

Jeff Kirkendall's Thoughts For The Month Column

Thoughts, Opinions, Reviews, Commentary & More!

Hello and Welcome! My name is Jeff Kirkendall and I'm an independent filmmaker and actor from the Upstate New York area. This is the section of the Very Scary Productions website where I write about topics related to independent filmmaking, digital video production, acting, movies in general, horror movies in particular, my own indie movies, as well as anything and everything related or in between.

I decided to create this commentary page because I find that I often come across things that either interest me, excite me, intrigue me, or maybe just bug me. Any topic related to movies and cinema is fair game, from the most mainstream to the most controversial. For example I'll often read about movie projects that I have a strong interest in or opinion on, for one reason or another. This page gives me a forum to discuss these things. It's all about discussion and furthering understanding of our pop culture. Anyone who has feedback concerning what I have to say here, feel free to contact me (see the contact link at <http://www.veryscaryproductions.com/>).

I'd also like to point out that the following is just my opinion, and everyone is free to agree or disagree with what I have to say. Enjoy, and to all the Indies out there: Keep on Filming!

SUBJECT: Movie Review: ***Mega Python vs. Gatoroid*** – May 2011

Note: The following movie review contains plot details which could be considered spoilers.

For those who may have missed it, ***Mega Python vs. Gatoroid*** is an original movie production from the SyFy (formerly Sci-Fi) channel, which recently debuted as one of their big Saturday night premieres. As the title implies, it is a monster flick involving giant snakes pitted against giant crocodiles, with many hapless humans caught in between. The plot involves pythons liberated from a lab by a group of well-meaning animal-rights activists led by Dr. Nikki Riley, played by 1980's teen pop icon Deborah (formerly Debbie) Gibson, and the chaos they cause in the swamp area where they are released. After the death of her fiancé local sheriff Terry O'Hara, portrayed by Gibson's 80's teen rival Tiffany (no last name needed), responds by feeding the local alligator population steroid-filled chicken so they will grow bigger and kill the menacing snakes. Not surprisingly, such dimwitted behavior brings terrible consequences as both snakes and alligators grow to enormous size and wreak havoc on everyone and everything in their path. The results of this crazy scenario are visual delights such as giant CGI creatures marauding down highways, brainless trigger-happy locals prowling the swamps, a brawl to end all brawls between our two lovely leading ladies, and an appearance by former Monkee Micky Dolenz (among other things)!

I really believe one either likes a movie of this sort or not. In other words, one either "gets it" or one doesn't. ***Mega Python vs. Gatoroid*** is a true modern-day B-movie in every sense of the word. It's a throwback to 1950's monster flicks, except with CGI (computer-generated imagery) now being employed to create the title creatures. The SyFy channel has now produced quite a few of these Saturday night creature epics on relatively low budgets (by today's standards), and the ones I've seen all share similar elements: "cheesy" CGI, plots with holes big enough to drive trucks through, creative casting, and above all a sense of crazy fun which make them well worth watching. I applaud the SyFy channel for producing such enjoyable movies which in many ways have little regard for our modern sensibilities. By this I mean they unapologetically disregard the so-called sophistication we've come to expect from films today, instead giving us stories,

images and characters we can all laugh along with. Although again, movies like this really are aimed at a certain audience, and not at those who are looking for serious science fiction fare.

Being a child of the 80's, I also must state the obvious. * It was great seeing 80's teen icons Debbie Gibson and Tiffany together in this film. What a cool idea! They were fun to watch as adversaries and then eventually reluctant friends, and of course the scene many people have coined "the ultimate catfight" was the highlight of the movie. This fight really was twenty years in the making! Other highlights included hearing the ladies slip song titles into their banter, as well as lines like "Looks like someone had bitch for breakfast", which is destined to be remembered as the most classic of dialog. Kudos goes to director Mary Lambert (of ***Pet Cemetery*** fame) for skillfully infusing the movie with these elements. If you are a B-movie fan (or Z-movie fan for that matter), or a fan of either Debbie or Tiffany, this crazy concoction of a movie is not to be missed. I can only hope the ladies will decide to continue their association with production company The Asylum and the SyFy channel to bring us more campy flicks like this in the future!

* Prior to this film the ladies each starred separately in a monster epic for the SyFy channel. Deborah Gibson previously appeared in 2009's ***Mega Shark vs. Giant Octopus***, while Tiffany starred in the 2010 creature feature ***Mega Piranha***.