



MOTHER

## LOGLINE

A young pregnant woman leaves her abusive marriage and moves into an apartment complex only to discover that the seemingly friendly building manager has a sinister agenda.



# INTRODUCTION

MOTHER will offer a unique cinematic experience, establishing a Gothic tone evoking the worlds of Tim Burton, Barton Fink and Edgar Allen Poe, then subverting the audiences expectations with awesome, beautifully imagined horror, conjuring the likes of Sam Raimi and Quentin Tarantino in their often colorful and startling depiction of gore and violence. Our relationship with the gothic is about to be updated!



# THE STORY

Emma lives with her terribly violent boyfriend, Darren, but after she finds out she's pregnant, she summons the strength to start fresh. Four months into the pregnancy, and living across town, Emma visits a hospital for an ultrasound. Emma's friendly nurse Mary tells of a recent vacancy in her apartment building. Unbeknownst to Emma, the previous tenant was viciously murdered. Despite an early warning from an eccentric neighbor, the move goes well and Mary is very accommodating. Emma bumps into an old boyfriend, Ben, and they hit it off.

Soon after, Emma learns that the previous tenant was pregnant when she died. She grows anxious, hears voices in the walls and begins to believe people are spying on her.

Finding the courage to investigate, Emma discovers a passageway from her apartment into Mary's. Through a keyhole in a locked room, she comes face-to-face with a hideous, disfigured child. It becomes evident to Emma that Mary aims to claim her unborn baby.

Furthermore, Mary and her odd, troubled, gigantic husband / brother, Joe, are responsible for many murders in the building - including Ben's memorably horrific acid-drenching in the apartment's elevator. Given Emma's complicity in Darren's death, she can't simply call the police. She must find a way to save her child and herself from Mary's devious agenda... alone.

GENRE

# GOTHIC HORROR MEETS CLASSIC FAIRYTALE



MOTHER is destined to be a classic horror-fairytale. It is an age-old story of a young woman with pure intentions vs. an oppressive 'Stepmother' with a sinister agenda. With the archetypal fairytales in mind, this story is entirely Emma's, where overcoming the external obstacles reflects the personal exorcism of her internal demons. Akin to the archetype that gave life to Sleeping Beauty, Snow White and Cinderella, Emma has a habit of finding herself in a state of victimhood, moving from one oppressive relationship to the next.

Of course, there is a shadow side to submitting to the agenda(s) of the external world. In our story, this shadow is beautifully represented by MARY, who could be thought of as both an external and internal demon for Emma to overcome. This buxom force of nature is a prototypical 'Mother hen', but behind closed doors she is a proverbial 'witch', obsessed with control and power-over, and will stop at nothing to achieve her agenda to be a mother to a normal baby. And like any archetypal 'Stepmother', destroying the heroine is like quenching an insatiable thirst for blood as Emma represents a purity and kindness that Mary can never possess and secretly longs for.

The potential for this poisonous nature lies in every mother to be, and so does the potential to be nurturing and kind; to not be beholden to fear and anger, but to be a steady, strong and gentle parent.

Emma's saving grace is an inner strength that has been dormant since the death of her mother. With her baby due to be born, Emma will discover this inner strength and outlast Mary in their battle over who will care for the newborn.

Furthermore, she will integrate her shadow as she discovers her own potential for violence and emerges as a mother bear at the end, turning on Mary and unleashing her darkest instincts; not as a reaction to an oppressed internal state, but a response to very real threats.

She will finally become empowered and restore order and stability to the world her baby has just entered.

# LOCATION



The story will be rooted in present day Baltimore. We will see the real, contemporary city, but in certain corners, like the apartment where Emma lives, the gothic past of Edgar Allen Poe still lurks!

A constant heavy rain will bridge the gap between the more ordinary locations and the apartment, making the overall setting cohesive. Like David Fincher's SEVEN, the apartment should feel like it has emerged from a dark and moody, graphic novel.

It will feel like a place from our dreams or nightmares, estranged from the familiar, from warmth and safety. A building that is the last on its block, separated by tear-downs and on the precipice of an abandoned industrial zone.





# CHARACTERS



# EMMA (25)

She is young, innocent and angelic, trapped in a world that continually oppresses and controls her. However, within her lies an abundance of potential to rise above these internal and external obstacles. She has the will to be strong and she has the will to be a good mother to her baby.



# MARY (50)

Mary lives in a world of fear and regret. The condition of her life is dismal and she has no hope of finding peace. She is determined to be a mother to a normal and healthy baby as a last chance to rise above it all. Of course, she lives in a world of delusion and unconsciousness.



