



## Wes Craven's New Nightmare

### Wes Craven

USA, 1994

105 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **New Line Cinema**

Executive Producer: **Robert Shaye, Wes Craven**

Producer: **Marianne Maddalena**

Screenplay: **Wes Craven**

Cinematography: **Mark Irwin**

Editor: **Patrick Lussier**

Production Design: **Cynthia Charette**

Music: **J. Peter Robinson**

Principal Cast: **Robert Englund, Heather Langenkamp, Miko Hughes, John Saxon**

Print Source: **Alliance Releasing, 920 Yonge Street, Suite 400, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3C7, Canada.**

Tel: (416) 967-1174.

Fax: (416) 967-4358.

Foreign Sales Agent: **New Line International, 116 North Robertson Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90048, USA. Tel: (310) 854-5811. Fax: (310) 854-1824.**

Wes Craven is a singular talent. His films, beginning with *Last House On The Left* in 1973, have transcended the gloss and cheap gore of contemporary horror, seeking instead the core mythologies which inform our worst fears. He has also consistently used cinema as a site to explore socio-political concerns in America and abroad, in ways usually more profound than his contemporaries making "respectable" Hollywood films.

It is no surprise, then, that *Wes Craven's New Nightmare* is a beautifully constructed exploration of myth-making and madness that demands serious thought while providing satisfying entertainment. Its intricate plot intertwines scenes from the Hollywood filmmaking process with a re-thought version of Craven's most successful villain, Freddy, from *A Nightmare On Elm Street*.

Craven sees Freddy's attraction to a huge public in philosophical terms. Freddy is the embodiment (in one storyteller's universe) of an ancient demon that feeds off the innocent and is found in every culture. Craven then asks what happens if this ancient demon decides he likes the role of Freddy and wants to be him in reality. He invades the consciousness and physical realities of the people who initially created and killed him: Craven, Robert Englund, who portrayed him, and Heather Langenkamp, who played Nancy, his "jailer."

Portraying themselves, Craven, Englund and Langenkamp grapple with the creation

of a new "Freddy" sequel – with hilarious cameos from New Line head Robert Shaye, among others – while facing the increasingly apparent presence of a new sinister force in their lives. The film centres especially on Langenkamp, whose subtle performance belies the bizarre happenings around her and her family. This new, exceedingly evil Freddy-like figure kills her husband and invades her schizophrenic child's mind. As the evil spirit gradually takes over, Heather/Nancy is forced into a chilling and soul-destroying journey to save her son and herself.

Although this is a completely new take on Freddy, there is one feature here consistent with the preceding *Nightmare* films: breathtaking production design and effects (some of which expand on Tsui Hark's marvellous *Chinese Ghost Story* creatures), which add another dimension both for Craven's many fans and those unfamiliar with this important filmmaker's work.

– *Noah Cowan*

**Wes Craven** began making films with a 16mm camera while teaching humanities at Clarkson College in Potsdam, New York. Within a year he quit his teaching post, determined to get into film. He wrote, directed and edited his first feature film, *Last House on the Left*. Since that time Craven has directed several feature films, five movies-of-the-week and numerous episodes of "Twilight Zone." Filmography: *Last House On The Left* (73), *The Hills Have Eyes* (77), *Deadly Blessing* (81), *Swamp Thing* (82), *A Nightmare On Elm Street* (84), *Chiller* (85), *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* (86), *The Serpent And The Rainbow* (88), *Shocker* (89), *The People Under The Stairs* (91), *Wes Craven's New Nightmare* (94).