

INDIGEST

CURRENT ISSUE 04/2012
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ABOUT

ARCHIVE

BLOG

EVENTS

INDIGEST EDITIONS

INDEFINITE PODCAST

SUBMIT

LINKS

RSS FEED



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

POETICS . NARRATIVES . ERRATICA . INDIALOGUE . GALLERY . MUSIC

Film Review: The Puppet Monster Massacre: Puppets, Blood, and Boobs! | 06.05.12

By AE Stueve

I want everyone out there on the interwebs to understand I thoroughly enjoyed this ridiculous send-up to the slasher B-movies of the 80s. The concept is simple: a madman creates a monster that needs to eat, so he invites some teenagers to his creepy house under the guise of a contest and—BADABOOM-BADABING—the teens fall victim to this madman's monster.

It's pretty basic but nevertheless, entertaining.

With an unmitigated, shameless pouring on of casual curse words, a gore level that would make Quentin Tarantino happy, a sardonic wit that simultaneously pays homage to and pokes fun at those horrible B-movies we all love, and a surprisingly complex (for this sort of movie) storyline, *The Puppet Monster Massacre* is everything I want in a low budget horror/comedy.

But there's more!

There's puppets.

Yep. It's all puppets folks; the title isn't just a clever inside joke. The 2010 release, which runs 70 minutes, is entirely performed by puppets except for an exceptionally well done animated flashback to a bloody WWII battle.

But back to the puppets. It's unnerving and quirky the way these stuffed felt toys fit nicely into the stereotypes of B-movies. There is the hero, Charlie, described on the movie's website as "a loveable wimp." If there was a flesh and blood actor portraying him, it would be Elijah Wood. Does saying that help? You know it does. Along with Charlie comes the girl he's madly in love with who is absolutely clueless. Then there's the slut (whose felt bosom is revealed again and again), then the bully with a fake Cockney accent, and finally the nerd. Essentially, it's a nice round cast of flat characters perfect for the slaughter.

Some of the shots and scenes may come off as a bit unrefined. There are a short ton of simple two-shot scenes and talking heads and it would have been nice to have a more developed setting. However, if those are my only complaints about this psychedelic puppet romp with blood, nudity, and toilet humor that could make your mama blush, then I've really got nothing to complain about. Also, I'm inclined to cut the filmmakers some slack, after all, this film is the very definition of low budget . . . perhaps even *no* budget . . .

Anyway, if you're looking for high literary filmmaking, don't look to this movie. If, on the other hand, you're looking for something unique, something ridiculous and fun, or something that will one day be viewed like Peter Jackson's *Meet the Feebles* and *Braindead (Dead Alive)*, then pick up *The Puppet Monster Massacre* and enjoy.

Ultimately, I liked it. I liked it a lot. And I can't wait to see what Dustin Mills and his crew do next.

