

THE ULTIMATE WITNESS, a western by Lazard Timsit

Frank has a lot of baggage. His thieving and murdering past had brought him a large amount of baggage that he is dragging behind him like a cannonball for over forty years. But something from his past decided to come back to the surface when, after all these years in prison, a stranger saves him from hanging at the last minute; a rider that says he works for Jo, a former and particularly violent partner of Frank that he would rather forget ... And, it's through a letter that Jo is inviting him to meet to this damn town from his past in order to recover half of the gold won a long time ago in a blood bath. He can't refuse this meet, even though it really looks like a trap. He knows it's his last chance of redemption, and even a way to wipe clean his past... The problem is that Frank is no longer the man he was. Old, tired, worn out by remorse, this journey back is turning into a real road to redemption. However, he tries to pretend, to play the part by firing a few clumsy shot, his hand shaking facing a demon who looks exactly the same... But, he is truly surprised and disconcerted when he learns that Jo doesn't have the money and that he did not write that letter ... Furthermore, when he hears that Jo also got a letter and he thought it was from him. The situation might not be as obvious as it originally looks. If it is a trap, it's not coming from that traitor Jo but more likely from that young rider that just got into town. A man who patiently worked for years to finally get Jo and Frank in the same town where he was the witness of a massacre that threw his life off-course forever... Today man's justice doesn't exist anymore for Timothy Strauss; he came to get his revenge ...

Statement of intention

Spaghetti western has always been my favorite movie genre, so it was obvious for me that I would have to write my script with the intention of making it into a western movie. In my opinion, it is a genre with unending resources that enables the audience to share strong, powerful and deep emotions at the same time.

I deeply admire Sergio Leone, as well as his artistic guide Akira Kurosawa. Both became masters in directing, which in my opinion plays a key role in a film by giving it its identity. What fascinates me most in directing is the spectacular aspect it can bring to a daily life scene, thanks to the combination of writing, photo and sound. The legendary locations of Almeria will perfectly render the power and identity of my movie. I didn't want the characters to be out of step with the locations. Also, natural elements such as wind and sand will be included in my directing. They will render the wild side, though esthetic, of the western genre. Those polished esthetics will be at the service of the core element of my movie: the story.

From a technical point of view, I consider the frame to be the basis of the image. Each shot must be storyboarded and well designed, as a photo would be. Regarding lighting, I would like to work in a natural setting and, if possible, at dusk or dawn. Being a huge fan of Terrence Malick and head cameraman Emmanuel Lubezki's work, I wish to focus on that kind of natural light, which is the one I like the most. Regarding the atmosphere of my movie, I would like to have the audience share the ambiguous dimension of my tormented characters. They are "anti-heroes", with tanned skin, searching for a part of themselves and doing so while being in doubt, seeking revenge and drenched in sweat.

My film gives a key role to music. The screenwriting has been completed working hand in hand with my music composer: he found the right sound for each scene. The story being told is based on strong feelings - remorse and revenge - so the soundtrack will help immerge the audience in the scenes and feel the various emotions channeled

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through the film. For instance, the duel scene in the chapel will be accompanied by a powerful music, in order to highlight the spectacular aspect of the duel. I want music to be omnipresent in my film because I believe it has the power to give instantaneously emotion to the audience.

As a conclusion, I would like to say that my goal is “to move forward”. This is why I’d like to use for this film the traditional codes of the western and samurais movies genre, without forgetting to reinvent them.



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Crew members

CHIEF CAMERAMAN Blancarte Francisco

FILM COMPOSER Raphaël Acker

ACTOR Massimo Sammarone

ACTOR Barbier Quantin

Light on ...



Lazard Timsit is an ESRA graduate and a young author and director. He started his career as an actor in French feature films (*Pédale douce*, *Quelqu'un de bien*, *L'Américain*) and TV movies (*L'Oiseau rare*) before deciding to become a director. He has directed celebrities interviews and short films, such as *Journal d'un diable* with French actor Lionel Astier.