

THE INTERVIEW BIZARRE: 6 QUESTIONS FOR 7 FILMMAKERS

 web.archive.org/web/20120205004551/http://www.filmthreat.com/interviews/46169

By Jeremy Knox

If you give it enough time, everything returns to the beginning. *Le Théâtre du Grand-Guignol* was French shock-horror theatre. It was founded in the 1890's by Oscar Metenier, and lasted until 1962 when it closed because Europeans had become desensitized to fictional violence and no longer appreciated its many quirks and charms. Yet the dark spirit of the thing endured, escaping the confines of the stage and haunting cinema. It lived through people like Alfred Hitchcock and H.G. Lewis and George Romero and Tom Savini. The screams of the victims on the screen was it's heartbeat. The fear oozing out of the audience in the theatre was it's blood.



As I was writing my questions for *The Theatre Bizarre* filmmakers, it occurred to me that I was very interested in what each of them thought about the Grand Guignol itself. So I asked them four identical questions, all pertaining to the Guignol, and two more personal questions relating to the segment that they had directed. I wanted to know if the ghost of the Guignol still haunted us all, and most importantly... how sharp its teeth were.

Enjoy.

Jeremy Kasten (Segment: The Theatre Bizarre)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I've been fascinated by the Grand Guignol theatre movement for many years and because of my on-going fascination didn't need to do research to learn about it. It's one of my peculiar fetishistic obsessions. The name Grand Guignol actually refers to that particular theatre being a large puppet show. It was like saying "here's something for children re-conceived for adults". That notion – a childhood nostalgic connection to a puppet show writ large as something... icky... that's EXACTLY what I'd hoped to capture.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

I think the use of blood and effects in grand guignol was actually restrained in some ways, too. In a real grand guignol show, you'd have to sit through a fair amount of character development and story stuff – really very similar to a Hitchcock movie. The whole time the audience is anticipating something scary or disgusting – but you're watching something that reflects your own life or your reality. The plays were soap operas about everyday life. People cheating on their spouses and getting syphilis. Shop girls moving to the city and getting raped. Not unlike following Marion Crane in "Psycho" the first time you see that movie and waiting... anxiously... ("I thought there was going to be a bunchy of killing – this lady is on the run with cash – what gives?"). So when the shower scene FINALLY happens, you're both on the edge of your seat with anticipation and completely caught off guard. I love horror movies but I am bored of their being discussed based how much fake blood is shed or how the special effects look. Who cares? Syphilis is scary – not decapitation.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

My segment's theme is that the storyteller (or filmmaker) has a vampiric relationship with its audience – and that it is better to be an active “puppet” than an inactive observer.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

Udo Kier is better than ever. And a sense that the entire film is moving forward even though its comprised of several unrelated stories.

#5 Your segment is the one that has the least amount of consecutive time to tell a story, yet is the most important overall since it has to tie everything together. So in the end it's a bit maddening because you only get bits and pieces of what's going on. Is there more to the story of Peg Poett and Enola Penny?

If pressed to tell the backstory for my piece, I would tell you that Zach and I decided that the Pegg Poett story is one of an unending history of a dark spirit occupying that spot where the Theatre now lives. Before it was a theatre, it was, perhaps, a performance space where Native American's suffered as “puppets” of that ideation of Poett. Before that cave people. And on and on.

That said, I am not sure what you mean by, “it's a bit maddening because you only get bits and pieces of what's going on”. I hoped that in telling a simple story with the main function of supporting the other films, no one would feel I was over-reaching or looking to self-aggrandize the wraparounds.

#6 In my review I said that your segment “...lets Udo be Udo, and that's a good thing.” How much improvisation did Udo Kier do and how much of his performance was directed by you?

Udo and I worked really well together because I knew what I wanted but I was very open to his ideas. Udo is full of creative energy and concepts and will gladly participate in the creative process if given that chance. He appreciated, though, that I was able to tell him clearly when I needed him to do something specific and when I didn't find an idea useful. Actors tend to find specific direction useful rather than general and I aim for that. The example he used (when he was discussing the process later) was that I asked him to speak his lines as though he were reading a story to a child.

When I first spoke to Udo he suggested the idea of killing the fly on camera. I didn't know what to make of it and worried that he'd be full of arbitrary ideas that would take lots of time on the set. Then I stopped being an uptight ninny and realized how great his idea was and how lucky I was to be getting ideas from Udo Fucking Kier. After that our real working relationship started.

