

# 'Candyman' coated in gore but suffers from weak script



By TIMM DOOLEN  
Special to THE BATTALION

**"Candyman"**  
Starring Virginia Madsen, Tony Todd and Vanessa Williams  
Directed by Bernard Rose  
Rated R  
Playing at Schulman 6

Who can take a body?  
Cover it with blood?  
Rip out the intestines and throw 'em in the mud?  
The Candyman, the Candyman can  
The Candyman can 'cause he mixes it with legend to make the film sound good.

OK, so Sammy Davis, Jr. is probably turning in his grave, along with half of the cast of this movie.  
Candyman, Candyman, Candyman, Candyman, Candyman. If you say his name five times while looking in a mirror, he'll appear behind you and disembowel you. Or so the

legend goes in the fictional "Candyman," based on the Clive Barker story, "The Forbidden."

The main protagonist, Helen (Virginia Madsen), is doing a thesis on urban legends — those modern terror stories that are told around campfires and at all-night sleepovers.

The "Candyman," played by Tony Todd, was murdered 100 years ago by a lynch mob who cut off his right hand and then let a hive of bees sting him to death. Now he's supposed to inhabit a run-down ghetto tenement in downtown Chicago, bludgeoning residents every once in a while.

Investigating the legend, Helen finds Candyman's living area in an abandoned apartment. She soon finds herself being followed by the Candyman, waking up covered in blood next to a decapitated dog, and being blamed for the disappearance of a baby in the "haunted" tenement.

For the rest of the movie, the Candyman kills other people and lets Helen take the blame for it, trying to turn her into a horror legend of her own.

As horror movies go, this isn't the worst,

but then again, this is no "Silence of the Lambs." It stays away from the senseless gore that other slasher films promote, but on the other hand it falls short in explaining the causes for any of the murders.

In the end, it's difficult to figure out what the point of the movie is, or why the Candyman wants to make Helen into another legend.

The first half of the movie drags to the point of boredom (with intermittent shocks) and then the second half is a flurry of action, accusations and dead bodies. But in the hurry to get on with the action, the story radically shifts its storyline and leaves behind any sense of significance.

I'm not normally a big fan of horror films, especially shock-slasher movies that try to scare you by any means possible. And while this is not as bad as a "Friday the 13th" or a "Silent Night, Deadly Night," it is definitely not up to par with other better horror films.

Who can take a movie?  
Turn it out so bad?  
Use ice picks on babies, make us feel real sad?  
The Candyman...

# Country charts fall short in percentage of female artists

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS — In the midst of country music's celebration of its recent prosperity comes a most telling statistic: Only about 15 percent of the records on the Billboard country singles and albums charts are by female artists.

Country has long been a male-dominated genre, but that percentage is low compared to a decade ago.

The conventional wisdom has long been that women make up three-quarters of country music buyers and are more likely to buy records by men, especially the ones who looked like they just stepped out of a cigarette commercial and into jeans that are four sizes too small.

But a recent Recording Industry Association of America survey indicates that only half of country records are bought by women. Females are buying the hunks, but then so are males.

Pam Tillis, racing up the charts with the single "Snake the Sugar Tree," thinks things are getting better for female artists in spite of

what the charts may say. "I don't think women were previously respected in Nashville like they are now," says the daughter of Mel Tillis. "We were expected to stand there and look pretty and not make waves. But then Loretta Lynn came out and sang 'The Pill' and Dolly Parton wrote some of her wonderful songs, and the attitude (toward women) started changing."

Suzy Bogguss' recent Country Music Association Horizon Award as best new artist shows that the Nashville establishment is willing to expand its expectations of female artists. At the time of awards voting, Bogguss was zooming up the charts with "Loving Go," which is about a daughter leaving home to go to college — not your usual country theme.

Bogguss says it's important for women artists to keep their voices strong and their vision clear. "We have a chance to sing about so many real feelings and emotions and sometimes giving the other side of the story. It's an exciting time to be in Nashville," she says.

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