



Pulp Fiction

Director: Quentin Tarantino
©/Presented by: Miramax Films
Productions: Band Apart, Jersey Films
Executive Producers: Danny DeVito, Michael Shamberg, Stacey Sher
Co-executive Producers: Bob Weinstein, Harvey Weinstein, Richard N. Gladstein
Producer: Lawrence Bender
Production Accountant: Julia Zane
Production Auditor: Angelique A. Costanza
Production Co-ordinator: Anna-Lisa Nilsson
Production Manager: Paul Helleman
Location Manager: Robert Earl Craft
1st Assistant Director: Francis R. (Sam) Mahony III
2nd Assistant Director: Kelly Kiernan
2nd 2nd Assistant Director: John 'Crash' Hyde Jr
Additional 2nd 2nd Assistant Director: William Paul Clark
Assistant to the Director: Victoria Lucai
Script Supervisor: Martin Kitrosser
CASTING: Ronnie Yeskel, Gary M. Zuckerbrod
CASTING ASSOCIATE: Ruth Lambert
SCREENPLAY: Quentin Tarantino
Based on stories by: Roger Avary, Quentin Tarantino
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Andrzej Sekula
CAMERA OPERATOR: Michael Levine
1st Assistant Cameraman: Ziad Doueiri
2nd Assistant Cameraman: Gregory Smith
CAMERA LOADER: Angelo De La Cruz
KEY GRIP: Mark Shane Davis
STEADICAM OPERATOR: Robert Gorelick
ADDITIONAL STEADICAM OPERATOR: John Nuler
Gaffer: Vance Trussell
UNIT STILL PHOTOGRAPHER: Linda R. Chen
SPECIAL EFFECTS CO-ORDINATOR: Larry Fioritto
SPECIAL EFFECTS: Wesley Mattox, Stephen DeLollis, Pat Domenico
CHIEF GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Gerald Martinez
GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Chris Cullen
CHARACTER ARTIST: Russell Vossler
EDITOR: Sally Menke
ADDITIONAL EDITOR: Jere P. Huggins
PRODUCTION DESIGNER: David Wasco
ART DIRECTOR: Charles Collum
ART DEPARTMENT CO-ORDINATOR: Emily Wolfe
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTORS: Samantha Gore, Chris Winslow
SET DESIGNERS: Daniel Bradford, Jacek Lisiewicz
SET DECORATOR: Sandy Reynolds-Wasco
BUYER: Ellen Brill
CONSTRUCTION CO-ORDINATOR: Brian Markey
CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN: Ray Maxwell
CONSTRUCTION LOCATION FOREMAN: Shane Hawkins
COSTUME DESIGNER: Betsy Heimann
ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER: Mary Claire Hannan
COSTUME SUPERVISOR: Jacqueline Aronson
COSTUMERS: Kristin Dangl, Marilyn Pachasa, Patia Prouty
KEY MAKE-UP ARTIST: Michelle Bühler
SPECIAL MAKE-UP EFFECTS: Kurtzman Nicotero Berger
EFX GROUP (MAKE-UP EFFECTS SUPERVISORS): Robert Kurtzman, Gregory Nicotero, Howard Berger
MAKE-UP EFFECTS CREW: Wayne Toth, David Smith, Ted Haines, Douglas Noe, Tom Bellissimo, Erin Haggerty
KEY HAIR SUPERVISOR: Audree Futterman
HAIR DESIGNER: Iain Jones
WIGMAKER: Bill Fletcher
TITLES/OPTICALS: Pacific Title

RE-RELEASES

Pulp Fiction (30th Anniversary)

SPOILER WARNING The following notes give away some of the plot.

It looks like a tribute to Quentin Tarantino's fast rise to fame that he has managed to draw quite such a varied crowd of names for *Pulp Fiction*. And yet when you examine those names, they are mostly those of actors in search of a hit. *Pulp Fiction* is full of five-minute culture jokes; could this be another one? Possibly; for several of the cast appear to be playing warped versions of characters for which they are known. Bruce Willis' tough guy Butch may be a *Die Hard* man, but this time round, Butch is a little bit stupid and has a nasty temper. Rosanna Arquette's crazy lady from *After Hours* has turned into a junkie's housewife, utterly absorbed in the piercings on her body. Harvey Keitel reprises his role in the *Nikita* remake *The Assassin*, as the icy, mute killer, who cleans up after dead bodies and gets rid of the living ones. Only this time, the grim-faced Wolf has absurd touches of Regular Guy about him. He chats about coffee, and his clean-up operation does not involve acid baths but soapy sponges and hose-downs. Some of the actors are not even playing out their own former roles in this rag-bag of film references; to take just Tarantino's own work, Honey Bunny and Pumpkin, who open and close the film, are straight out of *True Romance*, while the hitmen Jules and Vincent could have been in *Reservoir Dogs*.

