

A fan film by
MICHAEL PARIS

SPAWN: THE RECALL

Starring
JOHANNA GENET
TOM MAURICE

8 minutes
Shot on SONY PMW-EX3 and CANON EOS 60D

MICHAEL PARIS

Paris, FRANCE

www.michaelparis.fr

contact@michaelparis.fr

SPAWN : THE RECALL

Synopsis

SPAWN : THE RECALL is the story of a former witch and her son, who try to live a normal life away from the darkness.

While they're shopping in a supermarket, the child suddenly disappears.

She starts looking for him, freaked out knowing evil forces are still lurking.

A security guard comes to her help but while they are checking on the surveillance cameras, something happens.

She can sense it, they are here...

SPAWN: THE RECALL

Q&A with Director and Writer MICHAEL PARIS

What was your inspiration for the film and how did it get off the ground?

One day, I was talking with relatives, just catching up. They used to work in a supermarket. One thing leading to another, I started to think how mesmerizing and inspiring it could be to film in an empty supermarket, at night. I asked them if it sounded possible.

Their manager agreed to let us shoot, on closing days.

Then I started to turn things over in my head, to wonder what could be done inside the supermarket, considering what is involved. I think supermarkets are a kind of allegory for temptation, with all the ads, the colors, the sales events, encouraging consumption.

So I thought it would be interesting to mix an everyday life story in a supermarket, such as a mum and her kid shopping, with a dark and fantasy story.

Besides I have always been a fan of Spawn, I followed it since the comics began.

Both ideas then came together, so I decided to make a fan-film!

I had to make up a story in which all characters would fit while taking place in the supermarket.

The former witch and her son living undercover seemed a good pivot screenplay to bind everything.

We had short delays: we had very little time between the writing and the shooting, because we could only shoot on specific days.

It was a real challenge to take up.

How long was the shoot?

In the supermarket we shot everything in 1 day (on a Sunday) and 2 evenings, during closing time.

The scenes outside and a few other specific scenes were shot later on. All put together, that is 2 more days.

How many people worked on the film?

We worked with a limited team on that project.

On set we were 9 on the first day: the actors, a camera B operator, two technical assistants and extras.

The other days at the minimum we were 2 and on average 3 or 4.

For the post production, Johanna Genet worked on the sound design, James Edjouma on the music and I worked on the editing, the VFX and the color grading.

Apart from the limited team, was there any other big difficulty with the film making?

As we had very little time to shoot, it was very intense.

Otherwise, regarding sound design, there were parasite sounds on set such as big refrigerators or air conditioning that we couldn't shut down.

We took the decision to recreate everything back in post-production.

Therefore, all the sounds and the voices were added later.

For the VFX, I had a single computer to work on and render and sometimes I had to summon my patience!

How long was the post production?

2 years :)

In the end the making of the film cost nothing but commitment and free time!

About the special effects: did you use practical effects or are they all CGI?

I tried to get as many practical effects as possible, at least to use as references.

For example, the head and the body of Spawn were practically made but of course the cape, the chains, the smoke in his eyes, were CGI.

I used CGI when it was needed to enhance reality and make it more impressive.

But I wanted to keep the raw aspect of practical effects, insofar as possible.

Also, many effects were composing of real shots (lens flares, liquid in the fluorescent tube, etc...)

What do you think the essence of the film and its characters are about?

I'd say it is much about protection. And power.

On the one side, an every-day life situation, with a mum caring for her son, worried about him. She is protecting him, fighting as a woman and as a mother.

On the other side, there is this supernatural situation with monsters attacking the child and two powerful characters, Spawn and the Witch. They both are protecting the child against evil forces.

I wanted to start with a simple situation and generate a tension that would go crescendo, with most of the supernatural elements in the end. That is why I chose a non-linear editing.

I wanted the film to unfold with a rhythmic pace and to create a rise in power that would first lead to the apparition of Spawn, spectacular and powerful.

And then to a moment of grace: the apparition of the Witch, mystic, powerful, almost celestial despite her dark side.

That is another point that was important for me: the ambiguity of the characters.

I wanted people not to know whether they are good or bad, nor what their real intentions are.

I wanted the limit between good and evil not to be so clear.

The Witch loves her son and protects him, but she looks dark, she seems to be bound to the Darkness and we don't know her story. She seems to be on the run, to live undercover.

When I cast Johanna Genet, she had that specific mix of strength and fragility that I was looking for.

The actress had to be able to play a mother and a powerful witch and Johanna had the strong aspect and the little cracks needed for the role.

For Spawn it was a bit different because his story is already known, we are aware of his ambiguity.

He still looks like a demon but he is protecting the child.

However we don't know why. We don't know his real intentions.

I reinforced the ambiguity giving him angel wings while he still has his demonic chains and cape.

The film is also about the connection between the child and his mother.

