

what are we watching on dvd?



LUMPIA

81 Minutes (Alica Way Entertainment)

I remember several years ago when I saw a teaser trailer for a low-budget film titled "LUMPIA", I was interested in seeing more but had to wait several more years until the film came out on DVD to finally check it out!

As I have always supported Filipino and Asian artists and filmmakers, I know how it is to create a project using friends, family and filming with a small budget, but I really have to give it up to Patricio Ginelsa for creating a film that many Filipinos can watch, understand and enjoy.

I have watched films by friends and watched their films knowing that they accomplished things on a low budget and in these cases, requires the skill of talented and dedicated production staff, good editing and good storytelling.

Things that have been accomplished on films by directors such as Robert Rodriguez first film "El Mariachi" to Chris Chan Lee who directed "YELLOW". Both directors have gone on to better projects and with Patricio Ginelsa, I can see the same happening. Since "Lumpia", he has directed a music video ("The Apl Song") for the popular group, Black Eyed Peas.

"LUMPIA" is a movie that has been a project of Patricio Ginelsa for seven years and was shown in select theaters in 2003.

The storyline revolves around ten-

sion at Fogtown High School where James (Francis Custodio) and his friends try to stand up against Tyrone (Edward Baon) and his crew of thugs who are into F.O.B. bashing!

But a silent hero (played by Carlos Baon) emerges to help the Filipino immigrants, armed with fighting skills and fried lumpia, will the hero be able to protect the many Filipino immigrants of Fogtown High School?

For those not familiar with the term "F.O.B.", the term is a negative term given to Filipinos who have immigrated from the Philippines and are living in America.

For many Filipinos and depending where you live, there has always been tension among Filipino Americans towards Filipino immigrants.

May it be the differences of clothing style, speaking the English language or whatever reason several Filipino Americans have used against Filipino immigrants.

Unfortunately, this is something that many Filipinos have seen and experienced but "LUMPIA" shows that Filipino unity is important and Filipino Americans dissing our brothers and sisters from the Philippines is just stupid.

The film has a combination of action and comedy to keep people entertained. If there is one fault that I can find, it's definitely pacing.

There is a segment where the movie goes into a karaoke segment by James' friends which you can tell was shot years later than when the actual "LUMPIA" film was shot.

So, the odd intermission may leave

you wondering why the break was included in the film but at the same time, I see it as a good humor break that would please the audience and judging by the audience reaction to the segment, you can tell on the special audio track featuring a sold-out audience that they enjoyed it.

As for the audio and video quality of the DVD, of course it's not going to be the best quality if compared with films release via big budget but it's not that bad.

The film is derived from an ongoing seven year project and again, a reminder that "LUMPIA" was not created with a high budget.

If you are an audiophile and are expecting great sounds, you are not going to find a DTS or Digital 5.1 soundtrack on this DVD. And the same goes for video, for those who only want things anamorphic, this film is not.

But what the DVD doesn't lack in is the special features. I was very happy to find that the "LUMPIA" DVD is filled with many special features.

Special features include a cast and crew audio commentary, music videos featuring the PACIFICS, InnerVoices, 10.01 and Janice Aranas. Deleted scenes, making of LUMPIA featurette, TV spots and trailer, bloop-er reel, an old short film titled "The Green Magician", English subtitles, an audio tracks that feature the audio from a sold-out audience showing of the film and a "BASTOS!" uncensored version (although not completely uncensored).

The musical score was done very well for this film from music producer and artist Elson Trinidad and the editing by A.J. Calomay was also done very well.

Being a Filipino, I know my review may be a bit biased but watching films that many of our young culture can enjoy and learn from is exciting and also important.

The fact is that these films that are created by and star Filipino Americans are very rare and I appreciate the hardwork that Patricio and "LUMPIA" crew have done, From the creation and production for the film and also in getting the word out for the film.

I highly recommend checking this DVD out! So, watch "LUMPIA" because it's pretty damn good.

— DENNIS A. AMITH

REVIEW GRADE

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