

45

HOTROD
RETROPOCALYPSE

See!
Giant Insects
Attack!

Witness!
Marauding
Martians!

Listen!
To Rock-n-Roll
Mutants!

AND...

Experience The
Craziest Future...
EVER!

BKM 2006





Credits

It is the middle of the 20th Century, a time of change, a time of boundless science and the power of the atom.

The last Great War has been fought, and lost – by everyone – as mad technology and insane despotism worked hand in hand to destroy the world that was and to bring about the world that is.

Now, in the ruins of the old world, a new world must be forged in a land of atomic abominations, lawlessness, loose morals, fast cars and Rock N' Roll.

This is the world of '45!

Written & Directed by James 'Grim' Desborough

Based on an original screenplay by James & Donna Desborough.

Cinematography: Bradley K McDevitt, James 'Grim' Desborough, Raven Morrison, Matthew Vasey, Jess McDevitt (Assistant colourist), Emelie 'Bettieboner' Jensen (<http://bettieboner.de> viantart.com/ - emeliejensen84@hotmail.com), Darklyobscure – additional art courtesy of the Otherworldly Art Portfolio.

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Dedication

To everyone who was excited about this project and to everyone that will, hopefully, buy it and enjoy it! Now, grab your 50's fetish heels and your nickel plated .45 and get out there and shoot some giant ants! The very world is in peril and only you can save it!

Filmed in *Super-Atomic*

IMAGINATOVISION[®]





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Reel 1

Our Presentation Feature





Introduction

'45 began life as an entirely different sort of game. An examination of Nazi, Japanese, American and British 'super weapon' projects and the truth about how close the Nazis came to having an atomic bomb of their own started a chain of thought about what the world would be like if World War II had been fought with atomics before victory in Europe had been achieved.

While the idea had merit, and wasn't thought of in terms of a potential pulp game but rather a serious one, it was hard to see where the fun factor came in, especially with a plethora of other pulp-type games coming out at the time. It was hard to see, that is, until I began to think in context of the media of the period, from the pulps of the 30's through the B-Movie science fiction of the 40's and 50's through the lurid cinematography of the 60's. If only, I thought, radiation genuinely did do interesting things like create giant insects and strange mutants, which could turn things around, even if it was at the cost of seriousness.

But then, why shouldn't it? This was, after all, a game, not a historical treatise and while I aim for what I call 'plausibility' in much of what I write, in this case, there was no need. There is no real need to be coherent or realistic in such a game and a sort of, post apocalyptic, 50s-style B-Movie, Rockabilly extravaganza could be a real blast.

And that, was how '45 came to be what it is today.

'45

'45 was the year everything changed, the year what seemed like an inevitable defeat for Hitler's armies became something altogether different and more terrifying. The year the world shattered under the glow of hundreds of atom bombs that swept away everything that stood before.

Civilisation teetered on the brink of collapse across the world as the superweapons of all sides collided and science thrashed about in frenzy, casting off strange new technologies and weapons on all sides until, finally, the war petered out.

Still, the damage was already done.

Between the strange effects of radiation and chemicals, the uncovering of hidden civilisations in Africa, The Amazon and Antarctica, between the strange forces that were unleashed by the SS Ahnerbe and the atomic

detonations that caught the eye of beings beyond our world. This Island Earth has been made vulnerable

and now, all across it, heroes are needed. Daring pilots, fearless drivers, saviours of the modern age, harnessing the destructive power of the atom, the passion of Rock n' Roll and their fierce independence to bring law to the wilderness, to keep the flame of civilisation burning and to rebel against the forces of tyranny that threaten to plunge the Earth into a new dark age.

Just you, your gun and your hot rod.

Postmortem Studios

Postmortem Studios is the 'independent label' imprint of Origin's Award Winning RPG author James 'Grim' Desborough, author of *The Munchkin's Guide to Powergaming* and numerous other titles for various gaming companies.

Postmortem Studios had existed, unofficially, for some time but was formed into an official company in 2004 and has produced several successful PDF works in that time from the, much imitated *100 Adventure Seeds* books to the controversial card game, *Hentacle*.

Postmortem Studios goes from strength to strength and hopes to build on previous success with more quality PDF and print products for role-players everywhere.

Xpress System

The *Xpress System* is designed, not to be a 'generic system' per se, but rather a modifiable rules set of 'plug and play' options. Each rule is designed to be supplemented or swapped out by additional or replacement rules. While some of these will be stylistic alterations for different genres it will also allow you to build your own version of the rules suited to your own particular preference in gaming and depth of rules.

For this reason permission is given to print out and mix pages from any *Xpress* products or, in the case of print purchase, to photocopy any rules pages for personal use or to supply players with streamlined copies of the rules for their own use.

The *Xpress* rules version presented for '45 is a pulp-oriented, high action version and are the second iteration of the *Xpress* rules set. Basic rules printed in this version supercede those presented in @ctiv8 save where they are noted as 'Plug-Ins'. Plug-Ins are optional replacements or additions to existing rules. Suggested changes and



additions, merits, flaws and other ideas can be sent to...

