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# Dolla Morte

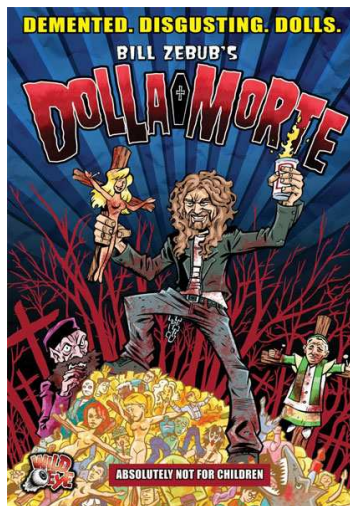
## directed by Bill Zebub

MVDvisual / Wild Eye

Zero budget, high concept, and uneven execution -- that sums up Bill Zebub's 2006 riff on Trey Parker's successful *Team America*. In this brave new world, a small team of highly-trained GI Joe dolls attempts to rescue one of their girlfriends, but things go terribly wrong, as they so often do. Islamic terrorists are out to take over America, George Bush is attempting to find the Unholy Grail, and the Pope takes a shit in the woods. Sound incoherent?

Well, in order to create that summary I had to read the website, do some Google searches, and sit through the Cliff Notes version of the story in the credits. If you have to explain the plot of an action adventure story, you're doing something wrong somewhere.

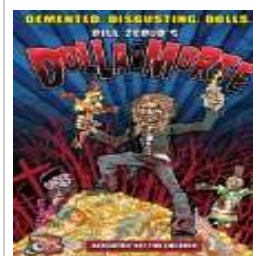
Style-wise, this film compares itself to *Robot Chicken* and other recent zero-budget films and cartoons. Actors are all dolls and puppets, some of which are quite good; the Pope and Bush were particularly convincing. Several dozen Bratz dolls were punched, spindled, and mutilated with barbecue skewers, and their sexual details were enhanced with pink Play-Doh and a soldering iron. Sure it's a rip on the *Blair Witch Project*, but it's only creepy to the folks in the film. Exteriors were set in a wooded creek or green-screened in with ultra-low-resolution



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video gear, and random motion of the dolls was cleverly edited to make the scenes flow. The sound is quite clear -- that's often the hardest thing to get right in a cheapie film. The credits give a long list of people who lent toys and dolls to the project. Someone even came up with a complete vintage Plasticville town. Video quality is intentionally low res -- my 640x480 films have less pixilation than this plastic slasher. If you like simulated sex with non-consenting puppets, you'll love this film.

Bill Zebub has an impressive list of films to his name and while I see what he's aiming for here, *Dolla Morte* doesn't rise much above the *Beavis and Butthead* level of storytelling. There are some funny and truly disturbing scenes here (Osama Bin Laden fingering Barbie, Bush talking Jesus Christ into sparing him a drop of blood, and a nice *Planet of the Apes* ripoff), but overall the movie trades plot and storytelling for about an hour of random stuff with no explanation. I hate to say this, but the trailers were the most intriguing part of this disc (I'm on the lookout for the Hippie epic *Gold* and an animated remake of *Night of the Living Dead*). Yup, you can do ANYthing with dolls. And sometimes it's interesting, but not here.

MVD: [MVDvisual.com](http://MVDvisual.com) • Bill Zebub: [www.billzebug.com](http://www.billzebug.com)

Carl F Gauze

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