

Terrifier 2

Terrifier 2 is a 2022 American <u>slasher film</u>^{[2][5][6]} written, directed, edited and produced by <u>Damien Leone</u>. A sequel to <u>Terrifier</u> (2016), it is the second film centered solely around <u>Art the Clown</u> and third feature-length film to feature the character. It is the fourth installment and sixth overall installment in the <u>Terrifier franchise</u>. It includes the return of <u>David Howard Thornton</u> and <u>Samantha Scaffidi</u>, who portrayed Art the Clown and <u>Victoria Heyes</u>, respectively, in the first film, and stars <u>Lauren LaVera</u>, Elliott Fullam, Sarah Voigt, Kailey Hyman and Casey Hartnett. The plot follows Art's resurrection and pursuit of teenage <u>Sienna Shaw</u> (LaVera) and her younger brother Jonathan (Fullam) on Halloween night—a year after the events of the first film.

The film originated from a feature film concept Leone began developing shortly after filming his directorial debut short film *The 9th Circle* (2009). The concept of the planned film focused heavily on an angel-dressed heroine and ultimately fell apart. Following its predecessor's release, Leone wanted to bring the heroine back—she would evolve into Sienna, someone Leone describes as the "heart and soul" of *Terrifier 2*. Leone spent three months writing a character-driven screenplay following criticism of the first film's perceived lack of narrative.

Funding was exacting as the script was more ambitious than the first film and required a bigger budget. Leone secured finances from private investors prior to filming, and he launched an Indiegogo campaign with a \$50,000 goal to produce a practical effects-driven scene. The campaign was a massive success, reaching over 430% of the initial goal with a donation total of \$250,000. It is one of the numerous films impacted by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic with principal photography coming to a halt mid-2020 due to the pandemic lockdowns.

It had its world premiere at the <u>FrightFest</u> on August 29, 2022, and was theatrically released in the United States on October 6, 2022, becoming a hit at the box office, grossing \$15 million. It received positive reviews from critics, with particular praise for LaVera and

Terrifier 2



Theatrical release poster

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Thornton's performances, though the film's runtime received some criticism. Many critics considered the film to be an improvement over its predecessor. A sequel, *Terrifier 3*, will be released in 2024.

Plot

After being resurrected by an unknown entity following the Miles County Massacre, Art the Clown brutally murders the coroner investigating his body and goes to the laundromat to clean his blood-soaked garments, where he encounters the Little Pale Girl—a mysterious entity in similar clown attire. A lone patron sees Art interacting with the girl, who is invisible to him, before being killed by him.

A year later, teenager <u>Sienna Shaw</u> is preparing her Halloween costume: an angel warrior made by her father, who recently died of a brain tumor. Her younger brother Jonathan has become fixated with Art since discovering sketches of him in their father's sketchbook. That night, Sienna has a nightmare of Art and awakens to a fire on her dresser; a sword that was a gift from her father remains unscathed.

	Paul Wiley		
Production companies	Bloody Disgusting Dark Age Cinema Fuzz on the Lens Productions		
Distributed by	Cinedigm		
Release dates	August 29, 2022 (FrightFest) October 6, 2022 (United States)		
Running time	138 minutes ^[1]		
Country	United States		
Language	English		
Budget	\$250,000 ^{[2][3]}		
Box office	\$15.7 million ^[4]		

On Halloween, Jonathan sees Art and the Little Pale Girl at school playing with a dead <u>opossum</u>. Sienna has a panic attack when her friends Allie and Brooke discuss <u>Victoria Heyes</u>'s mutilation of talk show host Monica Brown. Sienna and Allie go to the costume shop, where they encounter Art. Art kills the shop vendor and breaks into Allie's home, where he brutally maims her. Allie's mother is killed when she discovers her daughter's still alive body.

Jonathan shows Sienna and their mother, Barbara, his father's sketchbook, filled with newspaper clippings revealing that the Little Pale Girl bears resemblance to Art's first victim Emily Crane, the daughter of a circus performer. He believes their father knew how to stop Art. After Barbara hits Jonathan, he runs away. Art kills Barbara, kidnaps Jonathan, and steals Sienna's sword.

