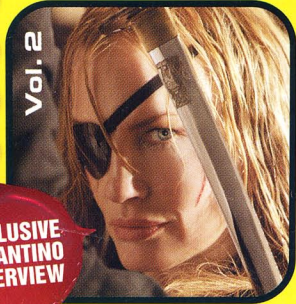


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## KILL BILL



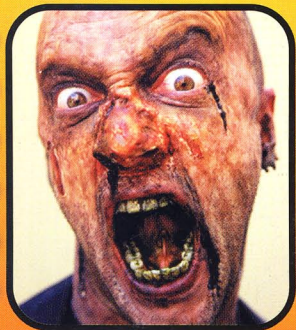
Vol. 2

EXCLUSIVE TARANTINO INTERVIEW

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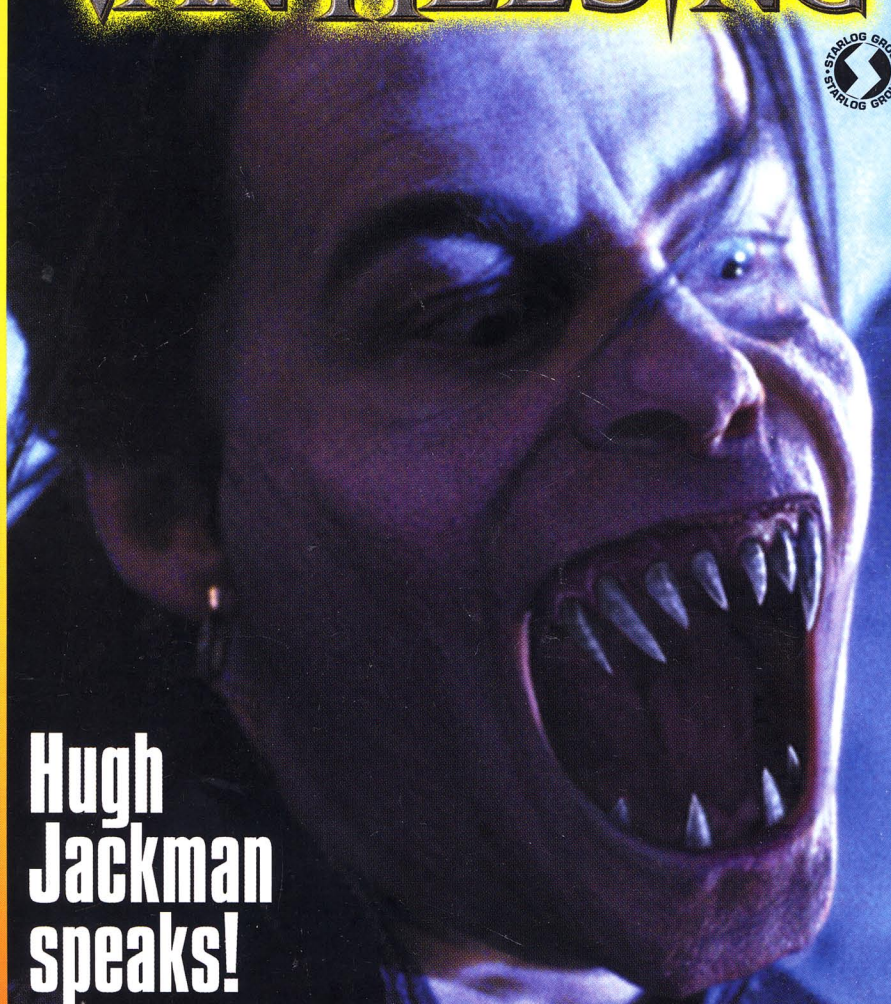
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## VAN HELSING



Hugh Jackman speaks!

# AND DRACULA BITES

**L**ast summer, writer/director/fanboy Quentin Tarantino let the cat of the bag when he tipped Fango off that he would be severing his new film *Kill Bill* into two parts. His gargantuan script and explosive action sequences (culminating in the *House of Blue Leaves* bloodbath) could not be experienced in one theatrical sitting without totally brain-frying moviegoers, so Tarantino pulled a *Matrix* and split his epic in two.

Fans dug Tarantino's ode to grindhouse cinema and made *Vol. 1* an international hit, while stuffed shirts bemoaned the lack of the auteur's usual crackling dialogue and the film's simplistic revenge plot. *Vol. 2*, opening April 16 from Miramax, finds the Bride (*Uma Thurman*) anxious to eliminate the last three names on her Death List: Bud (*Michael Madson*), Elle Driver (*Daryl Hannah*) and, of course, Bill (*David Carradine*), her former boss/lover.

