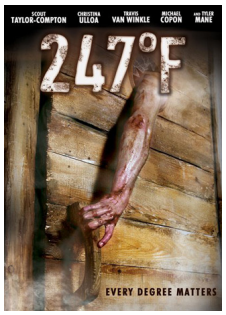
This’ll be a short one, folks, since there just isn’t much to say about a flick that ignores every possible bit of entertainment that could be had watching people trapped in a sauna. What we’re presented with is a movie featuring taut young folks who have been spritzed down or smeared with oil to resemble sweat, panting their lines in scene after scene.

Yeah, that’s really all the movie (out on DVD and Blu-ray from Anchor Bay) is. Hotties get trapped in hot room—and they talk, freak out, try to escape, talk more, then there’s a reveal at the end that makes you sad you stuck it out instead of turning it off. This is an extraordinary example of an in-one-eye-and-out-the-other cinematic experience. There is no sense of claustrophobia, and not a single cast member can sell the notion that they are actually cooking alive. There is that twist at the end, but it’s so ridiculous that you’re instantly reminded of other absurd shit that has occurred during the previous running time, which will make you angry.



I’m not sure what compelled Travis Van Winkle to take the role of Ian, since he’s a devastatingly annoying character. He’s the guy who has all the answers and works the hardest to get them out. He’s the one who explains to the others what happens to the human body when it’s overheated, for example. I watched as this man took a rock from the steam pile (ha) in the sauna and tried to break the small but thick glass window in the door (see cover art). His plan is to break the window, then put a rock inside a towel and try to swing it like a pendulum to

pop the door’s handle open. That doesn’t work after four attempts or so, which causes him to give up and breathlessly continue delivering informative dialogue. Not frustrating enough for you? Then ask yourself why he bloodied his bare hand all to hell while smashing the rock against the glass instead of wrapping it up in the towel for protection. Still not pissed at this person? He sits down afterward and rips the towel apart to bandage his hand. Never again does he try the not-too-bad rock-pendulum trick, and if he wanted to, he couldn’t because he has ruined the towel.

You’ve just read an entire paragraph about my distress over the use of a towel in a horror movie. I think that’s a good place to stop, because if you’re still considering renting or buying this thing, you deserve to discover the rest for yourself. And no, this is not a beer-and-friends flick to be played with. Moving on the features!

We get a commentary with director/producer Levan Bakhia. It comes as no surprise that every shot in the sauna was visually fixed up in post—surely a contributing factor as to why not one scene comes across as authentically hot or uncomfortable. Cinematographer Vigen Vartanov’s outdoor photography is impressive, so again, having talent on hand just to sit around in a phony sauna is pretty damn aggravating. Overall, Bakhia is earnest and serious about his debut project, but it’s very hard to care because he’s discussing this film. In fact, he seems so pleased with the outcome, and has such a great attitude about the stresses and rewards that come with such an undertaking, the track is equal parts humbling and frustrating. I was left hoping Bakhia chooses a better project for his next venture; this kind of enthusiasm ought not to be wasted on such silly material.

A few deleted scenes are also provided. They, on the other hand, made me feel absolutely nothing.

MOVIE: 💀💀💀💀

DISC PACKAGE: 💀💀💀💀