

## Film Review: 'The Dead Don't Die' Offers Full-On Horror Homage But Little Else

Submitted by [JonHC](#) [1] on June 18, 2019 - 6:46pm

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CHICAGO – Before Jordan Peele, before Mike Flanagan, before James Wan, and especially before all of Blumhouse, there were other masters of horror who paved the way for the filmmakers we know today. The Carpenters, the Cravens, and the Argentos of the world helped turn horror into the thriving genre it is today. Jim Jarmusch’s “The Dead Don’t Die” openly acknowledges this with their love letter approach to the genre itself.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Any person who sees horror films regularly will notice a few commonalities in themes or even become aware of tropes. There’s nothing wrong with a trope or two as long as there is something else of substance to go with them. Sometimes they’re inevitable, which is fine because they tend to feel like a personal signature reminding us of the rich history of the origins. There’s a fine line that needs to be walked to keep things staying in the homage territory and not crossing over to coming off as just plain lazy. Jarmusch toes the line carefully, and often successfully, but there are a few too many elements that he beats like an undead horse.

“The Dead Don’t Die” has many callbacks to some of the greatest horror films, but its entire existence can be traced directly to zombie auteur George R. Romero. Romero’s zombie films not only popularized and essentially created the zombie genre, but he also used them symbolically to tackle social and political issues. Writer/Director Jim Jarmusch stuffs all of this and more into his film, but without any of the finesse. The sloppy, breezy attitude is confirmed early on to be nothing short of intentional. From the flagrant foreboding to the mildly amusing meta-isms, this film was made for one reason and one reason alone: Fun. For better or worse, this was an obvious labor of love, even if sometimes it feels like a chore to watch.

*“The Dead Don’t Die” opened everywhere on June 14th. Featuring Bill Murray, Adam Drive, Tilda Swinton, Tom Waits, Chloë Sevigny, Steve Buscemi, Danny Glover, Selena Gomez, and Caleb Landry Jones. Directed by Jim Jarmusch. Written by Jim Jarmusch. Rated “R”*



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