

“PORNOGRAPHY: A THRILLER” (Film Review)

Written by John Nicol
Tuesday, 04 May 2010 16:10



PORNOGRAPHY: A THRILLER, written and directed by David Kittredge (and produced by Fango blogger Sean Abley) is a nightmarish journey into the surreal—and, yes, the gay-adult-film industry. How the two genres were going to mesh, this critic was initially unsure. Don't worry, they do, but not in the ways you might expect.

The film is a unique three-vignette tale about a top-of-his-game porn star named Mark Anton (Jared Grey) and his ominous disappearance. Anton becomes the industry's urban legend, one whose myth is steeped in stories of possible murder and the paranormal. His fall from grace is the common thread through the film's other two acts, and initiates the atmosphere of dread that follows.

The Anton legend becomes the muse and obsession for Michael Castigan's (Matthew Montgomery) new book on the history of vintage pornography. Michael moves with his lover into a new home which is shrouded in a mysterious past, and soon begins having intense nightmares about Anton's disappearance and a possible snuff-film connection. The house yields clues about its past torments and allows Michael to discover an old videotape sealed within its walls—one which may or may not contain the truth about Anton's disappearance.



Enter Matt Stevens (Pete Scherer), another adult-film A-lister whose own nightmares prompt his spontaneous writing of a new script intended to end his porn career on a high note. What Matt doesn't realize is that he's scribing the true tale of Mark Anton and his life. With the project

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greenlighted and production well underway, Matt ends up reliving Anton’s career in the same tragic manner.

PORNOGRAPHY is a seriously intended mind-bender that triggered much head-scratching on this critic’s part. I was hoping to see the bastard child resulting from a sweaty VIDEODROME/QUEER AS FOLK one-night stand—something a little grimier, hotter and genre-breaking. I expected the film to push some boundaries and buttons, but ultimately PORNOGRAPHY left me somewhat limp. That’s not to say this flick is an outright disaster, because there’s plenty to like: The acting is competent; the credit sequence alone is brilliant; the score is fabulous, intense and creepy; the snuff scenes are white-knuckle; the cinematography is gripping; the daydream and nightmare sequences are visually striking; and the surveillance-camera points of view add graphic realism.

But often, PORNOGRAPHY feels like it was directed by two different people. On the one hand, you have a very slick and stylish journey into madness, and on the other, you have endless amateurish dialogue-driven scenes that pull you right out of the picture. Sometimes it has the tone of a real adult film, and like many such flicks, it makes you want to fast-forward to the juicy bits. Perhaps this was a deliberate choice on Kittredge’s part to give the movie that authentic XXX veneer—but unfortunately, many of the sex scenes seem forced and labored. This is a serious letdown; I mean, a film with this title should at least deliver the goods on that front. This one doesn’t.

Still, in the end, I thoroughly enjoyed the often blurred lines between reality and the imaginary, and I absolutely love coming out of a flick with more questions than I had going in. PORNOGRAPHY is a frustrating film that needed more sleaze to fully ground itself, but it’s a nice try nonetheless. Keep your eyes on the movie’s [official website](#) for upcoming screening information.



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