



Complicit: The Films of Michael Haneke

# Time of the Wolf

**Time of the Wolf** Le Temps du loup

Director: Michael Haneke

©: Wega-Film, Bavaria-Film, France 3 Cinéma, Arte France Cinéma

Production Companies: France 3 Cinéma, Arte France Cinéma

Presented by: Films du Losange (Paris), Wega-Film, Bavaria-Film

With: Österreichischer Rundfunk-Fernsehen, Bayerischer Rundfunk, ARTE

With the participation of: Canal+, CNC – Centre national de la cinémat, Österreichisches Filminstitut, Filmfonds Wien, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern

With the support of: Eurimages Conseil de l'Europe Executive Producers: Michael Katz, Margaret Ménégoz

Producers: Margaret Ménégoz, Veit Heiduschka Co-producer: Michael Weber

Production Co-ordinator: Ulrike Lässer

France Production Manager: Nathalie Nghet

Austria Production Manager: Michael Katz

Unit Production Manager: Roman Haschberger

France Unit Manager: Fabien Courage

Unit Manager: Mathias Mayer

Location Manager: Peter Ecker

1st Assistant Director: Hanus Polak Jr

2nd Assistant Director: Katharina Biró,

Kathrin Resetarits, Jens Christian Borner

Script Supervisor: Jean Baptiste Filleau

Children Casting: Kris Portier de Bellair

France Casting: Brigitte Moidon

Austria Casting: Markus Schleinker

Screenplay: Michael Haneke

Director of Photography: Jürgen Jürges

Steadicam Operator: Jörg Widmer

Special Visual Effects: Geoffrey Kleindorfer

Special Effects: Tissi Brandhofer

Editors: Monika Willi, Nadine Muse

Additional Editors: Alarich Lenz, Yannick Coutheron

Art Director: Christoph Kanter

Set Decorator: Hans Wagner

Costumes: Lisy Christl

Make-up/Hair: Waldemar Pokromski, Ellen Just,

Claus Lulla, Nicolaj Espinosa Bach, Tu Nguyen,

Ela Bumbul, Stéphane Malheu

Make-up for Isabelle Huppert: Thi-Loan Nguyen

Sound Recording: Guillaume Sciamia,

Jean-Pierre LaForce

Sound Retakes: William Franck

Studio Sound Engineer: Olivier Dô Húu

Sound Effects: Pascal Chauvin

Post-synchronizations: Alter Ego, Hervé Icovic

Animal Wranglers: Animal Action

Horse Wrangler: Monika Fiserova

Publicity: Mathilde Incerti

Cast:

Isabelle Huppert (*Anne Laurent*)

Anaïs Demoustier (*Eva Laurent*)

Lucas Biscombe (*Ben Laurent*)

Hakim Taleb (*the boy/young runaway*)

Patrice Chéreau (*Thomas Brandt*)

Béatrice Dalle (*Lise Brandt*)

Olivier Gourmet (*Koslowski*)

Brigitte Roüan (*Béa*)

Daniel Duval (*Georges Laurent*)

Branko Samarovski (*policeman*)

Thierry van Werveke (*Jean*)

Maurice Bénichou (*Monsieur Azoulay*)

Maryline Even (*Madame Azoulay*)

Florence Loiret-Caille (*Nathalie Azoulay*)

Pierre Berriau (*chalet man*)

Valérie Moreau (*chalet woman*)

## Michael Haneke on 'Time of the Wolf'

*How dramatically has Time of the Wolf changed in the ten years since you wrote the script?*

The script didn't change at all. The one thing that did change is that originally it was going to be a three-hour film. The first hour was to have taken place in an indeterminate European capital in which things are slowly starting to go wrong. There are problems we don't quite understand: the water doesn't work and neither does the electricity. This was to have been set in a ghetto for rich people such as you find in some American and South American cities, enclaves with police protection. Then one of the families decides it would be easier to go to their country house. And that's exactly where the finished film picks up. After 11 September 2001 I felt it was no longer necessary to explain this buildup. It's now easily conceivable we could be faced with a similar catastrophe.

*Trying, as you do, to avoid Hollywood-style button-pushing moments, what do you structure your films around?*

The danger with the catastrophe genre in Hollywood is that it's one of exaggeration, so it makes catastrophe seem attractive – something we can enjoy because it's so unrealistic. My work consists of trying to reach people on an emotional level, raising the level of audience identification as high as possible by avoiding overt stylisation or exaggeration. Lots of people have talked about the fact that many of the sequences in *Time of the Wolf* are very dark on the screen. That has the simple explanation that at night, in a country deprived of electricity, it is going to be very dark. And people react in the dark in an entirely different manner. If someone is coming towards you on a well-lit street, they simply go past and that's that. But if you're in the dark that person is perceived as a threat. Lighting the film minimally allows the audience to experience this unease and fear.

*But how do you build a drama when you're deliberately eschewing so many established techniques?*

*Funny Games* is structured like a classical thriller despite the fact that it's a parody. But in this case the structure arose through following the way people would respond in a situation like this. And as a development of such events in terms of character, this is very classical too.

