

**CloWn TeARs ProDUcTIoNs
pReSEntS**

DeN

LOGLINE: A serial killer, with a religious secret, captures four victims and plays a deadly game of Q & A. The winner is promised to come out alive from this "wreck" room where truth, sin and religious faith are the game of choice.

The plot is comparable to Sartre's masterwork, "No Exit", with aspects of the original "Night of the Living Dead". "No Exit" featured three very different personalities who come to loathe each other while confined to a single room, which turned out to be, literally, Hell. Den explores this concept as well as Romero's underlying theme from NOTLD - personal differences that obstruct the group's ability to come together for the sake of the greater good.

Our protagonist, Den, drugs & kidnaps four people, three women & a man who's married to one of them. They awaken to find themselves imprisoned in a large room, wearing hospital gowns & shackles. As they try to grasp the reality of their situation, Den enters the room and begins to conduct the first round of what is to become a series of increasingly more sadistic debates, as well as revealing some vague insight to his motives. He encourages the group to engage him in conversation, suggesting that the better their conversational skills, the better their chances of survival will be. He says he wants to get to know them, to see what makes them tick, & for them to get to know each other, or more accurately, for them to get to know certain things about each other. It seems our group of strangers have some skeletons stashed away in mutual closets & Den delights in using that to provoke paranoia, distrust & animosity among them. He lays responsibility for certain events on the characters to not only further their distress, but to absolve himself of any guilt in his own mind. By injecting certain topics and suggestions, Den keeps his prisoners at each other's throats in order to try & quash any desires to unify for the greater good. Days pass & the predicament continuously spirals downward as the prisoners are starved, humiliated, taunted & physically tormented.

(NOTE: The plot to Den may sound extremely close to the plot of "SAW". DEN was completed in 2001 and screened at the Melbourne Underground Film Festival in Australia in July of 2002 – where Dana Ryan won for Best Actress. The filmmakers of SAW are from Melbourne. Currently, we have a lawyer looking at the similarities between DEN & SAW.)

SYNOPSIS: On a warm sunny morning, a strange man goes about his business. His business is killing and he is collecting new clients.

Den (although he has no name) cruises the city on a skateboard and captures four future victims: a psychotherapist and his wife -- Steven & Lolita Brewster;

Cassandra -- a militant atheist, who moonlights as a prostitute; and Milton Page -- a respiratory therapist who once longed to be a nun.

Den places his victims in a large abandoned theatre.

He chains the captives to the walls and doles out meager supplies that will keep them alive.

Den is truthful to the group: He admits he is a serial killer and that they are on his "list of people to do."

But he wants something... conversation. Through the course of nine days, he starts daily arguments and debates with the group. As the days pass on we learn that the group is not only tied by chains, but by personal secrets.

Milton reveals that her passion to be a nun was squelched when she realized she had sexual attractions towards women. She also confesses to having an affair with a married woman.

Steven's darker side comes out early on when we hear his racial & biased belief system. He has also been a naughty boy by seeing hookers, which is a surprise to Lolita, but not to Cassandra.

Lolita has her own skeleton she wishes to keep in the closet, but Den opens the door when it is disclosed that she has also had an affair... with Milton.

And when Cassandra admits to being an atheist, this shocks Den more than her work as a prostitute.

But there is one very big secret that the group is not aware of: Den is storing them under a church. His church. Yes, he is a priest.

In this room, Den uses the captive's secrets to turn one against the other. But Cassandra takes all the physical and mental abuse and throws it back at Den with all the strength and stamina she can muster. Her first major strike happens when Den wonders how anyone can not believe in God. With a classic heroic comeback line, she says, "It takes faith."

As the final day approaches the body count rises: Den has cut off Lolita's finger because she was pointing at him. She dies from an infection, although Den was kind enough to cauterize the wound with a soldering iron.

With Milton's sexual orientation and affair with Lolita exposed, Den gets Steven to stab and kill Milton with a crucifix-knife. He offers to let Steven get away with the killing, but recants and ends up beating Steven to death.

The final scene is a twisted, blasphemous one that has Cassandra verbally attacking the Bible and Den's beliefs. She calls out several mistakes that are written in this holy text and, thereby proves, if there is a God, He had no hand in the making of this religious manuscript.

Den, after killing some children, comes back to kill Cassandra. He stabs her in the chest with the crucifix-knife. He taunts her about pulling the knife out so she can kill him.

She doesn't and he feels that this is proof of the "no atheist in foxholes" theory. But this is a brief victory. As he turns to leave, Cassandra removes the knife and tosses it at Den. The knife skewers his head. He removes the knife and rushes to kill her, but convulses and dies on her.

Now Cassandra has killed the monster, but in doing so, had sealed her own fate... she is still chained up and this means death for her.

