



GEORGE A. ROMERO'S

DIARY OF THE DEAD

PRODUCTION NOTES

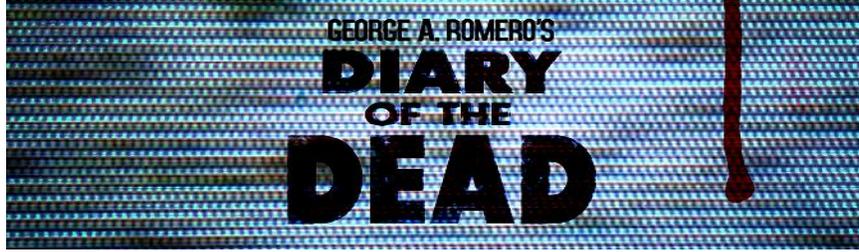
Running time: 95 minutes
Rated R by the MPAA

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An ARTFIRE FILMS / ROMERO-GRUNWALD Production
A GEORGE A. ROMERO FILM

In his first independently produced zombie film in over two decades, George A. Romero returns to ground zero in the history of the living dead. When a group of film students making a horror movie in the woods discovers that the dead have begun to revive, they turn their cameras on the real-life horrors that suddenly confront them, creating a first person diary of their bloody encounters and the disintegration of everything they hold dear. Told with Romero's pitch-black humor and an unflinching eye on our post-Katrina world, GEORGE A. ROMERO'S DIARY OF THE DEAD marks the noted filmmaker's return to his roots.

PRINCIPAL CAST

Debra.....	MICHELLE	MORGAN
Jason.....	JOSH	CLOSE
Tony.....	SHAWN	ROBERTS
Tracy.....	AMY	LALONDE
Eliot.....	JOE	DINICOL
Maxwell.....	SCOTT	WENTWORTH
Ridley.....	PHILIP	RICCIO
Gordo.....	CHRIS	VIOLETTE
Mary.....	TATIANA	MASLANY

PRINCIPAL CREW

Written and Directed by.....GEORGE A.
ROMERO Produced byPETER
GRUNWALD

ARTUR SPIGEL

SAM ENGLEBARDT
ARA KATZ

Executive Producers.....DAN FIREMAN

JOHN HARRISON
STEVE BARNETT

Co-
Producer.....
.....PAULA DEVONSHIRE Director of
Photography.....ADAM SWICA, csc
Production Designer.....RUPERT
LAZARUS Editor.....MICHAEL
DOHERTY Costume Designer.....ALEX
KAVANAGH Music By.....NORMAN
ORENSTEIN Special Make-Up Effects
Producer.....GREG NICOTERO Special Make-Up
Effects.....GASLIGHT STUDIO Visual
Effects.....SPIN
Casting by.....JOHN BUCHAN,
CSA Unit Production Manager.....D.J.
CARSON First Assistant
Director.....MARTIN WALTERS

SYNOPSIS

The master of horror returns to the kind of filmmaking he pioneered and the genre he invented. In his first independent zombie film in over twenty years, George A. Romero takes us back to ground zero in the history of the living dead.

Jason Creed and a small crew of college filmmakers are in the Pennsylvania woods making a no-budget horror film when they hear the terrifying news that the dead have started returning to life.

Led by Jason's girlfriend, Debra, the frightened young filmmakers set off in a friend's old Winnebago to try to get back to the only safety and security they know: their homes.

But there is no escape from the crisis, nor any real home for them anymore. Everything they depend upon, all that they hold dear, is fractured as the plague of the living dead begins to spread.

Jason documents the true-life horrors in a tense, first-person style that heightens the reality of each encounter.

Even as his friends die, even as they are attacked by ravenous walking corpses at every stop along the way, Jason keeps filming, an obsessive, unflinching eye in the midst of chaos.

The government first denies, then promises to quell the crisis, but can't. Technology fails. Communication with the rest of the world becomes impossible. Jason and what remains of his crew end up on their own, a handful of lucky survivors, reliant on no one but themselves to stay alive.

They take final refuge in a fortress of a mansion, but their sanctuary turns out to be a trap from which there is no escape. Throughout it all, the cameras keep rolling, recording every detail for future generations...if any survive.

ABOUT THE CAST

MICHELLE MORGAN (Debra) has worked steadily on both stage and screen for the past few years in a variety of roles.

