Written by Paolo Zelati
Tuesday, 02 March 2010 13:59

Is Italian horror cinema really dead? Directors Lamberto Bava, Sergio Stivaletti and Ruggero Deodato have been struggling to make a fright anthology since 2008; genre legend Dario Argento can’t even get his latest picture GIALLO properly released; and in the last 15 years, only singer/director Federico Zampaglione’s SHADOWS has shown a clear personal vision and interesting take on the genre. And Jonathan Zarantonello, director of the new chiller THE BUTTERFLY ROOM, had to leave his homeland in order to make his movie, from which you can see a few exclusive behind-the-scenes photos after the jump.

But just as fans of Italian horror are losing heart, their Gothic queen has finally left her castle and mounted an onscreen comeback. Of course, we’re talking about the divine Barbara Steele, the English actress who, in collaboration with Mario Bava (BLACK SUNDAY), Antonio Margheriti (CASTLE OF BLOOD), Riccardo Freda (THE HORRIBLE DR. HICHCOCK), Mario Caiano (NIGHTMARE CASTLE), Camillo Mastrocinque (AN ANGEL FOR SATAN) and Massimo Pupillo (TERROR CREATURES FROM THE GRAVE), became a true living icon of scare cinema. But the actress hasn’t enchanted us with her unique and magical eyes and presence since 1991, when she played Dr. Julia Hoffman in 12 episodes of the relaunched DARK SHADOWS TV series; since then, she’s done nothing more than a couple of quick cameos.

Now, Bava’s muse returns in grand style with a lead role in BUTTERFLY ROOM, the third film by Zarantonello following the high-school splatter movie MEDLEY (distributed on U.S. DVD by Troma) and the sex comedy UNCUT: MEMBER ONLY, a feature narrated from the point of view of…a penis. Zarantonello, who struggled for more than eight years to get BUTTERFLY off the ground, eventually emigrated to LA in search of financing and finally realized his dream.

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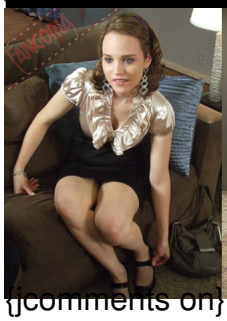

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