

Blu-Ray Review: Dante Tomaselli's Desecration is Surreal and Scrappy

By [Tyler Doupé](#) - August 8, 2018 11 0



Desecration follows a teenage boy named Bobby on a surreal and visceral journey through the literal depths of Hell that begins when he unintentionally kills one of the instructors at his school.

Dante Tomaselli is a master of atmosphere and an accomplished composer. The score of his debut feature is beautifully rendered and the atmosphere reminiscent of the early works of Argento, Bava, or Fulci. The director uses stunning visual FX, nightmarish landscapes, and perfectly timed sound effects to create a captivating and terrifying tale. The sound editing is near perfect. Tomaselli had limited funds to work with on this project but by tackling both the score and sound editing himself, he was able to deliver a finished product that defies the film's modest budget.

The film pulls off some grandiose FX work that look much more expensive to execute than they were. There are some really gruesome face-melting sequences and a delightfully violent encounter involving a pair of shears. On such a tight budget, these effects should have looked cheap but they rarely do.

The film has a largely green cast. Several of the players were acting for the first time. But in spite of that, Tomaselli was able to craft a film that shocks and entertains, even though some of the performances are on the amateur side. It's easy to forgive inexperienced acting when Tomaselli is able to so expertly deliver in other areas.

The film's themes speak to Tomaselli's personal history with Catholicism. The content of the film would strongly suggest that the director has had a trying relationship with religion. Tomaselli thanks his cousin Alfred Sole in the opening credits, which makes perfect sense, as the first act bears both visual and thematic similarities to Sole's American-made giallo, *Alice, Sweet Alice*. Both films suggest that religion is inherently corrupt and capable of leading people to commit acts of unspeakable evil.

In addition to *Alice, Sweet Alice*, Tomaselli was very likely also inspired by *The Evil Dead*. *Desecration* features an insane stop motion sequence involving vines that appears to pay loving tribute to Sam Raimi's 1981 masterwork without coming across as mere mimicry.

As for the Blu-ray release, the transfer is pretty poor. However, that's not a dig on Code Red DVD or Kino Lorber. The original Super 16 film print has been lost for some time and the transfer had to be taken from the Digibeta master tape. As such, the image quality is not particularly good.

The Blu-ray disc is chock full of special features. We get a bonus copy of Tomaselli's haunting musical effort, *Witches*, an insightful audio commentary from the director, a copy of the short on which the film is based, a still gallery, and more! This is truly the definitive release of the film and an absolute must own for any fan of the director's catalogue. *Desecration* is available now on Blu-ray from Code Red DVD.

WICKED RATING: 7/10

Director(s): Dante Tomaselli

Writer(s): Dante Tomaselli

Stars: Irma St. Paule, Danny Lopes, and Salvatore Paul Piro

Release: August 7, 2018 (Blu-ray)

Studio/ Production Co: Code Red DVD, Kino Lorber

Budget: \$150,000 Estimated

Language: English

Length: 88-Minutes



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