a carload of college kids arrive at their spring break campground. Why they don't go someplace that gets warm in March is anybody's guess. They park and head out into the woods, but get separated, and some kind of nasty, sharp-toothed creature starts taking them out. Alternately, we have an old roughneck pulling a car out of some brush on his property. A gross cocoon falls out and, though he doesn't realize it yet, that's where this creature was born. He soon learns all too well that this creature still likes hanging out there.

None of this, of course, makes very much sense. It feels like the movie was generated with only two things in mind, a location and an idea for the climax, from which writer John Doolan and director Colin Theys figured out a plot and shoehorned it into this film. The separate introductions and abundance of initial characters confuses things from the start; though they get started building a body count almost immediately, there is too much going on for any relationships to build, let alone any suspense. The people in the car are supposed to be best friends, but nobody seems to know anybody very well. It doesn't help that, as the teens are murdered, the reactions of these supposed friends are closer to bafflement than to terror or grief. Because we don't get to know most of them, we don't have time to get to hate them. From what we do know, however, there wasn't much to like.

Once the kids get weeded down to a reasonable number, their story merges with the roughneck's. He hasn't been seen since the intro, but we quickly learn that a lot has gone down with him since he last appeared. His nephew, Rocker (David McCarthy), has shown up, his wife was the first banshee victim, and he has a base at his house where he can fight the creature. Here, we start to learn a little bit about the creature and the situation, but it turns out that ignorance is bliss. The more we learn and the more that happens, the more ridiculous it becomes. It all culminates into one of the single corniest climaxes I've ever seen. It's awful, yes, but everybody should see it. Without saying too much, it involves Rocker pulling out the axe so he can rock the banshee to death. It's sillier than I can describe. The best thing I can say is that it never takes itself very seriously; they couldn't and allow that scene to stay in the film.

The performances are middle of the road; acceptable across the board without ever rising to a very high level. These aren't the most experienced people and they aren't working with the greatest script, but they make do. The biggest problem with the film is in how much we see the banshee. When most of the kills take place, the monster takes the form of one of the humans. That works pretty well, and doesn't take any elaborate digital effects. However, they feel the need to show us the creature in its true form. Every time we see it, it looks more and more like a badly-rendered cross between Alien and the monster from [Jeepers Creepers](#). Not good; by the end, it looks really cheesy.

MVD has produced a very nice release for **Banshee!!!**, something much better than I would have expected. The image

Scales of Justice

Judgment: 70

Perp Profile

Studio: [MVD Visual](#)

Video Formats:

- 1.78:1 Anamorphic

Audio Formats:

- Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround (English)

Subtitles:

- English
- Spanish

Running Time: 86 Minutes

Release Year: 2008

MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Genres:

- [Horror](#)
- [Independent](#)

Distinguishing Marks

- Commentary
- Deleted Scenes
- Bloopers/Outtakes
- Trailer

Accomplices

- [IMDb](#)

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transfer does suffer a few problems in the darker scenes, with murky, inconsistent black levels and colors that bleed into each other. The brighter daylight shots are considerably better, clear and bright without much at all to complain about. The surround mix is very good, with clear dialog and a full array of spatial effects to really let you hear the banshee's screams. The extras are your standard fare, with a commentary, deleted scenes, and a blooper reel. The outtakes are stupid, but the rest is informative.

Banshee!!! works fairly well for the budget; horror fans can have fun with some of the cheesy effects and dialog. It's ultimately crushed under the weight of its premise, however. This is a derivative film that offers little but some bloodshed and eye-rolling laughs as a time killer.

The Verdict

Guilty!!!

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