

Photo: © Sony Pictures



Help spread THE PLAGUE as its director intended

Fango recently heard from director Hal Masonberg, whose debut chiller THE PLAGUE was released to DVD last year as a Clive Barker film, even though the celebrated author/filmmaker wasn't directly involved in its production. And according to Masonberg, he himself had little to do with the version of the movie that wound up on disc either. "In fall 2005, THE PLAGUE was taken away from me and co-writer Teal Minton during postproduction," Masonberg says. "After an eight-year struggle to get the film made, the footage was recut from scratch by the producers without our involvement. Stock footage was added, new dialogue recorded and the film completely restructured, and it was released under the title CLIVE BARKER'S THE PLAGUE even though it was not based on any of Barker's work, and he personally had very little to do with the making of the film. That version of the movie in no way reflects our years of hard work, creativity or artistic intent. It is solely and completely a producers' cut.

"However, after having been removed from the film, I took it upon myself to finish it with the materials available to me -the dailies on DVD and a Macintosh computer turned postproduction facility," he continues. "The response to this Writers and Director's Cut from those who have seen it has been through the roof. However, without further support, this version may never see the light of day, as the film's current distributor, Screen Gems, has no plans to release this cut. I ask that you take a look at this site, where you will find an hour-long documentary containing interviews with myself and many others including Dee Wallace and other cast members, film authors and journalists. There is also a link to a petition and much more info on what happened to THE PLAGUE. We hope to convince Screen Gems that there is an audience for this cut of the movie and, perhaps, other films that have met a similar fate."

The site does indeed contain a wealth of information about the unfortunate circumstances surrounding THE PLAGUE which are, sadly, all too common to filmmaking today in general. Check it out! -Michael Gingold