

Director
Lee Demarbre
Cast
Phil Caracas Maria Moulton Mireille Varhelyi Ian Driscoll Jeff Moffet
Gore Gauge
ZERO LOW MEDIUM HIGH OFF THE CHARTS
Skin-o-Meter
ZERO LOW MEDIUM HIGH OFF THE CHARTS
Movie
Extras
Bottom Line

Jesus Christ: Vampire Hunter (2001)

review by Head Cheeze

At first I really didn't dig Jesus Christ Vampire Hunter. I had built up expectations for this low-budget flick since I'd first heard about it over a year ago, and anticipated something completely different. Instead, I watched the film and felt the residual smile, still held over from the hilarious song that plays while in the DVD's menu, gradually fade into a puzzled grimace. Eventually, however, the film won me over...just a little bit.

The film revolves around a vampire cult that has developed the means to walk in the daylight. When a church sees a decline in it's parishoner populace (especially lesbians), they enlist the aid of Jesus Christ (Caracas), who still lives among us and is biding his time until the second coming. Jesus is reluctant to help, but when a surprise vampire attack results in the deaths of two men of the cloth, Jesus takes to the streets on a quest to rid the world of the vampire menace. Joining him in his fight to save the "sapphos" are the leather clad biker babe Mary Magnum (Moulton) and the masked Mexican wrestler Santo (Moffet). Along the way, Jesus get's a haircut and new duds, performs a musical number or two, and engages in high flying martial arts duals with the denizens of the day.

JC:VH should, by all rights, be a hilarious film. I mean, Jesus Christ, the film is about *Jesus Christ* killing vampires! It starts off promisingly enough, with a very retro credits sequence and a beachfront melee between Christ and the vampires, but then the film sort of veers away from "run and gun" parody and toward John Waters style high camp. An extended musical number wears out it's welcome about a third of the way through, and then the film sort of lumbers forward, albeit with occasional bursts of comic genius. When JC:VH is funny, it's very funny, but when it's not, it's just sorta dull. It's a film that would have worked better at half it's length, but after nearly 90 minutes the joke's been worn so thin you could strain pasta through it.

The DVD from Eclectic, on the other hand, is an absolute treasure trove of goodness. The disc features a commentary track, outtakes reel, interviews, trailers, and all sorts of bonus materials that actually enhanced the film for me. More often than not, extras are just that; extra. However, JC:VH's supplements, especially the raucous commentary track, made me feel for the folks behind the film, and actually made me look at the film in a slightly different way. While it didn't alter my perspective too much, hearing the stories from the set and sharing the sense of fun and accomplishment these guys obviously feel made me like the film just a little bit more than perhaps I should.

Jesus Christ: Vampire Hunter is a film that is destined for cult status, and, while it isn't exactly my cup of B-negative, folks out there thirsting for something a little more Rocky than Horror could do worse than to give this one a look.