Her numerous screen credits include *Across the River To Motor City*, *Final 24*, *The Smart Woman's Survival Guide*, *Alien Fire* and *Road Rage*. She has honed her acting skills onstage in such diverse plays as Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, Goldini's *Servant of Two Masters* as well as *When We Dead Awaken* with John Neville, *The Bacchae*, *Fly* and *Two Rooms*. She currently lives in Toronto.

JOSH CLOSE's (Jason) acting debut was in the independent film, *In the Lair*, but he first won widespread attention with *K-19: The Widowmaker* when he was cast alongside one of his screen idols, Harrison Ford.

His co-starring roles in *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, with Laura Linney and Tom Wilkinson, and *A Home At The End of the World*, with Colin Farrell and Robin Wright Penn, have established him as a versatile actor whose star is on the rise. Other film credits include *Full of It*, *The Plague*, and *Haunted*. His many television appearances include a recurring role on ABC's *Life As We Know It*. He currently lives in Los Angeles.

SHAWN ROBERTS (Tony) began acting professionally at age 12 in the CBS series *Emily of New Moon*, produced by Academy Award-

winner Michael Donovan. Roberts went on to amass numerous diverse credits, including *Land of the Dead* directed by George A. Romero for Universal Pictures, *X Men* directed by Bryan Singer for Twentieth Century Fox, *Skinwalkers* for director Jim Isaac, *Jumper* for director Doug Liman, and *Cheaper By The Dozen 2*.

Roberts' television credits include *Stone Cold* opposite Tom Selleck for CBC, *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, *We Were the Mulvaneys* for Lifetime and a recurring role on ABC Family's *Falcon Beach*. He lives in both Toronto and Los Angeles.

AMY LALONDE (Tracy), a former high school arts teacher and Queen's University drama major, is no stranger to the world of horror, having been an associate producer, head writer and host for two seasons at *Scream* (Corus Entertainment), a movie channel devoted to thriller, horror, and suspense films.

Her screen credits include: *Battlestar Galactica*, *Mutant X*, *Queer as Folk*, *Beautiful People*, *LoveBites*, *Murder in the Hamptons*, and *Kevin Hill*. Recently, she completed a role in the feature film *Five Girls* opposite Ron Perlman. Amy also keeps busy as a highly sought-after commercial print model. She lives in Toronto.

JOE DINICOL (Eliot), though still a young man, is already an industry veteran having started as a child actor on a number of Canadian television series.

From family fare such as *Real Kids*, *Real Adventures*, *The Famous Jett Jackson*, *The Facts of Life*, *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang* to popular shows like *Eerie*, *Indiana*, *Rideau Hall*, and *Train 48*, Dinicol is no stranger to the rigors of being cast in a principal role. He has also been the lead in a number of feature films including *Kart Racer*, *The Marsh*, and *Weirdsville*, directed by Allan Moyle. He lives in Toronto.

SCOTT WENTWORTH (Maxwell), a versatile veteran of both stage and screen who has worked throughout the United States and Canada, brings both levity and gravity to *Diary of the Dead* in his professorial role.

An acclaimed regular at the prestigious Stratford Festival, he has played the title roles in *Macbeth*, *Henry IV*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*. On the Broadway stage, he was Uncle Louis in *Lost in Yonkers*, Count Vronsky in *Anna Karenina* and most recently, Bates in *Welcome to the Club*, which garnered him a Tony nomination. Wentworth is also no stranger to motion pictures and television. His credits include: Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm*, NBC's *The Terry Anderson Story*, *Elizabeth Rex*, and the award-winning series *Law and Order*. He lives in Toronto.

PHILIP RICCIO (Ridley) is an actor in high demand on both stage and screen. His diverse theatre work includes roles at the Stratford Festival in *Henry IV Part I* and *Henry IV Part II* and as Soulepper in *Hamlet*. Among his other stage credits are *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love*, *Love's Labour Lost*, *Don Juan*, and the Dora-nominated Company Theatre production of *A Whistle in the Dark*.

He has had principal roles onscreen in *Bookey's Mark*, *Puppets Who Kill* and was the lead in the WB's *A Windigo Tale*. Riccio is a series lead in the popular Showcase television hit *Rent-A-Goalie*. He lives in Toronto.

