



GARY OLDMAN

True Romance

SPOILER WARNING The following notes give away the film's ending.

Scripted by Quentin Tarantino, this is an unashamedly slick, brash, violent account of a spree embarked on by Detroit comic-store assistant Clarence (Slater) and novice sex-worker Alabama (Arquette) who suddenly find themselves in possession of the Mob's cocaine. Of the starry supporting cast, (which also includes Samuel L Jackson, Brad Pitt and Val Kilmer), Oldman is memorably vivid as Alabama's monstrous pimp.

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A contemporary review

The true romance on display here is between scriptwriter Quentin Tarantino and a litany of great B-movies. The film is as full of as many homages – or rip-offs, depending on how generous you are – as star cameos. Tarantino's first completed script, written before *Reservoir Dogs*, is a manic tribute to the thing that he most loves, although it is not without a cheeky chiding of the more unscrupulous aspects of his home town. The mogul Donowitz, whose magnum opus is a Vietnam flick *Home in a Body Bag*, seems to have come from the same off-the-peg sleazy producer line as Steve Martin's character in *Grand Canyon*.

The film has been touted by pundits as a *Badlands* for the 90s, but that is to overlook the complicated pathos and poetry of Terrence Malick's film. Or perhaps it's those pundits' short memories that can't stretch back to all those other films about gun-crazy lovers on the run. This is the comic strip version of those films as distinct from the pulp version. 'Pulp' implies that there is an emotional bruising to be had, whereas this film is stripped down to bold graphics and crazy bursts of inspired dialogue – there's no emotion. Emotion cannot be ironic, cannot be guarded by inverted commas. In *Badlands*, Sissy Spacek's character may have invested too much in the *Teen Romance* magazines with their Hollywood gossip and fluffy dreams, but Malick ensured that there was a bizarre wealth of feeling in those dime-store sentiments. Tarantino, however, trades in a currency of cleverness. His hero and heroine live and love in a movie frame. They even get the dream happy ending – complete with sunset – that would have never been allowed to their predecessors on the run to the Mexican borders. But their *True Romance* does not require true emotion.

For if the film were about true emotion, then what would we make of its more dubious passions? The invective about 'niggers' in *Reservoir Dogs* could be attributed to the pristine-suited sewer rats who spat the words out. It was scum dialogue for scummy men. The characters in *True Romance* inhabit the same low-rent domain. But somehow there is a weary sense of *déjà vu* as Clifford launches into his number about Sicilians being related to 'niggers' since they are 'aubergine coloured'. This comes across as clever white-trash talk so loaded with irony as to mock those who are offended. But the bizarre and audacious cameo appearance of Gary Oldman as an African-American rasta certainly rankles, as does the sadistically prolonged fight between Alabama and Coccotti's henchman. She may turn the tables on him, but not

before incurring a sound and furious beating in a bathroom full of jagged glass.

Such routines are problematic and cannot be glibly dismissed (the Sicilian/nigger dialogue has already been acclaimed as ‘brilliant’ by the critic Clancy Sigal). But the boyish outrage aspires to be forgiven with the quirky turns of the rest of the film. Brad Pitt as the spliffed-out space lieutenant Floyd, who sees Coccotti’s men less as the heavy mob than as a heavy trip, is truly funny. There are also the bravura rapid-fire conversational exchanges that allow characters to be pegged in one liners. This is Tarantino’s gift Tony Scott may be directing, but like a stick of rock, the film is shot through with Tarantino’s name. But what remains to be seen is whether his infatuation with film can mature into something a little more profound. With *True Romance* it expresses itself as a frenzied affair, exciting at the time but easily forgotten.

Lizzie Francke, *Sight & Sound*, November 1993

TRUE ROMANCE

Directed by: Tony Scott
©: Morgan Creek Productions
A Morgan Creek production
Produced in association with: Davis Films
Presented by: James G. Robinson
Distributed by: Warner Bros.
Executive Producers: James G. Robinson, Gary Barber, Bob Weinstein, Harvey Weinstein, Stanley Margolis
Produced by: Bill Unger, Steve Perry, Samuel Hadida
Co-producers: Don Edmonds, James W. Skotchdopole
Associate Producers: Lisa Cogswell, Spencer Franklin, Gregory S. Manson
Production Associate: Debbie Pinckes
Unit Production Manager: S.H. Perry
Production Co-ordinator: Spencer Franklin
Production Accountant: Gregory S.Manson
Location Managers: Janice Polley, Deborah J. Page
Post-production Supervisor: Jody Levin
1st Assistant Director: James W. Skotchdopole
Script Supervisor: P.R. Tooke
Casting: Risa Bramon, Billy Hopkins
Written by: Quentin Tarantino
Director of Photography: Jeffrey L. Kimball
Camera Operators: Michael A. Genne, Gregory Lundsgaard, Ray De La Motte
Steadicam Operator: Gregory Lundsgaard
1st Assistant Camera: Kenny Nishino, Dan Gold
Chief Lighting Technicians: Dan Delgado, Frank Mathews
Key Grip: J. Michael Popovich
Dolly Grip: Michael L. Schwake
Grips: Hilary Klym, Mark Meyers, ‘Slick’ Rick Rader
Video Assist: Richmond G. Cogswell
Still Photographer: Ron Phillips
Special Effects Co-ordinator: Mike Meinardus
Special Effects: Robert Henderson, Larry Shorts
Edited by: Michael Tronick, Christian Wagner
1st Assistant Film Editors: Tony S. Ciccone, Kenneth B. Blackwell, Joe Mosca
Production Designer: Benjamín Fernández
Art Director: James J. Murakami
Assistant Art Directors: Lou Montejano, Nancy Garber
Set Decorator: Thomas L. Roysden
Property Masters: Michael Blaze, Rick Chavez
Swing Gang: Tom J. Furginson
Construction Co-ordinator: Michael Muscarella
Construction Painter: Anthony Paronelli
Costume Designer: Susan Becker
Costume Supervisor: Hugo Peña
Key Costumer: Dawn Y. Line
Make-up: Ellen Wong
Tattoo Design: Mark Mahoney
Prosthetic Make-up Design: Frank Carrisosa
Hairstylists: Ron Scott, Mary Barnard
Title Design: Nina Saxon Film Design, Cinema Research Corporation
Process Compositing: Hansard
Colour Timers: Ray Morfino, Saúl Escobedo, Boyd Steer
Negative Cutting: Jay Wiechman
Filmed in: Panavision, Kodak Film