**FANGORIA:** What happened to the original February release date?

**QUENTIN TARANTINO:** There was no way we could have done that. We could have *maybe* done it, but it was a situation where your eyes are bigger than your stomach. We got right back into *Vol. 2* the minute I got back from traveling all around the world doin' promotion [for *Vol. 1*]. And I just did not have it in me [laughs]. So I ended up needing to take three weeks off. And we were slow getting started back up again because we were all exhausted. So we turned it into April. It is a better movie if I am not asleep during the editing process [laughs].

**FANG:** Did *Vol. 1* live up to your box-office and critical expectations?

**TARANTINO:** Yeah, pretty much, especially if you count the whole world. We did \$70 million in America for *Vol. 1*, and then we did \$104 million overseas. The thing I always said is that I am not an American filmmaker. I am a filmmaker for the planet

pletely validate the movie as far as splitting it in half. Not to say that you could not watch them both together. But it will really validate the fact that these are two movies. The number one thing with *Vol. 1* was to make this really fun action movie, the action movie of my dreams. It had the simplest storyline possible. I didn't have to bother telling it all the time. You got it [laughs]. You know she got ambushed at the church. These five people did it. She is tracking them down one by one. There is not much story to tell after you have told them that. It was an action movie with all the boring parts taken out, *vashoom*, runs like a jet all the way to Japan.

But with *Vol. 2*, where she is dealing with the last three members of her Death List, now it's different. After all that great action, we stop a little bit. Now we get to know the characters more. We learn more about the Bride and the other people on the list, like Bill. It's character time. And we get to see where the story starts with [*Vol. 2*'s] Chapter 6, which takes place at the wedding chapel, where you find out what happened there a long time ago. One of the things I like so much about *Vol. 1* is that there are no answers at all: Why did the Bride leave Bill? Why did Bill do what he did? All these things. You don't know, you don't have a clue. And this is the movie where we answer all that.

**FANG:** Did some critics judge *Vol. 1* unfairly because it was

pure exploitation?

**TARANTINO:** No. There are some people who will get it, and there are some people who won't. The people who really, really, really, really didn't like *Vol. 1*, they are not going to like *Vol. 2* any better. It probably means that they really, really don't like me. Manohla Dargis of the *L.A. Times*, she admired the filmmaking, but she had been waiting for a long time for me to make a movie. Basically, she wanted to hear my dialogue. She wanted to hear my storytelling. Well, it's coming.

**FANG:** What were your reactions to



# Quentin Tarantino FATHER OF THE

Earth. As far as critically was concerned, yeah, totally—a lot of critics liked it, but there was also a big “dot dot dot” on what is going to happen when we see the other one, you know—“Where can he go from here?” And they don't even have a clue, which is really cool.

