

## "THE HUMAN CENTIPEDE PART 2 (FULL SEQUENCE)" (Fantastic Fest Review)

Written by Samuel Zimmerman  
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Tom Six is in direct dialogue with his audience, and while the highly anticipated sequel to his veritably vapid cult sensation isn't perfect by any means, it's incredibly interesting and exciting to see something responsive and engaging (and visually striking to boot) from the filmmaker.

Uneven in its aim, it seems as if Six is aggressively addressing both his detractors and his supporters in FULL SEQUENCE, essentially shouting, "This is what you wanted, and now that I'm giving it to you, you're going to regret it." It'd be simple to criticize and say he's having his cake and eating it too, reveling in the brutality and purposeful obscenity while seemingly making fun of its audience for demanding it, but the deliberate choice of black-and-white cinematography makes it difficult to dismiss the film as such. It's almost a grosser, less intelligent Michael Haneke at play, but it's much better to see a Six with ambition than the high camp/one note director we were previously introduced to.

Firstly, it's not as off-putting as you'll likely hear. Even the worst of it—most of what's outlined in its BBFC banning—doesn't last for more than a few seconds and it's doubtful there will be a deeper impact than passing disgust. The film steps outside of its universe in seeing a seemingly mentally challenged obsessive fan of FIRST SEQUENCE put its practices into crude, sexually gratifying use, even one-upping Dieter Laser by attempting a twelve-person centipede. Martin (Laurence R. Harvey) is more disgusting than his actions, to be blunt. His intent is what's truly off-putting, as the excellent Harvey's eyes and Joe Spinell-like sweat glands clearly delineate the squalor behind them.



As previously mentioned, Six is taking on a lot here and Martin is the epicenter of it all, standing in as an extreme example of those who complained the first film wasn't as graphic as desired or promised (guilty as charged), but also poking fun at the concept of sequels itself (more of the same, just even more!) and cinematic serial killers (Martin is reclusive, unsanitary, has an

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abusive, psychotic mother and was touched inappropriately as a child. It's all there!) as well. Six is asking if those who complained about his previous effort realize they might be as depraved as what they're viewing. It's no doubt a question posited countless times before from filmmakers, but it doesn't fail here.

CENTIPEDE II is hilariously outlandish and seriously striking in its visual palette. Much more impressive than the first, the black and white lends itself to the horror on display, pushing it to melodramatic heights. Six and cinematographer David Meadows' wide shots of the full sequence itself are gorgeous and leave a lasting impression. One image in particular, in which Martin's creation emulates its insect counterpart, becoming monstrous and hostile, feels epic and is almost worth price-of-admission alone.

Does Six become muddled in his own mad scientist-like artistry, caught up in the hype and excitement of taking on his viewers? Yes. The film has logistic issues and because there isn't much of a connection with the victims on hand, its specific attempts at crimes against your eyes don't feel as awful as they're meant to be. Still, it's much more electrifying that FULL SEQUENCE is about something, and that its maestro is shooting squarely at those who watch his work, using his art form as means of expression and conversation, instead of internet commentary.