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The *Xpress System* is designed, as much as possible, to be a one-roll game with a quick resolution mechanic providing for scalable levels of success. This assists Games Masters in describing the outcomes of rolls and events. *Xpress* uses dice pools because the number of dice you pick up creates an immediate indication and physical feel for how good a character is at something, as well as providing a 'horror' factor in players once they see how many dice you are picking up. Re-rolling is also an integral mechanic, backing up the physical number of dice with another 'feel good' factor in the play of the game.

Specialisations, merits and flaws allow deeper character customisation and a greater feel for a character, something which can sometimes be lacking in rules-light games. Rather than an exhaustive list of merits and flaws the game provides rules for creating your own, with consistent effects, accompanied by some examples.

The *Xpress* system is not open and remains the property of Postmortem Studios, however, should anyone desire to use the system or to create material for any Postmortem Studios game that uses the system they are welcome to get in touch and an arrangement, royalty free, can be made.

Piracy

I am not a large multinational software corporation; I am not even a 'big player' in terms of money in the RPG scene. I do not make a great deal of money producing PDFs and what I do make, I need. It is fairly likely that this book will turn up on file-sharing networks, hosted on web pages or available for download through a newsgroup. If you get the file and like what you read, please consider buying a legitimate copy and I promise to keep writing.

Thank you.



"Even now Communist agents may be arming your own children against you!"





The World of '45

Joyce grasped the wheel of the '34 Chevy and slammed down her platform heel on the accelerator. The blower roared like a Florida hurricane, the re-bored engine snarled like an angry lion, shaking the whole car as the fat, slick tyres ate up the asphalt mile by mile leaving smoke and burnt rubber in their wake. Flames burst from the exhaust behind them as though they were fleeing from the very flames of hell itself.

She risked a glance in the rear view mirror and tightened her knuckles hard on the wheel when she saw. She held the wheel so tight that the word 'Fast' tattooed on her knuckles stood out even more, black ink proud on suddenly-white skin.

"They're gainin' on us sugah." She huskily told her companion in a sweet southern drawl that'd melt most men like a pat of butter in the summer sun, but there was fear in her voice that made it quaver.

Levi looked back at her, seeing fear behind those long dark lashes of hers for the first time since they'd met, last summer in Science City. It hurt him pretty bad to see his squeeze so full of fear and he clutched his nickel plated .45's in all three of his hands as he tried to reassure her.

"They ain't gonna be followin' us much longer honey-pie. You drive like a goddamn demon an' I shoot better'n John Wayne on his best day. We're gettin' out of this sweetcheeks. Don't you worry your pretty head none now, you hear?"

He leaned across the car and kissed her hard on her lips. The car didn't even sway as their mouths met. She tasted of honey, cinnamon and clove cigarettes. He tasted of cheap bourbon and Mexican cheroots. They were a potent cocktail together and they knew it.

Her eyes burned like fire as they stared into his, the road flashing past under the car, briefly illuminated by the shining light of their headlamps. She flickered her tongue past crimson lips and snapped her teeth in the air; his diesel goddess, petrol their aphrodisiac, lust their nitrous oxide, the road their life.

"Go get 'em tiger."

Levi growled, grinned, ran the barrel of a .45 back across his quiff and wound the seatbelt about his waist, throwing half his body out of the window of the hurtling Chevy into the black night outside.

The wind whipped at him, his denim jacket flapping about him like a demented bat sent from Hades. The night desert air chilled him to the bone, as cold as death itself; it blew so hard it even drowned out the roar of the engine. He brought all three arms up before him, setting back the hammers on the automatics as his eyes peered into the black void behind the rocketing car.

There they were. A countless swarm of locusts, each as big as a truck and ravenous for anything and everything they could devour, crops, homes, people, even cars. Born from the atomic fire that had burned Harrisburg to the foundations they had risen from the ashes like avenging angels in service to mother nature. They had already devoured three settlements, including Boothwyn, breakfast, lunch and dinner, and they'd decided on the roadster for pudding. Still, this was one hard rocking mutant that was going to give them indigestion.

"Bill Haley was from Boothwyn you insectoid, mutant, sons of bitches." Hissed Levi and pulled the triggers.

Three nickel-plated .45's – Faith, Hope and Charity, spat heavy-calibre death at the glittering insect eyes that shone in fire-light of the Chevy's exhaust. Bullets smashed chitin, tore flesh and knocked the ravenous hordes from the sky to crash and tumble on the road, wings twisted, legs twitching feebly in the night air.

Levi whooped like an injun as the guns blazed on and Joyce wrestled – white knuckled – with the Chevy, keeping it on the road, holding off the Cicadas Grandes for just a few moments of hard-fought life.

"You can eat Bill Haley motherfuckers! But you can't kill Rock N' Roll!"

