

= The Evil Dead =

The Evil Dead is a 1981 American black comedy horror film written and directed by Sam Raimi and executive produced by Raimi and Bruce Campbell, who also stars alongside Ellen Sandweiss and Betsy Baker. The film focuses on five college students vacationing in an isolated cabin in a remote wooded area. After they find an audiotape that releases a legion of demons and spirits, members of the group suffer from demonic possession, leading to increasingly gory mayhem. Raimi and the cast produced the short film *Within the Woods* as a "prototype" to build the interest of potential investors, which secured Raimi US \$ 90 @, @ 000 to produce *The Evil Dead*. The film was shot on location in a remote cabin located in Newport, Tennessee, in a difficult filming process that proved extremely uncomfortable for the majority of the cast and crew.

The low @-@ budget horror film attracted the interest of producer Irvin Shapiro, who helped screen the film at the 1982 Cannes Film Festival. Horror author Stephen King gave a rave review of the film, which helped convince New Line Cinema to serve as its distributor. Though a meager commercial success in the United States, the film made its budget back through worldwide distribution, and grossed \$ 2 @. @ 4 million during its theatrical run. Both early and later critical reception were universally positive and in the years since its release, *The Evil Dead* has developed a reputation as one of the largest cult films and has been cited among the greatest horror films of all time. *The Evil Dead* launched the careers of Campbell and Raimi, who would collaborate on several films together throughout the years, including Raimi's *Spider @-@ Man* trilogy.

The film has spawned a media franchise, beginning with two sequels written and directed by Raimi, *Evil Dead II* (1987) and *Army of Darkness* (1992), as well as video games, comic books, and a TV series. The film's protagonist Ash Williams (Campbell) is regarded as a cult icon. The fourth film, serving as a reboot, a remake, and a sequel, was titled *Evil Dead* and was released in 2013. Raimi co @-@ produced the film alongside Campbell and the franchise producer, Robert Tapert. As with the other films, the followup TV series *Ash vs. Evil Dead* was created and produced by Sam and Ivan Raimi, with Campbell also executive producing.

= = Plot = =

Five Michigan State University students ? Ash Williams (Bruce Campbell), his girlfriend Linda (Betsy Baker), Ash's sister Cheryl (Ellen Sandweiss), their friend Scotty, and his girlfriend Shelly ? venture into the Tennessee hills to vacation in an isolated cabin for their spring break. They soon run into trouble, first narrowly avoiding another motorist, then having a sudden scare as the bridge near the cabin begins to collapse as they cross. That night, while Cheryl is making a drawing of a clock, her hand becomes violently possessed by a mysterious entity, causing her to draw a picture that looks like a book with a deformed, evil face. She fails to mention the incident to the others, dismissing it as her imagination.

When the trapdoor to the cellar mysteriously flies open during dinner, Ash and Scotty go down to investigate and find the *Naturom Demonto*, a Sumerian version of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, along with a tape recording of incantations in which, when played by Ash then Scotty, unleashes demons and evil spirits. Cheryl becomes hysterical when a tree crashes through the window, and she runs to her room. Later, she hears strange voices and goes outside to investigate. She is attacked and raped by demonically possessed trees, but manages to escape. The others do not believe her story, but Ash agrees to drive her to town where she can find a place to stay for the night. However, they find that the only bridge connecting the cabin to the rest of the world has been destroyed. Back at the cabin, Ash listens to more of the tape and while the girls play cards, Cheryl then becomes demonically possessed, telling them that the demons will kill them. She then stabs Linda in the ankle with a pencil, and Scotty locks her in the cellar.

