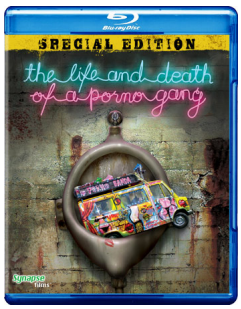
While the ultraviolent A SERBIAN FILM has assaulted international audiences with its taboo-smashing sex and violence, another film from that country has also been attracting the horror world’s bloodthirsty gaze. While not as graphic, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A PORNO GANG will likely attract equal buzz and has already been equally controversial prior to its U.S. disc debut this week.

Out tomorrow, August 14 on DVD and Blu-ray from Synapse Films , THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A PORNO GANG (reviewed here) focuses on a ragtag traveling sideshow of uninhibited performers led by wannabe filmmaker Marko (Mihajlo Jovanovic). In desperate need of money, Marko agrees to shoot snuff films with his troupe as the killers and local villagers—some of whom prove remarkably willing—as subjects. Fango had the opportunity to speak with Mladen Djordjevic, the writer/director of this boundary-smashing film.



FANGORIA: By this point you’re probably annoyed by this question, but let’s get it out of the way: Your movie is often mentioned in the same breath as A SERBIAN FILM. But aside from both having the underlying themes of a postwar society trying to find its way—and both being made by Serbians—the two couldn’t be more different. Do you feel the comparisons are fair?

MLADEN DJORDJEVIC: Yes, in both films one can find a strong reaction toward Serbian

society, but also toward the entire contemporary world, which we find very apocalyptic. Films in Serbia usually take very artistic approaches to reality, and this new wave of brutal films brings reality to theaters. We want to shake up the audience and sober them up in a sociopolitical and emotional sense. That's the reason these films are so explicit and uncompromising.

FANG: The heroes in PORNO GANG are reminiscent of counterculture hippies like the Merry Pranksters, or even the Manson family. Were groups like these something you had knowledge of, or were the characters inspired by a similar movement in Serbia?

DJORDJEVIC: You could say this has a kind of "neo-hippie" style. But there are no such marginal groups in Serbia, that share some unique and strong ideology. For me, groups like the Porno Gang are substitutes for family in times when family values are broken.

FANG: So what, then, did you draw your inspiration from?

DJORDJEVIC: They were inspired by characters from my previous film MADE IN SERBIA, a documentary about the Serbian porn industry [included on the PORNO GANG Blu-ray]. To play the Porno Gang, my first idea was to have the real porn actors [from MADE IN SERBIA], but that turned out to be impossible, because the people I wrote were too complex to be played by people who weren't professional actors—and also, real porn actors are not easily attached to serious moviemaking. They live in chaos, and the small amount of money I had to offer them wouldn't be enough to tie them down. So if I couldn't have them, it was important to get new, fresh faces, with a new energy.

FANG: The cast really bares all, both physically and emotionally. How difficult was it to get them to pull off such intense—and often naked—performances?

DJORDJEVIC: The casting lasted roughly six months, and about 30 actors refused to appear in the film after they read the script, or heard my explanation regarding the explicit approach to sex and violence. At the end of this troublesome process, I found young, brave, talented people who have introduced the spirit of change in Serbian filmmaking.

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