Richard Stanley (Segment: The Mother of Toads)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

A: I have been living in France for several years and have always had a strong interest in the roots of the gothic tradition. When we put together the script, my partner, Scarlett Amaris, and I tried to conflate what we knew of Grand Guignol, which was a form of tabloid theatre, dedicated to the grotesque, the bizarre and the outre with the folklore of the Pyrenees, the region where our segment was shot. I deliberately imbued the segment with references to European gothic cinema; to the work of Mario Bava, Lucio Fulci and Dario Argento and the American horror comics that fascinated me as a child. In some ways ‘The Mother of Toads’ is the most traditional of the various segments that make up ‘The Theatre Bizarre,’ serving as a sort of love letter to the entire genre and hopefully demonstrating

that those classic, mythic elements can still be potent, even now in the 21st century.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

A: Curiously enough, you'll not find one drop of blood in 'Mother of Toads,' but madness and slime aplenty, not to mention the gigantic Pyrenean toads whose appearance is guaranteed to provide a certain frisson. I've long been a fan of the cinema of assault, and the theatre of cruelty. As Artaud (or was it Mick Jagger?) puts it, "the only performance that really makes it, that makes it all the way, is the performance that achieves madness." I trust audiences will detect the authentic stench of insanity lovingly imbued in our twisted cinematic offering and react accordingly. This was best demonstrated at the Oldenburg Festival when some folk actually passed out in the auditorium.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

A: Love kills... but lust croaks!

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

A: I wanted to show that elder magic still exists in some parts of the world and remains as potent as it was in times gone by, something that folk in modern day America might have a hard time accepting. You have to be careful what you mess with. When you go looking for the dark, sometimes the dark goes looking for you.

#5 Why adapt "Mother of Toads" by Clark A. Smith? He's a rather obscure author. I mean, I'm a fairly well read person and I had never even heard of him until now.

A: Strictly speaking, it isn't really an adaptation. I thrived on Smith and Lovecraft when I was a child and I tried to weave elements from both private cosmologies into our 'lil cinematic homage. Smith was drawing in elements already found in European folklore. But truth be told, we were given the heads-up by the Ouija board. Scarlett and I were screwing around with a glow-in-the-dark Ouija board that we had just picked up from Toys R Us and it told us very specifically to read the Smith story and mount a modern day re-imagining of the text.

#6 In my review I said your segment was a short story told with images rather than words. I said this not because it was adapted from the Clark story, but because I felt that it's as if there's a silent narration behind every scene, that every image is intended to be poetry. Do you feel the same way? Was that something you consciously tried to do, or is it just something that I'm seeing?

A: As each segment couldn't run to much more than twenty minutes, we had to condense an awful lot into a very small package. Despite its miniscule five day shooting schedule, 'The Mother of Toads' was shot in five different locations at some very remote, haunted areas in the South of France, where magic still lingers. I've always enjoyed playing little games with the audience leaving clues, codes, and symbols that go by largely unnoticed on the first viewing and would probably need recourse to Google and a DVD pause button to fully unpack. I like to think that gothic art is a secret language carrying a hidden message from out of the darkness of futures past, a message registered by our subconscious that impacts on our dreams and nightmares.

Buddy Giovinazzo (Segment: I Love You)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I didn't do any research for this project but I'd been familiar with Grand Guignol theater because it reflected my own artistic tastes in film and theater. My films have always been in the Grand Guignol arena in that they are naturalistic, dramatic films, usually dealing with trouble characters, that eventually explode into shocking violence.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

I like to shock the audience. I think there's nothing better than to give the audience a good shock during a film, or at least show them something they might not ever see, or show something with another point of view that would be disturbing. I believe that violence, when portrayed in a film, should be realistic and bloody, the way violence is in real life. Anytime I've ever seen any real life violence, it was bloody and shocking and disturbing, and that's how I believe violence in certain films should be portrayed; at least in my films, that is.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

The theme of my story is about obsessive love, which isn't really love at all. It's about neediness and pathos that costumes itself as love and altruism, but is really just another form of psychosis.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

Under the surface of our normal everyday lives, there are people who are dangerous to us and to themselves, and these are people that you wouldn't really expect to be dangerous. I like the audience to look into the windows of my characters and see a different side to life; a side that you don't want to live in, but maybe it'd be interesting to watch it for a little while.

#5 One of the most disturbing parts of your segment is how you play with the audience's desire to lay blame and take sides when a relationship fails. It's probably my favorite in terms of clever dialogue. Did you have the audience and their responses in mind when writing?

Not really. I wrote the film first for myself. I figured, if I liked it, then maybe there's enough demented people out there who would like it as well. I always write first for myself, and then I hope that there's an audience that can support whatever it is I'm doing. I never realized how funny some of the dialogue was until I screened the film with an audience. Women, especially, love some of the dialogue; I'm proud of that.