# VISUAL TREATMENT



Wide angle lenses will primarily be used for this film. The most common lens being the 27mm. I want the violence to be realistic and colorful (always accented with a light comedic touch ala Tim Burton and The Coens). A 35mm lens will be used in the scenes outside of the apartment and when Emma is alone and has a moment to herself.



The wider lenses will also convey the aloneness of Emma. In establishing shots we will see the expanse of the environment and an exaggerated distance between the characters. When the camera is closer, for dialogue between characters, only in rare circumstances will Emma appear in the same frame as the supporting cast. We will feel the distance and aloneness she experiences.

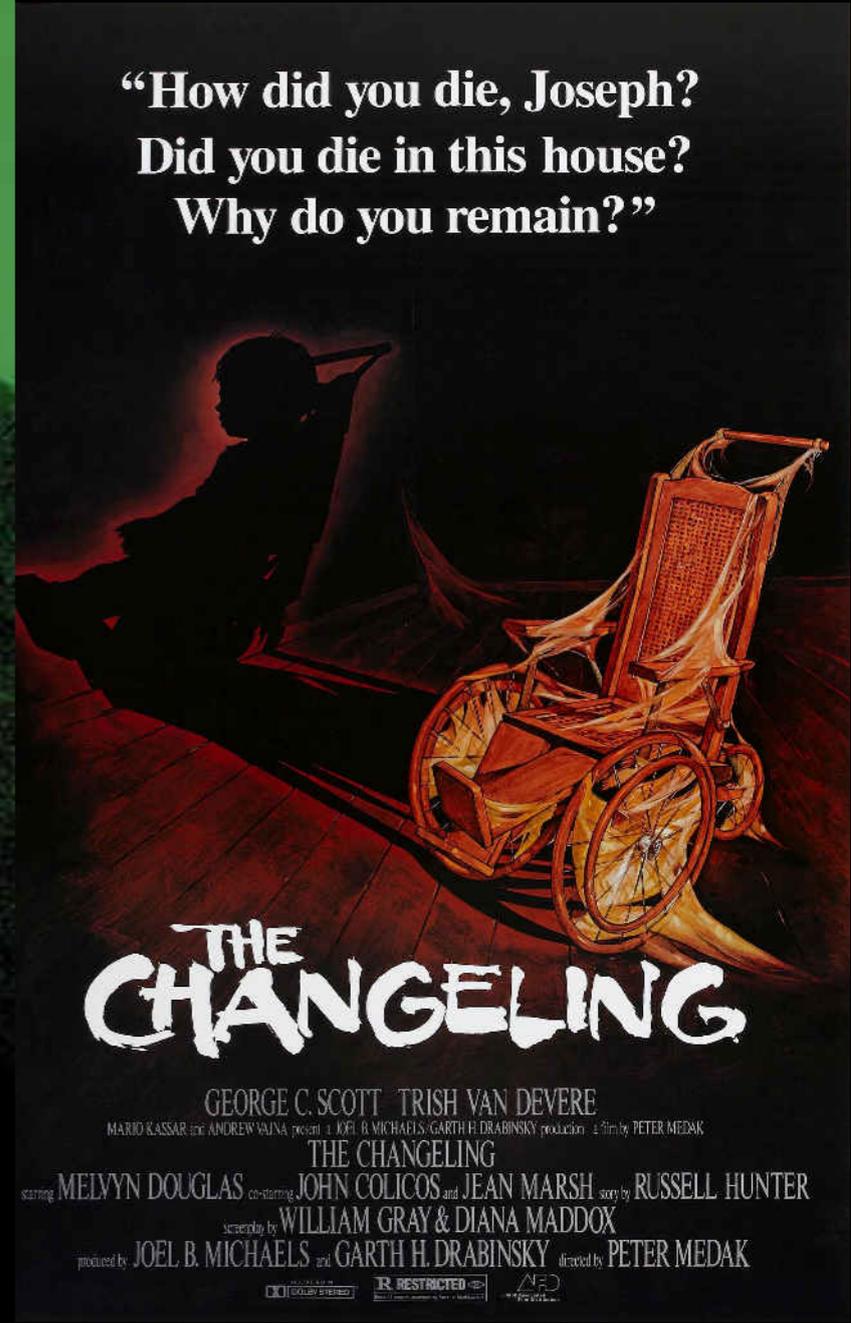
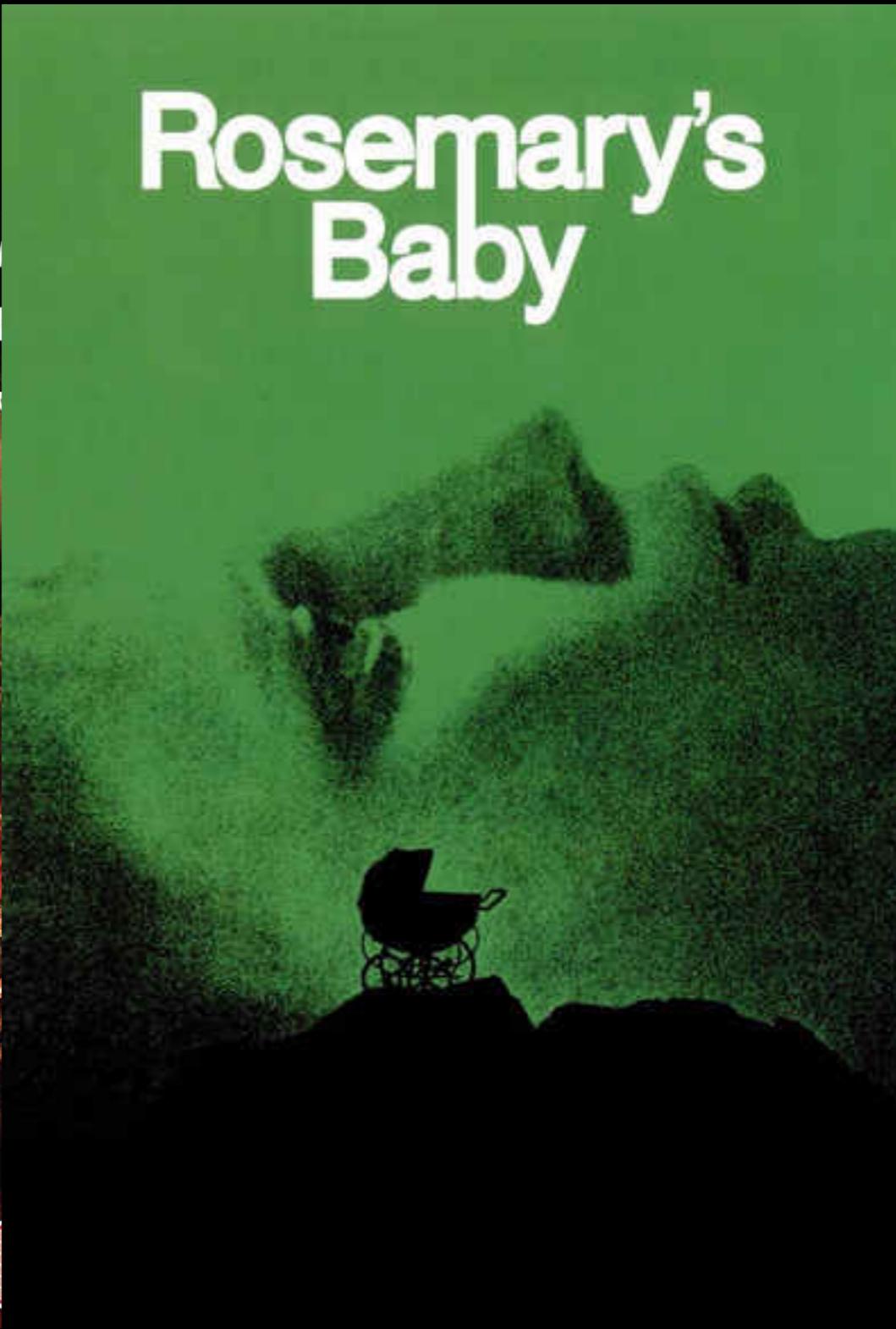
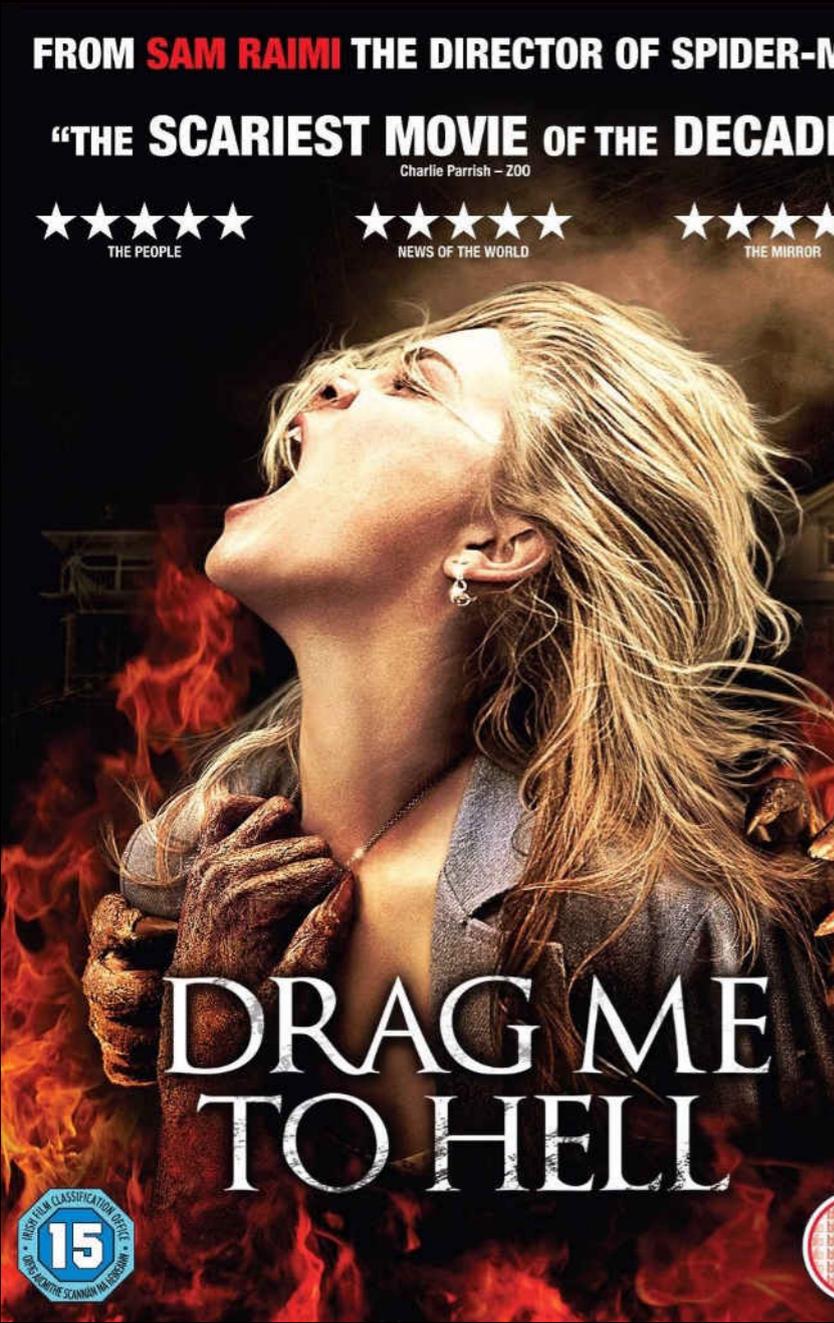


