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Movie Review: Planet of the Vampire Women

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Back in the 1960s and '70s, two great genres, common in movies and comics, were popular especially in southern Europe and countries like Italy, France and Spain: sexy science fiction movies and sexy vampire movies. Well, maybe we should make that *three* great genres -- there were of course also [movies about](#) sexy vampires in science fiction settings.

I'm of course talking about characters such as Barbarella, originally a French comics character made immortal by Jane [Fonda](#) in the movie version, I'm talking about the movies of Jean Rollin, the master, about comics and paintings by people like Philippe Druillet, and about bizarre movies like "Spermula" -- yes, there is a French movie from 1976 with that title. It's about space [vampires](#) and stars Udo Kier. And I must of course not forget a director like Jess Franco and a movie like "The Girl from Rio".





Forty years later, we have the American husband and wife team of Darin Wood (writer, director, SFX and more) and Christy Savage (co-producer, director of photography, editor and more), enhanced with co-producer Amy Slockbower, and their brand [new movie](#) "Planet of the Vampire Women". This is definitely a movie in the same vein as those old, classic European oddities.

Meet captain Trix Richards (Paquita Estrada) and her trigger happy crew of space pirates! When the movie opens, Captain Richards and her gang raid a space casino. Things don't go as planned, though, and a violent shoot-out erupts. Casino guests get killed, strippers get killed, staff get killed, and the space pirates have to flee head over heels.

They zoom through space in their space ship and seek refuge of a weird moon, but happen to crash-land on it. But that's not the worst part -- Captain Richards is possessed by something ... strange, and turns into a sinister vampire and bites members of her own crew to death before disappearing into the fog.

Now, the super tough, gun wielding Ginger Maldonado (Liesel Hanson), a robot (Keith Leti), a cop who was chasing them (Jawara Duncan) and a handful more have to fight for their lives to find their way back to civilization.



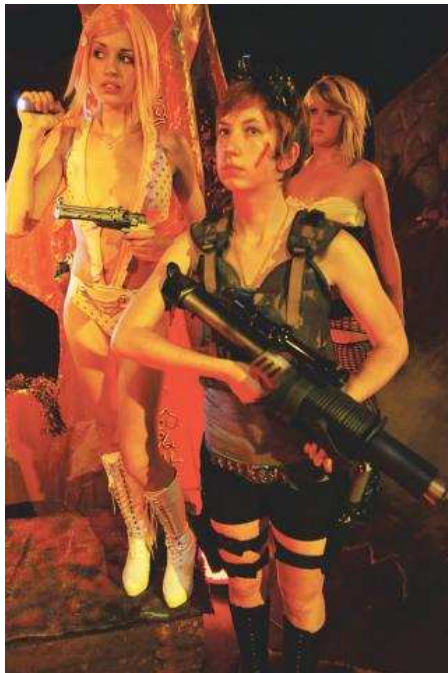
The budget of "Planet of the Vampire Women" was very, very low -- but that's a fact which makes this movie even more impressive. I guess a movie like this must look cheap. The CGI -- and there's lots of CGI on display here -- doesn't look the slightest bit realistic, but straight out of a cartoon. And that look is just perfect for this movie! So are the sets, with their obvious papier maché rocks and comic books space ship interiors. All this work to the movies advantage. The cinematography is slick and very colorful; it reminds me of the Empire and Full Moon productions of the 1980s and '90s, as well as the afore mentioned cult classics.

This is a quite cheerful and lively little movie -- the acting is sometimes a little uneven, but who cares when the movie is this much fun? Or at least most of the movie. To be honest, "Planet of the Vampire Women" does get a little draggy for a while in the middle, when nothing much happens and people just walk around the moon set. Clocking in at 95 minutes, the movie is too

long -- films like this should run around 80 minutes.

However, after this somewhat boring part, the filmmakers once again put in top gear, and the final twenty or so minutes are absolutely amazing; they're action packed, blood-soaked, entertaining, hilarious -- and crammed with nudity! All at once!

Yes, there's lots of nudity in this movie. I lost count of the boobs on display here. There are also several scenes sporting Blood on Breasts, something's that's always been a no-no in the UK market, thanks to the BBFC. I've no idea if it's accepted nowadays. Interestingly, there's no sex in the movie.



Here's one great, impressive scene in which the vampirized Captain Richards appears top-less and wearing an exceptionally cool space suit that looks straight out of a graphic novel by Druillet or maybe Mœbius.

The cast is surprisingly big for a low-budget movie of this type, there's lots of people at the space casino, and the movie's score by Phillip [Baldwin](#) is pretty cool; it's mainly lounge and exotica, and there are bongos on it!

One thing I really like about the movie, is that it's not a pastiche; it doesn't imitate the old cult classics, visually or acting wise. Nor is it a parody, although its tongue is firmly planted in the cheek. This is a movie in the same tradition, but it's definitely a 2011 production, it doesn't pretend it's a forgotten oldie.



“Planet of the Vampire Women” is currently touring the festival circuit as it hasn’t been officially released yet, this review is based on a screener. The producers are currently talking with some distributors and hopefully, DVD:s will be available for sale on the Internet by July.

To summarize all this: “Planet of the Vampire Women” may be a tad too long and uneven, but this is a pretty damn cool and entertaining movie! I'd like to see more movies like this one!

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