

Slammed & Damned: The Modern Day Horror Review

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A Wild, Wild Ride — Planet of the Vampire Women

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The folks at Trash Film Orgy, that fine purveyor of micro-budget exploitation fare such as *Cheerleaders From Hell* and *Monster From Bikini Beach*, have returned to the screen with *Planet of the Vampire Women*, their latest piece of campy craziness.

Planet of the Vampire Women is a veritable effects extravaganza, and though it doesn't work as well as it might, this fun new flick is easily the most ambitious project yet to emerge from Sacramento's reigning kings of B-movie madness.

Equal parts caper movie, sci-fi film and horror flick, *Planet of the Vampire Women* has a little something for everyone and starts with a bang. Captain Trix Richards is an infamous space pirate, looting and pillaging her way across the galaxy. Accompanied by her loyal crew of

outlaws, Richards is as much folk hero as criminal. After a major heist goes bad, the pirates find themselves on the run. With the law on their tail, they seek out a mysterious planet on which to hide out. Unluckily, things again go wrong and they are forced to crash land...but they soon discover that their stranded ship is the least of their worries.

This new entry in TFO's oeuvre harkens back to the era when Roger Corman was king of the drive-in. In those days, all you needed to entertain were a few hot babes, a little action and some rubber monsters. *Planet of the Vampire Women* contains all those elements, but writer/director Darin Wood mixes in the exploitative elements trash fans love (beasts, boobs and blood) and tops it all off with impressive visuals. What Corman used to do with miniatures and forced perspective, TFO also does with miniatures and forced perspective, but Wood mixes in some pretty remarkable CGI as well.

For the most part, the cast is made up of TFO's usual suspects, with standout work coming from [Liesel Hanson](#) as badass Ginger Maldonado, Keith Letl as the bionic Automatic Jones and [Stephanie Hyden](#), whose portrayal of pleasure clone Astrid Corvair is delightful though a bit unsteady. TFO newcomer [Paquita Estrada](#)'s turn as Captain Richards is sometimes awkward, but [Jawara Duncan](#), also new to the fold, makes for an entertaining hero as space cop Val Falco. The supporting cast is fine, especially Ashley Marino and Emily Vernon.



Wood and cinematographer Christy Savage have delivered a great-looking film this time out. Savage has bathed the proceedings in bright, almost lurid colors reminiscent of those cool mid-60s Italian sci-fi flicks, like *Terrore nello spazio* or *I Diafanoidi vengono da Marte*.

With *Planet of the Vampire Women*, TFO is working at a whole new level. Everything about it is on a larger scale than any previous Trash Film Orgy project, and that might be the crux of whatever small problems the movie has.

Wood's new film is quite an accomplishment overall, but it feels like he took so much time wrangling the big picture that he lost control of some of the smaller details along the way. There's a lot going on here and though Wood's screenplay pops with amusing dialogue, some of the gags and performances fall flat and the pacing feels off at times, with scenes running long. Also, during some of the fights, the actors seem to hold back, as if rehearsing, which undercuts the action's excitement. These are the kind of issues that typically plague most low-budget filmmakers who, pressed for time and money, don't always have the luxury to reshoot and tweak.

With TFO, [Darin Wood](#), [Christy Savage](#) and producer [Amy Slockbower](#) have quietly built a little low-budget empire in California's capitol. Over the years, TFO has steadily increased the scope of its films, culminating in this latest flick, which is without doubt a major turning point in TFO's evolution into a full-blown production house to be reckoned with. Combining a variety of genre elements immersed in TFO's trashy retro aesthetic, *Planet of the Vampire Women* is a wild, fun ride. Accent on the "fun."

<http://theronneel.com/?tag=planet-of-the-vampire-women>