In scenes with violence and gore, the wider lenses will make the image feel exaggerated and off kilter (particularly 16 mm), bringing a levity to the atmosphere. The acid will pour, or the eye will be gouged, with fire burning fervently in the background. We will not expect the extent of the horror and the impact will be surprising and horrific, but all the-while colorful, beautiful and very entertaining.





# COMPARATIVES



# DIRECTOR

Along with being a lifelong student of filmmaking and storytelling, Mark has always had a keen interest in Jungian psychology, Fairytale archetypes and dream analysis.

“I am fascinated by symbolism in dreams, how so much can be communicated to us by our own unconscious - a world of intuitive knowledge or “mindsight” that we already possess. This phenomenon parallels the world of storytelling, where an intuitive understanding of the human condition has been passed down through the ages, primarily through aural traditions. Often the storyteller is only consciously aware of a fragment of what is being communicated. So much lies beneath the surface. Fairytales and myths have so much to offer in our modern world. I am very excited to bring this archetypal story up to date, to tell a story that comes from the heart but goes for the jugular!”

Mark's first feature, ILL FATED (2005), was an official selection at several international film festivals including: Toronto, Shanghai, Slamdance, Mannheim and Durango. At Toronto ILL FATED was sold to THINKFILM. At Durango Mark received the prestigious Filmmaker's Award and at Mannheim ILL FATED won "Award of Independent Cinema Owners".

Further, Mark was awarded top honours in Directing and Screenwriting at the 2005 Leo Awards. In 2009 Mark's second film THE THAW (starring Val Kilmer) was a horror/thriller released by Lionsgate and Sam Raimi's Ghosthouse Pictures in Canada and the US, and sold by Voltage Pictures to many international territories.

Demo Reel: <https://vimeo.com/138414194>