

Stuck

Germany/United Kingdom/Canada/USA 2007
 Director: Stuart Gordon
 With Stephen Rea, Mena Suvari, Russell Hornsby, Rukiya Bernard
 Certificate 15 85m 0s



A stiff Brandi: Mena Suvari

Right from *Stuck's* opening scene – featuring a close-up of a shit-filled, leaking adult nappy on an incontinent elderly man – we know that director Stuart Gordon will spare us nothing in this punishingly dark movie, based on the true story of a Texan woman who accidentally struck a man with her car, then left him for days to die (“like a bug”) on her windshield. Gordon masterfully tells the story, setting it up with plenty of old-fashioned foreboding. Homeless Tom was hoping to find a place to sleep ‘anywhere’ before spending the next few days embedded in Brandi’s car. And of course friendless Tom was ‘stuck’ in life long before being violently immobilised on the windscreen, just as Brandi was ‘in the shit’ even before being saddled with the stranger bleeding to death in her garage.

Gordon builds the plot as a pattern of crushing moral dilemmas to which no one responds nobly. Will Brandi risk her promotion and face her irresponsible behaviour? (No.) Will boyfriend Rashid bring Brandi to her senses? (No.) Will anyone help a dying man? (No.) It’s every man (or woman) for himself in Gordon’s compassionless world; when a neighbour’s dog seems on the verge of revealing the gruesome situation – only to take a few hungry bites out of Tom’s open wounds – the relentlessness of life’s cruelties visited on this undead hunk of flesh which until recently had been a human being is driven home. Ultimately one wonders why Tom is so determined to survive this horror if only to return to the misery of life.

At first Tom seems a blank stand-in for every bad thing we’ve ever done and hoped would disappear but that refuses to go away. Our sympathies, initially, are oddly engaged by Brandi, a single woman trying to make headway in life; but as her myopic self-absorption turns

her from unlucky driver to outright murderer, Tom’s shattered humanity becomes the devastating centre of the film. When Rea delivers his few final lines – “Why? Why couldn’t you just let me go?” – it’s a surprise that someone is finally making humane sense out of this unspeakable situation, given that fear and heartlessness have driven every other moment of the film. Mena Suvari is convincing as the panicked and isolated moral linchpin of the film, struggling over the right thing to do and perpetually making the worst possible choices. The dark humour – Brandi angrily screaming “This is ALL YOUR FAULT!” to a helpless Tom as she pours petrol over him – is occasionally laugh-out-loud funny, but it reduces us too to unsympathetic witnesses, laughing at the atrocities onscreen.

It’s a smart, tight film, but a word of caution: *Stuck* is borderline unwatchable. The gore in the garage is only offset by a sequence of claustrophobic interiors; the walls of the garage itself seem to tighten as the film continues. It is an unflinching feelbad movie. And if you’re planning to cover your eyes through the really grisly bits when, for example, Tom slowly extracts the windshield wiper lodged in his gut, beware – *Stuck* has been foleyed to perfection by sound mixer Georges Hannan. The heavy crunching sound of flesh being ground into by shards of glass is the overwhelming memory of this bleak but hugely daring moral tale. **✦ Gilda Williams**

CREDITS

Directed by Stuart Gordon
Produced by Ken Gord
 Jay Firestone
 Robert Katz
 Stuart Gordon
Producer Christian Arnold-Beutel
Screenplay John Strysik
Story Stuart Gordon
Director of Photography Denis Maloney
Edited by Andy Horvitch
Production Designer Craig Lathrop
Composer Bobby Johnston

