

DEEP DIVE: Get Out

Film director Jordan Peele on turning good horror into great horror

"I wanted to make a horror film that took place in an idyllic environment. I'm not the biggest fan of those movies that just go for the dirty, haunted-house feel. *Get Out* presents the exact opposite; it takes place among an opulent, luxurious setting. In some ways, it's a bit *Stepford Wives*, I guess; it gives the audience a little bit of an escape, a bit of a vacation. When you subvert a beautiful image, you challenge the traditional ways in which you can scare people.

"I've been calling this movie a 'social thriller' because straight 'horror' doesn't seem quite right. Neither does 'psychological thriller'. The biggest threat in this movie is a societal thing – the monster is coming from society; from the conversations between people and from the way we expect people to behave. There's no one entity getting in the way; the terror is an ideology or a belief system. How do you defeat something like that? The threat looms large.

"Horror is powerful because, for me, horror movies and thrillers are about facing our darkest fears and our deepest horrors, and we as a society truly are the worst monster we've ever come across. We're

capable of amazing things when we cooperate, but we're also capable of the greatest atrocities in the world. Naturally, these thrillers have more impact when society has stuff to be scared about. And right now, in the current climate with President Trump, *Get Out* seems to provide a certain catharsis.

"But what makes a good horror truly great is when it's about the imagination, and movies that play off the terror of the unknown threat are, to me, always more elevated. You want every scene to be better than the last, in a way. If you can keep the next scene more interesting, then you're going to win.

"The ultimate challenge with *Get Out* was making a horror movie where race was the focal point. There's a lot of pressure – any wrong tone, or wrong choice, and the whole movie comes crashing down.

"If I had to describe the music,

in the film, I'd call it 'satanic negro-spiritual'. I wanted something undeniably African-American, but it was important to have a darkness and a subversiveness to it. In horror films, music is 50 per cent of the experience – that's how I look at it. You experience horror with your eyes and ears, so it can't be undersold how important it is. I sought out Michael Abels, a black composer who could bring something fresh. He's a classical composer who also does jazz, African and a mix of different cultures. The opening theme is my favourite piece of composed music in the film; it's full of eerie voices. It's beautiful and elevated, but somehow terrifying, too.

"Despite the nature of the film, I want people to come away from this movie feeling good. I want it to strike a cathartic cord with people, and provide an emotional release. I have no doubt white and black audiences will experience the film very differently, but this movie is actually bringing people together. And I hope they sh*t their pants! It's the least I could hope for."

Get Out is in cinemas from 17 Mar

**POST(ER)
ANALYSIS**

BRUCE MARCHANT, OF LONDON'S REEL POSTER GALLERY, DECODES *GET OUT*'S BILLBOARD BANNER



The colours

The monochrome element is the most interesting part of this poster. It's stark and simple. This film tackles racial prejudice, and the colour scheme reflects that. It reminds me of the poster for the 1961 cult movie *My Baby is Black*, which examined racism in the early days of the civil-rights era. I'd be amazed if the designers hadn't seen that poster.

The text

At first glance, the text is simple and to the point. But look at the letter G and you'll see it's in the shape of a circular arrow, like the refresh symbol on some web browsers, as if to say 'go back', or in this case 'Get out!' It's subtle but it helps hammer home the message. A nice touch.

The picture

The way he's looking up and out of the poster, rather than straight at you, adds an element of mystery. What's he scared of? It's the monster under the bed. Also, because the poster's not cluttered by lots of text, you're instantly drawn into the actor's face staring up at something terrifying.

reelposter.com