It is a remarkable achievement that the film manages to hold all these people together through four different storylines. Perhaps because we get to know him best, the link seems to be John Travolta's Vincent. Flashy Vincent is what the disco-loving street boy Tony Manero would have grown up to be after *Saturday Night Fever*. And he still needs to sort himself out. Vincent has enough sense not to let himself sleep with Marsellus's wife, Mia, when he gets the opportunity, but is stupid enough to leave his gun lying around while he goes to the bathroom. We see him shoot heroin, and we see him on the lavatory, and Vincent therefore becomes vulnerable. But like everyone else here, he has little regard for human life, and when he accidentally shoots his hostage's head off, he worries more about his suit than about what he has done.

Violence is still Tarantino's watchword, and *Pulp Fiction* abounds with other nasty, casual deaths. No one is immune; even Vincent, the hero of sorts, dies with an undignified snap of the fingers. Life in the 90s, Tarantino seems to be saying, is speedy and worthless. The people on the screen are, as the film's title makes plain, characters from trash novels. They are drug dealers, killers, crime lords, spoilt ladies, prize boxers, S&M rapists. Everyone is on the run, off their heads, or on the wrong side of the law. And yet in a way they could be us, too. If Tarantino has anything to say, it seems to be that there is no morality or justice in the patterns of life and death. Instead, the nihilist argument continues, there is trivia.

For if we are not supposed to empathise with the characters themselves, we cannot help recognising the junk culture world they inhabit; a world filled with ridiculous TV programmes, gimmicky restaurants where the waiters dress up as film stars and steaks are named after directors, and powerful drugs that demand their own place in a daily timetable. Trash is not just the written word,

Colour Timer: Michael Stanwick
Music Supervisor: Karyn Rachtman
Music Consultants: Chuck Kelley, Laura Lovelace
Production Sound Mixer: Ken King
Boom Operator: Larry Scharf
Re-recording Mixers: Rick Ash, Dean A. Zupancic
Dubbing Recordist: Larry Pitman
ADR Mixer: Jeff Courtie
Foley: Joan Rowe, Catherine Rowe
Foley Mixer: Ezra Dweck
Transportation Co-ordinator: Derek Raser
Stunt Co-ordinator: Ken Lesco
Stunt Players: Matt Avila, Cameron, Chris Doyle, Marcia Holley, Terry Jackson, Melvin Jones, Hubie Kerns Jr, Scott McElroy, Dennis 'Danger' Madalone
Unit Publicist: Deborah Wuliger
Cast:
 John Travolta (*Vincent Vega*)
 Samuel L. Jackson (*Jules Winnfield*)
 Uma Thurman (*Mia Wallace*)
 Harvey Keitel (*Winston, 'The Wolf'*)
 Tim Roth (*Pumpkin*)
 Amanda Plummer (*Yolanda, 'Honey Bunny'*)
 Maria de Medeiros (*Fabienne*)
 Ving Rhames (*Marsellus Wallace*)
 Eric Stoltz (*Lance*)
 Rosanna Arquette (*Jody*)
 Christopher Walken (*Captain Koons*)
 Bruce Willis (*Butch Coolidge*)
 Paul Calderon (*Paul*)
 Bronagh Gallagher (*Trudi*)
 Peter Greene (*Zed*)
 Stephen Hibbert (*The Gimp*)
 Angela Jones (*Esmarelda Villa Lobos*)
 Phil LaMarr (*Marvin*)
 Robert Ruth (*coffee shop manager*)
 Julia Sweeney (*Raquel*)
 Quentin Tarantino (*Jimmie*)
 Frank Whaley (*Brett*)
 Duane Whitaker (*Maynard*)
 Laura Lovelace (*waitress*)
 Burr Steers (*Roger*)
 Jerome Patrick Hoban (*Ed Sullivan*)
 Michael Gilden (*Phillip Morris page*)
 Gary Shorelle (*Ricky Nelson*)
 Susan Griffiths (*Marilyn Monroe*)
 Eric Clark (*James Dean*)
 Josef Pilato (*Dean Martin*)
 Brad Parker (*Jerry Lewis*)
 Steve Buscemi (*Buddy Holly*)
 Lorelei Leslie (*Mamie Van Doren*)
 Emil Sitka (*'hold hands you love birds'*)
 Brenda Hillhouse (*Butch's mother*)
 Chandler Lindauer (*young Butch*)
 Sy Sher (*Klondike*)
 Robert Ruth (*sportscaster 1*)
 Rich Turner (*sportscaster 2*)
 Don Blakely (*Wilson's trainer [role deleted]*)
 Carl Allen (*dead Floyd Wilson [role deleted]*)
 Karen Maruyama (*gawker 1*)
 Kathy Griffin (*herself, gawker 2*)
 Venessia Valentino (*pedestrian [role deleted]*)
 Linda Kaye (*shot lady*)
 Alexis Arquette (*fourth man*)
 Venessia Valentino (*Bonnie [role deleted]*)
 Lawrence Bender (*long hair yuppie-scum*)
 USA 1994©
 154 mins
 Digital 4K