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Production Companies Rigel Entertainment presents an Amicus Entertainment Ltd. production in association with Prodigy Pictures Inc. and Grana Productions Inc. Produced with the financial participation of New Brunswick Film with the assistance of Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit
Executive Producers Sam Grana
 John F.S. Laing
 Tim McGrath
 Andrew Arno
Co-producer Fran Lewis
Associate Producers Mena Suvari
 Julie Moldo
 Zenon Yunko
Production Manager Rob Urquhart
Production Accountant Rick Constantineau
Production Co-ordinator Joanne Duguay
Locations Manager Jacquie Anderson
Post-production Supervisor Andy Horvitch
Production Consultant James Ordonez
Assistant Directors 1st: Scott Senechal
 2nd: Rob Cotterill
Script Supervisor Marie Louise McCloskey
Casting Directors Ferné Cassel
 Lisa Parasyon
 Jon Comerford
 Donna Rae Gibbs
 Sheila Lane
Camera Operators Didier Maignet
 Patrick Doyle
 Robert Zimmerman
Key Grip Mike McDonald
Gaffer Larry Smith
Visual Effects Switch VFX
Key Special Effects Jim McFall
Key Set Decorator Alan McLeod
Property Master Mike Holleran
Construction Co-ordinator Robert Godin
Costume Designers Carol Cutshall
 Chris O’Neil
Key Make-up Sylvie Mazerolle
Prosthetic Special Effects

Mike Measimer
 Optic Nerve
Key Hair Linda Flynn
Main Title Design Steven Nevius
 Fertile Mind Digital
Soundtrack “Get on Your Job” – DJ Honda, featuring The Rawcotiks, Problemz, Black Attack; “We Don’t Play” – DJ Honda featuring S-On, Manifest, Rawcotiks, Missin’ Linx; “Smokin Session” – DJ Honda featuring DJ Aladdin; “Heavy Metal Kings” – III Bill; “Constant Elevation” – DJ Honda featuring Parrish ‘PMD’ Smith; “F**k with Us” – DJ Honda featuring The Beatnuts, Buttah of The Rawcotiks, Willie Stubbs, Marly Gatz; “Know What I Mean” – DJ Honda featuring Parrish ‘PMD’ Smith, Rob Jackson, 8 Off Agallah, J-Boogie, Rah-Sun; “Old School, New School” – DJ Honda featuring Black Attack
Sound Mixer Georges Hannan
Sound Editing Steve Adriansen
 Justin Bates
 Brian Best
 Noah Blough
 Richard Burton
 Thierry Couturier
 Corey Eccles
 Patricio Libenson
 Tanaï Drayton
Stunt Co-ordinators John Stoneham Jr
 Jamie Jones

CAST

Stephen Rea Tom Bardo
Mena Suvari Brandi Boski
Russell Hornsby Rashid
Rukiya Bernard Tanya
Carolyn Purdy-Gordon Petersen
Lionel Mark Smith Sam
Wayne Robson Mr Binkley
R.D. Reid manager
Patrick McKenna Lieber
Sharlene Royer Rashid’s other girlfriend
Bunthivy Nou Gloria
Suzanne Short receptionist
Wally McKinnon beat cop
John Dartt cop
Liam McNamara thin young man
Shuko Akune hospital voice menu
John Dunsworth cabbie
Marguerite McNeil Mrs Pashkewitz
Jeffrey Combs 911 operator
Martin Moreno Pedro
Lorena Rincon Estela
Mauricio Hoyos Luis

Dolby Digital In Colour [1.85:1]
Distributor High Fliers Distribution
7650 ft +5 frames

The Tale of Despereaux

USA/United Kingdom 2008

Directors: Sam Fell, Rob Stevenhagen
 Voices of Matthew Broderick, Robbie Coltrane, Frances Conroy
 Certificate U 93m 20s

The review of this film was published in our February issue but unfortunately credits were unavailable at the time going to press.

CREDITS

Directed by Sam Fell
 Rob Stevenhagen
Produced by Gary Ross
 Allison Thomas
Screenplay Gary Ross
 Based on the book by Kate DiCamillo
Screen Story Will McCrabb
 Chris Viscardi
Director of Photography Brad Blackbourn
Edited by Mark Solomon
Production Designer Evgeni Tomov
Music William Ross