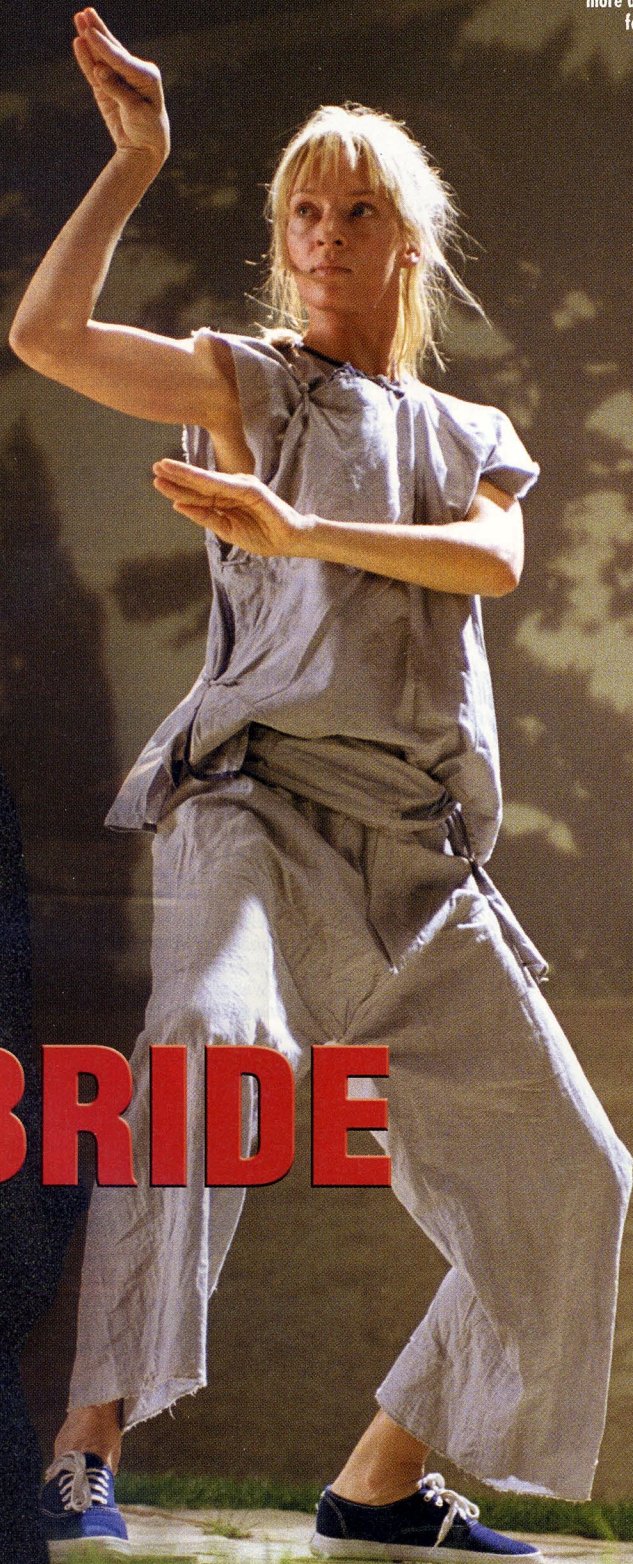
**FANG:** Some negative comments knocked *Vol. 1* for not being cerebral enough and lacking your customary dialogue.

**TARANTINO:** It is very much like that. I've always known it. But *Vol. 2* is such a different movie. This is so not the same film. When you see *Vol. 2*, it will com-

By ANTHONY TIMPONE

THE  
MAVERICK  
DIRECTOR  
CLOSES HIS  
“KILL BILL” SAGA WITH FLOURISHES  
OF LUCIO FULCI  
AND SERGIO LEONE.

The Bride (Uma Thurman) trades in her wedding dress for something a little more appropriate for fighting.



# BRIDE

Stephen King's hostile *Entertainment Weekly* review?

**TARANTINO:** That really, really bugged me, and semihurt my feelings because I really like Stephen King. I mean, I have never met him before, but I really respect him, as a writer and everything. And so I actually find it unfathomable that he did not have any more fun at the movie than that. I really hope that, whether it is negative or positive, he does a follow-up review for *Kill Bill Vol. 2*. It does not have to be good. But I would like to hear what he has to say. I can take it.

There is a part of me that is kind of a frustrated movie critic. And all the time when I see movies, I write reviews in my head. Or, as I talk about a movie with somebody, I talk out a review. I've wanted to write reviews for other people's movies from time to time. Just like King did. But after I read the King one, I thought, "I can't really do that because I am not a reviewer. I am not a critic." And neither is he. It is a critic's job to criticize, and you read the review and you feel however you feel about it. You never get your feelings hurt too bad by the critic. But just the fact that it was Stephen King, it hurt my feelings, because he's not a critic. So it made me realize that maybe I don't want to do that.

**FANG:** What are some of the stylistic differences between *Vol. 1* and *2*?

**TARANTINO:** *Vol. 1* was like a Shaw Brothers/Toho samurai movie with a little bit of spaghetti Western overtones in it. *Vol. 2* is my modern-day spaghetti Western with a little Shaw Brothers overtones in it. If the first one was an Eastern, this one's a Western in every way. The most full-on Shaw Brothers sequence in either one of the two movies is in *Vol. 2*, where Gordon Liu plays Pai Mei, a character Lo Lieh played in at least three Shaw Brothers films. Pai Mei is the evil white-haired priest. So his sequence is shot in that same kind of style that those Shaw Brothers movies were released in. I started thinking, "Wait a minute, when we saw those films in America, some fly-by-night distribution company was releasing them in the theaters for that week. They never got a negative. They sent them a print that probably played all over Taiwan and everywhere, and they took that print and dubbed other prints off of that."

