



## Fay Grim

### Hal Hartley

USA/GERMANY, 2006  
English

118 minutes ■ Colour/HDCAM

Production Company: HDNet Films/  
zero fiction film/This is That/  
Possible Films

Executive Producer: Mark Cuban,  
Todd Wagner, Ted Hope

Producer: Jason Kliot, Joana Vicente,  
Martin Hagemann, Mike S. Ryan,  
Hal Hartley

Screenplay: Hal Hartley

Cinematographer: Sarah Cawley

Editor: Hal Hartley

Production Designer: Richard Sylvarnes

Sound: Paul Oberle

Music: Hal Hartley

Principal Cast: Parker Posey,  
Jeff Goldblum, James Urbaniak,  
Saffron Burrows, Liam Aiken,  
Thomas Jay Ryan

Production: HDNet Films,  
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#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

US Distributor: Magnolia Pictures  
Foreign Sales Agent:  
HDNet Films International

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Hal Hartley has had a profound and rarely acknowledged impact on American cinema. His films reclaim the wit of classical Hollywood comedy and film noir, while putting forward an American take on Jean-Luc Godard's ironic playfulness with genre. This synthesis still resonates throughout American film comedy; recent hits like *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Thank You for Smoking* owe much to his trail-blazing efforts.

The film that stood as a culmination of his signature style was *Henry Fool*, his 1997 masterpiece. But that has now been surpassed. Posited as a sequel, *Fay Grim* is considerably more expansive and political than its forebear – not to mention funnier.

As the title suggests, the story has shifted to Henry's wife, portrayed again with sparkling humour and sass by the inimitable Parker Posey. Seven years earlier, Henry (a wonderfully snarky Thomas Jay Ryan) killed a vicious neighbour and fled the country, abetted in his escape by Fay's brother, the celebrated poet Simon Grim (James Urbaniak). Fay is left with a porn-obsessed son, a sibling in jail and a vanished spouse.

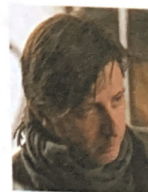
So far, so grim. But, as the movie begins, Simon has come to realize that Henry's piss-poor literary tome, "Confessions," just might be some sort of political tell-all chronicling the secret atrocities of various governments around the world. Then the CIA shows up, led by super-suave Agent Fulbright (a delicious role for Jeff Goldblum) with another story altogether. Soon Fay is jetting around Europe and getting involved

in political and romantic *contretemps* too complex to précis here.

Hartley's films trade on rhythm and this requires an enormous command of tone by both actors and director. *Fay Grim* is a perfect example of how a film can be dramatically elevated by a wildly successful collaboration in this area, Posey and Goldblum's scene being especially electric.

*Fay Grim* also features a marvellously off-kilter cinematographic style, with angle constantly pushing the viewer into frequently absurd but somehow appropriate point of view. It is a most impressive return from one of American cinema's true innovators.

■ Noah Cowan



**Hal Hartley** was born in Islip, New York and attended the Massachusetts College of Art and the State University of New York at Purchase. He directed several short films, including *Kid* (85), *The Cartographer's Girlfriend* (87) and *Dogs* (88) before completing his feature directorial debut, *The Unbelievable Truth* (89). His subsequent features include *True* (90), *Simple Men* (92), *Amateur* (93), *Flirt* (95), *Henry Fool* (97), which received the award for best screenplay at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival, *No Such Thing* (01) and *The G from Monday* (05). *Fay Grim* (06) is his most recent film.

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