

Inferno

d'August Strindberg



Press Kit

Kafard films in association with Morph
presents

Inferno

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Directed by Paul-Anthony Mille
Written by Pierre Mille

Based upon the autobiographical novel *Inferno* by August Strindberg

2013 / France
86min / 1.85 / Color / Super16 / French

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Inferno

of August Strindberg



If I wanted to follow the road taken by the herd, I would have gotten money and fame, but I prefer to follow my own path even if it would lead me to hell.

SYNOPSIS

In 1896, dramatist August Strindberg, fleeing glory and scandal, leaves Sweden only to end up in a modest hotel room in the heart of the Latin quarter in Paris.

In this unlikely setting will take place the ultimate struggle pitting the creator first against himself, then against a self made “double” and finally against the notorious invisible “powers” which will go as far as transforming the small hotel into an imaginary stage haunted by some of the most famous characters of his own plays.

Besieged by guilt and madness, the author will finally overcome his demons and go back to literature to unveil certain secrets the “powers” themselves had resolutely kept from mankind.

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*People are constantly clamoring for the joy of life.
As for me, I find the joy of life in the hard and cruel battle of life -
to learn something is a joy to me.*

THE PROJECT

In Tibet, tradition demands images of the local Gods be painted on the walls of the houses for good health and prosperity to be bestowed upon the inhabitants.

In Paris, painting is out, filmmaking is in.

So, for some of the Parisians who still take a certain tradition into account, (yes, they are a few left), it is only natural to make a film about a minor God whose spirit stills seems to be haunting the Left Bank.

Why would August Strindberg be a God albeit a minor one?

Because he simply wanted to wake up those with sleep running deep through their veins, meaning us, men and women of this world, his fellow creatures.

An eminently aristocratic task which can only be accomplished in the wake of an obscure and patient work on oneself.

Because August Strindberg by consistently choosing what is essential and true over what is futile and easy has also won the victory over himself.

Work over himself, work for the others, concealed life, public life, here is an example of how a creature of blood and flesh can attain the supreme function of existence and join the mythical cohort of mankind's pathfinders.

Everything is written, everything is recorded in the author's books.

From "INFERNO", the autobiography of his Parisian stay describing his personal struggles to the ensuing stage plays (THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS, CRIME AND CRIME, THE DREAM PLAY, THE GHOST SONATA...), he delivers his testimony ; "the one who has fallen into the frozen lake has a duty to warn his friends from the danger"...

... so they can wake up and escape disaster.

To make a movie about the work of awakening a poor and exiled artist started out in an obscure hotel room in 1896 Paris, this is also what filmmaking is about.

Let us not forget it, please.

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The world, life and human beings are only an illusion, a phantom, a dream image

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

« INFERNO » is the first feature film of the father/son filmmaking team of Paul-Anthony and Pierre MILLE. The collaboration started out as a mere hobby some twelve years ago when Pierre MILLE offered a DV cam to his son Paul-Anthony. Even though a screenwriter by trade, Pierre could not foresee this simple gift would turn out to be a watershed event for both the father and son.

A few homemade short films later, Paul-Anthony started out a garage-based film production facility when he was barely fifteen years old. One year later, in 2005, he would be shooting « SERIAL DREAMER », his first professional short feature written by his father.

Little did they know that « SERIAL DREAMER », an idiosyncratic confession of a serial killer, was yet another unexpected but logical milestone in the course of Paul-Anthony's technical and artistic maturing.

Two years later indeed, « ILLUMINATI », Paul Anthony's most ambitious project to date was going into production. Based on Pierre's original script, the work of fiction spans three centuries and blends both historical and fantastic storylines. The 50 minute film is a unique piece of conspiratorial turned metaphysical vision linking the ultimate evil to one and the same force in the course of human history.

An emphasis on the lighting, the costumes, the ambiance would inaugure what would become Paul-Anthony's visual trademark.

After « ILLUMINATI », Pierre turned away from the fantastic to develop a more sophisticated approach to film writing using theater and time « sculpting ».

The result is « LES MAUDITS ».

Shot in 2010, the 50 minute adaptation of Shakespeare's « ROMEO & JULIET » is set during the French-Prussian 1870 war with Romeo a French AWOL soldier and Juliet the pensionner of a brothel.

In addition to lighting, costumes, ambiance of a typical period piece, the characterization and the dialogs of the original material required Paul-Anthony to devote this time a great deal more attention to the direction of the comedians.

Based on the pair's experience in period dramas and theatrical adaptation, it was fitting their next project would be « INFERNO », a feature-length biopic about a major figure of modern theater, namely the swedish author August Strindberg.

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To film a writer's life is a challenge, it all happens in the artist's mind. But when the artist poised with loneliness and guilt starts losing his mind, it can get very interesting.

« INFERNO » is a work where fiction and reality are closely intertwined with many excerpts from some of the author's plays being quoted throughout the film's dialogs.

Moreover, the author's tireless quest for the truth hampered by a deep-seated sense of living some pervasive dreamlike reality led Pierre and Paul-Anthony to create an eerie ambiance, a dreamlike atmosphere that is unlike anything seen in a biopic before.

Surely « INFERNO » is a daring piece of filmmaking. From the use of 16mm film particularly in the candlelit scenes, to the mix of fiction, reality and dream throughout the storytelling which includes a full short play at midpoint, everything has been pushed to the limit, something independent filmmaking still allows.



Now I know the full power of evil. It makes ugliness seem beautiful and goodness seem ugly and weak.



I dream, therefore I exist.