



## RE-RELEASES

# The Matrix

### The Matrix

Directors: The Wachowskis

©: Warner Bros.

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Production Company: Silver Pictures

Presented by: Warner Bros.

Presented in association with:

Village Roadshow Pictures,

Groucho II Film Partnership

Executive Producers: Barrie M. Osborne,

Andrew Mason, Andy Wachowski [i.e. Lilly

Wachowski], Larry Wachowski [i.e. Lana

Wachowski], Erwin Stoff, Bruce Berman

Producer: Joel Silver

Co-producer: Dan Cracchiolo

Associate Producers: Richard Mirisch,

Carol Hughes

Unit Production Manager: Carol Hughes

Unit Manager: Will Matthews

Unit Manager (2nd Unit): Simon Lucas

Production Co-ordinators: Megan Worthy,

Jane Griffin

Production Co-ordinator (2nd Unit): Julia Peters

Production Accountants: Marge Rowland,

Alistair Jenkins

Locations Manager: Peter Lawless,

Robin Clifton

2nd Unit Director: Bruce Hunt

1st Assistant Directors: Colin Fletcher,

James McTeigue, Noni Roy

Script Supervisor: Victoria Sullivan

2nd Unit Script Supervisor: Gillian Steine

Casting: Mali Finn, Shauna Wolfson,

Mullinars Casting

Written by: Andy Wachowski [i.e. Lilly Wachowski],

Larry Wachowski [i.e. Lana Wachowski]

Director of Photography: Bill Pope

Timelapse Cinematography:

Simon Carroll Archive

2nd Unit Director of Photography: Ross Emery

Camera Operators: David Williamson,

Robert Agganis

Underwater Camera Operator: Roger Buckingham

Steadicam Operators: Robert Agganis,

Phil Pastuhov

Visual Effects Supervisor: John Gaeta

Visual Effects Producer: Matt Ferro

Visual Effects Editor: Kate Crossley

2D/3D Conceptual Designer: Sergei Chadiloff

Visual Effects: Manex Visual Effects LLC,

Bullet Time, DFilm Services, Animal Logic

Additional Visual Effects: Amalgamated Pixels

Special Effects Supervisors: Steve Courtley,

Brian Cox

Special Effects Co-ordinator: Robina Osbourne

Miniatures/Models Supervisor: Tom Davies

Graphics: Karen Harborow

Screen Graphics Co-ordinator:

Adam McCulloch

Editor: Zach Staenberg

Production Designer: Owen Paterson

Conceptual Designer: Geoffrey Darrow

Art Directors: Hugh Bateup, Michelle McGahey

Set Designers: Sarah Light, Jacinta Leong,

Godric Cole, Judith Harvey, Andrew Powell,

Deborah Riley

Illustrator: Phil Shearer

Scenic Artist: Peter Collias

Storyboard Artists: Steve Skroce, Tani Kunitake,

Collin Grant, Warren Manser

Property Master: Lon Lucini

Costume Designer: Kym Barrett

Costume Supervisor: Lyn Askew

Thomas Anderson (Keanu Reeves) works as a lowly IT programmer, leading a double-life as a hacker at night, under the alias 'Neo'. One night he is visited by a group of rebels led by charismatic seer Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne), who imparts a shattering revelation about life as we know it, and seeks to recruit Neo to fight evil forces at work.

Rising to the reality-bending potential of their premise, writer-directors the Wachowski sisters pushed computer-generated imagery to stage gravity-defying fight sequences between Neo and the Matrix's black-suited villain Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving).

Alongside its breathtaking spectacle, the film also tapped into contemporary philosophical unease about our over-mediated perception of reality, with radical thinkers such as Jean Baudrillard referenced in the smart screenplay.

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### A contemporary review

The Wachowski wrote and sold the script for *The Matrix* before they made their first film, the mesmerizing crime thriller *Bound*. They have since reported that between comic-book conception (a spin-off from their work at Marvel on the *Hellraiser* stories) and production go-ahead, 'the script that nobody understands' underwent considerable fine-tuning, thanks to studio insistence on explanatory dialogue. Even so, for a breathlessly vertiginous first quarter *The Matrix* scorns offering any rationale behind its attention-grabbing assaults and chases, leaving only its peevish spokesperson to mutter legitimate protests on our behalf ('This is insane! Why is it happening to me? What did I do?') until reasonably concluding he must be half-asleep. At which point, naturally, he falls into the grasp of Morpheus.

The Wachowskis are good at names, as they demonstrated with the title and main trio of *Bound*: Corky (buoyant), Violet (clinging) and Caesar (dictatorial). Conjuring up a flock of evocations – Cypher, Tank, Switch, Apoc, Mouse – for *The Matrix*, they invest the film's gradually uncovered crusade with a rich blend of messianic implications blatantly signaled by warrior priestess Trinity. Her unifying presence links – and exchanges – the powers of Morpheus the dream-master with those of the long-sought savior Neo (note the anagram) who is at once the New Man (as in, by useful coincidence, Neo-Tokyo, subsumed by *Akira*) and the neophyte disciple.

