

Blu-ray Review: Lifeless ‘A Haunted House’ Dies Quick Death

Submitted by [mattmoviemann](#) [1] on April 24, 2013 - 8:27am

- [A Haunted House](#) [2]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [3]
- [Essence Atkins](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Marlon Wayans](#) [6]
- [Matt Fagerholm](#) [7]
- [Michael Tiddes](#) [8]
- [Nick Swardson](#) [9]
- [Paranormal Activity](#) [10]
- [Universal Studios Home Entertainment](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]

CHICAGO – A routinely diverting extra on Apatow home video releases is the “Line O’Rama” montage supplying alternate riffs for scenes included in the final cut. They’re entertaining because they display the various wild directions the scenes could’ve taken courtesy of inspired improvisation. Judd Apatow clearly understands comedy, and Marlon Wayans clearly does not.

In his latest laugh dead zone, “A Haunted House,” co-writer/producer/star Wayans and director Michael Tiddes render countless scenes unbearably tedious by including multiple versions of gag lines artlessly stitched together through jump cuts. It doesn’t help that each new riff is less funny than the last. Instead of illustrating the cast’s boundless comedic imaginations, it lends the film an excruciating sense of mounting desperation.



Blu-ray Rating: **0.5/5.0**

Since Oren Peli’s marvelously effective found footage hit, “Paranormal Activity,” was about a white couple tormented by demonic spirits, Wayans apparently views it as a foreign entity ripe for ridicule. So many jokes in this amateurish parody center on the differences between blacks and whites, as if it’s desiring to champion the segregation of American cinema. Nearly every white character in the film is a blithering fool harboring a perverse obsession with Wayans’s nether regions, and none of them are less amusing than Nick Swardson (Bucky Larson, himself) as a flaming psychic embodying the sort of homophobic stereotypes only closeted frat boys would find hilarious. What Wayans seems to be suggesting is that only black audiences will find this schlock funny, and that’s a flat-out insult. I imagine very few living specimens will find this obnoxious gallery of thunderous flatulence and mean-spirited caricatures the least bit watchable.



A Haunted House was released on Blu-ray and DVD on April 23rd, 2013.

Photo credit: Universal Studios Home Entertainment

It's actually a shame just how awful this film is, considering that the subject matter remains fertile ground for satire. With every money-mongering sequel, the "Paranormal" franchise has devolved further into soulless self-parody where digital gimmicks overtake suspenseful set-pieces. Wayans could've mined the humor inherent in a couple's awkward first days living together, and the actress cast as Wayans's wife, Essence Atkins, certainly appears game to play a credible human being. Sadly, her sole requirement is to endure a series of wince-inducing humiliations culminating in the vicious climax where she's beaten to a pulp by five guys in a basement. What a riot. Only one shot in the entire 87-minute ordeal displays a smidgen of comic potential. It takes place during a tense breakfast as Wayans and Atkins grimly attempt to ignore the abusive poltergeist as it wreaks havoc on the room. When Atkins reaches for her glass, the invisible vexation pushes it off the table, inspiring her to rattle off the deadpan quip, "Good thing we switched to plastic." For a fleeting moment, the film stops trying to break the Guinness Book record for offensive crudity and decides to simply be funny. Perhaps Wayans should try that approach next time.

"A Haunted House" is presented in 1080p High Definition (with a 1.85:1 aspect ratio), accompanied by English, Spanish and French subtitles, and is available in a Blu-ray/DVD/digital copy/UltraViolet combo pack. The alleged featurette is a two-minute trailer with soundbites.

'A Haunted House' is released by Universal Studios Home Entertainment and stars Marlon Wayans, Essence Atkins, Nick Swardson, David Koechner and Cedric the Entertainer. It was written by Rick Alvarez and Marlon Wayans and directed by Michael Tiddes. It was released on April 23rd, 2013. It is rated R.



[13]

By [MATT FAGERHOLM](#) [14]
Staff Writer
HollywoodChicago.com
matt@hollywoodchicago.com [13]

Source URL (retrieved on *Apr 25 2024 - 2:28pm*):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/21922/blu-ray-review-lifeless-a-haunted-house-dies-quick-death>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/mattmovieman>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/a-haunted-house>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/essence-atkins>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/marlon-wayans>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/matt-fagerholm>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/michael-tiddes>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nick-swardson>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/paranormal-activity>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/universal-studios-home-entertainment>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [13] <mailto:matt@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#MATT>