#6 In "I Love You" the timeline plays a very important part in the storytelling. Did you write it all the scenes in a consecutive way and then play around with the timeline, or did it come out pretty much as we see it on screen?

I wrote the story pretty much the way it is. With this type of film, a short length and also being part of an anthology, I didn't have time to experiment with time jumping and restructuring, so I tried to have the film already formed and cut in my head before I shot it. That doesn't happen very often with me, I do a lot of my writing work in the editing process, sometimes changing the entire structure of what I shot on set. But with "I LOVE YOU" it was pretty much edited the way I conceived it originally.

Tom Savini (Segment: Wet Dreams)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I didn't have to do any research as I was already familiar with Grande Guignol as my documentary called *Scream Greats* points out in referencing my work in movies. My stuff has always been compared to Grande Guignol and I

was even approached by off Broadway producers to consult on a production being produced on the New York stage using Grand Guignol techniques. I can't say there were historical details influencing me. It was there's a job to do... let's do it...

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

Unless you're Peter Jackson and the movie is *Bad Taste*....there's no excuse.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

Insecurity.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

I want men to squirm and women to cheer.

#5 You seem to have a lot of empathy and affection for the female characters in your work. In fact, strong women are a theme in almost everything you've ever directed. Do you feel that you understand women well?

Let's just say that I have learned a lot from women.

#6 During the Q&A at the Fantasia film festival you mentioned that your segment had been written years before. What had it originally been written for?

Nope, only the beginning was "talked about" before with John Esposito when we were prepping his script of *Graveyard Shift*.

Douglas Buck (Segment: The Accident)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I had a general understanding of what the Grand Guignol theater was before I was asked to take part in this anthology. However, after I was asked, I did read up on it a bit. What struck me was how popular this type of theater, especially the horror plays, were after World War I and how some historians theorized that going to the theater and seeing the horrific bloody images was a way to purge the real horrors of World War I. This idea interested me enough that I decided to use the idea of horror in stories — whether in theater, films, books, wherever — as a way of dealing with real life horror as the ultimate exploration of my episode.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

Well, I have certainly used gore and bloody effects in previous films I've done (as well as have all of the directors on *The Theatre Bizarre*). I'm not against the use of any imagery, no matter how perverse, bloody or subversive, on the cinema screen. Where I may find possible objection, however, is with the intentions of the filmmaker. Being a filmmaker, a presenter of images for people to ingest, is a responsibility, especially in dealing with material that may cause a reaction, a shock, that I think should be taken seriously. So many of the profound images presented to us are merely there as consumerist fodder to momentarily stimulate us until we move onto the next image or object of

titillation. This I find reprehensible. Unfortunately, this concept is basically the mainstream way of living in a consumerist society and, I guess, just another reason why I usually feel out of step.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

As I mentioned above, the theme or idea I was considering or trying to explore in my episode relates to the nature of horror stories, in regards to why we are drawn to watching them, or reading them, or listening to them. In many ways, I guess, on a larger scale, it's even about our human relation to stories in general. Ultimately, I think we need them to try and help us formulate an understanding of the reality we see before us and live with every day.

Basically. skirting back to something you approached with your last question, I decided I wasn't going to make a 'Grand Guignol' episode, but rather an episode dealing with why something as potentially ghastly (for some, anyway) like Grand Guignol exists in the first place.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

If I had to distill it down to one emotion, I would say a sense of melancholia — of the type that hopefully leads to reflection and contemplation on what has been seen, tinged with sorrow.

#5 Your segment is the quietest of the bunch, yet there's a growing sense of dread to the whole thing. Not because it's bloody or frightening. It's more of an existential horror. Personally I love it, but how do you feel your segment embodies the spirit of the Grand Guignol?

I'm not sure my episode does, in fact, embody the spirit of Grand Guignol as clearly as the other episodes do... well, maybe it does, in the sense of it being a melodrama, which certainly had its place in the Grand Guignol, but not in the sense of what most people first think of when we consider the Grand Guignol. As I mentioned, I was more looking to explore what the importance of places like Grand Guignol have to us, why we have created them.

#6 Children and animals are usually a director's nightmare. Your segment contains both. How did that go?