More squarely, the film is an ironic rereading of *Logan's Run* (1976), with a nod to *Soylent Green* (1973) and more than a dash of *Zardoz* (1973). The Wachowskis unveil a seedy utopia where mankind is preserved, protected and endlessly recycled by its own mega-computer. The alternative to this artificial stasis is, as usual, well beyond the wit of mortal proles. Necessarily, *The Matrix* ends much where it started, its newborn visionary poised – like Logan or 2001's Starchild or *THX 1138*'s hero or even like Luke Skywalker (prime

*Make-up (Key Artists):* Nikki Gooley, Deborah Taylor, Kathy Courtney  
*Make-up Special Effects Design/Creation:* Bob McCarron  
*Senior Make-up Special Effects Artist:* Wendy Sainsbury  
*Animatronic Prosthetics Created by:* Make-up Effects Group  
*Animatronic Prosthetics Created by:* Paul Katte, Nick Nicolaou  
*Animatronics Designer:* Trevor Tighe  
*Hairdresser:* Cheryl Williams  
*Titles Designed by:* Greenberg/Schluter Inc  
*Titles/Opticals:* Pacific Title/Mirage  
*Colour Timer:* David Orr  
*Music Composed/Orchestrated/Conducted by:* Don Davis  
*Sound Design:* Dane A. Davis  
*Sound Recordist:* David Lee  
*Boom Operators:* Jack Friedman, Gerry Nucifora  
*Re-recording Mixers:* John Reitz, Gregg Rudloff, David Campbell  
*Supervising Sound Editor:* Dane A. Davis  
*Stunt Co-ordinator:* Glenn Boswell  
*Aerial Co-ordinators:* Terry Lee, Maverick Records  
*Kung Fu Choreographer:* Yuen Woo-ping  
*Hong Kong Kung Fu Co-ordinators:* Carol Kim, Eagle Yuen Shun-yi, Sam Huang Kai-sen, Dion Lam Tat-ho  
*Key Armourer:* John Bowring  
*Cast:*  
 Keanu Reeves (*Thomas Anderson, 'Neo'*)  
 Laurence Fishburne (*Morpheus*)  
 Carrie-Anne Moss (*Trinity*)  
 Hugo Weaving (*Agent Smith*)  
 Joe Pantoliano (*Cypher*)  
 Gloria Foster (*Oracle*)  
 Marcus Chong (*Tank*)  
 Julian Arahanga (*Apoc*)  
 Matt Doran (*Mouse*)  
 Belinda McClory (*Switch*)  
 Anthony Ray Parker (*Dozer*)  
 Paul Goddard (*Agent Brown*)  
 Robert Taylor (*Agent Jones*)  
 David Aston (*Rhineheart*)  
 Marc Gray (*Choi*)  
 Ada Nicodemou (*Dujour*)  
 Deni Gordon (*priestess*)  
 Rowan Witt (*spoon boy*)  
 Elenor Witt (*potential*)  
 Tamara Brown, Janaya Pender, Adryn White, Natalie Tjen (*potentials*)  
 Bill Young (*lieutenant*)  
 David O'Connor (*FedEx man*)  
 Jeremy Ball (*businessman*)  
 Fiona Johnson (*woman in red*)  
 Harry Lawrence (*old man*)  
 Steve Dodd (*blind man*)  
 Luke Quinton (*security guard*)  
 Lawrence Woodward (*guard*)  
 Michael Butcher (*cop who captures Neo*)  
 Bernie Ledger (*big cop*)  
 Robert Simper, Chris Scott (*cops*)  
 Nigel Harbach (*parking cop*)  
 Martin Grelis (*helicopter pilot*)  
 USA 1999  
 136 mins  
 Digital 4K

exponent of the 'Why me?' syndrome) – on the brink of literally unimaginable new benefits. Away from the meddling tyranny of the machine, the superhero will be in charge. There's always One.

The retrospect is less than reassuring and the Wachowskis don't hide their misgivings. Played by Keanu Reeves with a certain gloomy helplessness, Neo gives a good impression of being incapable of original thought (he is, after all, as programmed as any Matrix slave) and little sign of inspiring social reform. But two voices speak loudly and persuasively on behalf of the Matrix: the traitorous terrorist Cypher celebrates it for colourful comforts unmatched by the drab post-apocalyptic real world; and the fearsome man-in-black humanoid Agent Smith (not quite Winston Smith, but the Wachowskis, recognising an affinity, have mischievously appended a Room 101) spells out its evolutionary task by dismissing humans as 'a plague – and we are the cure'. The same dispassionate logic was prologue to *The Terminator* and more recently at the core of *Virus*.

But if the Wachowskis claim no originality of message, they are startling innovators of method. As with *Bound*, the film is a feast of unexpected fidgets and perspectives, punctuated by trademark overhead shots and teasing detail and detour, such as the squeal of washed windows as Neo is reprimanded by his boss, or the White Rabbit subtext culminating in a glimpse of *Night of the Lepus* (1972) on a television. Just as in *Bound*, telephones play a vital role, while the fetishistic use of shades and black leather tells yet another story, encompassing Smith's chipped lens and Neo's triumphal final outfit. Primarily, *The Matrix* is a wonderland of tricks and stunts, light years from Kansas, combining computerised slow-motion with the extravagant choreography of martial-arts movies to create a broadside of astonishing images. As Neo turns cartwheels, blazing away behind wildly exploding décor, it seems clear that the Wachowskis have discovered a gleeful utopia of their own.

Philip Strick, *Sight and Sound*, July 1999

## NEW RELEASES

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**Àma Gloria**  
 From Fri 14 Jun  
**Green Border** Zielona granica  
 From Fri 21 Jun  
**Bye Bye Tiberias** Bye Bye Tibériade  
 From Fri 28 Jun + Q&A on Fri 28 Jun 18:00  
**Sleep Jam**  
 From Fri 12 Jul  
**About Dry Grasses** Kuru Otlar Üstüne  
 From Fri 26 Jul

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**The Conversation**  
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