



James Franco Presents

Child Of God

2013 Venice Film Festival
2013 Toronto International Film Festival

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CHILD OF GOD

Synopsis

Set in mountainous Sevier County, Tennessee, based on the Cormac McCarthy novel, CHILD OF GOD tells the story of Lester Ballard, a dispossessed, violent man who is described as "a child of God much like yourself perhaps." Ballard's life is a disastrous attempt to exist outside the social order. Successively deprived of parents and homes and with few other ties, Ballard descends literally and figuratively to the level of a cave dweller as he falls deeper into crime and degradation.

CHILD OF GOD

James Franco: Director's Statement

CHILD OF GOD is based on Cormac McCarthy's third novel of the same title, written back when he was a struggling writer in Tennessee writing about characters in the back woods of his home state. This book, pre-Blood Meridian, and even pre-Suttree, showed something of the spare style he would develop for his later, better known books like No Country for Old Men and The Road. Some of the inspiration for the protagonist, or anti-protagonist, Lester Ballard came from the real life killer in the '50s, Ed Gein, who also inspired Robert Bloch's book Psycho, and the film The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. It is fascinating to see how three very different kinds of products could result from the same source.

We saw this project as an opportunity to examine extreme isolation. The grisly subject matter would be dealt with in a responsible way, but its main function would be to show, in an admittedly intense way, what it's like to want desperately to connect with other humans and not being able to. This was our way in, to show a man willing to commune with the dead because they were the only ones who wouldn't reject him. He is pushed into this dreadful situation because he has been pushed out of all civilized society. In that sense the story is very topical and relevant: what do people do when they can't keep up with all the new systems of civilization and socialization? Lester moves from farm, to cabin, to cave, to actually roaming beneath the earth; an outcast, but an outcast we can all relate to. The key to our film was to present something that was both intense and watchable. Lester is a killer and a disturbed individual, and in no way is his behavior condonable, but in the realms of art, a character like him can be used to study what is inside all of us. And heck, he's even a little funny. He's a bumbling killer. Half Deliverance, half Charlie Chaplin.

ABOUT THE CAST AND FILMMAKERS

SCOTT HAZE (Lester Ballard)

Scott Haze is the lead of James Franco's *CHILD OF GOD*, a film adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's novel, directed by Franco, in which Haze plays the lead role of "Lester Ballard," a dispossessed, violent man whose life is a disastrous attempt to exist outside the social order. Successively deprived of parents and homes and with few other ties, Ballard descends literally and figuratively to the level of a cave dweller as he falls deeper into crime, degradation, sexual deviance and necrophilia. *VARIETY* has named it #1 of Top 10 most anticipated films to premiere at the Venice Film Festival.

A longtime collaborator of Franco's, Haze has a supporting role in *AS I LAY DYING*, based on Faulkner's novel that debuted at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival and will be released via Millennium on September 27th, and a cameo in Franco's upcoming *BUKOWSKI*. Haze is next attached to star in Franco's next feature *THE SOUND & THE FURY*, another Faulkner adaptation, and is currently in post production on a documentary with Nate Parker titled *GHOSTS & GOBLINS* about Olympic wrestling legend Lee Kemp.

Haze currently resides in Los Angeles and runs a non-profit theater in North Hollywood called The Sherry Theater, which produces the work of up-and-coming artists.

JAMES FRANCO (Writer/Director/Jerry)

JAMES FRANCO's metamorphosis into the title role of the TNT biopic *JAMES DEAN* earned him a Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Motion Picture made for Television, and nominations for an Emmy and Screen Actors Guild Award. Franco earned an Independent Spirit Award for Best Male Lead as well as nominations for an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award and a Screen Actors Guild Award for his starring role in Danny Boyle's critically acclaimed *127 HOURS*. His performance alongside Sean Penn in Gus Van Sant's *MILK* earned an Independent Spirit Award for Best Supporting Actor and he was nominated for a Golden Globe for his role in David Gordon Green's comedy *PINEAPPLE EXPRESS*, where he starred opposite Seth Rogen. He is also known for his starring role as Harry Osbourne in Sam Raimi's *SPIDER-MAN* trilogy.

Franco's additional credits include: Sam Raimi's OZ: THE GREAT AND POWERFUL; THE END OF THE WORLD with Jonah Hill and Seth Rogen; the Planet of the Apes franchise RISE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES; Ryan Murphy's EAT, PRAY, LOVE; Shawn Levy's comedy DATE NIGHT Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman's HOWL, where he played the famous poet Allen Ginsberg, George C. Wolfe's NIGHTS IN RODANTHE; Paul Haggis' IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH; Karen Moncrieff's ensemble drama THE DEAD GIRL; Tommy O'Haver's drama AN AMERICAN CRIME; John Dahl's THE GREAT RAID; Robert Altman's THE COMPANY; as well as CITY BY THE SEA opposite Robert DeNiro and the Martin Scorsese produced DEUCES WILD. On television, he starred in the critically acclaimed series FREAKS AND GEEKS.

He will next be seen in AS I LAY DYING and CHILD OF GOD, which he also co-wrote and directed. He shot both and the Sylvester Stallone penned film HOMEFRONT with Jason Statham and Kate Bosworth this year and will next shoot Paul Haggis' THE THIRD PERSON and TRUE STORY with Jonah Hill.