It begins with individuals with individual problems. People who can't cope with these themselves then join groups and as the groups become larger the problems change.

*Are you a big consumer of science fiction?*

I've read the classics – the novel of *Solaris* and Olaf Stapledon's book *Last and First Men* – but I've probably read only ten science-fiction books in my whole life. And I've seen even fewer films. I like *Blade Runner* and obviously *Solaris*, though I don't see that so much as a science-fiction film, more a metaphoric film. I'm not a huge fan of these films, especially as so many of them are dumb.

*Did you look at any science fiction in order to consider what not to do?*

I don't know enough about the genre to be able to avoid or to seek out these problems. But making a science-fiction film would interest me very little. *Time*

Ina Strnad  
 Costel Cascaval (*Constantin*)  
 Rona Hartner (*Arina*)  
 Luminita Gheorghiu (*Mrs Homolka*)  
 Adriana Trandafir  
 Michaël Abiteboul (*armed man*)  
 Franck Gourlat (*water seller*)  
 François Hautesserre (*music lover*)  
 Maria Hofstätter (*quarrelsome woman*)  
 Serge Riaboukine (*the leader*)  
 Claude Singeot (*razor blade man*)  
 Roman Agrinz, Alexander Barta, Peter Bartak,  
 Gabriela Bauer, Ileana Brancu, Georg Friedrich,  
 Simon Hatzl, Alexandra Hörmann, Margita Huttova,  
 Edmund Jäger, Silke Jandl, Dorothea Kocsis,  
 Natascha Kuliskova, Carmen Loley, Andreas Lust,  
 Marian Mitas, Martin Nahalka, Klaus Ortner, Petru  
 Pecican, Andreas Pühringer, Sonja Romei,  
 Maria Speranza Paraschiv, Christoph Theussl,  
 Sophie Wimmer-Lieb, Christian Wlach,  
 Mira Zeichmann  
 France-Austria-Germany 2003©  
 113 mins  
 Digital

The screening on Wed 25 Jun will be introduced by  
 Geoff Andrew, Film Critic, Lecturer and Programmer

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*of the Wolf* is about contemporary society – currently four-fifths of humanity live  
 in conditions far worse than those depicted here. The only thing I did was to  
 take those living conditions and transpose them into our geographical area.  
 Catastrophes for us are things that take place somewhere else. So this is not a  
 film for the third world – they don't need to see it. This is for the wealthy  
 nations.

*Did you do any special preparation with the cast?*

In all my films the actors are placed in difficult situations. I'm not a huge fan of  
 long rehearsals – in my experience, when you do that you reduce the  
 spontaneity. I worked for many years as a theatre director and there the  
 rehearsal time is much longer, but when it comes to making films I prefer to  
 work on the problems on set.

*The camera style is about pushing the light to the limits. Was it derived in part  
 from a particular idea of cinema?*

The idea was always to depict things as closely as possible to the way they  
 would be. Usually when you're shooting in the dark it's enough to have one  
 spotlight illuminating things. Here we shot the scenes in the barn, with the  
 cigarette lighter and the straw, with natural light, but everything else became  
 very difficult. You needed a little bit of lighting but it needed to be very diffuse,  
 otherwise it would look like a spotlight. So, for example, when the girl is sitting  
 on the railway track a little below her brother, they had to light up the whole  
 scene, a vast area, with non-specific lighting.

*There are separate killings of a horse and a goat, both very realistic. Since the  
 British certification authorities take these matters very seriously, how were  
 these scenes achieved?*

The goat was given a tranquilliser. If you look at the shot closely you can see  
 it's still breathing. We had blood on the blade of the knife so it looks as if the  
 goat is bleeding. There are two shots of the horse. First you see it falling when  
 it's shot – it was trained to do that on command. The horse whose throat was  
 cut was going to be killed anyway and the shot was taken in a slaughterhouse.  
 It's so hypocritical, the censorious reaction, especially from carnivores.

*You invoke several semi-religious myths – the group of the 36 Just people,  
 which is also a Judaic story, and the people who can redeem the human race  
 by jumping into fires.*

Each of these stories can be understood one way or another. Ben is willing to  
 sacrifice himself in the flames for the good of the community but we have no  
 idea if the story he's heard from the man who swallows the razorblade is true or  
 not. And that's also the point made by Jean (Thierry van Werveke), the man  
 who saves Ben from the flames. He says that maybe tomorrow things will be  
 different, and that what counts is the intention, the fact that the boy was ready  
 to take that step. How this works is for each spectator to decide for  
 themselves. In the same way, the story of the Just people is told by a woman  
 whom most spectators will think is crazy, but that doesn't take away from the  
 fact that the insane often reveal the truth. Such stories inevitably evoke a  
 religious or mythological context and I deliberately leave the interpretation  
 open.

Interview by Nick James, *Sight and Sound*, October 2003