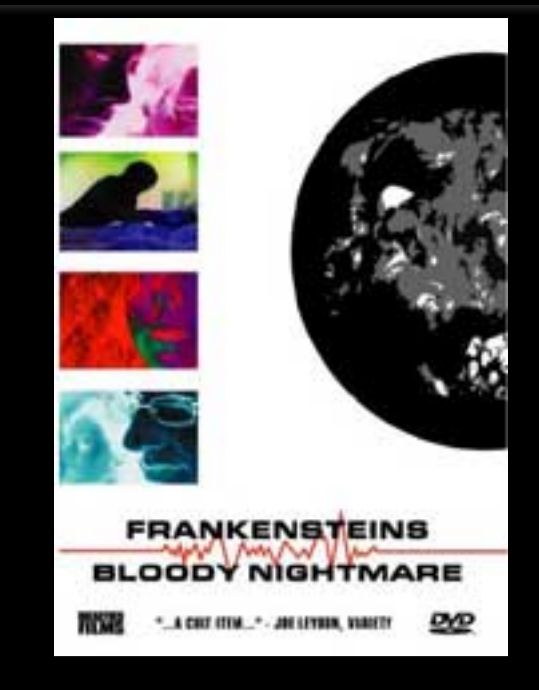


Frankenstein's Bloody Nightmare

DVD released: May 22, 2007.
Approximate running time: 77 minutes
Aspect ratio: 1.33:1 Fullframe
Rating: NR
Sound: Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound
DVD Release: Unearthed Films
Region Coding: NTSC Region 1
Retail Price: \$19.99

Reviewed by:
 Ian Jane on July 9, 2007.



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The Film

A strange, almost surrealist take on Shelley's famous novel, *Frankenstein's Bloody Nightmare*, marks the first but hopefully not the last feature from writer/director John R. Hand. Far from a traditional take on the source material, Hand's film is as unique as it is unsettling as it borrows from the seventies in its approach without feeling like a retread or an homage.

Victor Karlstein (played by Hand himself) looks to be an up and coming force to be reckoned with in the medical world until his girlfriend (Amy Olivastro) passes away while under his care in his hospital and his mind starts to crack. Grief stricken, he decides to use his knowledge to bring her back from the dead using a variety of body parts to improve her in certain ways. Sadly, this doesn't go quite as planned and her re-animated self needs a steady supply of replacement parts in order to keep on going. The victims/donors start to pile up and Karlstein finds himself with a man sized predicament (and it's a big one too).

Borrowing from obvious sources like *Frankenstein*, *Frankenhooker* and *Re-Animator*, Hand's film could have very easily turned out to be little more than a rip off of what has come before. Thankfully, that's not the case. Yes, Hand has definitely been influenced by Cronenberg (the body horror aspect), and probably Shinya Tsukamoto (the frantic pacing and bizarre camera work) as well but by combining these influences and regurgitating their themes and ideas as his own he's managed to create a different kind of film that wears its influences on its sleeve without pulling from them too much. Considering that he not only directed but that he also stars in and wrote the picture, this is definitely his vision all the way through.

While characterizations are minimal, what this movie has going for it in spades is freaky-deaky atmosphere and otherworldly tone. The choice to shoot bulk of the film in 8mm gives it a genuine retro look while opting to shoot the scenes seen through the monster's eyes in DV so that heavy optical effects could be applied gives those bits an appropriately skewed appearance. Hand uses both types of footage very effectively and it's extremely impressive to see what he's cooked up considering that, as stated, it's his inaugural feature. The performances are a bit rough in spots but the direction is solid and the cinematography is very impressive. Hand also uses sound very well here, allowing certain scenes to build up very intensely towards the later part of the picture.



Video 3/5

The 1.33:1 fullframe transfer presents the film in its original aspect ratio and it looks pretty good save for the unfortunate fact that the disc has not been properly flagged for progressive scan playback. Aside from that, expect a bit of grain here and there (the bulk of this movie was shot on 8mm film stock after all) throughout but otherwise things look good. Color reproduction is strong, black levels are solid and there aren't any issues with mpeg compression artifacts or edge enhancement to complain about.



Audio 4/5

Surprisingly enough, *Frankenstein's Bloody Nightmare* arrives on DVD with a Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound mix. The mix is intentionally aggressive in spots and this track does a fine job of bringing some of the filmed lunacy to life.

Extras 3.5/5

The main supplement on the disc is a full length director's commentary track courtesy of writer/director/actor John R. Hand. The one thing that really shines through in this talk is that Hand loves movies. He's obviously a pretty passionate guy and this comes across as he talks about his influences, why certain scenes were shot the way that they were shot, and about working on a low budget. He covers casting, points out what he likes and doesn't like about certain parts of the picture and generally just gives us an insightful and well thought out talk on what went into this project and why.

From there, check out the thirteen minute making of documentary that features some interesting clips and interviews with the cast and crew of the production. A lot of what is covered here is also covered in the commentary but it's nice to see it as well as hear it.

A trailer for the feature, a decent sized still gallery and trailers for other Unearthed Films DVD releases round out the supplements alongside some keen animated menus and a chapter selection sub-menu.



Overall 3.5/5

Unearthed Films gives a truly strange and unique piece of surrealist horror a very strong DVD debut. *Frankenstein's Bloody Nightmare* won't appeal to everyone but those with a taste for the bizarre should certainly seek it out.

Want more info? Hit up the Unearthed Films website [here!](#)

Film Rating	DVD Rating
Director: John R. Hand	Film: ****
Writers: John R. Hand	Video: ***
Released: 2005	Audio: ****
Cast: John R. Hand, Amy Olivastro, Chester Delacruz, Chip Chism, Mike Ensley, Karl Borst, Wade Best	Extras: ****
	Overall: ****

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