At a Halloween party, Brooke spikes Sienna's drink with <u>MDMA</u> in an attempt to calm her, but she has a panic attack. Brooke and her boyfriend, Jeff, drive her home, but the Little Pale Girl lures Sienna to the Terrifier haunted attraction at the now-defunct carnival where Art killed her years before. Art kills Jeff and Brooke.

Sienna is knocked unconscious by Art. She awakens to find him using a scalpel on her brother and begins attacking him with his own weapons. Though Art is killed several times by the siblings, he continuously manages to resurrect. He kills Sienna with her father's sword and throws her into a <u>water torture cell</u>. As he attempts to eat Jonathan, she is mysteriously resurrected by the sword. She decapitates Art; The Little Pale Girl takes his head and leaves without hurting Sienna and Jonathan.

In a mid-credits scene, an institutionalized Victoria writes "Vicky + Art" and obscenities on the wall with her blood. She gives birth to Art's living head, leaving a horrified nurse screaming.

Cast

- Lauren LaVera as Sienna Shaw, Jonathan's older sister [7]
- David Howard Thornton as Art the Clown
- Elliott Fullam as Jonathan, Sienna's younger brother
- Sarah Voigt as Barbara, mother of Sienna and Jonathan
- Kailey Hyman as Brooke, Sienna's friend
- Casey Hartnett as Allie, Sienna's friend
- Charlie McElveen as Jeff, Brooke's boyfriend
- Amelie McLain as the Little Pale Girl^[c]
- Johnath Davis as Ricky, the costume shop clerk
- <u>Samantha Scaffidi</u> as <u>Victoria Heyes</u>, the sole survivor of the events of the first film, who is now in a psychiatric hospital [8]
- Leah Voysey as Clown Cafe TV host / Nurse
- Chris Jericho as Burke, a nurse
- Felissa Rose as Ms. Principe
- Owen Myre as Sean
- Griffin Santopietro as Eric
- Tamara Glynn as costume shop mom

Additionally, <u>Jenna Kanell</u> and Catherine Corcoran are credited for photographic cameos as Tara and Dawn, respectively.

Production

Writing

"...That was my favorite character that I ever wrote, ever. So I knew that character was always there; I knew one day I was going to bring that character back and finally make a movie with her. So she is the heart and soul of *Part 2*, and everything revolves around that character. So I always knew that seed was there."

— Damien Leone on the evolution of Sienna Shaw^[9]

Leone revealed February 12, 2019, in a post on his social media showing the cover page, that the first draft of the screenplay was complete. Leone envisioned the concept of the film dating back to 2008—with an idea of an angel-warrior costumed heroine battling the Art the Clown character. This heroine was the basis of Sienna, who Leone wanted to bring back for *Terrifier 2*, which he knew he wanted to make while filming the first film. The writing process for the film differed from Leone's previous film projects, in which he had to work around parttime jobs. Leone spent three consecutive months

writing. Much of his focus was on developing a character that could rival Art in popularity. When he was not writing, he would read books about screenwriting and listen to screenwriters discuss their processes with writing. [11][9]

He opted to bring back the angel-attired heroine a decade later and adapt her into Sienna Shaw. [9] Leone described much of the screenplay revolving around the teenage girl, his favorite character he has ever written. [9] Leone describes the screenplay as much bigger in scope than the previous film and recollects not considering a budget while writing. [9]

One of the factors during writing was establishing an adversary to Art—something inspired by the relationship between <u>superhero</u> <u>Batman</u> and <u>supervillain</u> <u>Joker.^[12]</u> During a lunch with Leone and David Howard Thornton, the actress who plays Sienna, Lauren LaVera, was told of this intended dynamic between her character and Art.^[12] Besides Sienna, LaVera recollects the script focusing heavily on Sienna's younger brother Jonathan, their mother, and her friends—all of whom play a crucial part in the story.^[12]

