



Adam Resurrected

Paul Schrader

GERMANY/ISRAEL/USA, 2008
English

106 minutes ■ Colour and Black and White/35mm

Production Company: **Bleiberg Entertainment/3L Filmproduktion**

Executive Producer: **Ulf Israel, Marion Forster Bleiberg**

Producer: **Ehud Bleiberg, Werner Wirsing**
Screenplay: **Noah Stollman, based on the novel by Yoram Kaniuk**

Cinematographer: **Sebastian Edschmid**

Editor: **Sandy Saffeels**

Production Designer: **Alexander Manasse**

Sound: **Guido Zettler**

Music: **Gabriel Yared**

Principal Cast: **Jeff Goldblum,**

Willem Dafoe, Derek Jacobi,

Ayelet Zurer, Moritz Bleibtreu

Production: **Bleiberg Entertainment,**
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It's not every day you see a magic realist *film maudit* concerning the Holocaust. But the unexpected is what Paul Schrader has consistently delivered over his extraordinary career. As a screenwriter and director, he is the confirmed master of the anti-hero, men caught in solipsistic traps that push them into despair, madness and often violence.

Now joining Travis Bickle (*Taxi Driver*), Julian Kaye (*American Gigolo*), Jesus (*The Last Temptation of Christ*) and Wade Whitehouse (*Affliction*) in the Schrader pantheon is Adam Stein, the funniest Jew in pre-war Germany and by 1961, the most popular resident of a sanitarium in Israel's Negev Desert. What happened to Adam in the interim and how he finally confronts his wartime experiences shape this unique cinematic odyssey.

The film is also about humans who become dogs and then become human again. While interned at a concentration camp, Adam was subjected to a particular form of cruelty when a merciless commandant (Willem Dafoe, captivatingly odious here) made him his pet. Fifteen years later, a feral boy who believes he is a dog awakens Adam's sense of self and his faith in others, both of which had been viciously stamped down in the war.

One might expect a meditative tone for such a story, but Schrader and his Israeli producers opt instead for a kind of madcap farce, reminiscent at times of *Le Roi de Coeur*, Philippe de Broca's bittersweet masterpiece of madness and compassion. And through this tacitly forbidden approach – a Holocaust comedy? really? – Schrader finds new

and enlightening things to say about how we might come to terms with something so impossibly tragic. Imagine a theology class taught by a sad clown, and you get some idea of how disorienting the film actually is.

To make such a radical idea come to life, a great actor is required. Enter Jeff Goldblum, whose inimitable style perfectly suits the material. His awkwardness, and the irony that accompanies it, keeps us guessing about Adam's intentions and the form his ultimate redemption might take. It is a virtuoso turn from an under-recognized master of his craft, perfectly matched to the breathtaking courage that frames this project.

■ Noah Cowan



Paul Schrader studied at Columbia University, the American Film Institute and the University of California, Los Angeles. He made his film debut co-writing the screenplay for *The Yakuza*, and has since written several films directed by Martin Scorsese, including *Taxi Driver* (76), *Raging Bull* (80) and *The Last Temptation of Christ* (88). His directorial work includes *Blue Collar* (78), *Hardcore* (79), *American Gigolo* (80), *Cat People* (82), *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters* (85), *The Comfort of Strangers* (90), *Light Sleeper* (92), *Affliction* (97), *Auto Focus* (02), *The Walker* (07) and *Adam Resurrected* (08).

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