



Funny Games U.S.

Directed by: Michael Haneke
©: Celluloid Dreams, Halcyon Pictures, Tartan Films, X Filme International
Production Company: Halcyon Pictures, X Filme International, Lucky Red
International Distribution by: Celluloid Dreams
In association with: Belladonna Ltd, Kinematograf
Executive Producers: Naomi Watts, Philippe Aigle, Carole Siller, Douglas Steiner
Produced by: Chris Coen, Hamish McAlpine
Producers: Hengameh Panahi, Christian Baute, Andro Steinborn
Co-producers: Andrea Occhipinti, René Bastian, Linda Moran, Adam Brightman, Jonathan Schwartz
Line Producers: Valerie Romer, Pascal Metge
Associate Producers: Stefano Massenzi, Charlotte Mickie, Skady Lis
Production Account Supervisors: Andy Wheeler, Corinne Saglio
Production Accountants: Brian Cantaldi, Franck Sauvineau, Cordula Hermann
Production Co-ordinators: Jeremy Blaise Crane, Vanessa Ciszewski, Andreas Dobers
Unit Production Manager: Nicola Westermann
Location Manager: Randy Manion
Location Scouts: Laura Berning, Audra Gorman, Carl Carson, Kip Myers, Jason Kadlec, Rik Nagel, Evan Gregg
Assistant Director: Urs Hirschbiegel
2nd Assistant Director: Jason Graham
2nd 2nd Assistant Director: Justin Ritson
Screenplay: Diane Hounsell
Casting by: Johanna Ray
New York Casting by: Paul Schnee, Billy Hopkins, Suzanne Crowley, Kerry Barden
UK Casting by: Elaine Grainger
Extras Casting: Paladino Casting
Screenplay: Michael Haneke
Script Consultant: Lodge Kerrigan
Director of Photography: Darius Khondji
Assistant Camera: Felipe Reinheimer
B 1st Assistant Camera: Braden Belmonte
Aerial Unit 1st Assistant Camera: Marshall Steif, Paul C. McKenna
A 2nd Assistant Camera: Braden Belmonte
Camera Loader: Debbie Stampfle
Key Grip: Mitch Lillian
Dolly Grip: Rick Marroquin
Aerial Unit Spacecam Camera Operator: Dylan Goss
Aerial Unit Tyler Mount: Brian Heller
Gaffer: Gene Engels
Video Playback Operator: Vincent P. Camuto
Video Assist: Anguibé Guindo
Aerial Unit Video Assist: Rico O. Alston
Still Photographers: Brigitte Lacombe, Nicole Rivelli, Hugh Stewart
Visual Effects Company: Listo
Special Effects Co-ordinator: Listo: Steve Kirshoff
Visual Effects Supervisor: Geoffrey Kleindorfer
Special Effects Foreman: Wilfred Caban
Special Effects Technicians: Carmen M. Campolo, Richard Bryan Douglas, Devin Maggio, John Stifanich
Editor: Monika Willi
Assistant Editors: Sandie Bompar, Thomas Treu
Production Designer: Kevin Thompson
Art Director: Hinju Kim
Assistant Art Director: Beth Kuhn
Art Department Co-ordinator: Leanne Murphy
Set Decorators: Becca Meis DeMarco, Susanne Haneke

Complicit: The Films of Michael Haneke

Funny Games U.S.

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

Michael Haneke on 'Funny Games U.S.'

Do you think that cinema, and particularly attitudes to violence in cinema, have changed over the ten years since the first Funny Games film?

Nothing has changed. The media have continued to get worse and worse. If anything the film has become even more relevant today than it was ten years ago, which is one of the reasons why I wanted to do such an exact remake. There has been a huge increase in the tendency to use violence on a daily basis as a sort of consumer product.

What is the main distinction between the two versions of the film?

It's hard to say – and in any case I'm always very cagey about passing judgement on my own films. Of course the casts come from very different backgrounds: the whole style of performance in German-speaking films is much more artificial, more theatrical and less naturalistic than in America. Then each actor brings his or her own interpretation to a role. It's the same in theatre when you put on the same play, the result changes every time, even if the production concept is identical.

Did the actors study your original version in order to prepare for the film? And did they feel themselves placed under pressure by the existence of this blueprint?

They all watched it once because they wanted to know what they were dealing with. But I advised them not to go back to it in case they got the idea that they had to copy it or to do something that would contrast with it. Both would be undesirable because I wanted them to approach the roles on their own terms.

You have a fearsome reputation with actors: for instance, Brady Corbet, who plays one of the thugs, has described you as a 'total dictator'. Would you agree?

The actors were obviously used to trying out a range of things together in rehearsal. But when I make a film, even when I'm doing something for the first time I know precisely how I would like to have it, which can be annoying for some people. At rehearsals I can say: 'The coffee is over here and the knife is lying next to it' – technical things like that. But the script tells you everything you need to know, and we didn't discuss it. Naomi Watts thought at first that I was like that because we were doing a remake, but once she understood, there was no problem. If the actor is cast correctly then he or she just needs to respond to the situation and that should work fine. When it doesn't, I say so.

You've worked in France, but this is the first time you've made a film in the United States, for a major studio, and in English. What's more, Funny Games is sharply critical of Hollywood genre cinema. How did you find the experience?