Casting

Both Thornton and Scaffidi were confirmed to reprise their respective roles of Art and Victoria, [14] becoming the only returning cast members of the prior film, other than a brief voice cameo by Michael Leavy (who played Will the Exterminator in the original film) as the Club Announcer and DJ voice, and Corey Duval, who returns as the coroner from the first installment. There were also reports of Steven Della Salla and Jason Leavy, the two cops in the original film, returning in cameo appearances as well; the three are all producers on the second installment. [15] On September 11, 2019 it was announced that actress Lauren LaVera was cast in the lead role of Sienna Shaw. On October 15, it was announced that Felissa Rose, Chris Jericho and Tamara Glynn had joined the cast in cameo roles. [16][17] Actress Leah Voysey had auditioned for Sienna and her friends Ally and Brooke before co-producer Jason Leavy, who knew about Voysey's singing and guitar skills, invited her to be the host that performed a song in the Clown Cafe dream sequence, which after being filmed led to Leone bringing Voysey to appear as a nurse in the credits scene. [18]

Filming

While Leone had secured full funding for the film from a handful of private investors prior to filming, he launched an <u>Indiegogo</u> with a \$50k goal to finance a practical effects driven scene and to attach a



Samantha Scaffidi reprises her role as Victoria Heyes from the first film, with an updated appearance[13]



Lauren LaVera portrays Sienna Shaw

well known actor to the project. The campaign was a major success, grossing over \$125k in the first week. $\frac{[19]}{}$ It reached a total of \$250k by the end of the campaign, 430% more than the initial goal.

Filming began in October 2019. While a majority of the film's main story line had already been completed, principal photography was halted due to COVID-19, becoming one of many films affected by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. On September 7, Leone revealed that he was in the process of working on the prosthetic makeup for Victoria's disfigured face in preparation of filming Samantha Scaffidi's scenes. As Sienna's costume received a positive reception when production stills were officially released, when asked about the attire, LaVera described liking it on the first day of wearing it but began to feel disdain for it throughout the course of filming as it was uncomfortable to wear. She even obtained blisters from wearing it. Filming quietly resumed and wrapped on July 10, 2021. The post-

credits scene would originally reveal Art growing out of the back of Victoria's head, but once <u>Malignant</u> had a similar getup for its villain, Leone discarded it and shot another sequence where Victoria gave birth to Art's head. [25]

Marketing

A teaser trailer for *Terrifier 2* was released on July 24, 2020. MovieWeb's Jeremy Dick commented on the teaser, stating that "the teaser is pretty exciting to watch for anyone who enjoyed the first movie." [28]

It was also announced that a three-issue limited release comic book series would be issued prior to the film's release. [29][30]

Special effects

The film has gained significant media coverage because of the gore effects, particularly for the notorious "Bedroom Scene," depicting the lengthy murder of the supporting character Allie (Casey Hartnett). Leone has stated it was the most challenging and technical scene to film out of the entire production—three minutes depicting mutilation. Leone had to create a life-size replica <u>puppet</u> of Hartnett that could work as an animatronic. He stated, "I had people under the bed with rods going through it into her limbs and behind the wall operating her head. I put some rubber gloves in her chest with tubing to have her breathe. Leone digitally added Hartnett's eye onto the puppet when Allie awakens to her mother.

Release

Terrifier 2 had its world premiere at the <u>Fantastic Fest</u> on August 29, 2022, [32] and screened the same day at <u>Fright Fest</u> in London. It was theatrically released on October 6, 2022 by <u>Bloody Disgusting</u>. The film is intended to later stream on <u>Screambox</u>, as well as play at various "prominent genre festivals" prior to its official release. Leone had previously expressed a desire to release the picture "<u>road show</u> style" once finished. [34][35]

While initially set for a <u>one-week limited theatrical release</u>, audience demand led Bloody Disgusting to announce that *Terrifier 2* would remain in theaters for a second weekend on October 12, 2022. On October 17, this run was extended once more for another week.

The film was released for \underline{VOD} on November 11, 2022, followed by a $\underline{Blu\text{-ray}}$ and DVD release on December 27, 2022. [38] It grossed \$3.2 million in home sales. [39]

Reception

Box office

Terrifier 2 was released in 886 theaters in the United States, grossing \$400,000 on its opening day. [40] It went on to debut to \$805,000, and then made \$1 million the following weekend (an increase of 28%). *Variety* called the film's success a "shock" to the industry due to its low budget, limited mainstream marketing, and lack of marquee stars. [3] Through its first two weeks of release, the film had grossed \$3.4 million. [41] Expanding to 1,550 theaters in its fourth weekend (an increase of 795) the film made \$1.8 million, for a running total of \$10.1 million as of November 2022. [42]

