

# Low-budget N.M. film creates horrific aftermath

## REVIEW

### Horror in the Wind

A FILM BY MAX MITCHELL

Dec. 12-14

SCREEN TIMES:

11p, Fri.; 1p, Sat., & Sun.

Guild Cinema

3405 Central NE,  
255.1848

\$7

horrorinthewind.com  
princessdianabile.com  
guildcinema.com



Southern New Mexican filmmaker Max Mitchell has the dubious distinction of having his latest film, *Horror in the Wind*, be banned by Allen Theatres as being "too political." The film will be screened at Guild Cinema December 12 through 14.

BY JEFF BERG

**D**ebauchery! Hedonism! Blasphemy! Naked New Mexicans! You will find it all in one very entertaining and ultra-low budget New Mexican film (\$52,863.98 to be exact), officially banned earlier this year by the Allen Theatre chain, which operates nearly 100 movie screens throughout New Mexico.

"Too political," explained Max Mitchell, the director, writer and co-producer of *Horror in the Wind* in a recent *Local iQ* interview, as the reason why Allen Theatres officials refused to publicly screen Mitchell's 85-minute feature.

The filmmaker went on to note that the multiplex in Alamogordo, N.M. that is run by Allen, was, at the time, reportedly screening no less than seven films that featured violence as a major theme.

If you're not up on your New Mexican geography, the town of High Rolls exists in the "other" New Mexico, the one that excludes Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Taos. It is a "dot on the map" of a town located in the southern mountains of the state, approximately 30 minutes away from Alamogordo.

Despite of the snub by Allen Theatres, Mitchell was quick to point out that his supposedly controversial movie could not have been made anywhere else.

"It's easier to make movies (in New Mexico) than in L.A.," Mitchell noted in a subtly tongue-in-cheek manner. "We did open

casting calls in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces and Ruidoso, and ended up with an entire cast of New Mexicans. Someone even loaned us an airplane, and the staff at the Dona Ana Community College (in Las Cruces) couldn't have been more helpful."

The concept that resulted in *Horror in the Wind* was Mitchell's idea from the start. He has made one film previously, *Get Your Stuff*, an independent comedy about two gay men who adopt a pair of street-wise kids.

"Two foster kids from hell", the filmmaker noted.

Mitchell added that, after the making of *Get Your Stuff*, he got to thinking that, since being both gay and political are major factors in his life, the roots of his story were established. The resulting plot unfolds with well-known evangelists Pat Robertson and James Dobson having recently been elected president and vice-president, respectively. But meanwhile, back in New Mexico, Ed and Richard, two award-winning researchers, have stumbled across a formula that suppresses the sexual urges of humans — something the newly-appointed leaders of the free world take an interest in.

Ed and Richard's formula is stolen by the American government before it is completed. The formula is subsequently sprayed onto the entire populace of the country via airplane, turning all straight people into gay people, and conversely, gay people, into straight people —

including Robertson, Dobson, Ed and Richard. From that point on, a decidedly casual chase is on to find an antidote, yet no one in the film seems to really mind being gay.

Co-produced by Dick Weber, no one is safe from parody in Mitchell's film; everyone takes a hit, especially religious leaders and stereotypical political hypocrites. One particular character, Mitchell said, is based on fact: an Alamogordo-based preacher who reportedly organized the burning of Harry Potter books a few years back.

"He's also burned bibles," Mitchell purported.

*Horror in the Wind* is by no means a movie meant to be seen by the biblically sensitive, nor those who lack a sense of humor. The jokes in the film are dry and the political edginess is painfully evident. In a word, the film is clever.

But for as much controversy that this film has generated, it is Mitchell's next project that is sure to stir up even more emotions among religious zealots. Mitchell said he and Weber are currently planning to make a movie with the working title *Princess Diana Bible*, which Mitchell offered will be a new version of the bible that includes *The Gay Old Testament* and *The Gay New Testament*.

Although the titles might make the impending two-part mini-series sound like a musical made in the 1930s, Mitchell lifted a subtle eyebrow that indicated they will be anything but.