

Halloween Picks: The scariest movies ever

By Vincent Civitillo
Managing Editor

Review

This Halloween when you're at the video store fishing through the horror section for the perfect film to play at your party, you will likely find a lot of corny drivel like *Leprechaun in the Hood* made intentionally to waste your money.

However, for those looking for a true night of terror, this list of the 10 scariest movies on the shelves has been compiled.

10. *The Ring* (2002) – This psychological thriller about a videotape that kills anyone who watches it is based on an apparently even scarier Japanese movie titled *Ringu*. It confuses and disturbs but always stays one step ahead of its viewers and, in the end, leaves them wondering just what they saw.

9. *Scream* (1995) – Any horror movie made after 1995 is likely to have been in some way influenced by *Scream*. The film revitalized the failing genre by tying it into the teen market, changing the face of horror over the next decade. With a strong life imitating art theme, the film resonated in the minds of viewers and greatly influenced the Caller ID craze that soon followed.

8. *Misery* (1990) – It would be impossible to write a list like this without including a movie based on a book by Steven King. *Misery*, the most

3rd 'Scary' time's a charm

By Jodi Cantor
Staff Writer

Review

The somewhat awaited *Scary Movie 3* premiered in theaters last Friday. It debuted with \$49.7 million in sales, making it both number one at the box office over the weekend and the highest debut for a film in October. This is a great improvement over the mediocre opening *Scary Movie 2* had of \$20 million in July of 2001 but isn't too far off from the \$42 million the first film raked in the year prior. But who cares about numbers? Did people rush out to see a great scary movie parody over the weekend or did they just waste their money?

The third installment of the widely received horror movie parodies was made under new management. While the first two films were written by brothers Shawn and Marlon Wayans and directed by their other brother Keenan Ivory Wayans, the third film is directed by David Zucker of the *Airplane* and the *Naked Gun* films and written by one of the *Naked Gun* and *Hot Shots* screenwriters, Pat Proft. Actors Leslie Nielsen and Charlie Sheen were recruited from these films to star along with Anna Faris, who reprises her role as Cindy Campbell, to find out why weird crop circles are appearing in farms outside of Washington, D.C.

The tone of this newest film is much different from the others. While the first two *Scary Movies* were rated R, edging on NC-17, the third film is more teen friendly with a PG-13 rating. On one hand, the film loses the raunchiness which drove away many viewers from the first two films, which is good. The



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Linda Blair, the possessed star of *The Exorcist*, stares down her adversary.

realistic of King's resume, depicts the terror of an obsessive fan in her quest to bring destruction to her novelist idol. This film's scariest element is undeniably Kathy Bates, whose portrayal of Annie Wilkes is enough to make any writer consider a different profession.

7. *The Evil Dead* (1981) – An example of how funny sequels can make people forget just how scary the original was. *The Evil Dead* is a true cult-classic with zombies, people to kill and oh yeah, if that's not enough, there's also a creepy book bound in human flesh and inked in blood with evil incantations that raise the dead, turn, your friends against you and make trees rape you. Enjoy.

6. *Spice World* (1997) – The songs, the outfits, the girls, the bus: madness.

absence of these vulgar scenes allows for more sophisticated dialogue and jokes.

On the other hand, it loses some of the few isolated hilarious grown-up moments that can't be seen in many of the innocent comedies in theaters today.

Charlie Sheen's portrayal of Tom, a former priest (a parody of Mel Gibson's character in *Signs*) is very reminiscent of his other slap-stick comedy work in *Hot Shots*. Tom is an unintelligent man trying to raise his daughter with the help of his brother, stereotypically clumsy George, whose dreams of becoming a rap star are predictably cut short when he mistakenly portrays himself as racist at a rap showdown. George, played by Simon Rex, is romantically linked to the heroine of the film, Cindy Campbell, who is now a reporter for a D.C. news show that reports nothing but "sex, violence and the weather." Parallel to the other *Scary Movies*, the characters in the third are weakly developed, brainless when it comes to fending for themselves and often find themselves in sometimes excessively played-out scary moments.

A few of the film's funniest moments are surprisingly not in the trailers. The scenes in the previews that are shown are mostly just allusions to longer jokes and punch-lines that one has to see the movie to fully appreciate.

While the film isn't as hilarious as the commercials make it seem, it still is very entertaining. As to the title of the film, the only scary thing about this film is that there's a fourth in the works. What movies will they think to parody next?

5. *Halloween* (1978) – Name a horror cliché and it likely came out of this film. Perhaps one of the most emulated movies in the industry, Michael Myers still reigns supreme as the king of the slashers. A creepy movie to begin with, John Carpenter's signature theme took a simple film about a baby sitter hunted by a madman and made it legendary.

4. *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991) – More psychological than shocking, *Silence* terrified audiences and critics alike, earning it all of the primary Academy Awards. Whether *Silence* scares us because we fear for the life of one of cinema's only real female protagonists, or because Hannibal Lecter never gave us a reason why he liked eating all those livers with his Chianti, the complexities

of *Silence* make it hard to walk away unfazed and will continue to frighten and disturb audiences forever.

3. *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) – It's been said that *Blair Witch* was scary because it left more questions than answers, that for a generation jaded behind camera lenses, the first person perspective hit closer to home. But really, while it's common to see people killed in a horror film, it's rare to see ones where people truly systematically break down into a state of madness. Unfortunately, the style of this one is hit or miss. People will find they're either terrified by *Blair Witch* or not affected at all.

2. *Psycho* (1960) – Hitchcock's greatest piece took viewers on a roller-coaster of fear, toying with the emotions of moviegoers and scaring people away from showers for years. Nearly a half-century later, *Psycho* is just as disturbing as the day of its release. Just don't pick up the embarrassing 1998 remake.

1. *The Exorcist* (1973) – Forget the 2000 special edition, the original masterpiece remains widely regarded as the scariest movie ever conceived. In a time where horror has blended with teen movies, it's nice to see a film about the true power of evil, uncompromised. You can kill guys like Leatherface, but *The Exorcist* won people over with an evil so powerful, you couldn't dream of stopping it, only of driving it away.



Photo copyright New Line Productions, Inc.

This year's Halloween horror flick, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is playing in theaters now and stars Eric Balfour and Jessica Biel.

Leatherface returns

By James McArthur
Staff Writer

Review

Thirty years ago there was a film that took audiences by storm. Now, nearly three decades later, *Leatherface* returns with his chainsawing ways.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre is a thrill ride from beginning to end. It is definitely a movie that puts the gory back with the scary.

It's a classic horror flick based around a van-load of horny, pot-smoking and attractive young people. The day they ventured into a small town, and a stranger grabbed their attention, they did not know that their lives would be changed forever.

Director Marcus Nispel snatches the audience by wielding young talent (Jessica Biel, Eric Balfour). As the film springs forward, the victims meet the

unusual townspeople as well as having a deadly encounter with the movie's infamous killer, *Leatherface*.

Biel displays a superior performance as the movie's strong female hero. Her character shows leadership, a strong heart and common sense, as demonstrated when she stops to check on a lonely hitchhiker.

Those who love being terrified while watching a movie cannot go wrong with this film. For others, maybe this would be a good time to break the ice and take a chance on a film that keeps viewers in a constant state of suspense.

This is the time to get off the couch, away from the books and go to the movies to enjoy the new *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, in theater's everywhere. Experience this Halloween season with a chill.