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Jug Face

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Jug Face

Abstract

This is a film of *Jug Face* (2013) directed by Chad Crawford Kinkle.

Keywords

Horror, Sacrifice

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Jug Face

Directed by Chad Crawford Kinkle

(Slamdance Special Screening)

Jug Face is clearly intended to be a horror film. A young woman, Ada, is trying to avoid death. It is her turn to die, because Dawai, a potter in the area has created a jug with Ada's face on it. Dawai is moved by the pit. When the pit requires a sacrifice, it moves Dawai to create a jug with the face of the next victim on it. Victims have their throats slit over the pit, thereby feeding the pit with their blood. There is a ghost boy (listed in the credits as “emaciated boy”) and Ada has some very unusual experiences where she seems to go into a trance. Throat slitting, ghosts, surprise encounters, and trances are all elements that make up the horror story.



But, the story is interesting to those interested in religion and film because the people of the area (it is not quite a village) worship the pit. The characters in this movie come to us right out of *Deliverance*. There is a pit that they worship. The pit demands an occasional sacrifice, but the people believe that it also provides sustenance. There are a variety of rituals associated with the pit. Those who must die are encouraged to die with dignity, to submit themselves to the

throat slitting ritual. This is a quite simple religion. The pit represents God. The people worship the pit. The pit gives and it takes away. How the pit influences Dawai is mystical. Ada is to be partnered with Bodie, but she needs to be pure in order to do so, and she is not pure. Sexual purity seems to be an important ingredient in the religion. It may be that *Jug Face* offers us religion at its basic level. All you need is something to worship. That thing (in this case the pit) controls the world around us. We can explain the world only in terms of the pit and we do not understand how the pit works—it is mystical. And, the pit requires sexual purity. It is interesting how much of religion concerns sexual behavior. Clearly the pit has served its purpose for this group of people. But, they are isolated, removed from the larger community. Things go badly for Ada when she acts contrary to the rules and this is where the horror enters into the picture.

Jug Face offers a picture of religion at its basic level. There must be something to worship. That thing must explain the good things that happen as well as the bad—we recognize how little control we have over the world around us. And there must be some rules about our conduct. *Jug Face* gives us an interesting model for understanding religion.

— William Blizek