

MK2 FILMS AND WIM WENDERS STIFTUNG PRESENT

THE END OF VIOLENCE

A FILM BY
WIM WENDERS

1997 – France/Germany/USA – THRILLER/CRIME – 122' – NEW 4K

mk2
FILMS

SYNOPSIS

In Hollywood, successful film producer Mike Max, notorious for exploiting violence in his films, is abducted by hitmen. When their headless bodies are discovered, Inspector Brock investigates how Max escaped and whether his wife Paige is involved. Meanwhile, scientist Ray Bering, operating a secret government surveillance system, catches a glimpse of the crime, but the footage is distorted. As he delves deeper, Bering realises he may also be under surveillance.

NOTES ON RESTORATION

The 4K restoration of THE END OF VIOLENCE was made by Wim Wenders Stiftung and mk2 Films under the supervision of Wim Wenders, at L'Immagine Ritrovata/ Éclair Classics, Paris – Bologna with the support of the German Film Heritage Funding Program (FFE).

THE END OF VIOLENCE BY WIM WENDERS: THE CITY OF ANGELS

The German director's webbed exploration of an image saturated Los Angeles is a thought-provoking analysis of human brutality. mk2 is offering this thriller for rediscovery in a restored version that highlights its contemporary relevance.

'Just when you think you've got it all figured, in a heartbeat, it changes again', says one of Wim Wenders' characters from *The End of Violence*. It rings as a warning. On entering this strangely meandering thriller, the viewer steps into a shady, multifaceted world, where the image does not act as evidence but instead leads one astray. Wim Wenders tells the story of Mike Max, a cynical TV producer (Bill Pullman) who has made a fortune by financing films smeared with blood and crime, and who is about to be left by his wife (Andie MacDowell). The day he miraculously escapes a kidnapping attempt, redemption comes to him. He decides to leave the champagne dollar driven world, and take refuge in a community of Mexican immigrants. But as often with Wim Wenders, one plot leads to another, and the story becomes multi-layered. We soon follow the journey of Ray Bering (Gabriel Byrne), an idealistic engineer involved in a large-scale video-surveillance project run by the FBI to curb violence, and the existential meanderings of Cat, a Hollywood actress (Traci Lind)... These fragments of life, seemingly disconnected, gradually take on the form of a nightmarish labyrinth, set against the backdrop of ubiquitous surveillance cameras and screens. Despite its ironic title, *The End of Violence* is a cerebral and sobering examination of the all-consuming, dehumanising reign of images.

AUTOPSY OF THE IMAGE

From the very start, the characters are placed in a horrifying, alienating world of images. Mike is chatting to his assistant from behind his monitor, wearing an earpiece. The conversation is shown in large format, literally eating up the screen. Straight after this, as the producer casually watches the rushes of an action film, his wife calls him to tell him she's leaving him. As if he were unable to experience the break-up in the real world, unable to grasp its tangible nature, he seems to dissolve in this anecdotal fiction. On a number of occasions, Wim Wenders uses a plethora of images to express the disconnect between his characters and their own emotions. When Cat is being interrogated by an FBI agent on a film set following a take, the scene is filmed in wide shot from a distance. In the foreground, the camera is still rolling, and the monitor shows Cat's face in close-up, suffused in a bluish light. Wenders manages to say a lot about his heroine's dissociation, who has become a pure digital surface, by using this doubling effect, this story within a story. Later, in Ray Bering's film, the camera zooms in and out of the mosaic of surveillance cameras, as if caught up in this infernal vortex.

The sheer volume of images and perspectives first appear to bring us closer to the character's truth, but in fact, it only dilutes. This is what Wim Wenders tells us. In this respect, *The End of Violence* is a worthy heir to Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966), a great paranoid variation on the deception of images, or David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (1983), in which the viewing of pornography literally turns its hero into a monstrous video recorder. When *The End of Violence* came out at the end of the 90s, technology was booming. The visual and dramatic opportunities it offered fascinated artists as much as it terrified them. It's also no coincidence that Wenders' film was released in 1997, the same year as David Lynch's *Lost Highway*, a neo-noir film (also starring Bill Pullman) in which videocassettes become a means of unleashing domestic violence.

In their own way, all these films point to the schizophrenia of modern capitalism, trapped between an unbounded desire for freedom, and extreme surveillance- two conflicting promises made by technology.

The theme of spiralling paranoia found in *The End of Violence* has widely been revisited by modern cinema, and adapted for the age of pop culture. *Under the Silver Lake* by American director David Robert Mitchell follows a lecherous geek (Andrew Garfield), whose obsessive appetite for mystery leads him to imagine a Los Angeles full of hidden signs to be decoded. Hypervigilance and a bulimic frenzy of images have led to a state of generalised conspiracy, which the filmmaker captures

with startling iconoclastic style. As for David Cronenberg, his *Maps to the Stars* turns the City of Angels into a perverted incestuous brotherhood, where dreams of cinema collide with drugs and grim news stories. With *The End of Violence*, Wim Wenders opened the door to satire on the disillusionment of Hollywood.