CHRISTINA ALEXANDRA VOROS (Director of Photography)

CHRISTINA VOROS is a Brooklyn-based director and cinematographer, recognized by IFP's Filmmaker Magazine as one of their "25 New Faces in Independent Film." The only member of her family not to be born in Hungary, Christina was raised in Cambridge, MA, where she later attended Harvard University. Her careers prior to filmmaking have included that of a stage actor, restaurateur and nationally-ranked saber fencer. The recipient of a Dean's Fellowship at NYU's Tisch School of the Art's Graduate Department of Film and Television, Christina was awarded a Graduate Assistantship in cinematography in 2006.

Her first documentary film, THE LADIES, received Grand Jury Prizes at Slamdance, Chicago International, GenArt, San Francisco International, Seattle International, Expression en Corto, Ojai, Vancouver and Edmonton International Film Festivals in 2008, and was selected by Spike Lee as the Grand Prize winner of the international Babelgum Film Festival in 2009. In 2010 she completed 127 HOURS: AN EXTRAORDINARY VIEW the documentary portrait of director Danny Boyle's Oscar nominated picture, released on the Fox Searchlight blu-ray of the film. Her most recent documentary KINK premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2013.

As a cinematographer Christina's recent narrative work includes *AS I LAY DYING*, *CHILD OF GOD*, *THE BROKEN TOWER* and *SAL* for director James Franco. Her documentary cinematography includes *SATURDAY NIGHT* (SXSW, Tribeca), and *LET FREEDOM SING*, for Emmy award-winner Jon Goodman (PBS).

MILES LEVY (Producer)

For the last 24 years, Miles Levy has been instrumental in guiding many actors careers. Alongside his business partner Randy James, they started James/Levy Management; a company dedicated to developing young talent. Their idea was to bring young actors through the ranks of the entertainment industry and are recognized as being the first company to do so. He has now ventured into production as a partner of Rabbit Bandini with James Franco and Vince Jolivet. Some of his credits include *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE: DOCUMENTARY*, *HOWL*, Harmony Korine's *SPRING BREAKERS* and Gia Coppola's *PALO ALTO* which will be released early next year.

VINCE JOLIVETTE (Producer)

In 2003, Vince Jolivet teamed with actor James Franco and manager Miles Levy to form Rabbit Bandini, a production company focused on creating groundbreaking narrative, documentary and multimedia content. Recent projects include Harmony Korine's *SPRING BREAKERS*, *LOVELACE* starring Amanda Seyfried, *THE ICEMAN* starring Michael Shannon, and the SNL behind the scenes documentary *SATURDAY NIGHT*. Some projects currently in production include an adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's acclaimed book *CHILD OF GOD*, *TAR* starring Franco, Mila Kunis and Jessica Chastain and a bio-pic on the early years of author Charles Bukowski.

RABBIT BANDINI PRODUCTIONS

Rabbit Bandini Productions is a film production company which aims to support independent filmmakers with the creation of groundbreaking narrative, documentary and multimedia content. The company was founded in 2003 by actor/filmmaker James Franco, producer/writer/actor Vince Jolivet and producer/manager Miles Levy.

Recent credits include the Allen Ginsberg biopic, *HOWL*, from directors Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman; *SAL*, directed by Franco and co-written by Franco and Jolivette; director Harmony Korine's upcoming *SPRING BREAKERS* starring Franco, Selena Gomez, Vanessa Hudgens and Ashley Benson, which will be released in March by A24 Films; and director Christina Voros' documentary *KINK*, which will debut at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival.

Rabbit Bandini is currently in post-production on director Gia Coppola's drama *PALO ALTO*; Franco's directorial adaptations of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Cormac McCarthy's *CHILD OF GOD*, and Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner's *AS I LAY DYING*, both slated for fall 2013 theatrical releases.

CREDITS

Directed by James Franco

Based on the novel Child Of God by Cormac McCarthy

Screenplay by James Franco & Vince Jolivette

Produced by Caroline Aragon,
Vince Jolivette
& Miles Levy

Starring
Scott Haze as Lester Ballard

Tim Blake Nelson
Jim Parrack
Nina Ljeti
& Brian Lally

Edited by Curtiss Clayton

Cinematography by Christina Voros

Production Design by Kristen Adams

Costume Design by Malgosia Turzanska

Sound Design by
Leslie Schatz & Scott Kramer

Original Music by Aaron Embry

A Rabbit Bandini Production
in Association with Made in Film Land

CAST

Lester Ballard	Scott Haze
Sheriff Fate	Tim Blake Nelson
Deputy Cotton	Jim Parrack
Auctioneer	Steve Hunter
Greer	Brian Lally
Lady in White	Elena McGhee
First Victim	Nina Ljeti
Boyfriend of First Victim	Nathan Mohebbi
Boys the Cabin	Jeremy Ambler & Ethan Cline
Ms. Walker	Kristen Adams
Girly	Fallon Goodson
Boyfriend of Girly	Trevor Pittinger
Salesgirl	Cierra Parrack
Mr. Fox	Boyd Smith
Fair Pitchman	Terrance Huff
Mother at the Fair	Caroline Smith
Little Girls at the Fair	Kali Willow Hudson & Autumn Ember
Prisoner	Joseph Wallace
Preacher	John Holt
Nurse	Madalyn Lester
Hunters:	
Jerry	James Franco
Ernest	Vince Jolivette
Jay	Richie Hill
Tommy	Colby Batty
Ed	Dale Lester
Jimmy	Zachary Labin

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