Music by: Hans Zimmer, Mark Mancina, John Van Tongeren
Music Supervisor: Maureen Crowe
Music Editor: Thomas Milano
Score Mixers/Recorder: Jay Rifkin, Matt Patterson, Bob Hile
Production Sound Mixer: William B. Kaplan
Boom Persons: Earl F. Sampson, Jules Strasser III
Re-recording Mixers: Kevin O’Connell, Rick Kline
Supervising Sound Editor: Robert G. Henderson
Sound Editors: Bub Asman, Virginia Cook-McGowan, Samuel C. Crutcher, Greg Dillon, David M. Horton, Jayme S. Parker
ADR Recordists: Charleen Richards, Greg Steele
Supervising ADR Editor: James Simcik
ADR Editor: William C. Carruth
Foley: Sarah Monet
Foley Walker: Robin Harllon
Foley Recordists: Dorothy Wright, Eric Gotthelf
Foley Editor: David L. Horton Jr, Scot A. Tinsley
Stunt Co-ordinator: Charles Picerni
Weapons Specialist: Michael Papac
Animal Trainer: Paul Calabria

Cast

Christian Slater (*Clarence Worley*)
Patricia Arquette (*Alabama Whitman*)
Dennis Hopper (*Clifford Worley*)
Val Kilmer (*Elvis Presley, mentor*)
Gary Oldman (*Drexl Spivey*)
Brad Pitt (*Floyd, Dick’s roommate*)
Christopher Walken (*Vincenzo Coccotti*)
Bronson Pinchot (*Elliot Blitzler*)
Samuel L. Jackson (*Big Don*)
Michael Rapaport (*Dick Ritchie*)
Saul Rubinek (*Lee Donowitz*)
Conchata Ferrell (*Mary Louise Ravencroft*)
James Gandolfini (*Virgil*)
Anna Thomson (*Lucy*)
Victor Argo (*Lenny*)
Paul Bates (*Marty*)
Chris Penn (*Nicky Dimes*)
Tom Sizemore (*Cody Nicholson*)
Said Faraj (*burger man*)
Gregory Sporleder (*burger stand customer*)
Maria Pitillo (*Kandi*)
Frank Adonis (*Frankie*)
Kevin Corrigan (*Marvin*)
Paul Ben-Victor (*Luca*)
Michael Beach (*Wurlitzer*)
Joe D’Angerio (*police radio operator*)
John Bower (*detective*)
John Cenatiempo (*squad cop 1*)
Eric Allan Kramer (*Boris*)
Patrick John Hurley (*Monty*)
Dennis Garber, Scott Evers (*lobby cops*)
Hilary Klym (*running cop*)
Steve Gonzales (*LA officer*)
Laurence Mason (*Floyd D*)

USA 1993
119 mins

GARY OLDMAN

Meantime

Mon 17 Oct 20:40; Fri 28 Oct 17:50

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead

Tue 18 Oct 18:05; Sun 6 Nov 18:20

Bram Stoker’s Dracula

Wed 19 Oct 20:25 (+ intro by Christopher Frayling); Sat 29 Oct 20:30;
Wed 23 Nov 18:00

Prick Up Your Ears

Fri 21 Oct 20:30; Sun 13 Nov 18:20; Fri 25 Nov 20:40

JFK – Director’s Cut

Sun 23 Oct 16:00; Sat 19 Nov 16:30

True Romance

Mon 24 Oct 20:40; Tue 22 Nov 20:30; Tue 29 Nov 18:00

The Firm – Director’s Cut

Wed 2 Nov 21:00; Thu 10 Nov 18:15

The Contender

Fri 4 Nov 18:00; Mon 14 Nov 18:00

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy

Sat 5 Nov 20:20; Thu 24 Nov 17:55

Mank

Tue 8 Nov 20:15; Sat 26 Nov 17:20; Tue 29 Nov 20:20

Darkest Hour

Sat 12 Nov 12:20; Sat 19 Nov 20:30; Mon 21 Nov 14:30

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