CHRIS VIOLETTE (Gordo) who is best known for his role as Blue Ranger Sky in the popular television series "*Power Rangers*" has also appeared in "*Degrassi: The Next Generation*", "*Wild Card*", and "*Queer as Folk*." Chris' film credits include "*Labou*" directed by Greg Aronowitz, and he will be featured in "*Return to Sleepaway Camp*" directed by Robert Hiltzik to be released this year.

TATIANA MASLANY (Mary) is a versatile actress, who loves improv comedy and is a member of a number of troupes including the General Food Improvisational Theatre and Anoetic Improv. She is an alumnus of the Canadian Improv Games.

A native of Regina, Saskatchewan, Tatiana portrayed the Ghost in "*Ginger Snaps 2: Unleashed*" and has appeared in "*The Messengers*", "*The Robber Bride*" and the thriller "*Stir of Echoes: The Homecoming*".

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

GEORGE A. ROMERO (writer-director) is considered the father of the modern horror film. His first feature, *Night of the*

Living Dead (1968), redefined the genre, not only with its explicit violence, but also with a satirical view of American society that reflected the turmoil of the times.

Known for his intelligence, innovation and sensitivity as a filmmaker, in addition to his ability to scare, Romero made short films, industrials and commercials before co-writing, directing, filming and editing *Night of the Living Dead*. The film, made on a budget of \$114,000, is a stark parable of the American family consuming itself and still retains the power to shock and surprise.

Romero made several other low-budget films in Pittsburgh before solidifying his reputation with two remarkable films: *Martin* (1978), a lyrical, poignant and deeply disturbing story of a lonely boy who is convinced he is a vampire, and *Dawn of the Dead* (1979), set in a suburban shopping mall where a band of struggling survivors is beset by zombies and their own personal demons. A powerful, apocalyptic action film leavened with Romero's signature pitch-black wit, the movie became one of the most profitable independent productions in film history.

He continued to do interesting work throughout the 80s and 90s with *Knightriders* (1981), a heartfelt film based on Arthurian legend, in which Ed Harris plays the leader of a troupe that stages medieval fairs with knights jousting on motorcycles instead of horses; *Creepshow* (1982), a smart and boldly stylized film with a script by Stephen King and a cast of well-known actors; and 1985's *Day of the Dead*, a progressive, eerily claustrophobic film, the third in Romero's zombie saga.

In 1988, *Monkey Shines* became Romero's first studio-produced film and introduced him to Peter Grunwald, with whom he eventually formed Romero-Grunwald Productions. The film was hailed by Newsweek as a "white-knuckle triumph." *Two Evil Eyes* (1990) was a collaboration with filmmaker Dario Argento, comprising two vignettes inspired by Edgar Allan Poe short stories. 1993's *The Dark Half* starred Tim Hutton in a superb dual performance. The film, like much of Romero's work, was praised by critics and is considered among the most thoughtful of the many Stephen King adaptations.

In 2000 Romero made *Bruiser*, a taught, frightening and highly original tale of revenge, which at the time was his most exciting, stylish and accomplished film. *Land of the Dead* was released by Universal Pictures in June 2005 and

garnered exceptional critical acclaim in addition to becoming one of the most successful of Romero's films at the box office.

In the fall of 2006 Romero embarked on *Diary of the Dead*, his most personal film since *Night of the Living Dead*. He proudly describes it as one that "comes from my heart. It's not a sequel or a remake. It's a whole new beginning for the dead."

PETER GRUNWALD (Producer) began his career at 15 as a production assistant on Otto Preminger's *Such Good Friends*. Two years later, he wrote and directed a short subject, *The Vendor*, for producer Steve Tisch, which led to an association with Robert Evans at Paramount Pictures, where Grunwald worked on such films as *Chinatown*, *Marathon Man*, and *Black Sunday*.

Grunwald became a story editor at Paramount before establishing an editorial consulting firm that included Ken McCormick, the legendary publisher of *Roots*, among its clients. Grunwald returned to film work as Vice President of Charles Evans Productions, which developed and produced *Tootsie*, and served as executive producer of *Monkey Shines*, written and directed by George Romero, with whom he began a long-term collaboration. Romero-Grunwald Productions, the development and production company formed by the two, has produced the films *Bruiser*, *Land of the Dead*, and *Diary of the Dead*.