A Paramount Pictures release

it is all around. And here it is endlessly recycled in the endless conversations of Tarantino's pulp protagonists.

In the car, Vincent and Jules are engrossed in the French names for hamburgers. As the camera follows them towards the apartment of boys they are about to kill, they talk about foot massages. When Butch gets to the motel in which he is meeting Fabienne before they flee with his winnings, she starts chatting about the fatness of her stomach. This is the kind of stuff most of us actually do spend much of our time talking about, and it puts us on a level of understanding with the characters. The effect is strangely subtle in a film that is all about crude gestures. Mia, herself a bizarre mixture of spoiled child and wise woman, remarks that Marsellus's henchmen are worse than a sewing circle when it comes to gossip. And suddenly the killers have been emasculated.

True Romance seemed to become less Quentin Tarantino and more its director Tony Scott every time it lapsed into sentimentality, so it is hardly surprising that Tarantino imposes a sizeable emotional distance between the audience and the characters. When Butch dreams about Captain Koons (a hilarious cameo by Christopher Walken) giving him his father's watch, a sentimental episode from a thousand TV movies becomes more ludicrous and disgusting by the minute. And even though each section of the film ends with a moment of collaboration – between Vincent and Mia, Marsellus and Butch, and finally Jules, Pumpkin and Honey Bunny – the sense of shame that could bring about an attempt at a heartfelt moment is subsumed by the characters' self-interest. In the same way, it would be an effort to feel sentimental over the film's one big emotional transformation. Samuel L. Jackson's Jules is an extraordinary character, with touches of Robert Mitchum's preaching murderer in *The Night of the Hunter*. He goes about his killing business with religious fervour, spouting Ezekiel at his terrified victims as if to justify his acts. And what changes his mind about his work? Not a crisis of conscience but a realisation of his own mortality. More self-preservation; the philosophical new Jules is as hard and cold as the old one. He resists the temptation to kill Pumpkin not because he has found mercy but because he has made a decision to stop killing.

Butch is the nearest we might get to a sentimentalist – he has a girl he loves and enough heart to go back and rescue his arch-enemy from the rapists. But Butch is not nice either. In Tarantino's movie reference library, Butch is more loudmouth Ralph Meeker in *Kiss Me Deadly* than sappy Fred MacMurray in *Double Indemnity*.

Like *Reservoir Dogs*, this is stylishly shot in neo-cartoon style, with massive, distorting close-ups offset by attractively angled shots. The effect again, is of a hard, closed, rather linear world. But in some ways, there is more to *Pulp Fiction* than to the first film. For one thing, there are a few women in it, and a broader spectrum of characters. For another, by allowing just a few chinks in its dispassionate armour, mostly through Travolta's oddly affable Vincent Vega, it is easier to like rather than just admire.

Amanda Lipman, *Sight and Sound*, November 1994