



## RE-RELEASES

# Lone Star

### Lone Star

Director: John Sayles

Production Companies:

Castle Rock Entertainment, Rio Dulce

Executive Producer: John Sloss

Producers: R. Paul Miller, Maggie Renzi

Associate Producer: Jan Foster

Production Manager: Robert Labrecque

Production Co-ordinator: Angela Quiles

Location Manager: Deborah Parker

Post-production Supervisor: Caitlin Maloney

1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director: John Powditch

2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director: Brian O'Kelley

2<sup>nd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director: Galia Hardy

Script Supervisor: Mary Cybulski

Casting: Avy Kaufman

Screenplay: John Sayles

Director of Photography: Stuart Dryburgh

Steadicam Operators: David McGill, Ralph Watson

Special Effects Co-ordinator: Jack Bennett

Editor: John Sayles

Associate Editor: Plummy Tucker

Production Designer: Dan Bishop

Art Director: Tyler Black

Set Decorator: Dianna Freas

Costume Designer: Shay Cunliffe

Wardrobe Supervisor: Mayes Rubeo

Key Make-up Artist: Lori Hicks

Key Hairstylist: Roy Bryson

Hairstylists: Caroline Rempher, Susan Todd

Titles Designed/Produced by:

Balsmeyer & Everett Inc

Opticals: The Effects House

Music: Mason Daring

Score Performers: Duke Levine, Billy Novick,

Marshal Wood, Tim Jackson, Larry Luddecke,

Mike Turk, Evan Harlan, Mason Daring

Music Editor: Nic Ratner

Music Score Engineered/Mixed by: David Shacter

Music Consultant: Arlene Fishbach

Sound Mixer: Clive Winter

Re-recording Engineer: Michael Barry

Supervising Sound Editor: Philip Stockton

Dialogue Editor: Sylvia Menno

Effects Recordist: Ben Cheah

Effects Editors: Eugene Gearty, Lew Goldstein

ADR Editor: Gail Stockton

Foley Recordist: Bruce Pross

Foley Artist: Marko Costanzo

Foley Editors: Steve Visscher, Frank Kern,

Kam Chan, Stuart Stanley

Military Adviser: Lt. Col. Mitch Marovitz

Cast:

Chris Cooper (*Sam Deeds*)

Elizabeth Peña (*Pilar Cruz*)

Joe Morton (*Delmore 'Del' Payne*)

Matthew McConaughey (*Buddy Deeds*)

Kris Kristofferson (*Charlie Wade*)

Stephen Mendillo (*Cliff*)

Stephen Lang (*Mikey*)

Oni Faida Lampley (*Celie*)

Eleese Lester (*Molly*)

Joe Stevens (*Deputy Travis*)

Gonzalo Castillo (*Amado*)

Richard Coca (*Enrique*)

Clifton James (*Mayor Hollis Pogue*)

Tony Frank (*Fenton*)

Miriam Colón (*Mercedes Cruz*)

Jeff Monahan (*young Hollis*)

LaTanya Richardson (*Priscilla Worth*)

Eddie Robinson (*Chet*)

Ron Canada (*Otis Payne*)

Chandra Wilson (*Athens*)

When an old skeleton with a sheriff's badge is unearthed in a Texas border town, Sheriff Sam Deeds must investigate what could have happened to his predecessor. Examining racial violence, local legends, and myths around his own family, he ends up disturbing many long-buried secrets in the process. Academy Award®-nominated for Best Screenplay, *Lone Star* is a thrilling neo-Western mystery, with scene-stealing turns from a young Matthew McConaughey and Frances McDormand. This stunning 4K restoration was supervised by director John Sayles and director of photography Stuart Dryburgh, and created from the 35mm original camera negative.

### SPOILER WARNING

 The following notes give away some of the plot.

The final words of *Lone Star* are 'Forget the Alamo'. In a border region which, as the protagonist Sam Deeds remarks with laconic understatement, 'has seen a good number of disagreements over the years', the past weighs heavy, constraining and distorting relationships not only between individuals but between generations and whole communities. Pilar Cruz's words, 'All that stuff, that history – the hell with it, right?', are a bid to break free from the trap of past guilts and enmities and start from scratch. The film, the director John Sayles has said, is 'about history and what we do with it. Do we use it to hit each other? Is it something that drags us down? ... At what point do you say about your parents, "That was them, this is me"?'

At the same time, that 'Forget the Alamo' – which Sayles at one point considered as a title for the film – shouldn't be taken too literally. Neither Pilar (a history teacher, after all) nor Sayles is suggesting anything so crude as simply junking the past, even if any of us could. Sayles's latest film develops the theme that has underpinned all his work to date: the sense of character as a product of accumulated social and cultural influences, the way people are moulded by their backgrounds and their pasts but can surmount that conditioning if they try hard enough. 'Blood only means what you let it,' Otis Payne tells his grandson, even while teaching him to be proud of his mixed Afro-Seminole ancestry. 'Most people,' says Cody, the redneck barman, 'don't want their salt and sugar in the same jar,' but under his morose gaze two army sergeants, one Black and one white, are showing up the inadequacy of his metaphor as they plan their future life together.