Their final death tableau forms the Pieta position.

Life Lines:

Greg Arce (Producer/Writer/Den) When not working on cold fusion experiments that deal with Velveeta cheese and Zima, Greg has always been associated with the entertainment world. He started his young life as a professional magician then went on to become an in-house writer/producer/director at Florida International University. While there he began to write plays and found he had a “knack” for them.

His exploits into theatre, stand-up comedy, magic, and video, have taken him around the country, including an off-Broadway play and several productions of his own words. His writings have been compared this way: “It’s like Stephen King meets Woody Allen at a Neil Simon barbecue.”

DEN was a thought that finally crawled out of his brain... eating its way through, no less. When he was told his idea was “too controversial” by the Hollywood crowd, he decided to ride the new wave of digital technology by “hanging ten” and producing the movie on his own terms... his own terms usually are found in Nostradamus’ predictions, but that’s another story.

Stephanie Rettig (Lolita) I always knew that being in the movies was what I wanted to do... to make people feel happiness, or sadness, or to hate the character I was playing. Or to have them laugh at me, or leave the theater in tears because my character opened up a part of them that not everyone in their world may get to see.

In 1996, I decided to give up the only life I knew and move to California to pursue the only life I ever wanted. I worked 3 jobs, and sold everything I had to move here... alone. I started doing background work on movies and television, and still I continue to study as I go to auditions to do the best I can to perfect my acting skills.

Lee Schall (Steven) Having been born and raised in New York city, Lee Schall has been on a constant search in Los Angeles for a truly great slice of pizza.

In addition to this exhausting quest, Lee has had lead and supporting roles, in over 10 independent films and pilots during the past 2 years. Lee has also appeared in several national commercials. You would think with all these credits a good slice would finally make an appearance.

Sabrina O’Neill (Milton) She was born and raised in scenic Staten Island, NY... known for the largest garbage dump on the planet. After escaping from there in ’96, with her husband Michael, she hightailed it to San Francisco, where she discovered the art of improvisation (thanks to her husband who was absolutely tired of being her only audience).

Following several performances where she made rooms full of people laugh, she opted for acting classes. It was then that her husband pushed her out of the nest and she flew to Hollywood on a one-way ticket. In L.A., she discovered that things are not what they seem, but she was determined and she persisted anyway. After making several PSAs and a slew of short and non-paying films, she landed the plum role of Milton – a wannabe nun who is really a lesbian.

Sabrina will be moving on from L.A. this month as she and her adoring, wonderful husband are relocating to beautiful, sunny London, England for a couple of years. We’ll see what’s next for this beautiful, rising star.

Dana J. Ryan (Cassandra) *I was very excited to play Cassandra in this film. The role has everything – it’s chock full of life and fire as well as physical challenges!*

Dana completed work on several other indie films this last season; one of which also premieres this June. Plus she has skipped into a few TV spots this spring; “The Tonight Show with Jay Leno” and “To Tell The Truth” where her performance fooled several judges and locked the audience into 3 re-votes.

Theater kept her going whenever she wasn't here in L.A. where she was nominated for an award for her performance as yet another “Cassie” in Neil Simon's comedy “Rumors”.

Right now I'm putting a project together entitled ‘Dreamy’ which is a comedy short. I've been really lucky to have such a positive response around me with people volunteering to help in key positions. Though I'm still in need of others. What will I do with 3 DPs? Then again, in this business, I may end up needing them all.

Tomer Almagor & Rom Lipschitz (Editors) While in New York in '97, Rom & Tomer formed the company *den of aXis*, which is dedicated to expanding boundaries, captivating story telling and visual innovation.

At first, we setup a FCP based editing suite to cut our own short films. Since winning a festival prize for best editing on "Aleta's Masquerade", we have worked as a team on numerous projects. Last year we relocated to Los Angeles, and quickly started working on various films, including the DV feature "DEN". We hope to keep on working with the same fast pace and participating in more intriguing projects in the future.

Jacky Hay (Director of Photography) He is a one-man dolly, steadicam, and crane. Every picture that comes out of his lens is a thing of beauty.

He has worked for the Miami Film Festival, shot a digital trailer & short film, photographed in Paris, studied with Helmut Newton... and soon will be in Prague for a Durban Clothing commercial. His pictures and works of art are collected worldwide. Jacky also directed and edited a documentary called *But a good cigar is a smoke*.

In his words: *My vision is my art. My art is your vision. Enjoy.*

PlaYerS
GrEg ArcE --- deN
StePhANiE RETtiG --- LoLiTA
LeE ScHaLL --- SteVEn
DaNA j RYAn --- CassAnDra
SabriNa o'NeiL --- MILton
GoD --- HimSeLF