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Production Companies Universal Pictures presents in association with Relativity Media a Larger Than Life production in association with FrameStore Animation
Executive Producers William Sargent
 Ryan Kavanaugh
 David Lipman
 Robin Bissell
Co-producer Tracy Shaw
Associate Producers UK Production Unit: Celia Boydell
 US Production Unit: Peiyu Foley
 Casey Crowe
 Jamal McLemore
Post-production Supervisor Cheryl Murphy
Casting Debra Zane
Story Head of Story: Rob Stevenhagen
 Story Artists: Arshad Baig
 Chris Butler
 Gary Dunn
 Brendan Houghton
 Len Morganti
 Dean Roberts
 Sharon Smith
 Darren Vandenburg
 Tim Watts
 Gabriele Zucchelli
 Additional Story Artists: Dino Athanassiou
 Piet Kroon
 Mike Smith
 Phil Valentine
Character Technical Direction FrameStore Animation
Character Technical Directors Supervisor: Nico Scapel
 Technical Supervisor: Mark Wilson
 Facial Supervisor: Laurie Brugger
 Cloth Supervisor: Sylvain Degrotte

Lead Rigger: Emmanuel Sey
Modelling, Sur Textures FrameStore Animation
 Modelling Supervisor: Ben Lambert
 Surfacing Supervisor: Xavier Bernasconi
 Texture Supervisor: Rebecca Melani
Animation Supervisor Gabriele Zucchelli
Animation FrameStore Animation
 Line Producer: Tripp Hudson
 Lead Animators: Bart Boirot
 Rahul Dahokar
 Phil Dale
 Pepe de Lucas
 Pete Dodd
 Matt Everitt
 Jeremy Lazare
 Michael Schilling
 Tim Watts
 Animators: Valentin Amador
 Chiara Arletini
 Rosie Ashforth
 Isabel Auphan
 Mark Beaujeau
 David Beer
 Laurent Benham
 Johanna Bessière
 Antoine Birot
 Brendan Body
 Ferran Casas
 Andrea Castagna
 Paul Claessens
 Mike Cottee
 James Cunliffe
 Florent De La Taille
 Jesús Del Campo
 Vincent Devay
 Mathieu DiMuro
 Cecile Dubois-Her
 Benoit Dubuc
 Stuart Ellis
 Samy Feich
 Mike Ford
 Aldo Gagliardi
 Gabriel Gelade
 Daniel Gerhardt
 Jordi Gronès
 Hector Godoy
 Yvon Jarrel
 Hyun-chul Jung
 Laurent Laban
 Andrew Lawson
 Sylvain Marc
 Barth Manougy
 Ambre Maurin
 Luca Mazzoleni
 Peter McCauley
 Nathan McConnell
 Andrea Minella
 Sandra Murta
 Melinda Padua
 Christopher Page
 Simon Pickard
 Matthieu Porey
 Jure Prek
 Andres Puente
 In-Ah Roediger
 Liam Russell
 Allison Rutland
 Alison Sanders
 Nicolas Seck
 Brad Silby
 Ricardo Silva
 Nick Starcevic
 Elwaleed Sulman
 Andrew Thompson

■ **SYNOPSIS** Rhode Island, the present. Brandi Boski excels at her work as a retirement-home carer; her demanding boss lets her know that she is tipped for promotion. Meanwhile, penniless Tom Bardo is having a very bad day, having been evicted from his dingy room and turned away by an unsympathetic employment agency. Prevented from sleeping in a park by police, he aimlessly walks the streets – until he is hit by Brandi, who is driving while intoxicated after a night out with drug-dealing boyfriend Rashid. Tom is severely wounded, and stuck in the windshield. Panic-stricken, Brandi drives home and hides the car in the garage – with Tom still bleeding on the bonnet. She partially confesses to the unconcerned Rashid but blithely leaves for work the next morning in a taxi, hitting Tom over the head to prevent him attracting attention. Tom’s thwarted attempts to get help (from, for example, a young boy who is put off the idea of assisting the tortured stranger by his frightened, illegal-immigrant parents) convince him he must save himself and he painfully pushes his way out. Meanwhile a distraught Brandi asks Rashid to get rid of Tom. A plan to abandon the injured man in a park escalates into an attempt at outright murder; Rashid tries to shoot Tom, but Tom succeeds in killing Rashid instead, and takes the gun. Tom crawls out of the garage but Brandi disarms him and drags him back. She douses the place with petrol to burn him and the garage down. In a final desperate move, Tom pins her to the wall with the car; this time it is he who ignores Brandi’s pleas for help. She shoots at Tom but succeeds only in setting the petrol-drenched place alight. Tom survives and is helped by neighbours as the garage and its occupants burn.