After two relatively intimate chamber works – *Passion Fish* and *The Secret of Roan Inish* – *Lone Star* sees Sayles returning to the broad-canvas, multiple-character mode of *Matewan* and *City of Hope*. The new film, indeed, comes on very much as a companion piece to *City of Hope* – one northern and urban, the other southern and smalltown-rural, but both intent on tracing lines of tension and interconnection among a wide spread of individuals, showing how they impinge on each other no matter how much they try to hold themselves separate. Several characters in *Lone Star* strive to keep aloof: Mercedes Cruz, proud of her American citizenship, rejecting her own Hispanic background; Delmore Payne taking refuge in the rigid disciplines of army life; the Anglo parents at the school, resentful at finding themselves a minority in 'their' community. For *Lone Star* is both a film about connections and also, in Sayles's words, 'a film about borders' – which, however artificial, are there and

Damon Guy (*Shadow*)  
Dee Macaluso (*Anglo mother*)  
Luis Cobo (*Mexican-American father*)  
Marco Perella (*Anglo father*)  
Don Phillips (*principal*)  
Mary Jane R. Hernandez  
(*Mexican-American mother*)  
Jesse Borrego (*Danny*)  
Carina Martinez (*Paloma*)  
Tony Plana (*Ray*)  
Richard A. Jones (*Ben Wetzel*)  
Beatrice Winde (*Minnie Bledsoe*)  
Gabriel Casseus (*young Otis*)  
Randy Stripling (*Roderick*)  
Richard Reyes (*Jorge*)  
Olga Luna (*waitress*)  
Juan Vega III (*cook*)  
Lizzie Curry Martínez (*girl*)  
Leo Burmester (*Cody*)  
Carmen de Lavallade (*Carolyn*)  
Vanessa Martinez (*young Pilar*)  
Tay Strathairn (*young Sam*)  
Sam Vlahos (*Pete*)  
Maricela Gonzalez (*Anselma*)  
Tony Amendola (*Chucho Montoya*)  
Gilbert R. Cuellar Jr. (*Eladio*)  
James Borrego (*young Chucho*)  
Gordon Tootoosis (*Wesley Birdsong*)  
Lisa Suarez (*Marisol*)  
Jesús Ramirez (*driver*)  
Frances McDormand (*Bunny*)  
John Griesemer (*voice of football announcer*)  
Eduardo Martinez (*Jamie*)  
Azalea Mendez (*young Mercedes*)  
USA 1996  
135 mins  
Digital 4K

A Park Circus release

The screenings on Sat 17 Aug 17:50 and  
Sun 18 Aug 12:50 include a pre-recorded intro by  
director John Sayles and producer Maggie Renzi

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have to be acknowledged, but can still be crossed. In the final scene Sam and Pilar deliberately decide to cross one of the most fundamental borders of all, the incest taboo, since it matters less than their own happiness.

In its visual style, too, the film elides borders. Flashbacks are presented, not by cuts or dissolves, but by the camera simply panning left or right, up or down into a different time-zone that nonetheless occupies part of the same space. The past, Sayles is indicating, isn't another country; it's still here and people like Sam are living in it, carrying it with them. And as the flashbacks accumulate, the line between moral absolutes also starts to blur. To begin with Charlie Wade and Buddy Deeds are seen as polar opposites: bad guy and good guy, 'your ol' time bribe and bullets sheriff' (in Mayor Hollis Pogue's phrase) versus the paragon of civic integrity. (The name carries its resonance; the principled hero of Frank Capra's *Mr Deeds Goes to Town* was played by that iconic figure of the Old West, Gary Cooper.) But as Sam digs away around the feet of the idol, determined to expose the clay, a less clearcut, more human figure emerges: a man less bad than Sam wants him to be, but less perfect than the legend paints him. 'It's not like there's a borderline between the good people and the bad people,' Otis observes.

As that line indicates, *Lone Star* now and then tends to the overly didactic, and some of the plotting (such as the revelation that Mercedes Cruz was an illegal) comes a little too pat to carry conviction. In aspiring to a near-novelistic complexity of texture, Sayles overeggs his pudding: there are half-a-dozen more minor plot strands than the above synopsis indicates, and some of them could be axed without doing the film much damage. But *Lone Star*, while breaking new ground in Sayles' ongoing exploration of the American myth, retains all his qualities of intelligence, political acuteness and narrative lucidity, and its widescreen photography (by Stuart Dryburgh, who photographed *The Piano*) develops the strain of visual lyricism that's enriched his films since *Matewan*. As ever, he draws nuanced performances from his cast, blending rep company regulars like Chris Cooper (*Matewan*, *City of Hope*) with newcomers like Frances McDormand (a cameo of knife-edge hysteria as Sam's estranged wife), and gives Kris Kristofferson his first worthwhile role for a decade.

John Sayles has always taken a fruitfully oblique angle on genre, and *Lone Star* turns the conventions and vocabulary of the Western to its own ends. The central strand of a man gradually stripping the legend away from an admired father-figure carries echoes of Bertolucci's *The Spider's Stratagem* (to say nothing of *Citizen Kane*). But, although Sayles has often said he wants his films to make people think about their own lives, not about other films, *Lone Star's* final revelation comes so close to the denouement of *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* that it can only be intentional. The whole film, in fact, could be read as a covert critique of John Ford's film, and even provides its own ironic version of Valance's most famous line when Hollis protests that suppressing the truth will leave people thinking Buddy killed Wade: 'Buddy's a goddamn legend – he can handle it.' It says a lot for Sayles's achievement that his film isn't in the least diminished by the comparison.

Philip Kemp, *Sight and Sound*, October 1996