

TOKYO PSYCHO (2004)

Category : DVD REVIEWS (S-Z)

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Directed by Ataru Oikawa

Review by David Carter



Released by Panik House Entertainment

Running Time: 79 minutes

Rating: NR

Color format: Color

Audio/Subtitles: 5.1 or 2.0 Japanese Dolby Digital Surround/English and Spanish Subtitles

Region Code: 1, NTSC

Aspect Ratio: Widescreen 1.85:1

16:9 Enhanced: Yes

Special Features: Behind the scenes footage, Premiere footage, Poster & Still Galleries, Cast & Crew Bios, "True Crime: the Inspiration for TOKYO PSYCHO" essays, English & Spanish Full-length commentary tracks, Insert Card & Sticker

Trailer Online: [Yes](#)



A common misconception is that serial murder is a wholly American phenomenon. In fact, all countries are plagued by serial killers, some even far more chilling and bizarre than the more widely known American killers. Serial murderers are still relatively rare in Japan, however, with two notable exceptions: Tsutomu Miyazaki and Hiroyuki Tsuchida. Eerily similar, Miyazaki was dubbed "the Otaku Murderer" for his love of manga and anime, and Tsuchida claimed he was inspired to kill his family from themes he picked up from the anime NEON GENESIS EVANGELION. The two incidences shocked Japan and polarized public opinion about both graphic anime and horror films. A curious side-effect of this backlash was director Ataru Oikawa's film TOKYO PSYCHO, which features a loosely based composite of the two killers.

Beautiful Yumiko Osawa has a relatively quiet life running a small design company with her friend Moe. One day Yumiko receives a strange package that contains and bloodstained letter than reads, "You were born to marry me." Naturally she's frightened by this, but doesn't let it disturb her normal routine. She continues to receive letters and packages regardless of where she goes, each more disturbing than the last. While attending a school reunion, she's reminded of a strange classmate named Motomu Mikuriya who had also told her she would marry him. Some quick research leads

her to find out that after she lost contact with Mikuriya, he murdered both his parents. Now truly afraid for her life, Yumiko hires a detective agency to help her find out where Mikuriya is now. She's alarmed to find out he's in Japan, and more alarmed when she finds out that may already be closer to her than she ever imagined.



TOKYO PSYCHO differs from many modern serial killer films by focusing not on the killer or the police, but on the intended victim. It's an interesting technique that gives a glimpse into the victim's terror, rather than the killer's insanity. By doing so, the film both greatly humanizes the victim while simultaneously making the killer seem more terrifying and enigmatic. It's refreshing for a serial killer film to not try to subtly glorify the killer by making them a more well-defined character than the victims.

Panik House Entertainment has released TOKYO PSYCHO with an outstanding DVD presentation. The audio and visuals are both well above average. They've included a wealth of bonus materials as well. Most interesting were the essays on the real life killers, Miyazaki and Tsuchida. In addition to this background material, there is a significant amount of behind-the-scenes footage, footage from the premiere, and many trailer variations.



TOKYO PSYCHO differs from the current crop of serial killer films to such a great degree some viewers may be caught off guard by the film. This is not a film to watch for the gore or high body count, as both are practically non-existent. Instead it's a well-done psychological thriller that gives a chilling look into a victim's life when being hunted by a killer. Some may balk at the lack of violent excess in the film, but most viewers will be able to appreciate the good use of tension throughout.