



# Trauma

## Dario Argento

Italy/USA, 1993

86 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **ADC**

**Productions**

Executive Producer: **Andrea Tinnirello**

Producer: **Dario Argento**

Screenplay: **Dario Argento &**

**T.E.D. Klein**

Cinematography: **Raffaele Mertes**

Editor: **Conrad Gonzalez**

Special Make Up Effects: **Tom Savini**

Principal Cast: **Christopher Rydell,**

**Asia Argento, Laura Johnson, James**

**Russo, Brad Dourif, Frederic Forrest,**

**Piper Laurie**

Print Source: **Overseas Film Group,**

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Dario Argento packs more poetic punch into one shot than most of Hollywood manages in a calendar year. But it is the suggestion of greater evil, which lurks behind this explosive imagery — a gnawing complicity with the voyeur, the attractive aesthetics of torture — that justifies Argento's inclusion in the pantheon of film masters.

*Trauma* makes full use of his traditional palette — genuinely creepy Steadicam and tracking shots, luminescent filters and wholly original killing devices — and sees the master working familiar narrative territory: the fallout from a young woman being an eyewitness to murder (except that, this time, the girl in question is Argento's real-life daughter, Asia). Perhaps Argento's finest heroine yet, she inhabits the role of Aura, a vulnerable and emaciated nymph on the run from an evil psychiatrist and his unorthodox methods.

Thinking her a suicidal junkie, young artist David Parson (Christopher Rydell) returns Aura to her parents, a meek father and a larger-than-life mother (Piper Laurie, in a deliciously camp turn). That night, at a séance, Mom the medium freaks out and runs into the forest, with dad in pursuit. Aura follows them, and sees a hooded killer decapitate the pair with a combination chainsaw/lasso.

Traumatized, Aura runs to David, who vows to help her find the killer. Clues lead them to Aura's evil psychiatrist. They seem on the verge of solving the mystery, when a shocking turnaround leaves them captive to an insane killer. Fun cameos from Brad Dourif and Frederic Forrest spice the broth, but it is Argento, the living legend, who really makes this baby traumatize.

■ **Noah Cowan**

### Dario Argento

was born in 1940. He worked initially as a journalist, and later as a screenwriter with Sergio Leone. His directing debut, *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, won Best Film and Best New Director at the Italian Academy Awards. In 1977, *Suspira* brought him international recognition. Films include: *The Cat O' Nine Tails* (71), *Four Flies On Gray Velvet* (72), *Deep Red* (76), *Inferno* (80), *Tenebrae* (82), *Creepers* (84), *Opera* (88), and *Two Evil Eyes* (90).