Bad, very bad. It's a dreadfully overblown production apparatus with far too many unnecessary people who only work slowly and grudgingly. I had an eight-and-a-half week shooting schedule and only managed with enormous difficulty to finish the film in time when in Austria I could easily have completed it in six weeks. It was an incredibly tough and unwieldy process and it wore me

Set Dressers: Carl Ferrara, Paul J. Zydel
On Set Dresser: Theo Sena
Prop Master: Duke Scoppa
Construction Co-ordinator: Kenneth D. Nelson
Costume Designer: David Robinson
Assistant Costume Designer: Lee Harper
Wardrobe Supervisor: Sandi Figueroa
Make-up: Michael Bigger
Key Make-up Artist: Rita Ogden
Prosthetic Make-up Consultant:
 Waldemar Pokromski
Special Make-up Effects Artist: Louie Zakarian
Hair Department Head: Francesca Paris
Key Hairstylist: Thom Gonzales
Production Film Lab: PostWorks
Post-production Laboratory: LTC
Film Colourist: Serge Antony
Sound Negative by: CinéStéréo
Film Out by: Duboi
Logo: Fuji
Music: George Friedrich Handel, Pietro Mascagni,
 W.A. Mozart, John Zorn
Sound [Recordist]: Tom Varga
Production Sound Recordist: Dominique Eyraud
Boom Operators: Teferra McKenzie, Lionel Le Bras
Color NY Post-recordings: Josh Abbey
Sound Re-recording: Jean-Pierre LaForce
Sound Editor: Nadine Muse
Additional Sound: Marie Guesnier, Pierre Martens
Supervisor - Mot pour Mo ADR: Fred Mays
Foley Artists: Pascal Chauvin, Franck Tassel
Dolby Consultants: Francis Pérreard, Michel Monier
Marine Co-ordinator: Chris Barnes
Stunt Co-ordinator: Roy Farfel
Stunts: Jay Carrodo, Cameron Greenlee,
 Don Hewitt, David Januzzi, Jodi Pynn,
 Kevin Rogers
Stand-in for Naomi Watts: Cicely Osbourne
Stand-in for Tim Roth: Scott Harris
Stand-ins for Michael Pitt: Lucas Steele,
 Mauro Bossi
Stand-in for Brady Corbet: Brett Vanderbrook
Stand-in for Devon Gearhart: Jan Uczkowski
Photo Double Georgie: Justin Geisenberger
Photo Double Ann: Jules Hartley
Dialect Coach: Elizabeth Himelstein Reynolds
ADR Dialogue Coach: Tanya Blumstein
Animal Wranglers: Christina Potter, Tasha Zamsky
Aerial Unit Helicopter Pilot: Al Cerullo
Publicists: Emma Cooper, Gordon Spragg
Cast:
 Naomi Watts (*Ann Farber*)
 Tim Roth (*George Farber*)
 Michael Pitt (*Paul*)
 Brady Corbet (*Peter*)
 Devon Gearhart (*Georgie Farber*)
 Boyd Gaines (*Fred Thompson*)
 Siobhan Fallon Hogan (*Betsy Thompson*)
 Robert LuPone (*Robert*)
 Susanne Haneke (*Betsy's sister-in-law*)
 Linda Moran (*Eva*)
 Lucky (*the dog*)
 France-UK-Germany-Italy-USA 2007©
 111 mins
 Digital

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out. I had a certain additional difficulty with the actors because my English is not so good, so it was hard for me to express myself accurately and to understand when they wanted to explain something to me. I tried as much as I could to avoid working through interpreters but it wasn't possible when I didn't have the vocabulary.

Another English-language remake of one of your films has been mooted in Hollywood, a version of Hidden with Ron Howard directing. Are you involved in any way?

Only insofar as they've taken out an option on the script. They're transferring the story to America and I'm getting some money for it and that's as far as it goes. I'd be very wary of taking part in it, though if it does get made people will compare the two films to each other, of course. That really would be quite funny.

Michael Haneke interviewed by Sheila Johnston, *Sight and Sound*, April 2008

'Funny Games U.S.' in the horror genre context

Back in 1997 Haneke compared his 'parody of a thriller' with realist works of terror such as John McNaughton's *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* and the cinema of stylised ultra-violence represented by Peckinpah, Tarantino and Oliver Stone. But the past decade has seen onscreen depictions of rape and violence reach new heights with the emergence of graphic 'torture porn' in horror franchises such as *Saw* and *Hostel*. Given that Haneke's script and *mise en scène* are largely unchanged, it is in casting and performance that his remake might provide a comment on the contemporary cinematic landscape. Certainly, Naomi Watts imbues her incarnation of Ann with a new sensuality that echoes the fetishisation of the female victim so frequent in present-day Hollywood horror; a scene in which she is made to strip for her captors' amusement is haunted by the spectre of rape in a much more immediate manner.

Tim Roth as George is a much weaker presence than Ulrich Mühe, placing a new spin on the dynamic between husband and wife as George becomes the embodiment of the emasculated American male and Ann edges ever closer to the status of immortal final girl. Brady Corbet as Peter may be an uncanny replica of his predecessor Frank Giering but Michael Pitt transforms Arno Frisch's wiry devil Paul into a maleficent cherub, a golden vision of all-American innocence gone wrong, significantly clad in the same Converse pumps as his victims.

Catherine Wheatley, *Sight and Sound*, April 2008