ARTUR SPIGEL (Producer) founded 7ate9 Entertainment, a Hollywood-based multi-platform production agency focused on youth entertainment, in 1997. The company is known as an innovator in the world of television and youth marketing, producing and directing thousands of award-winning productions for networks including Disney, MTV, and Cartoon Network. In 2004, Art founded Artfire Films with his partner, Dan Fireman. Artfire is a film production and financing company specializing in director-driven, independent projects. Through Artfire, Art is producing a number of films, most recently *George A. Romero's Diary of The Dead*.

SAM ENGLEBARDT (Producer) is a Vice President in the Private Clients practice at Bernstein Global Wealth Management,

where he works as a financial advisor to high net worth individuals, families and foundations. He was formerly Executive Vice President and General Counsel at Artfire Films and was a founding partner of Arrival Cinema, where he produced and executive produced several acclaimed films, including *Paris, je t'aime*, a collective film set in Paris, with segments directed by some of the world's top directors, and *Edmond*, adapted from David Mamet's play, directed by Stuart Gordon, starring William H. Macy and Julia Stiles.

Englehardt graduated from Harvard Law School and is a licensed attorney in California. He graduated Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a degree in Philosophy and Political Science and studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford University.

ARA KATZ (Producer) began producing films after graduating magna cum laude from Tufts University. Her first feature, *Sexual Dependency*, sold worldwide and garnered critical acclaim, ultimately receiving the Oscar nomination from Bolivia in 2003. Soon after the success of her first feature, Ara founded Arrival Cinema, where she has produced and executive produced a number of projects, most notably, *Paris, je t'aime*. In 2006, Arrival Cinema was folded into the producing and financing company, Artfire Films, where Ara serves as the Executive Vice President of Production and Development.

DAN FIREMAN (Executive Producer) is a partner in Artfire Films, the entity that financed and joined with Romero-Grunwald Productions to bring *Diary of the Dead* to the screen. Fireman's passion to support filmmakers with an independent voice is what attracted him to the film business and it's his business and financial acumen that will be integral to Artfire's growth in the motion picture industry. Although primarily an asset manager and real estate developer-builder, he has been involved with such high-profile documentaries as the Academy Award-winning *Born into Brothels* and the Oscar-nominated *Murderball*.

In his role as President & CEO of Willowbend Development, LLC, Fireman is presently overseeing the residential development at Liberty National, a New Jersey waterfront property that overlooks the Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan skyline and boasts three residential towers and a world-class golf course. Other Willowbend properties include: Willowbend Country Club - a private residential golf community on Cape Cod; The Westin

Rio Mar Beach Resort & Golf Club in Puerto Rico and The Starr Pass Marriott in Tucson, Arizona.

JOHN HARRISON (Executive Producer) began his career directing rock videos and working as a First Assistant Director for George A. Romero. He wrote and directed multiple episodes of Romero's classic TV series, *Tales From The Darkside*, before helming Paramount Pictures' *Tales From the Darkside, The Movie* for which he won the Grand Prix du Festival at Avoriaz, France.

Harrison has written and directed television episodes and world premiere movies for HBO, NBC and FOX. He wrote and directed SciFi Channel's six-hour miniseries adaptations of Frank Herbert's bestseller, *Dune*, and its follow up, *Children of Dune*, both of which were Emmy-winners. He co-wrote Disney's animated feature, *Dinosaur*, and adapted Clive Barker's fantasy novels, *Abarat*, for Disney. Harrison is now in pre-production on the film adaptation of Barker's *Book of Blood*, which he will direct from his own screenplay.

STEVE BARNETT (Executive Producer) is currently Senior Vice President of Production and Development at Dimension Films, where he recently developed and managed the production of *The Mist*, based on a Stephen King novella, which was adapted for the screen and directed by Frank Darabont.

Prior to joining Dimension, he was Executive Vice President of Production for Atmosphere Entertainment MM, where he was instrumental in the production of four major studio films: *300*, released by Warner Bros Pictures; *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, for Paramount Pictures; *Full Of It*, a teen comedy released by New Line Cinema; and *George A. Romero's Land of The Dead* for Universal Pictures.

Before Atmosphere, Barnett was a Senior Vice President of Production at Artists Production Group, the film production unit of Michael Ovitz's Artists Management Group, where he was instrumental in building the company's film development department.

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