

The Black Waters of Echo's Pond

Written by Kam Williams

Haunted house serves as setting for old-fashioned fright flick

Ever since the "Scream" trilogy so successfully parodied the horror movie genre, few directors have dared to try to make a traditional scary movie featuring all the tried and true conventions. But with "The Black Waters of Echo's Pond," Gabriel Bologna has served up an old-fashioned fright flick reminiscent of a Vincent Price classic.

First of all, you have the perfect setting, a spooky Victorian mansion located on a remote island off the coast of Maine. Then you factor in the place's cursed history, since everyone there had perished 80 years before while playing an evil, ritualistic board game.

Today, Beacon Island has only one inhabitant, Pete (Robert Patrick), a grizzled geezer who patrols the grounds with his trusty gun. The curmudgeonly caretaker has reluctantly agreed to let a group of young people use the house for what they expect to be a fun-filled weekend of imbibing and carousing.

Each of the nine revelers represents a readily-identifiable archetype, ranging from the good-natured host (Arcadiy Golubovich) to the flirtatious tramp flashing her new implants (Mircea Monroe) to a girl in mourning (Danielle Harris) to the macho jock (Walker Howard) to twin damsels in distress (Electra and Elise Avellan) to the uninvited party crasher (James Duval).

Upon their arrival, the naïve guests learn that communication with the mainland is impossible because there are no cell phone towers for miles around. Soon thereafter, Anton discovers an ancient board game hidden in the basement, and they all agree to play it that very evening in front of the fireplace. Little do they know they are kickstarting a ghastly chain of events which will have them dying to leave the island, literally and figuratively.

A high attrition, haunted house throwback certain to send chills up your spine despite trading in all the stock clichés, like the one which has the black guy dying first.

