



The Sect

Michele Soavi

Italy, 1990, 112 minutes
Colour/35mm

Production Company: Penta Film/ADC

Executive Producer: Andrea Tinnirello

Producer: Dario Argento

Screenplay: Dario Argento, Giovanni Romoli,

Michele Soavi

Cinematography: Raffaele Mertes

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Director: M. Antonello Geleng

Music: Pino Donaggio

Principal Cast: Kelly Curtis, Herbert Lom, Michel
Adatte, Maria Angela Giordano, Carla Cassola,
Tomas Arana

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Cults, evil shrouds, deep wells, and insects that feed on human brains. Marry these images with profound philosophical implications, stunning cinematography, and eerie special effects. What else could it be but a new film from Dario Argento? Working once more in collaboration with Michele Soavi, Italy's horror auteur delivers a breath-taking advance on his unique aesthetic. Midnight acolytes will remember their first joint effort, *The Church*, which received its world premiere at last year's Festival. Although a provocative work, the film betrayed a stylistic conflict mainly between the controlled approach of Soavi and the explosive, chaotic vision of Argento. But in *The Sect*, their disparate talents have fused, shattering the screen with a surreal and disturbing version of the modern Satanic fairy tale. A blood-thirsty group of cult members converge on a house in small-town Germany. The present occupant of this little cottage, the basement of which conveniently doubles as a gate to hell, is a young school teacher named Miriam (Kelly Curtis). Her life is tranquil until the arrival of Moebius Kelly (Herbert Lom) master of a worldwide cult which has the nasty habit of cutting out people's hearts. When Moebius perishes on her couch, all hell breaks loose. Literally. Before you can say "Beelzebub", Miriam is the concubine of Lucifer himself, with the reborn Kelly serving as pimp. All builds to a climax which simply exhausts superlatives. For those unfamiliar with the gothic splendour of Italian horror, *The Sect* should certainly prove a mesmerizing introduction.

Michele Soavi was born in Milan, Italy in 1959. At age 18 he left school to work as an actor for five years, and then was an assistant director on *Bambule* by Marco Modugno. It was during this period that he met Dario Argento, and worked with him as an assistant director on *Tenebrae* and *Creepers*, as well as Lamberto Bava's *Demons*. He began directing in 1987 with *Deliria*, which was a modest success in Italy. He then worked as second-unit director on both *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* and Argento's masterpiece, *Opera*. Since 1989, he has been collaborating exclusively with Argento on various projects. Feature films as a director include: *Deliria* (87), *The Church* (89), *The Sect* (90).