

## “MIRRORS 2” (Blu-ray Review)

Written by Tim Janson

Tuesday, 09 November 2010 17:26

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One of the most overused scenes in horror films is a character seeing a terrifying image in a mirror that quickly disappears. So you have to admire the sheer boldness of *MIRRORS* to build an entire film around this visual device—and even more so that it’s attempted again in *MIRRORS 2*, a quasi-sequel now available in a Blu-ray/DVD combo and solo DVD from Fox Home Entertainment.

*MIRRORS 2* provides the flimsiest of connections to its predecessor, as a mirror from that movie’s derelict department store is moved to *another* luxury department store in New Orleans that’s on the verge of opening. After a security guard mutilates himself by eating shattered glass, Max Matheson (Nick Stahl) takes over as the new nighttime guard. Max is coping with the death of his girlfriend in an auto accident, for which he blames himself. As he does his rounds through the store, he becomes haunted by a young woman in the mirror, as well as much more grotesque images. The store’s top brass begin to die in grisly ways (beheaded by a shower door, slicing their own innards out, etc.), and Max discovers that a young female employee named Eleanor Reigns disappeared two months earlier. He soon comes into contact with her sister Elizabeth (Emmanuelle Vaugier), who has been searching for her ever since, and together they uncover the dark secret of Eleanor’s disappearance and her vengeful spirit.



We get that Max is still distraught over his girlfriend’s death, but Stahl looks positively ragged here, like he’s just come down after a 48-hour Red Bull binge. He meanders about the store doing little actual security-guard stuff while encountering the girl’s spirit at predictable intervals. *MIRRORS 2* enjoys its best moments when she’s exacting her vengeance, and the kills are surprisingly gory and effective—but every time things get moving, director Victor Garcia lets up on the gas and the story slows down to uninspired ghost fare.

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The film was shot in a museum, and it shows; even though we're told the store is opening in a few days, there's nothing that remotely gives the impression that this *is* a store. There's no merchandise, no signs, no cash registers...just a lot of empty, nondescript rooms and corridors. Ah...but plenty of mirrors! In fact, it's said that the mirror transplanted from New York is the store's centerpiece—and it's not saying a lot about your establishment if its key feature is a piece of glass.

MIRRORS 2's main fault is that it lacks any ambition. The subplot of Max's grief over his girlfriend is dropped and never picked up again. Instead of attempting a new take on this material, screenwriter Matt Venne gives us another troubled night watchman in another department store—so much for originality. While it offers some solid moments of grue in the midsection, everything around them is too slow and predictable.

The Blu-ray sports clean, crisp DTS-HD 5.1 audio and widescreen visuals. Despite the fact that much of the film takes place at night in low light settings, the contrast is sharp and you never feel like you're missing anything onscreen. You can choose to watch the film with “Woman in the Mirror” mode turned on: At certain points, a picture-in-picture will pop up giving you the view from the perspective of Eleanor's spirit. This gimmick doesn't offer much outside of a different perspective of the scene and additional views of the vengeful ghost.

Several short bonuses are included, including “The Other Side: Making MIRRORS 2.” It's your standard featurette, running 10 minutes and including an interview with Garcia, who explains that the producers were going for a smaller-scale production that offered more suspense than the original (they achieved one of those goals, anyway). “Keep it Real: The Visual and Special Effects of MIRRORS 2” runs 12 minutes and provides an in-depth look at the various kills and how they were created by the FX team, and there's also just two minutes of deleted scenes.

The dual-sided DVD contains the original Korean film INTO THE MIRROR, upon which both MIRRORS features are based—though neither is a direct Americanized version of the Asian original. MIRRORS 2 probably hews a little closer, but INTO THE MIRROR is not a classic by any means. It's slowly paced, and doesn't contain the bloodshed that the American films offer to indiscriminating gorehounds.

MOVIE: 

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