During pre-production, my DP Karim Hussain jokingly lamented how, just as you say, everyone says 'Don't work with children or animals. You'll never get what you want and they just slow everything down'. And, of course, my episode has both. Well, in this case, the fates were kind. Melanie Simard was an absolute pro to work with. In fact, I have worked with a number of child actors in my film and have never had a problem with them. In many ways, they can be quite easy if you keep it emotionally simple when you direct them. With Melodie, however, you can direct her in more complex ways than most and she can handle it. It was interesting to watch her bounce around and act like a child before the take, then as soon as it was time to shoot, she would grow completely still and focused. And, then, as soon as it was Cut, she'd bounce happily around again.

As far as animals, well... this is the first one I worked with. The difficult thing, it turned out, wasn't getting the animal to perform, which — with the help of the trainer — was not very difficult, in fact. It was more the FINDING of this particular animal, with it needing to be trained, that seemed an almost insurmountable task... but Victoria Sanchez, my kick-ass line producer was never deterred from getting me everything I needed for the film. With a TON of effort on her part of calling and searching around everywhere and anywhere, she managed it. I will always be indebted to her for her efforts, as well as to the rest of the crew.

Karim Hussain (Vision Stains)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I had known quite a bit about the Grand Guignol theatre for some time, seeing as my interest in the horror genre has been with me since I was a child and the fact that most extreme modern genre films have their roots there. I had read some books that explained the history of the theatre as a kid and read some of the plays around that time. Even as a youngster, I wanted to adapt some of the plays to cinema, and even wrote a screenplay based on a Grand Guignol play, but it was childish practice writing, never something that would get made. Ironically, so many years later, *The Theatre Bizarre* happened, but we just went with the over-all feel of the Grand Guignol and took it elsewhere, to a much more modern place. Today, a lot of the plays, I think, would be seen as very old fashioned and morally out-dated.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

I think gore can work if there's an idea or concept behind it. While Doug decided to take the gore to a different place in his episode, I decided to still stick to the guns of a Grand Guignol story, but use the gory bits as a way to propel the story in an original way, where there's a reason for all the horrible things we present to happen. The syringe in the eyeball thing then became the actual story, instead of a gory punctuation that only exists to shock. I think the fact that The Writer kills these women out of a strange, yet admittedly perverse and horrific agenda to help them in her mind, to actually preserve their stories, gives a more original context to the graphic violence on-screen. To just do a gory movie without justification to its content might be amusing to watch, but if I'm going to direct a movie, which is something I don't do very often these days, primarily I work as a cinematographer, I want it to count as something that at least attempts to break new ground.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

There are many themes to it, but primarily it's a story about an artist who will go to any lengths to do what she thinks is right. It's about the quest towards immortality that I think all artists strive to reach. To not be forgotten. Also it's about the superiority complex some artists can have towards their work, even if others get trampled along the way. The women being murdered could give a fuck about their stories being preserved. It's all the artist's egomania.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

Probably a strange sense of poetry or dreaminess would be nice. It's kind of got an arty vibe to it to mix with the horror, which might turn off some people, along with its voice-over which some people can take and others not. A single feeling might be not enough. I hope people get out of it what they want to, or be pleasantly surprised. At one point the movie is out of your hands and it belongs the audience's movie.

#5 Your segment does seem to have a very definite opinion about artists and how they cannibalize other people's lives for their work. What's your own personal view about the subject?

Like I said before, I think artists can indeed be a kind of cannibal to the people that surround them and events in reality. It's a mutual cannibalism, especially with regards to working with certain actors, but people can get hurt along the way. It's the nature of the beast. You try and live as a good person, as much as you can, but there's always people waiting to attack you around the corner, as much as they're willing to celebrate you. You just have to blindly run forward, be conscious of people's feelings and perspective along the way, and try not to be a total asshole as you do it. I'm much better at being nice as I work these days then I was when I first started. Now I really insist on a good vibe on set where people feel valued and appreciated. They'll perform better and it's pleasant to go to work and be respected.

#6 Another subject that's brought up is how the writer in your segment doesn't seem particularly interested in anyone ever reading what she wrote. She seems to write in the same way addicts do drugs, there's a satisfaction to it but little joy. Do you think art can be a drug?

I definitely think art can be a drug. You become one-track minded much like a junkie obsessively trying to score the next fix. It's in your blood, its chemical. But when you can't create you become depressed, despondent. The trouble with films is that to express yourself you need so much damn money and a machine behind it, if you're used to working at a certain level. So there is more time spent in withdrawal than in a drug-induced stupor. It creates a lot of pain. But it's beautiful when you're high. So beautiful...

David Gregory (Segment: Sweets)

#1 Did you do any research on the Grand Guignol before starting your segment? If so, what elements or bits of historical detail influenced the end result?

