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UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING (2007)

--Review by Nic Brown--



Writer/director Susan Adriensen's UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING tell the story of Raven (Kimberly Amato) who has a gift. If you were to ask her, she'd tell you her gift is to see through all the lies and false realities of our world and look into the dimensions around us. This gift, she might tell you, lets her see the horror that lies within dimension five and also the unimaginable beauty of dimension one. With her spirit guide within her, she is able to direct her friends Angel (Kamilla Sofie Sadekova) and Jessie (Jessica Palette) in what they must do and how they must act to allow themselves to transcend beyond this evil world and journey to the bliss that awaits them in dimension one. That is what Raven might tell you if you asked. The reality of it is that Raven's gift is not one of sight, but of manipulation. Angel and Jessie are troubled young women with serious emotional problems and Raven, like many charismatic cult leaders, is able to push her beliefs onto these two fragile young women and use them as a means of control. Raven's own deep belief that what she tells them is true helps make her even more compelling.

Now a young documentary filmmaker (Coy DeLuca) had gotten permission from Raven to document their lives. She wants him to record their actions as a testament to the world. The filmmaker though, has his own goal. He wants to document the women confessing to the murder of a man who they "saved" by allowing him to transcend this world and enter dimension number one. Together the four of them begin a journey down a dark road and as the filmmaker begins to fall under Raven's spell, the audience must wonder where it will ultimately lead.

Although UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING is Adriensen's first outing as a feature film writer and director one cannot see it from the quality of her work. The cinematography (also credited to Adriensen) was excellent and despite being done almost entirely as point of view from the camera of the documentary filmmaker, it did not have the overly shaky feel that one may come to expect from this type of feature.

Perhaps UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING's strongest point though is the cast. Kimberly

Amato's performance as Raven was exceptional as she captured the woman's inner turmoil and extreme emotional instability. Sadekova and Palette were also perfect for the roles of Raven's surrogate family and followers. Playing both victims and killers in the same role was a unique challenge and all three actresses did a phenomenal job. Coupled with Adriensen's compelling story the movie is engaging from the start.

One drawback to the film was its length. While the acting and story were all first rate, the pacing of the film suffered at times as scenes seemed to drag on longer than needed. That said, the version of the film that was screened was the 'original' cut of the film. The version planned for general release will be ten or so minutes shorter and this bit of editing should improve the film's pace significantly.

UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING is dark and compelling tale of control, dependency and ultimately murder. From the start Raven is a mesmerizing character that dominates the screen when she is present much in the same way she dominates the lives of her friends Jessie and Angel. It is the relationship between these women and the man filming them that is the heart of the film. As that relationship progresses the viewer feels the dark conclusion to this tale growing unavoidably closer. Check out Susan Adriensen's UNDER THE RAVEN'S WING if you have a chance. and be careful that you don't fall under her spell as well.

When you're done reading about ATTACK OF THE SLIME PEOPLE, check out B-Movie Man Nic Brown's new novel:

["Blood Curse: Werewolf For Hire Book One"](#)



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