Shelly is the next to become possessed; she attacks Scotty, who eventually dismembers her with an felling axe. They bury her, and a shaken Scotty leaves to find an alternate trail through the woods. Checking on Linda, Ash discovers that she too became possessed. Scotty returns, suffering from injuries inflicted by the possessed trees. Before losing consciousness, he tells Ash

that a trail does exist but is impossible because of the trees . Linda and Cheryl unsuccessfully attempt to deceive Ash into believing they are no longer possessed , only to attack him again . He locks Linda outside the cabin and tends to Scotty 's injuries , but she sneaks in through the back door and attacks Ash with a dagger , which he uses to impale her . Taking her body to the woodshed , Ash tries to force himself to dismember her with a chainsaw , but finds himself unable to do it and buries her instead . She rises from the grave and attacks him , forcing him to decapitate her with a shovel . Returning to the cabin , Ash finds that Cheryl has escaped from the cellar . Arming himself with a shotgun , he finds her hiding outside and shoots her in the shoulder . He then descends into the cellar to search for more shotgun shells after barricading the doors . While there , he hears voices and sees blood seeping from numerous crevices and openings in the walls .

A demonically possessed Scotty tries to kill Ash as Cheryl breaks through the door . During their fight , Ash sees that the Book of the Dead has fallen near the fireplace and is starting to burn , as are Cheryl and Scotty . As Cheryl raises a fireplace poker to impale him , Ash snatches the book and throws it into the fire . With the book burned , Cheryl and Scotty disintegrate and their blood is soaked all over Ash . After watching in horror , Ash hears an ominous voice saying " Join us " and heads outside while the sun rises . Walking outside to his car , an unseen evil speeds through the forest and the cabin and descends upon him . He turns around and screams in terror before the film cuts abruptly to the end credits .

= = Production = =

= = = Background and writing = = =

Raimi and Campbell grew up together , and have been friends from a young age . The duo directed several low @-@ budget Super 8 mm film projects together . Several were comedies , including Clockwork and It 's Murder ! . Shooting a suspense scene in It 's Murder ! inspired Raimi to approach a career in the horror genre , and after researching horror cinema at drive @-@ in theaters , Raimi was set on directing a horror film . The idea was to shoot a short film first , which would attract the interest of producers , and then use the money gained from that to shoot a full @-@ length project . The short film that Raimi created was called Within the Woods . It was produced for \$ 1 @,@ 600 , but for The Evil Dead , Raimi needed over \$ 100 @,@ 000 .

To generate funds for the film , Raimi approached Phil Gillis , a lawyer to one of his friends . Raimi showed him Within the Woods , and although Gillis was not impressed by the short film , he offered Raimi legal advice on how to produce The Evil Dead . With his advice in mind , Raimi asked a variety of people for donations , and even eventually " begged " some . Campbell had to ask several of his own family members , and Raimi asked every individual he thought could be interested . He eventually raised enough money to produce a full @-@ length film , though not the full amount he originally wanted .

With enough money to produce the film , Raimi and Campbell set out to make what was then titled Book of the Dead , a name inspired by Raimi 's interest in the writer H. P. Lovecraft . The film was supposed to be a remake of Within the Woods , with higher production values and a full @-@ length running time . Raimi turned 20 just before shooting began , and he considered the project his " rite of passage " .

= = = Pre @-@ production and casting = = =

Raimi asked for help and assistance from several of his friends and past collaborators to make The Evil Dead . Campbell was cast as Ash Williams , the main character . To acquire more actors for the project , Raimi put an ad in The Detroit News . Betsy Baker was one of the actresses who responded , and Ellen Sandweiss , who appeared in Within the Woods , was also cast . The crew consisted almost entirely of Raimi and Campbell 's friends and family . The make @-@ up adviser for Within the Woods , Tom Sullivan , was brought on to compose the effects after expressing a

positive reaction to working with Raimi .

Without any formal assistance from location scouts , the cast had to find filming locations on their own . The crew initially attempted to shoot the film in Raimi 's hometown of Royal Oak , Michigan , but instead chose Morristown , Tennessee , as Tennessee was the only state that expressed enthusiasm for the project . The crew quickly found a remote cabin located several miles away from any other buildings . During pre @-@ production , the 13 crew members had to stay at the cabin , leading to several people sleeping in the same room . The living conditions were notoriously difficult , with several arguments breaking out between crew members .

Steve Frankel was the only carpenter on set , which made him the art direction 's sole contributor . For exterior shots , Frankel had to produce several elaborate props with a circular saw . Otherwise , the cabin mostly remained the way it was found during production . The cabin had no plumbing , but phone lines were connected to it .