So we recreated that quality for this one section where we go back into the Bride's life and you see how she learned martial arts. Other than that, everything else is a Western. She goes to get Michael Madsen in Barstow, California, right in the middle of a desert. At the end of the movie she goes to get Bill, in Mexico. The last chapter is the Sam Peckinpah chapter. Plus, Sergio Leone is all through this movie. He and the kung-fu director Chang Cheh are the two biggest influences. Leone is all over the place, which befits a spaghetti Western, plus Anthony Mann kind of '50s Western vistas. I didn't try to make anything overtly Peckinpah. But when you go down


to Mexico, for the kind of story that I am doing, especially in the whorehouse, you can't help but evoke Peckinpah.

But one of the biggest sequences in the entire film is my horror-film sequence, where the Bride is buried alive. Lucio Fulci was where I started from. But we went to even a different place. I can safely say that we have the best buried-alive sequence ever done so far. If you are claustrophobic, we are going to get you exactly where you live. After we first screened it in Texas, I talked to all of these people, and they said, "Quentin, if I was sitting in the aisle, I would have had to leave. *The Serpent and the Rainbow*? F\*\*k that." We never let the audience off the hook. She is in the coffin in total darkness, and there is nothing but sound, for a long, long time. As the coffin is being carried to the grave, lowered into it, shovels full of dirt coming down...it's all happening in darkness.

FANG: What other genres and films are referenced in *Vol. 2*?

TARANTINO: Not as many as *Vol. 1* because that was part of the fun of *Vol. 1*, the Bride fighting her way through grindhouse cinema. In *Vol. 2*, the same thing kind of happens, but it is just more specific to the movie. You're completely up with the mythology of this story. You know this world. You know who Bill is. You know about the Deadly Vipers. You get a sense of everything. You don't even know how much you remember until you see *Vol. 2*. And then you are completely in *Kill Bill* world, and as opposed to racing along, you get to hang out. You get to know the characters. There are fewer individual touchstones. Like I said, it becomes something totally different. But to start off, the inspiration for the buried-alive sequence was Jennifer O'Neill getting boarded up in *The Psychic*. That was a touchstone.

FANG: Can any sequence in *Vol. 2* compete with *Vol. 1*'s spectacular House of Blue Leaves battle?



Some viewers looked down on the first volume's ultraviolence, but not the Deadly Viper Assassination Squad.

TARANTINO: Yeah, it competes but wins in a different way. That buried-alive scene fully competes when it comes to exciting filmmaking, like freaking people out. It is not so much the House of Blue Leaves, but that sequence competes with all the other disturbing sequences in my movies

**"I can safely say that we have the best buried-alive sequence ever done so far."**

[laughs]. Whether it be [*Reservoir Dogs*] torture and ear-cutting-off scene, or [*Pulp Fiction*]'s needle-injection scene. I am a little too close to it to say, but everybody who has seen *Vol. 2* is telling me that the fight scene between the Bride and Elle Driver is the best fight of both movies. It is the white-trash fight inside the trailer. It doesn't try to compete on a House of Blue Leaves level; it creates its own battleground.

It is not about the grace and smoothness of the moves. It's hard, and it's violent, and it's rough. And it hurts. Every blow hurts. These two blonde Nordic goddesses are just like f\*\*king each

other up beyond control. Being in a trailer, using whatever they can grab. There is no fancy kung fu in there. It's a trailer [laughs]. They can only do so much. So instead they're bashing each other's heads into the walls, toilets and bars. And grabbing whatever they can and smashing it over each other's heads. I didn't want any music in that scene. We even tried to put some music in for the fun of it, but it didn't hurt any more. The music is going to be all the people in the theater going, "Ooh, ahh, ooh, ahh." The House of Blue Leaves was a true battle scene, like the helicopter sequence from *Apocalypse Now*. This is not a battle scene. This is a down-and-dirty fight, the one you have been waiting for. So while it does not have that epicness that the House of Blue Leaves has, it's more personal. You want to see the Bride kick Elle Driver's ass.

FANG: Did Daryl Hannah enjoy tossing her screen image out the window?

TARANTINO: She had a blast. When it just comes to having fun on this movie, Daryl and Chiaki Kuriyama [*Vol. 1*'s Go Go Yubari] had the most fun. Daryl loved rolling up her sleeves and creating a whole new image for herself. You see a little bit of it in *Vol. 1*, but you ain't seen nothing yet.

FANG: Was the trailer fight the toughest scene to shoot?