He is naive, carefree. He doesn't understand his mother's worry, though he carries the weight of it.

And like most children, he wants to make her happy. That is what is going to cause him trouble: he takes off his medallion because he wants to get the "flask of happiness" for his mother to be happy.

It suggests he feels something is wrong with his mother, even if he doesn't know what.

Sometimes he might even think she's a little crazy.

I wanted to introduce him in his child world: lost in his thoughts most of the time, dreaming, kept away from adults concerns. But feeling everything that goes wrong, absorbed in the situation.

What were your references for this movie?

I am a huge fan of Dante's Divine Comedy. By the way, the opening sentence in the movie comes from it.

Gustave Doré's inspiring illustrations for Dante's Inferno highly influenced my vision. For the circus scene, several artists nourished my work but the Satoshi Kon visionary "Paprika" was predominant.

I also did a lot of research about goddesses and deity through art history.

What is the mountain we see at the end of the credits?

In Dante's Divine Comedy, Lucifer is waist deep in ice.

The mountain depicts where Lucifer broke free.

It's clearly an open ending do you have any ideas for developments?

The idea of the film was to introduce a new storyline and a new character, the Witch. Of course I have many ideas, I'm full of ideas! :)

A trivia about the film making to share with us?

The mask of Spawn was made with slices of real meat, that we painted to get an interesting textural effect.

For the eyes we put real light bulbs in the eye sockets. What we had not planned was that the heat caused by the lights would melt the fat, and Spawn started to cry liquid fat. The actor underneath was really pleased!

SPAWN: THE RECALL

About the crew

Michael Paris - Writer and Director

Michael Paris is a French film director.

He created and directed for the past few years several short-films among which :

LES ECHOS D'UN MURMURE, official selection at the LUFF festival in Lausann in

2011 and at the SHORT FILM CORNER in Cannes in 2011.

PTX 2000 official selection at the SALENTO FINIBUS TERRAE in 2012.

M83-SAFE at the LAST FRIDAYS SHORTS in 2011

...CLOSER THAN THEY ARE official selection at LES TRES COURTS short film festival in 2009.

He is a self taught film maker and VFX designer.

He studied in a Fine Arts School for 5 years and graduated in 2008.

There he developed his own artistic world and worked his director and VFX skills, putting it into practice in various personal projects. Then he worked for a short while for BUF, a Parisian special effects company.

Since 2008, he has also been a freelance graphic designer and has worked for several prestigious companies.

Johanna Genet - Actress and Sound designer

Johanna Genet is The Witch in SPAWN : THE RECALL.

She is a French actress and a long time collaborator with Michael Paris. They met in a drama group in 2006 and worked together on several projects ever since.

She starred in several short films among which LES ECHOS D'UN MURMURE, that she co-wrote and co-directed with Michael Paris.

On television, Genet starred in French series such as DEJA VU or BIENVENUE AUX EDELWEISS.

On stage, she recently played Sylvia/Louisa./Alpha in UN HOMME A LA MER from Ghigo di Chiara.

Furthermore, she was in charge of the sound design of SPAWN : THE RECALL.

Previously she made the sound design and the music for LES ECHOS D'UN MURMURE and COBRA : THE SPACE PIRATE fan film.

Tom Maurice - Actor

Tom Maurice was cast while he was taking English-speaking actor class.

To this day, he is still at school.

James Edjouma - Music composer

James Edjouma is a self taught music composer and songwriter. He and Michael Paris met in 2010, when they worked together on the short film: CHICANE STORY.

He previously worked with platinum recording artists (from Daniel Lévi and Vitaa to Snoop Dogg or P.Diddy).

He composed in 2012 the musical score for the dramatic adaptation of FULL MONTY – Ladies Night – as well as the music for the L'Or Espresso TV commercial.

He also composed the musical score and wrote lyrics for the next Audrey Estrougo's feature film, UNE HISTOIRE BANALE.

CREDITS

A film by Michael Paris

Starring

The Witch Johanna Genet

Michael Tom Maurice

Spawn Gregory Paris

J3.0 (voice)

Music by James BKS Edjouma

Sound Design by Johanna Genet

DP/EDITING/VFX Michael Paris

Camera B Operator Gregory Paris

Technical Crew

Samuel Gaillard Hervé Thomas

Jessica Genet Emerick Descamps

Thanks for their support

James Kretchmar Patrick Paris

Solange Genet Mickael Genet

Emilien Adage Tom's family

Special Thanks to

Michel Antoine Brigitte Antoine

Gregory Paris Freddy Danneels &

the supermarket crew

Additional Voices by J3.0

Additional Music Mourioche - Mystic Gambit

This short film uses many sounds from

FREESOUND.ORG ([see full list](#))

A huge thank you to all the team for their support and help
without you this film wouldn't exist