

# Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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## Tromadance Day 1 ? Reviews

Written by David on September, 26 2009

The following reviews do not express the opinion of the Strand Theatre.

Submitted by: Terrance Aldridge

An invasion began in Shelbyville Friday night as independent and B-movie film-makers and their minions descended across the town at three locations: the Strand Theatre, the Skyline Drive and Studio 10 Cinemas. The rabid invaders plan to occupy the town for next several days as part a sinister conspiracy to distribute both independent films and movies so bad they are good.

At the Strand, Friday night's invasion force consisted of the advance guard of the Tromadance Indiana which presented five low-budget or independent films during this their initial assault on Shelby County.

Meanwhile, across the city other classic B-movies spread like blood crazed demons across all available large format silver screens in a conspiracy masterminded by the Indy Film Co-op and its local allies, operating as "the B-movie Celebration." Other reported sightings of these creatures were reported in neighboring Indiana towns like Franklin.

Friday night's initial foray at The Strand arrived in rapid sequential waves of zombies interspersed with quick flurries of independent short films followed by a tour-de-force performance by a local-born woman conscripted into this bedlam army of the night.

This most fascinating assault on the senses was, in true horror style, saved for the end of the evening. It is "Halfway to Hell," a work-in-progress, screened for the first time ever anywhere, by native-born Hoosier film director, Lola Wallace.

The evening's Tromadance extravaganza, however, opened with a foreign film of Eastern European origins, "Arkunan Martitison." The movie explored the rather vivid, graphic dreams of the unemployed protagonist and his journeys across a bleak, dying industrial town with his equally lost and wandering friends.

Tromadance's second film of the night "The Face Eater," quickly shifted the mood of the evening into the more traditional horror genre of really, really bad B- movies. It is parody of classic-gore films in which a kind-hearted hitman sequentially kills off a cornball mafia of bosses named after such masters of the genre as Romera, Craven, Carpenter and Corman. In the process of this rampage, our flawed hero seemingly manages to venture enter every known genre of bad film and to refer to nearly all the clichés associated with them, save that of the screaming, busty, bikini-clad babe.

The third offering the night. "The Eternal Pitfall of Prokofiev" was a short work that quickly reshifted the focus the evening again. This silent, black and white throwback film, set to the classic composers works, humorously fused the works of such past-masters of comedy as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton with early German, expressionist cinema. The movie

unfolds as a purposely choppy, modern version of Goethe's tale of Mephistopheles and his pact with devil, told through a dream sequence where the visions of the night's haunting becomes the macabre reality of the next morning. All-in-all, it was a very entertaining and humorous journey into film history.

The following foray in to bad B-cinema, "Redneck Carnage," was a stupendous venture into choreographed chaos, a regular sensory overload of zombie-killing, aliens, Bigfoot, bad cops, stoners and nearly every alternative life-style found in Americana. Most strikingly, the film effectively fused the audio effects of heavy metal thrash music with slasher visuals of zombie-killing carnage as a sport. In the end it even managed to throw an Elvis cameo as a last sardonic twist.

The next installment in this night of macabre madness was a very humorous short, "How to Deal with Telemarketers.? A rather funny snippet of creative ways for citizens to culture-jam those rather annoying interrupters of regular every day reality.

The following cinematic venture of the night, "Soul Robbers from Outer Space", seems inspired by and destined to become a cult-film classic. This black and white feature was an over-the-top romp into the wastelands of campiness, kitsch and culture of 1950 cinema. Imagine, if somehow, somewhere Ed Wood meets the X-Files channeled by the really bad and banal near porn of John Waters and you have this movie in a freaky nutshell.

The final stab into the horror genre of the night came from the very promising mind and skills of Lola Wallace, the aforementioned Indiana born director. This "Rough-cut" micro-budget film is and will be a very intriguing journey into horror movies and may signal a new format in this genre.

Wallace, A USC Film-school -grad, and her creative partner Tom Devlin utilize a hands-on version of film-making as craft. They build, construct and create virtually every special effect in the movie by themselves. More importantly, however, are the story-weaving skills employed in this film. It is a movie about more than mere blood and guts, biker zombie-thugs and a satanic wizard-master. To her credit, Wallace incorporates an adventure-coming-of-age tale with the Classic tale of the American Road movie. She also deftly adds suspense, plot-driven character development and mystery into her intriguing mix. In short, this is a rather intriguing update of the genre. It is horror married to the epic tragedies of classic Greek drama. It's a film about more than gore-for-gore's sake mayhem. It is a moral-journey of growth amid bikers, monster-morphing babes and fluent cinematography.

As an aside, Wallace said she hope to have the film completed in roughly a month from now. Hopefully, the final version will come to a screen somewhere near you. It is a film well worth watching again.

### **Images on this post:**

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