

SYNERGY MAGAZINE

TEAR SHEET

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Mindflesh

Zen Films

R0 DVD

Web: <http://www.zenfilms.com>

Mindflesh is a truly astounding indie film; it is hypnotic, surreal and cruel, beautiful, seductive and terrifying. At times it reminds me of Stuart Gordon's *From Beyond*, at other's Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*, but it most seems to resonate with David Cronenberg with a special reference to *Videodrome*.

It has beautiful cinematography and relatively simply visual cues such as a watery wave across the screen or an "eye effect" when coupled with the dark ambient soundtrack create an unrivalled uneasy feel.

The acting is solid and the special effects top notch, in my mind the effects rival those found in far higher budget films. The creature is especially impressive. The characters are believable and the plot unusual but it an interesting and offers an unusual intriguing dark fantasy story. The soundtrack should also be noted as it is especially atmospheric and creates an eerie mood throughout.

The film is based off the novel "White Light" by William Schein-



man and evokes all manner of esoteric and spiritual motifs as well as the edges of quantum science.

The story is of a taxi driver named Chris, he has had a very difficult time of late, splitting with his girlfriend and in a job he doesn't especially like; it seems he is a budding author. He has a lot of demons from his childhood which haunt his dreams. However, recently, things have gone from bad to worse, the beautiful woman of his dreams has become to appear as a ghostly apparition at all manner of strange locations.

He has become obsessed with her appearances and begins to

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document them. As she appears more regularly her materializations seem accompanied with both an erotic and destructive charge, he experiences terrifying overpowering nightmares and develops strange nodules on his stomach.

As the story unfolds the more philosophical underpinnings of *Mind-flesh* become better explained and these are impressive. It seems to mix Buddhism, Quantum physics and pop psychology into a heady and erotic mix based on the idea of "consensus reality". It is explained when Chris meets the author of a book on manifestation. It seems some humans are the edge of evolution and have the ability to harness reality. Since Chris is untrained in how to use this "supernature", his childhood trauma has created an erotic yet demonic entity directly from his traumatized psyche.

At the same time this is not just a danger to Chris as this ability to "materialize" desires is contagious and is spreading to his friends. To stop this contagion "The Guardi-

ans", creatures which watch over the planet will use any method needed to force Chris to face his childhood trauma and kill his manifestation. The climax of the film where the "Guardians" force Chris to confront his past is truly overpowering both in the savagery of the "Guardians" methods and the tragedy of Chris' tormented past.

This is a film packed with sex, violence, trauma, nightmares and visions. The use of nudity, strong erotically charged scenes and explorations of sex and violence help explore the central motif of the film which is the way in which powerful emotions (sexual and otherwise) can open the door to the "supernature" and mould reality.

While this may seem an eccentric notion to many, it is actually a well held philosophical belief in many Buddhist, fringe science and alternative spiritual belief systems. Whether it is taken literally or allegorically, the power of childhood trauma to change reality (or our perception of reality) underpins this tale.

It is truly innovative and original and will confront and confound and have you thinking about it for a long time after you have finished watching it. It is not surprising it has received rave reviews and was the winner of the Best Horror award at the Philadelphia Independent Film Festival. I think this will be the first award of many!

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