

Written by Tony Timpone
Friday, 11 June 2010 11:28



You've probably been following the plethora of news items on this website in regards to our FANGORIA FrightFest program (see initial announcement [here](#)). Right? If not, please do. I gave up my job—editing the mag for nearly 25 years—to help bring these horror movies to you. The FANGORIA FrightFest is our version of After Dark's 8 Films to Die For and Ghost House Underground. Luckily, as I've found out, there are plenty of good genre films to go around.

There are so many exciting aspects of our multitiered program to help get the FANGORIA FrightFest to the horror masses, beginning with their initial debuts on August 6 as Blockbuster exclusives (the stores will even feature a FANGORIA section!). Before that, fans can vote at www.fangoriafrightfest.com

(from June 21 to July 19) to win a theatrical release for one of the movies at the end of July (we just booked a cool venue in NYC; more cities to be announced shortly). After their 45-day Blockbuster run, the FANGORIA FrightFest will expand to retail DVD (via Phase 4), VOD and digital outlets, straight through Halloween. You will continue to see these movies previewed on this website, in the magazine and at some of our favorite horror websites like Shock Till You Drop, Dread Central, Twitch, Arrow in the Head and more.

Anyway, the majority of my job responsibilities now find me scouring the globe for new horror movies to watch as potential future product for more FANGORIA FrightFests. That means watching, at all hours of the night, the DVDs that come over the transom, and also hitting up the world's greatest film festivals and markets, like Montreal's [Fantasia](#) in July (where I'm also a programmer); Spain's legendary

[Sitges](#)

(held each October) and November's

[American Film Market](#)

. Last spring, from April 22 through May 2, I got to hang in my own backyard, when the ninth annual

[Tribeca Film Festival](#)

came to town. Though the event was thoroughly covered on this website (see Michael Gingold's reviews and video interviews) already, I thought I'd share some of my own experiences and brief screening comments based on the dozen or so movies I caught during the fest's run. And not all of them were horror, like...

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SEX & DRUGS & ROCK & ROLL: A really good biopic of late punk icon Ian Dury (who gave us the titular song, "Reasons to be Cheerful, Part 3," "Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick," etc.). The Mat Whitecross-directed movie features a superb performance by Andy Serkis, who also produced and does his own singing. (When I run into former FANGORIA RADIO interviewee Serkis again at the Tribeca press office, I tell the ex-Gollum he delivered an Oscar-worthy performance as Dury. "Thanks, mate!" he responds.) ***1/2

POSSESSED (pictured): This fairly original Korean horror/mystery film about a missing girl and various religious fanatics boasts a few good scares, but moves a little too slow for my tastes. Written and directed by Lee Yong-ju. **1/2

ONDINE: Acclaimed Irish filmmaker Neil Jordan (THE COMPANY OF WOLVES, INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE, THE CRYING GAME) spins a quiet quasi-fantasy drama about a fisherman (Colin Farrell) who snares what may be a mythical sea creature, but more closely resembles the gorgeous Alicja Bachleda, in his net. The story jumps the rails in the final act with the introduction of standard thriller elements, but the understated Farrell makes it work, as does young Alison Barry as his sick daughter. (Currently playing in NY and LA and on VOD.) ***

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ALICE CREED: I loved this terrific suspense thriller/kidnapping yarn, about two parolees (Martin Compston and Eddie Marsan) who hold a spoiled little rich girl (Gemma Arterton) for ransom. Riveting and surprising from the get-go; put this August Anchor Bay theatrical release on your must-see list and look for it at Fantasia in July. Can't wait to see what writer/director J Blakeson comes up with next. ***1/2

TICKED-OFF TRANNIES WITH KNIVES: I'm going to hold off rating this grindhouse throwback until it finds a distributor, but I will say that the title is a killer, and Texas-based writer/director Israel Luna—a nice guy and Fango fan—already has his next movie in the planning stages: a hardcore X-rated musical! Watch for a Luna interview on this site soon.

