

Published on Tuesday, September 12, 2006 - 7:47pm

Copernicus on FIDO - a sort of Leave It To Beaver meets Zombies type of thing!

Hey folks, Harry here with the amazing Copernicus and his coverage from Toronto. Here's his look at the 50's Americana invaded by the Zombie Hordes flick. Sounds awesome! Here ya go...

FIDO

If you can imagine zombies running around in the LEAVE IT TO BEAVER universe, you have some idea of what FIDO is going for.

It's a zombie comedy set in the '50s. Think SHAUN OF THE DEAD meets PLEASANTVILLE, only more extreme than either film, and starring Carrie-Ann Moss as a note-perfect '50s housewife, Tim Blake Nelson as a necrophiliac neighbor, and Billy Connolly as the titular zombie. As so often happens, space dust has awakened the dead, and zombie wars ensue. Eventually megacorp Zomcom invents a collar that suppresses the zombie craving for human flesh, turning them into docile servants. But the non-collared newly dead still eat people, and the collars have a tendency to go on the fritz just when the plot needs to move forward, so there's plenty of opportunity for zombie carnage and mayhem to wreck idyllic '50s suburbia. In an effort to keep up with the Joneses, the Robinson family gets their first zombie, which son Timmy names Fido. While Timmy's father can't stand zombies, the mother and son can't help but bond with their new undead pet.

FIDO is gut-laughing funny. Right from the opening newsreel-style history lesson you know director and cowriter Andrew Currie is pulling off a brilliant and twisted vision. As a subversive send-up of '50s values, the closest thing in tone may be "Nigger Family" skit on the Chappelle Show. It works because the filmmakers have faithfully reproduced every facet of the '50s as distilled through sitcoms, from the cocktail dress wearing housewife to the giant curvy Packards. The film looks great, and the score by Don Macdonald puts you right into that universe, and adds to the comic punch.

Every performance is bang-on. It is nice to see Carrie-Ann Moss in a role that differentiates her from her leather-clad ass-whipping chick persona. She really sells the '50s housewife thing, but with just enough of an undercurrent of

edginess. Even though she's playing it straight, she delivers on the comic timing, and scores a good fraction of the laughs. I also love the fact that Billy Connolly took a role without a speaking part. He kills as an animated corpse, though. Let's start the best supporting actor campaign right now so that it can go to someone A) without a speaking part, and B) a zombie. Dylan Baker also does fine work practically channeling William H. Macy as a frustrated '50s patriarch. But the real "discovery" of the film is K'Sun Ray who plays Timmy, the little boy with the pet zombie. I'm betting he'll be the 'it' kid for preteen roles over the next few years.

I almost hesitate to mention that this is a Canadian production. By that I mean that Canadian films often don't cross over to American audiences. Maybe it is because they are ususally low budget and don't usually have name stars. FIDO avoids both of these drawbacks, and I'm guessing it was the strength of the script that sold both the actors and financiers to take a chance on such a wacky production. Fortunately, American audiences will get a chance to see FIDO, because it has an American distribution deal with Lion's Gate. Even if you aren't a zombie fan, this thing has crossover appeal. It is worth a look.

Copernicus