Speaking of the film's box office success, Leone said, "I did not expect it to make this kind of splash or play in theaters, honestly, other than maybe a few arthouse theaters. To see it snowballing, the word of mouth growing, people getting sick and fainting and it really taking off, I never expected this or for it to make millions of dollars in theaters." [43]

Critical response

On the <u>review aggregator</u> website <u>Rotten Tomatoes</u>, 86% of 78 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.8/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Terrifier 2* outdoes the original in every way – which makes it bad news for the squeamish, but a bloody good time for genre enthusiasts." <u>Metacritic</u>, which uses a <u>weighted average</u>, assigned the film a score of 59 out of 100, based on eight critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews. <u>[45]</u>

Jeffrey Anderson of Common Sense Media described the characters as memorable, particularly Sienna, due to her character development. Anderson states that "human life starts to matter more here than it did in the first film." [46] Matt Donato of IGN while stating the film has "underdeveloped subplots and themes" noted it as an improvement of the original film and highlighted the performance of LaVera, writing that she "rules as Sienna in her angel-winged fantasy armor as a final girl fighting for family, facing her demons, and screaming bloody war cries in Art's mocking face." [47] Matthew Jackson of Paste wrote that "LaVera, tasked with injecting humanity into the sequel, lives up to this task with pure star power." [48] Trace Sauveur of Paste praised the "sense of physicality and comic timing" of Thornton. [49] Sammy Gecsoyler from Paste praised the film a total of three stars out of five, praising the film's creative kills, and performances, while giving some criticism towards its runtime.

The film was not without its detractors. <u>Owen Gleiberman</u> of <u>Variety</u> commended the film for effectively capturing the look and feel of 1970's and 1980's slasher films, as well as the soundtrack and special effects, but was critical of the relentless brutality and unsympathetic characters. <u>[51]</u> Adam Graham of <u>The Detroit</u> <u>News</u> rated the film a grade D, calling it "[a] bludgeoning exercise in splatter, which drags on well past the two hour mark with no sense of purpose other than its own inert attempts to shock."

Audience response

Following its release, there were several reports of viewers vomiting and <u>fainting</u> during their screenings of *Terrifier 2*, with one instance allegedly having emergency services being called. Speaking on the audience reactions to the film, director Damien Leone remarked, "Listen, I would have loved to have a couple of walk-outs, I think that's sort of a badge of honor because it is an intense movie. I don't want people fainting, getting hurt during the movie. But it's surreal."

Accolades

Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Nominee(s)	Result	Ref.
Fangoria Chainsaw Awards May 21, 2023	Augusta May 21, 2022	Best Kill	Killing Allie	Won	
		Best Limited Release Movie	Terrifier 2	Won	[56]
	Best Makeup FX	Damien Leone	Won	[50]	
		The Editor's Eyeball Award	Lauren LaVera	Won	

Sequel

In 2019, both Leone and Thornton stated that a *Terrifier 3* is planned, [57] along with further installments that will slowly build on Art's background and motives. In October 2022, Leone said he had an entire treatment for a third film but it "is getting so big that it could potentially split into a *Part 4* because [he] wouldn't want to make another 2 hour 20 minute movie." The Coven Films, a French distribution company and executive producer of the series, announced in May 2023 that filming for the third would begin in either November or December of that year with an expected release in late 2024, a "low-mid seven figure budget." Leone, producer Phil Falcone, and actors David Howard Thornton and Lauren LaVera are all slated to reprise their roles. [59][60]

Principal photography commenced by July $2023.^{[61]}$ The film is set during Christmas. $^{[62]}$ In October of the same year, it was announced that the first trailer for the sequel would debut on November 1, 2023; exclusively during a theatrical re-release of *Terrifier 2*. $^{[63]}$

Notes

- a. The *Terrifier* franchise is a spin-off of the <u>All Hallows' Eve</u> anthology film which features Art the Clown, in the character's first feature film. The character previously appeared in the writer/director's short films, *The 9th Circle* (2009) and *Terrifier* (2011).
- b. As depicted in Terrifier.
- c. McLain also appears as Emily Crane in a photographic cameo.

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External links

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