I had been aware of Grand Guignol since a very young age through Denis Gifford's essential "A Pictorial History of Horror Movies" book and had always been fascinated by it. When I was thinking of a suitably all-encompassing theme for THEATRE BIZARRE I thought Grand Guignol was perfect ("Grand Guignol" was an early working title for the film but took the more easily pronounceable *Theatre Bizarre* from a late 19th century French anthology play), not just because of its legacy and influence over the horror genre but also how it has subsequently become an adjective to describe any kind of over the top or sensationalist horror in popular entertainment. Once I settled on that wide net to give the directors as the leaping off point for their films I subsequently went ahead and did more research on the history of the theatre. My episode "Sweets" takes more of the adjective approach though I did make sure that most of the piece took place in a couple of spaces which could have played on a stage, with a couple of the key shots in those spaces being designed like they were being viewed from the audience's wide perspective of a stage set. As an aside, when we showed the film in Paris me and the other Bizarros present paid a visit to the location of the original Grand Guignol theatre. Sort of a class trip to pay our respects to our principal influence.

#2 While the original Grand Guignol's goal was to sicken the audience. Theatre Bizarre wisely takes a more sophisticated approach, making every drop of blood count as opposed to tossing out gallons indiscriminately. What's your take on the use of gore in order to achieve an effect on the audience?

It really depends on the context. I'm a gore lover having grown up choosing movies at the video store by the goriest pictures on the back cover. I think it can work in a humorous way like in an early Peter Jackson or EVIL DEAD or RE-ANIMATOR, it can be disturbing like seeing the flesh ripped off a girl's arms in MEN BEHIND THE SUN or the unflinching violence in COMBAT SHOCK or THE MANSON FAMILY, it can be stylish/aesthetically pleasing as Argento made it his signature in the late 70s/early 80s or it can be just simply entertaining in its audacity like a good old throat chomping in ZOMBIE or a head exploding in SCANNERS or DAWN OF THE DEAD or THE PROWLER even. But just as there are a multitude of ways to use cinematic gore well, if it's not done well then it can be boring or off-putting too. With "Sweets" I was trying to make a cocktail of the stylish with a pinch of the humorous and a splash of the disturbing. Hopefully people find it at least one of those, even better if all three.

#3 The original Grand Guignol was often more about feel than story. Stripped of its story, what is the overall theme of your segment?

The overall theme is the beauty of the grotesque. I'd say the intended extremity of the imagery was first and foremost in the episode. It started as a very basic story skeleton that I wanted to decorate with beautiful and disgusting things.

#4 Grand Guignol often tended to be single minded in purpose. What is the single emotion or thought (Besides horror or gross-out) that you wish to elicit from viewers with your segment?

Actually as I say above I wanted to tread the line between two apparently polarized aesthetics, the beautiful and the disgusting. Is that funny? Disturbing? Sickening? So far it's affected different people different ways and that's great.

#5 I love how your segment never really shows its hand. We never really know what's actually happening and can only make guesses based upon the few clues that you give us. Can you tell us one or two secrets about the story behind your segment?

Well the story was born out of a personal experience. But the experience as it happened was completely dull as far as how I thought it could be represented as a straight piece of drama. And I think most people of both sexes can relate to the stripped down break-up scenario, particularly the clichéd hollow break-up excuses that we've either heard or used and how the giver and receiver handles them. So it became much more interesting to me to keep that backbone then add the depraved indulgence and then ride the metaphor to its logical, blood-soaked conclusion. I also used to be intrigued, and very frustrated, by red rope club culture. I would be so frustrated as a British teenage male by some fat necked bloke in a penguin suit being the gatekeeper to my pleasurable night out in some secret society behind the velvet curtain. Now, once one was able to get into whatever dance club/drinking establishment one was formerly refused entry to, it was without exception a major disappointment, but I like to draw on what my imagination told me was going on that was only accessible to some specific chosen sect.

#6 The relationship shown in the segment is obviously a Feedee/Feeder relationship. Did you do any research on that?

Actually, not so much because I wanted to avoid realism in the addiction and make it more fantastical. I mean I know it exists but I wanted it to be more like a drug or booze type addiction but represented through food which lends itself to all kinds of excessive color and absurdity to illustrate a metaphor for an increasingly unhealthy relationship. And rather than drawing on a feeder type situation I used more of the stuff that we'd see people eating or preparing in something like MONDO CANE. The vomit-inducing restaurants and markets, the foie gras creation or the slaughter of the bull were not dirty secrets but were actually a way of life that was chosen and often a very proud one. My hope is that more audience members will be able to relate to the occasional overindulgence in food as a more commonplace human vice than any other addiction thus causing a basic visceral response, be it laughter or revulsion.

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