

“THE LOST TRIBE” (DVD Review)

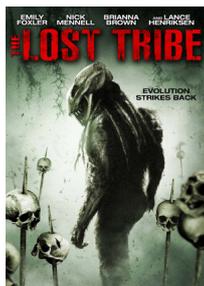
Written by Lianne Spiderbaby

Tuesday, 02 November 2010 16:39



I watched Roel Reiné’s *THE LOST TRIBE* two days ago, and as I sit down to write this review, I will admit—it’s a bit of a struggle to recall specific details, character names and anything else that really struck me as original and outstanding. Don’t get me wrong; I enjoyed the film, and Reiné has some talent as a cinematic storyteller. It’s just that after another few days, I will probably have forgotten the movie entirely—and perhaps along with it, this review I’m writing. The film is decent, it just isn’t great.

THE LOST TRIBE, now on DVD from Image Entertainment, starts with a group of young professionals on a yacht, sailing to a resort where they can close a business deal and start making a lot of money. Two of the characters have some depth: a female physician and her boyfriend, who—as we discover after a sappy scene with even sappier music—have decided to move in together. *Awww*. The other characters are simply stock; you’ve met them before: the single, funny guy who likes to drink and the unattractive, boisterous dude who is dating the type of hot blonde he never could in real life. When this group rescues a man near death from the water, one unusual event leads to another.



During the night, the rescued stranger attempts to steer the boat in a different direction, but accidentally wrecks it on a rock, sending the vessel down into the drink. The castaways reach the shore of a tropical island, and when all else fails, they head into the jungle. They soon discover that the island was once home to several archeologists studying a long-lost tribe of monstrous human mutations (which look very similar to the Predator). One by one, they are killed off or abducted by the creatures still inhabiting the island, except for Anna (the female doctor, played by Emily Foxler), who will do anything to find her boyfriend, Tom (Nick Mennell from the *HALLOWEEN* and *FRIDAY THE 13TH* remakes). Anna, of course, is the Final Girl who does what no archaeologist previously could: discover the secrets of the monster society and get off the island alive.

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The film is beautifully shot (and presented in 2.35:1 widescreen), and the Dolby Digital 5.1 sound almost convinces you that you're in the jungle with the monsters—quite an accomplishment for this DVD. One audio debit: Reiné and screenwriter Mark E. Davidson attempt to involve viewers and get them invested in the characters via Anna and Tom's romantic subplot, but the relationship is made into a joke when several of the lovebirds' moments together are ruined by cheesy, overproduced and overdramatic music.

ALIENS and THE TERMINATOR star Lance Henriksen makes an appearance as a Catholic priest/assassin sent to crush the monster species and any proof of their existence (including the archaeologists) in order to protect the Church and the seven-day Creation theory. When this information is revealed, it seems promising, suggesting that perhaps THE LOST TRIBE will become a commentary on the horror of the information age, science and the Church. Mix in a little Darwin and some blood and guts, and it could be cool. But alas, no—THE LOST TRIBE doesn't do more than scratch the surface.

The DVD's special features include a trailer that probably gives too much of the film and the monsters' appearance away, a 10-minute making-of piece called “Into the Jungle” and commentary by producer Mohit Ramchandani and actor Hadley Fraser (he's Chris—the single, funny, etc. guy). The featurette includes some cool shots of Reiné and his camera crew hanging from trees on zip lines to get some of the film's more impressive angles and shots, along with a few comments from cast and crewmembers.

While the commentary has some insightful moments during scenes in which the actors are in the midst of the Panama rain forest, it would have been much more interesting to hear from the director himself. Ramchandani and Fraser do a lot of explaining about what's happening in each scene, as if the viewer won't be able to understand what's going on. They also make a reference to Oasis frontman Noel Gallagher and joke about how Americans won't get the gag—as if the United States is further away than Mars. However, it is interesting to hear about how difficult it was to shoot in Panama because of severe weather changes, during which filming would often be cut short because of heavy rainfall. Fraser also reveals that Reiné was hard on his actors, who were often covered in mud, wet and asked to do minor but difficult and physically challenging stunts.

THE LOST TRIBE is recommended for Sunday-afternoon viewing, as a potential hangover cure. It truly is a gift that will keep on giving, because you won't remember much about it the next day—so it can be watched again and again.

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MOVIE: 

DVD PACKAGE: 

{comments on}