

## Interview: Fede Alvarez Brings His Bloody Vision to ‘Evil Dead’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on April 3, 2013 - 3:47pm

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CHICAGO – Since that first preview hit the net through to the horror-loving fans embrace of the movie at South by Southwest, Fede Alvarez’s “Evil Dead” has been one of the most anticipated horror flicks in years. The writer/director of the remake of the movie that gave Sam Raimi & Bruce Campbell their careers gave us a call last week to talk gore, the limitless potential of “Evil Dead 2,” and what his movie has in common with “Bram Stoker’s Dracula” and “The Omen.”

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** How did you convince the MPAA to give you an R for something so bloody and violent?

**FEDE ALVAREZ:** I’ve heard the horror stories about the MPAA having people recut and recut and not knowing [what to cut] but it wasn’t like that for us. They were very helpful. The first cut they saw, they said would be NC-17. They told us if we trimmed down five scenes that were very graphic, we would get our R rating. They actually helped us to make a better film. We had to really think about what to show and how much to show. They helped us make a sharper film in a way. We had to be very precise. And we still got a lot. I think it’s the hardest R out there.



Evil Dead  
Photo credit: TriStar

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** Definitely. You must have had those conversations before the MPAA though. Were you ever thinking you were going too far or did you set out to push the envelope in terms of gore?

**ALVAREZ:** We decided not to think about the MPAA until we had to. It didn’t enter our minds too much. Not during writing. We just wanted to make the best movie. [Producers] Rob [Tapert], Bruce [Campbell], and Sam [Raimi] had been through that before. When we started shooting the movie, Rob was pushing us to not cut at all. Shoot whatever we want to shoot. Do whatever we want to do. Worst-case scenario - we can always have an unrated DVD. When the time came to deal with it, they helped us get everything to the screen.





Evil Dead  
Photo credit: TriStar

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** How hands-on were Sam and Bruce?

**ALVAREZ:** Rob Tapert is the producer and he was on set once a week to keep things under control. These guys are experts. They were very helpful. Choosing the crew — they surrounded me with the best. It was great. Rob's contribution was that he knows all the best people for the job. All during the writing process, I got really good guidance. They helped me figure out which scenes would work great with the audience. "That scene's going to be awesome." "Nobody's going to care about this." They were the best producers you could ask for. They were 100% director-driven. They want the director to have as much freedom as he can have. They support the director. Any director or argument, Sam Raimi would always support the director. There was no way to make this film if you try to fight the director. Most Hollywood films that are done on consensus don't work. The only way to make this work is to do something more author-driven by a writer/director. Sam thought that was the spirit of [the original] "Evil Dead." Bruce Campbell was helpful during the casting process. He really helped with the actors and telling them everything they were going to go through. He would tell them that it would be the worst experience ever to scare them off. The actors that would say, "Yeah, fuck it, bring it on," would be the ones to hire. Those were the brave ones. The ones we needed. And he was with me during the mixing process. He's really good at that. He brought a lot of ideas for the sounds of the Deadites. We still have the sound from the original film. All the details. Even the voice tracks from the original film.

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** What films and filmmakers inspired this work or just in general?

**ALVAREZ:** In general, there are so many films. "Star Wars." I'm a big Terry Gilliam film. "Baron Munchausen." "Time Bandits." Gilliam is one of my favorite filmmakers. I like craft. I think about him. I like Coppola too. "Bram Stoker's Dracula." That was a film that was done all with techniques from the '40s and '50s at a time when people were doing CGI. He really wanted to capture the vibe of those classic films. Gilliam stays away from modern techniques. I wanted to make a movie like this where I could make that decision to not use CGI. Movies? Definitely "The Exorcist." It's the best possession movie ever. It set up the rules. "The Omen." How do you make the audience believe in the Devil when you set up such a realistic story? Those stories show you how to craft a good horror movie - how to make believe the non-believers.



Evil Dead  
Photo credit: TriStar

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** It's interesting to me that you're citing all older films and filmmakers. Is that because of your preference for practical effects over CGI? And have you always been that way or just when you were presented with the option here to go all-practical [there's no CGI in "Evil Dead"]?

**ALVAREZ:** I don't know. I just think that with horror you have to be real. Even the best CGI, your brain is going to know it's an effect. Even the best CGI like "Life of Pi," for example, you know it's not a real tiger even though the effects are mind-blowing. It depends on what kind of story you're telling. With horror, you have to be real. You have to tap into the basic instinct of survival. Even if you know it's not real...I've seen a lot of people jumping and looking away and they know it's not real but their brain and their body don't. It's a basic instinct. Something like "I Am Legend." It could have been great and super-scary but as soon as you see the monsters you know they're CGI.

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** It dates it too. It ages poorly.

**ALVAREZ:** That was the other thing. I didn't want it to look like shit in five years.

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** Have you seen "I, Robot" lately? It's unbelievable. Looks like a cartoon.

**ALVAREZ:** [Laughs.] Even "Avatar" already.

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** I agree. Can you tell me anything about "Evil Dead 2" before you go?

**ALVAREZ:** We just started crashing the story. It's something that we're going to do and everybody wants to do it. I would love to direct it. Right now, I'm just the writer and I really want to control the fate of these characters and where they're going to go. It's going to be the first, 100% original "Evil Dead" in a long time.

**HOLLYWOODCHICAGO.COM:** You can go anywhere.

**ALVAREZ:** That's right.

**See where this version of "Evil Dead" goes when it opens on April 5, 2013, nationwide.**



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