

Why independent cinema should play Hollywood at its own game and consider remakes

Let me establish something straight away: I abhor Hollywood remakes. I am disgusted by the relentless brutality the tinsel town ego machine is able to unleash upon what I consider works of cinematic art, for little more than financial gain and the opportunity to "modernize" by adding digital lens flair and sexier actors.

The latest announcement that has really agitated me is Dennis Iliadis's remake of Wes Craven's bleak exploitation horror classic, ['The Last House on the Left'](#). Of course, the movie is not inherently original - it is in fact loosely based on Ingmar Bergman's ['Virgin Spring'](#) - but for horror movie fans it has since been considered a landmark in on-screen violence and bad reputation being considered a precursor to the "video nasty" label that has since been given to low budget horror years later. Additionally, the movie also introduced the world to the directorial genius that is Wes Craven.

However the particular relevance of, and my annoyance at, this remake is a little more complex. Simply put, Craven's debut is by no means perfect. Most notably, its documentary and no-budget traits are at times an endurance to sit through and unsettling enough to even disgust the violent perpetrators themselves. Of course any ['Last House'](#) reviews will cite these aspects of the movie as the most groundbreaking and important points - and I agree too. It is not popcorn horror, but I anticipate Iliadis's remake will be - and if it does remain satisfyingly unpolished then it will render the whole endeavour even more pointless.

This is where my proposal to the indie directors of the world comes in. After all, similar to the numerous consumer [film reviews](#) I've read, I'm sure these guys are sick of the ongoing swathe of devolving cinematic regression they have to compete with - well, why don't the good guys consider remaking imperfect but popular Hollywood classics? It has happened in music throughout history - and often for the good of the medium (talking of devolution, I regard Devo's cover of ['Satisfaction'](#) a good musical equivalent of what I am suggesting).

The idea came to me after watching Michael Gottlieb's 1987 "classic" [Mannequin](#). It is loved, and I'm sure MGM would be eager to see some publicity for the original, and the story would lend itself to a low budget moody art film about complicated love in a hyper-modern world. Imagine it: romantic black and white, set on a Paris high street, with a slightly uglier more neurotic leading man - and film history is sure to be made. It could be called *Le Mannequin*! Or maybe this is just too desperate?

About the Author

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