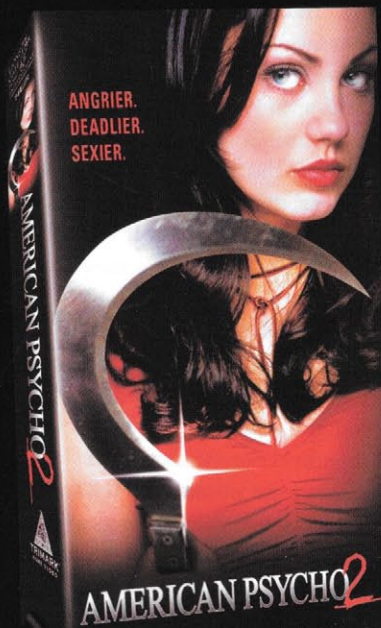




making a Killing

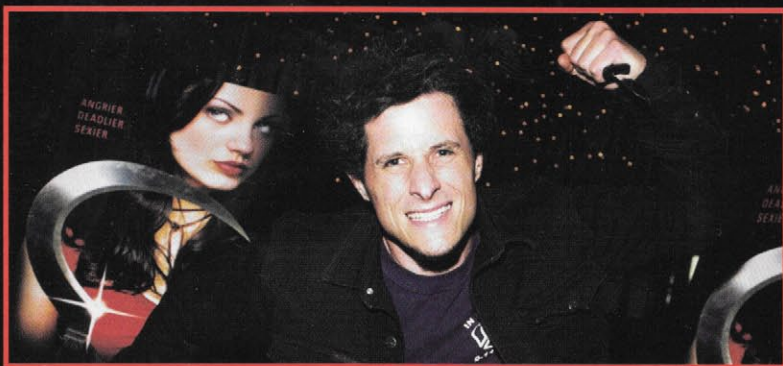
interview by David Salcido
photos by Brad Buckman

AN INTERVIEW WITH AMERICAN PSYCHO II DIRECTOR, MORGAN J. FREEMAN



IMPULSE: After such critically acclaimed films as *Hurricane Streets* and *Desert Blue*, why *American Psycho II*? It's not your average run-of-the-mill slasher/serial killer film.

FREEMAN: No, it's not. To me it was kind of a psychological mind-fuck film. It was obviously inspired and greenlit because of *American Psycho*, but I think you could have just as easily switched Batman's name and it would stand on its own. Either way, I like continuing a saga. People who are expecting a horror film may be left a bit high and dry, in that most of the gore is off-screen, intentionally, so that it's in your head. I think that, sometimes, the way you visualize what's happening off-screen, based on what you're hearing, is a lot more potent than actually seeing the actual act.



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IMP: There's a lot of dark humor in this film. Do you see it as a comedy?

FREEMAN: I definitely wanted it to be tongue-in-cheek. It was never intended to be *Hannibal*. I wanted it to be a parody of *Silence Of The Lambs*, or at least the Clarice Starling character. I've always been drawn to movies like *Heathers*, *Pump Up The Volume*, cult classic films like that. Plus, it has William Shatner in it.

IMP: It certainly does, which poses the question: Did you ever, at any time, feel like plunging a knife into William Shatner?

FREEMAN: I didn't want to stick a knife into him any more than I wanted to stick a knife in anyone else in the room. I had read a lot of stuff about his past difficulty, but I also read that he was aware of that and wanted to repair his on-set image. When we spoke about the film, he knew it was a low budget movie. Given the circumstances and the fact that we had to get everything in the can within 20 days, he was a trooper.

IMP: Why Mila Kunis and not, say, Christina Ricci?

FREEMAN: I love working with people who are interested in doing a diversion from anything else they've ever done before. That's far more interesting to me than using anybody you'd expect to see in this kind of movie. I'd never even heard of Mila at the time, but it was really the hour I spent with her at Jerry's Diner that made me want to make the movie. The character is the exact opposite of Jackie from

That 70s Show. The challenge of working with Mila to create the anti-Jackie became one of the most appealing aspects of doing the movie.

IMP: How big a gamble is it to go directly to DVD with this movie, instead of getting a wide theatrical release?

FREEMAN: That's something people don't yet understand. They look at the stigma of going directly to video and think, 'ooh, it must be bad,' but that's not the case anymore. With DVD it's all changed. Especially during the summer. We would get squashed. There's not a weekend through the end of September that's not a blockbuster weekend. To compete with those movies costs a minimum of 25 million dollars. Then there's the visibility factor. Mila has visibility from her show, but to get it out there for the theaters, you've got to put out giant billboards, call the movie 'Illegally Brunette,' say 'A girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do,' drape her in an American flag and put an icepick between her teeth instead of a rose. And that's got to be on the Hyatt Regency painted a hundred feet tall. This way, I get more exposure, more people see the movie and, it's funny because, three months from now it'll still be in the new releases section. There are so many movies being released they can't possibly see them all. So, I think this is the best possible placement for it, especially with all the added features on DVD, the outtakes, the bloopers, the commentary and all that stuff. It's the best of both worlds, really.

8 SERIAL KILLERS WE HAVE KNOWN

American Psycho (2000) - Christian Bale is yuppie seum with a distinct lack of social skills, knocking off the good, the bad and the ugly, with detective Willem Dafoe hot on his heels.



Copycat (1995) - Criminal profiler Sigourney Weaver has been marked by vicious baddie William Menamara, unless bumbling detectives Holly Hunter and Dermot Mulroney can stop him.



Heathers (1989) - School social politics will never be the same again after Christian Slater teaches Winona Ryder how to properly deal with the bitchy babes of the "in" crowd.



Henry: Portrait Of A Serial Killer (1986) - Michael Rooker portrays real-life death-dealer Henry Lee Lucas, an average guy next door with a proclivity for killing strangers for sport.



Natural Born Killers (1994) - Woody Harrelson and Juliette Lewis make murder seem fun as they road trip across the Southwest killing for kicks, with Robert Downey Jr. turning them into media stars.



Serial Mom (1994) - Kathleen Turner is a loving mother who doesn't like people messing with her picture perfect middle class family, and boy does she have the body count to prove it.



Silence Of The Lambs (1991) - Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster are on opposite sides of the law, facing off in an attempt to stop a psychopath who first kidnaps, then skins his victims.



Virtuosity (1995) - Russell Crowe is a sadistic android synthesized from the minds of more than 150 serial killers, which causes no end of grief to ex-cop-with-a-history, Denzel Washington.