DREAM HOME: Meet Hong Kong's answer to the recent French gore-fests, particularly INSIDE, plus a bloody comment on the worldwide housing crisis (!). An upwardly mobile telemarketer (Josie Ho) will stop at nothing to get that swank penthouse apartment, including prostituting herself and committing a string of grisly, over-the-top murders. Not even the pregnant girl is safe in this splatter debut by Hong Kong director/co-writer Pang-Ho Cheung, previously known for comedies. ***

OPEN HOUSE: A few good shocks and surprises can be found in this PSYCHO/THE STRANGERS-style thriller, written and directed by newcomer Andrew Paquin. A demented couple (stoic Brian Geraghty and she-beast Tricia Helfer of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA) squat in comfortable houses for sale and murder all interlopers, including TRUE BLOOD lovebirds Anna Paquin (the director's sis) and Stephen Moyer. *Another* allegory for the mortgage mess? Am I sensing a trend? OPEN HOUSE (out on DVD in August from Lionsgate; stay tuned for cast and director video chats right here) succeeds when it mines psychological thrills over body-count predictability. **1/2

DOG POUND: SHEITAN's Kim Chapiron directed this excellent juvenile-detention movie that took home a Tribeca prize. A strong trio of naturalistic young actors (as the newest bad-boy arrivals) engenders our sympathy without resorting to clichés or sentimentality. Violent and uncompromising. ***1/2

ZONAD: Dublin-born writers/directors/brothers John and Kieran Carney's cute Irish comedy finds a rehab escapee (the amusing Simon Delaney) hiding out with a family in a quiet Irish hamlet. Lunacy ensues from the start when the family thinks their chubby guest is a friendly (but horny) being from another planet. ZONAD never goes far enough, but it's pleasant and funny just the same. A naughtier version of last year's ALIEN TRESPASS. ***

THE KILLER INSIDE ME: Ultra-dark film noir based on the novel by THE GRIFTERS' Jim Thompson and directed by Britain's Michael Winterbottom. A superb Casey Affleck plays an amoral small-town deputy (innocent-looking but pure evil) masterminding a methodical web of revenge and murder. Even tough customer Bill Lustig, who I run into at most of the Tribeca screenings, loved this one. Due June 18 from IFC, THE KILLER INSIDE ME includes one scene of MARTYRS-style cringe-inducing violence. ***1/2

THIEVES BY LAW: Lustig also recommended I take in this brilliant documentary on the Russian Mafia. Writer/director Alexander Gentelev interviews three Russian crime kingpins turned businessmen, chronicling their early days of petty offenses, violent prison stints and eventual stranglehold on post-Soviet Union society. Riveting because it's all true. ***1/2

SPORK: Another NAPOLEAN DYNAMITE wannabe, about a trailer-park hermaphrodite teen (Savannah Stehlin) competing in a dance-off. Not really edgy or original enough. **

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MEET MONICA VELOUR: In a case of a FANGORIA writer made good, this coming-of-age comedy/drama marks the feature debut of former Fango scribe Keith Bearden. A teen film geek (lanky Dustin Ingram) pines for a '70s porn star (Kim Cattrall, playing it unglamorous and over-the-hill). Some good, honest, funny moments. Nice to see the great Keith David (THE THING, THEY LIVE, CORALINE) cast against type as an eccentric artist. Bravo, Keith and Keith! ***

BLOOD AND RAIN: A haunting neo-noir set during a rainy night in Bogota, as a cab driver (Quique Mendoza) looks for the killer of his brother. More a character study than a thriller, BLOOD AND RAIN is very well-acted and gritty. Colombian director Jorge Navas keeps most of the violence off screen, but you'll still need an umbrella and shower after this one. ***

That's it for Tribeca. In four weeks, I'm off to Fantasia. Watch for tons of coverage on this site as the fest opens on July 8. And be sure to keep tabs on the FANGORIA FrightFest in the meantime.

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