

Filmmaker talks period chiller “SEA OF DUST”

Written by Michael Gingold
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One of the more uniquely conceived independent genre films of late is the tongue-in-cheek chiller SEA OF DUST, for which writer/director Scott Bunt drew from a number of inspirations. “I have a genuine love for the fantasy genre, for the work of Terence Fisher and Mario Bava and Jean Cocteau,” he tells Fango. “And for exploding heads.”



The movie, which hits DVD from [Cinema Epoch](#) August 10 (see details [here](#)), stars Tom Savini (pictured right) as evil religious figure Prestor John, heading a cast that also includes Hammer veteran Ingrid Pitt, Troy Holland, Sarah Dauber, Darby Totten, Stuart Rudin (“Multiple Miggs” in THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS), Bill Timoney, THE TENEMENT’s Suzi Lorraine and Pete Barker, Edward X. Young and Ed Ferrugia; Josh Turi created the makeup FX. The movie combines a humorous approach with old-school genre sensibilities. “It would have been an easy matter for us to clone a ’60s Gothic horror, but—for better or worse—we wanted SEA OF DUST to be something more,” Bunt notes. “We wanted it to be absurd and surreal and reflective of the times, like a cross between a Hammer film and a contemporary midnight movie.

“As tongue-in-cheek as it is, SEA does have a historic foundation,” he continues. It’s concerned with the notions of good and evil, specifically how perspective can play a role in defining them. It’s very much a film informed by the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, when we watched people we’d known our whole lives transform into bloodthirsty fanatics, eager to take revenge on those they were told were responsible. We decided to use humor to point out the lunacy of institutionalized hatred. In some ways, I suppose it’s a quintessentially New York film.”

Bunt credits the genre vets in his cast for allowing him to achieve his vision on a larger scale than originally intended. “SEA was never intended to be a big picture, but with the involvement of Tom Savini, Ingrid Pitt and [singer] Stephen Malkmus, things began to snowball. It gained a certain synergy and became the ‘little picture that could.’ We’re proud to have worked in the

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company of so many talented people, both in front of the camera and behind it.” You can watch the trailer below, and for more info on the film, check out SEA’s [official website](#) .

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