THE RUINS OF CINEMA

To guide us through the maze of this confused era, this age of doubt, Wim Wenders conjures up an aesthetic of ruins. Following the success of *Paris, Texas*, shot in the fall of 1983 in California, New Mexico and Houston. *The end of violence* was his return to his muse. In the 70s, he'd travelled the country with his camera accompanied by Martin Scorsese and Francis Ford Coppola. However, this time, Wenders wanted to film LA's bitterness, its fierce aura. 'Violence can also be found in nature. In L.A, where it can be found in earthquakes, fires and mudslides. The start of filming coincided with the big fires in Malibu: the house where we were staying got very hot!' the filmmaker explained to *Libération* in 1998. He captured several mythical Hollywood locations and stripped them of their grandeur. The Griffith Observatory, which had become an iconic site in popular culture (it was one of the sets for Nicholas Ray's *Rebel Without a Cause*), became Ray Bering's computer bunker, a sealed off lab, crammed with computers and flooded with metallic lights. The sumptuous villas of the City of Angels, captured with heady Lynchian tracking shots, become ethereal. Away from the cameras, this world of pretence vanishes and appears as it really is: vain.

Wim Wenders has never denied his admiration for Edward Hopper's sorrowful paintings. He recreated with precision the location of the painting *Nighthawks* (1942) - the window of a long bar where a mysterious couple are chatting - and used it as a film-within-a-film set in one of the sequences from *The End of Violence*. With this formal nod, he reignites myths of American violence. Intimate, sophisticated bars where lonesome gangsters hang out. This mannerist gesture could also be read as a tribute by Wim Wenders to the evocative power of images from the past. Cinema is able to reproduce ad infinitum and revive. With its narrative dead-ends and visual saturation, *The End of Violence* continues to question the dream machine that is Hollywood, both as a brutal machine and as a fictional impetus.

Léa André-Sarreau, TROISCOULEURS

WIM WENDERS - FILMOGRAPHY

FEATURE FILMS

<https://wimwendersstiftung.de/en/films/>

1970	Summer in the City
1971	The Goalkeeper's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick
1972	The Scarlet Letter
1973	Alice in the Cities
1975	Wrong Move
1976	Kings of the Road
1977	The American Friend
1982	Hammett
	The State of Things
1984	Paris, Texas
1987	Wings of Desire
1991	Until the End of the World - Director's Cut
1993	Faraway, So Close!
1995	Lisbon Story
1995	Beyond the Clouds
1997	The End of Violence
2000	The Million Dollar Hotel
2004	Land of Plenty
2005	Don't Come Knocking
2008	Palermo Shooting
2015	Every Thing Will Be Fine (3D)
2016	The Beautiful Days of Aranjuez (3D)
2017	Submergence
2023	Perfect Days

DOCUMENTARIES

1980	Lightning Over Water
1982	Room 666
1985	Tokyo-Ga

1989 Notebook on Cities and Clothes
1996 A Trick of the Light
1998 Willie Nelson at the Teatro
1999 Buena Vista Social Club
2002 Ode to Cologne: A Rock 'N' Roll Film
2003 The Soul of a Man
2011 Pina (3D)
2014 Cathedrals of Culture Episode: „The Berlin Philharmonic“ (3D)
2014 The Salt of the Earth
2018 Pope Francis - A MAN OF HIS WORD
2023 Anselm (3D)

CAST & CREW

CAST

Mike Max	Bill Pullman
Paige	Andie MacDowell
Ray Bering	Gabriel Byrne
Doc	Loren Dean
Cat	Traci Lind
Brice Phelps	Daniel Benzali
Lowell Lewis	John Diehl
Six	K. Todd Freeman
Frank Cray	Pruitt Taylor-Vince
Brian	Peter Horton
Zoltan	Udo Kier
Call	Marshall Bell
Ramon	Enrique Castillo
Ade	Nicole Parker
Claire	Rosalind Chao
Mathilda	Marisol Padilla Sanchez
MacDermot	Frederic Forrest
Louis	Samuel Fuller

CREW

Story by	Nicholas Klein & Wim Wenders
Written by	Nicholas Klein
Cinematography	Pascal Rabaud
Production Design	Patricia Norris
Editing	Peter Przygodda
Music	Ry Cooder
Production	Ciby Pictures, Road Movies, Kintop Pictures
International Sales	mk2 Films

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ABOUT THE WIM WENDERS FOUNDATION



" People around the globe have seen my films, many have been influenced by them, and some of these films have become classics or cult films. In this sense they no longer belong to me anyways, but instead to a collective memory of cinemagoers of every age and many nationalities. It has been my desire for many years that in the future my work might belong only to itself, and thus to everyone. There is now a realistic and unique opportunity for this dream to come true."

Wim Wenders

In the fall of 2012 this desire began to be fulfilled. The establishment of the Wim Wenders Foundation in Düsseldorf created a legally binding framework to bring together the cinematic, photographic, artistic and literary lifework of Wim Wenders in his native country and to make it permanently accessible to the general public worldwide.

The non-profit foundation model ensures that the whole body of work remains beyond the reach of any form of private self-interest. All revenues are used to finance the foundation's main purposes: preserving, maintaining, researching and disseminating the work of Wim Wenders, promoting young talent in the field of innovative cinematic storytelling and imparting film knowledge to young audiences.

[\[WEBSITE\]](#)