Photos: Andrew Cooper/Copyright 2004 Miramax

**TARANTINO:** Well, it is kind of a toss-up between that and the House of Blue Leaves. Maybe the trailer was more day-in and day-out difficult because of the restrictions and because it had to be so violent. I did not want to hurt the actresses. The House of Blue Leaves took eight weeks. It was very, very draining. When I was finished with the House of Blue Leaves, I had to convince myself that I wasn't done with the film.

**FANG:** Will we be able to watch the entire House of Blue Leaves sequence in color on the DVD?

**TARANTINO:** No. That will [remain] in black and white. It was only seen in color in Japan and Hong Kong. After everything is said and done, I will take the Japanese versions of both *Vol. 1* and *2*, put them together and release them in theaters. And it will be NC-17. Then we will come out with that on video too.

**FANG:** What special features will the *Vol. 1* DVD have?

**TARANTINO:** There are a few. I wasn't able to go whole hog because I want to really do that myself and I am busy doing *Vol. 2*. Remember that cool Japanese band the 5.6.7.8.'s playing in the House of Blue Leaves? Well, we did two full numbers with them that we were not able to show. So we have that in the [DVD] special section.

**FANG:** Is Michael Madsen's Bud the most sympathetic person on the Bride's Death List?

**TARANTINO:** Well, it's funny because cosmetically, yes. I set it up so that the audience ends up thoroughly caring for him right at the very beginning of *Vol. 2* as the story gets through the first chapter. The thing is, you don't know about Bill, and you don't quite feel about Bill the way you think you are going to feel about him, even though nothing you have heard about him is wrong. He did what he did. He really is pretty much the devil incarnate. But the devil is the devil because he is charming. And Bill does have a point of view. He has his side of

Talk about underground filmmaking... Quentin Tarantino brings *giallo* style to the mainstream in the buried-alive sequence.



After the short work *The Bride made of the Crazy 88*, what chance do these three guys have?

Before *The Bride* shows up, Bill (David Carradine) does some killing of his own.



the story.

**FANG:** What can we expect from the confrontation with Bill?

**TARANTINO:** That's the one where I want to pretty much keep my cards close to the vest. Because we haven't said much, and most people don't even have a clue. They know something is going to happen to Bud, and they know there is going to be a fight with Daryl and Uma. But you don't know quite what to expect with Bill. And I want to keep it that way.

**FANG:** You must have a few choice David Carradine anecdotes...

**TARANTINO:** Definitely, that's for sure. I consider David to be one of my favorite actors, right up there with Jack Nicholson when it comes to one of the great mad geniuses of Hollywood. And as

much as I loved his performances as [Kung Fu's] Kwai Chang Caine, as Woody Guthrie in *Bound for Glory* and as Cole Younger in *The Young Riders*, *Death Race 2000*, etc., this is David's peak. Because he is treated great, he is shot great, he has terrific dialogue, he has a terrific character. He completely lives up to what I have done with other actors, where I have taken people who I always thought had been fantastic but were discarded by Hollywood, and given them great roles worthy of them. They completely rise to the occasion. When everyone else would get the Dustin Hoffman or Al Pacino or Robert De Niro, I get the Robert Forster. I get the Pam Grier. I get the David Carradine. And you get to see how f\*\*king good they always were.

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It's the blonde bleeding the blonde as our heroine arrives at a trailer park to take out the white trash.

my favorite independent American film of the '70s, not just my favorite horror film. But I have to say, when I saw the [re-make's] trailer, I thought, "Oh my God, wow, it looks like they did a good job with that." Then I couldn't wait to see the f\*\*kin' movie. And then I saw it, and I really liked it. I didn't like the way it ended. They ran out of gas 10 feet before the finish line. But also, how can you top what I consider the greatest closing shot in the history of cinema, Leatherface dancing at sunrise? Well, they didn't even try. But I liked that movie. They did a really good job with it.

But there is something that seems sacrilegious about redoing *Dawn of the Dead*. I haven't seen it. To me, remaking *Dawn of the Dead* is tantamount to remaking *Suspiria*. What is the point of a *Suspiria* without Dario Argento, when a whole film is based completely on the auteur theory? I'm not saying it can't be done, because I am a huge fan of Jim McBride's remake of *Breathless*. If there ever was a movie that fits in the auteur theory, it would be Godard's *Breathless*. McBride did a fantastic job because he reimagined it. But I just don't see that same kind of imagination at work with *Dawn of the Dead*. An R-rated *Dawn of the Dead* starts off castrated. It can never have an opportunity to be as good as the first one.

FANG: If there was one horror movie you could remake, what would it be?

