

Gorehounds Unite! - The More Blood The Better

UNDER THE RAVENS WING Review:



This film came to my attention shortly after I did the review for "The Blood Shed" (if you haven't read it be sure to check it out after you read this review) and was contacted by Susan Adriensen who played sno cakes in that film and directed this one. She asked if I'd like to review it and I immediately said yes! I didn't really know what to expect from this film as I didn't research it before watching it.....and I'm glad I didn't as it turned out to be quite a surprise for me!

This isn't as much of a horror film as it's a dark and deeply disturbing character study with some real horrific overtones. Under The Raven's Wing was filmed in a Documentary/ Blair Witch (for lack of a better comparison) type of style that serves the story well. The story revolves around a young man, who's known only as "The Director" (Cory DeLuca....an off-screen only character) and is making a documentary about three beautiful women Raven (Kimberly Amato), Angel (Kamilla Sofie Sadekova), and Jessie (Jessica Palette). Raven is the "goth-like" leader of the group, Angel's the rebellious one, and Jessie's the ditzzy follower just looking for acceptance.



The first thing I realized is that with such a narrative driven plot the acting would have to be near perfect as any bad performance could make the film as a whole fail. The roles had to be played perfectly.....The women definitely looked the part but could they act?

The answer to that is a resounding YES! In fact I'll go out on a limb here and say this is the best acting I've seen in a low budget film.....EVER. They nailed their roles so well it draws you into the story that much more. I have to say that they play well off of each other and they all seemed to be their characters, which is the biggest compliment I could ever give to an actor. And the fact that they all were so good is just an amazing accomplishment.

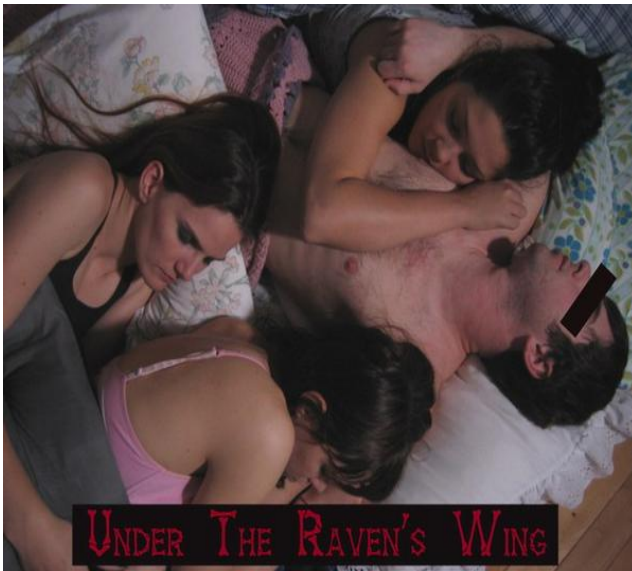
This brings me to the next point that could make or break the film.....and that's the writing. This is another area the film shines! The dialogue of the characters is believable and natural (the hardest part to write of any

film), the characters backstories are well fleshed out and very believable, and the plot as a whole is well written without being too preachy or overbearing. You care for these characters more so than in most films I've seen.....I don't know if all of this comes because the filmmaker is female and gives a different point of view in her films but if that's the case we need more women directing films.



I for one have never been a big fan of the whole Blair Witch style of filmmaking but that's because I've never seen it used to its potential this much before. In every other film that uses this approach it seems the filmmakers use it in such a raw form that all the scenes just start to blend together and you lose interest in the film or it just becomes confusing. Not so here.....the way its cut together makes everything make sense and is used in a way that accents the story as opposed to detracting from it. I really enjoyed the way the filmmakers used the flashbacks for each individual girl's backstory. For some reason they just fit really well and helped you feel for these women.

This isn't to say that the film doesn't have some rough edges to it.....I felt some scenes run on a little too long and there were a few too many scenes that didn't really have anything in it that propelled the plot forward or they rehashed something we already learned earlier. I also found a few scenes that looked more like a music video and didn't really fit in the film.....although interesting to look at they also took you out of the story at moments.....thankfully the performances and story of the girls pull you back in quickly.



I may be reaching here but the film actually felt like it had a lot more going on underneath than it portrays at first glance. It was interesting to see a sort of social commentary on the "religious extremist / Cult" angle. I have always been intrigued how someone could have such control over seemingly normal people that they can make them do and believe pretty much whatever they desire. This film pretty much answered this question for me as I actually started to buy into Raven's somewhat out there ideas and beliefs...although my rational side could never buy into it that much. I have to admit though that it also touches on the exploitation of people who were "damaged" or slightly disturbed by circumstances in their past. I actually started to feel bad for the other girls.....but mostly for the fragile Jessie.

The film also seems to explore the deeply emotional female relationship....how they deal with each other, support each other, and protect each other. It's an interesting perspective into the inner workings of these relationships. Like I said I may be reaching but these were some things I noticed while watching the film.

I do want to point out to all the readers that this is by no means a gore-fest or even close to a splatter film. Under The Ravens Wing is a very intelligent and thought provoking Character study that will keep you on the edge of your seat till the shocking conclusion.



If this film doesn't get distribution it would not only be a HUGE disservice to the filmmakers and actors that did such great work on the film but it would also be a shame for fans of cinema not to get the chance to see the world of Raven, Jessie and angel. I really can't say enough about this film as a whole and I will continue to spread the word as much as I can so everyone who enjoys this type of film can see it.

I would love to see this film get shown to students in film school and acting school so they can see just how compelling the film medium can be if you put your passion into every aspect of making it. Under The Ravens Wing in my book is one of the top 10 Indie films released in the last 5 years regardless of genre. I see huge things in the future for all involved in this project. Under The Ravens Wing is the future of Independent films.....a future where filmmakers do it for all the right reasons and put their heart and souls into every aspect of the filmmaking process!

Visit the filmmakers at their official website: <http://www.undertheravenswing.com/>

And their myspace page: <http://www.myspace.com/underravenswing>

RATING:

4 1/2 out of 5 Severed Heads!