TARANTINO: I've thought of how I would do Lucio Fulci's *The Psychic/Seven Notes in Black*. Actually, that is a really good movie. And that could be a really good remake. I don't know if I would do it or not. Every time I watch it, I kind of remake it in my mind—who I would cast in it and things like that.

FANG: Is your giallo film still percolating?  
TARANTINO: That's definitely in there. Once I get off this mountain, I will know where to go next. But I'm still on the mountain right now.

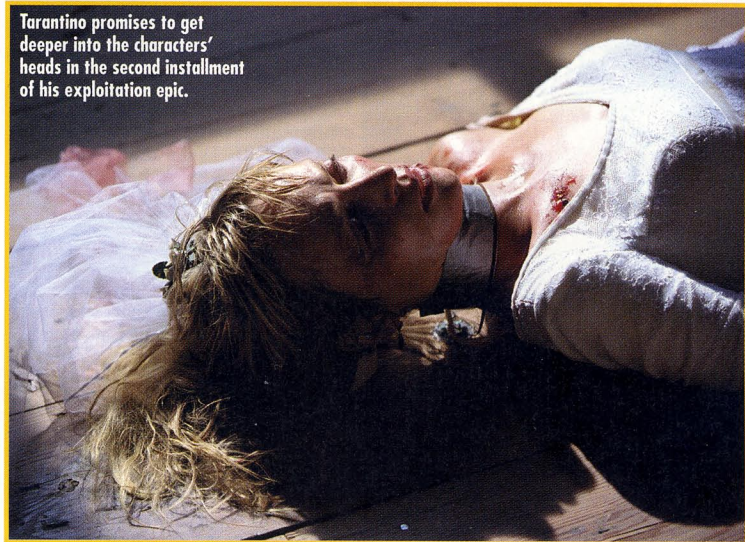


**"When you see Vol. 2, it will completely validate the movie as far as splitting it in half."**

*The Professional Gun*. One of my favorite scores of his is from the Burt Reynolds movie *Navajo Joe*. I have a few different *Navajo Joe* cuts in *Vol. 2*. Luis Bacalov, who did the theme for *Django* and *The Grand Duel*, which was in *Vol. 1* during the anime sequence, is back with a really cool theme that he did for this '70s Spanish revenge movie called *Summertime Killer*. I also have the most original score I've ever had in a movie. The RZA is back doing some stuff. And Robert Rodriguez wrote a lot of it, doing Mexican spaghetti Western music.

FANG: What is your stance on the recent horror remake craze?  
TARANTINO: It's strange because on one hand, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is probably

Tarantino promises to get deeper into the characters' heads in the second installment of his exploitation epic.



And that goes for a couple of other cool actors—faces from genre films past are in this film too and again doing fantastic character work. Michael Parks is back, playing a different character, an 80-year-old Mexican pimp. It is something out of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Uma goes to talk to him, and that was all shot in a real whorehouse with the hookers all around him. And Gordon Liu, who was in *Vol. 1* as the head of the Crazy 88, is back as Pai Mei, and he is fantastic. There is a great genre thing going on here, because Gordon was one of the superstars of Hong Kong in the '70s playing the Shaolin monk character. He was always the good guy fighting the evil white-haired priest. Now he is a little older and he gets to play the character that he always f\*\*ked. His performance is amazing. He plays a cool bastard, but he is charming. He never gives you one good reason to like him. He never softens once. You like him nevertheless.

Sid Haig is in the movie too, in just a little bit. It was so funny when we were [screening] in Austin—as soon as he came on, the audience said, "That's the guy from *House of 1000 Corpses*!" I've admired Sid Haig's work forever. Sid was the Sam Jackson of New World Pictures and AIP, back when he was doing those movies with Jack Hill. And Sam Jackson has acknowledged that. Sid has not had a chance to do anything like that in a very long time. *House of 1000 Corpses* gave him the role that he could have always done. He just dominates the entire movie. He is fantastic in it. Sid Haig's the man.

FANG: *Vol. 1* had a killer soundtrack. What cuts/samplings can we expect in *Vol. 2*?

TARANTINO: There are a few. I like taking things from blaxploitation soundtracks and putting them in kung-fu movies. I took Isaac Hayes' opening theme from *Three Tough Guys* and used that in one of the Pai Mei sections. In the spaghetti Western part, I'm using a few different themes from Ennio Morricone. I've got a track from *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, but not the main theme. I've got his main theme that I always loved from

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