= = = Filming = = =

Because of the crew 's inexperience , filming was a " comedy of errors " . The first day of filming led to the crew getting lost in the woods during a scene shot on a bridge . Several crew members became injured during the shoot , and because of the cabin 's remoteness , securing medical assistance was difficult . One notably gruesome moment on set involved ripping off Baker 's eyelashes during removal of her face @-@ mask . Because of the low budget , contact lenses as thick as glass had to be applied to the actors to achieve the " demonic eyes " effect . The lenses took ten minutes to apply , and could only be left on for about fifteen minutes because eyes could not " breathe " with them applied . Campbell later commented that to get the effect of wearing these lenses , they had to put " Tupperware " over their eyes .

Raimi developed a sense of mise en scène , coming up with ideas for scenes at a fast rate . He had drawn several crude illustrations to help him break down the flow of scenes . The crew was surprised when Raimi began using dutch angles during shots to build atmosphere during scenes . To accommodate Raimi 's style of direction , several elaborate , low @-@ budget rigs had to be built , since the crew could not afford a camera dolly . One involved the " vas @-@ o @-@ cam " , which relied on a mounted camera that was slid down long wood platforms to create a more fluid sense of motion .

A camera trick used to emulate a Steadicam inexpensively was the " shaky cam " , which involved mounting the camera to a piece of wood and having two camera operators sprint around the swamp . During scenes involving the unseen force in the woods watching the characters , Raimi had to run through the woods with the makeshift rig , jumping over logs and stones . This often proved difficult due to mist in the swamp . The film 's final scene was shot with the camera mounted to a bike , while it was quickly driven through the cabin to create a seamless long take .

Raimi had been a big fan of the The Three Stooges franchise during his youth , and it inspired him to use " fake shemps " during production . In any scene that required a background shot of a character , he would use another actor as a substitute to save time if the original actor was preoccupied . During a close @-@ up involving Richard DeManicor 's hand opening a curtain , Raimi used his own hand in the scene since it was more convenient . His brother Ted Raimi was used as a substitute in many scenes when the original actor was either busy or preoccupied .

Raimi famously enjoyed " torturing " his actors . Raimi believed that to capture pain and anger in his actors , he had to abuse them a little at times , saying , " if everyone was in extreme pain and misery , that would translate into a horror . " Producer Robert Tapert agreed with Raimi , commenting that he " enjoyed when an actor bleeds . " While shooting a scene with Campbell running down a hill , Campbell tripped and injured his leg . Raimi enjoyed poking Campbell 's injury with a stick he found in the woods . Because of the copious amounts of blood in the film , the crew produced gallons of fake blood with karo syrup . It took Campbell hours to remove the sticky substance from himself . Several actors had inadvertently been stabbed or thrown into objects during production .

On the last few days on set , the conditions had become so poor that the crew began burning furniture to stay warm . Since only exterior shots needed to be filmed at that point , they burned

nearly every piece of furniture left . Several actors went days without showering , and because of the freezing conditions , several caught colds and other illnesses . Campbell later described the filming process as nearly " twelve weeks of mirthless exercise in agony " , though he allowed that he did manage to have fun while on set . On January 23 , 1980 , filming was finished and almost every crew member left the set to return home , with Campbell staying with Raimi . While looking over the footage that had been shot , Raimi discovered that a few pick @-@ ups were required to fill in missing shots . Four days of re @-@ shoots were then done to complete the film . The final moment involved Campbell having " monster @-@ guts " splattered on him in the basement .

= = = Editing = = =

After the extensive filming process , Raimi had a " mountain of footage " that he had to put together . He chose a Detroit editing association , where he met Edna Paul , to cut the film . Paul 's assistant was Joel Coen of the Coen brothers , who helped with the film 's editing . Paul edited a majority of the film , although Coen notably edited the shed sequence . Coen had been inspired by Raimi 's *Within the Woods* and liked the idea of producing a prototype film to help build the interest of investors . Joel used the concept to help make *Blood Simple* with his brother Ethan , and he and Raimi became friends following the editing process .

The film 's first cut ran at around 117 minutes , which Campbell called an impressive achievement in light of the 65 @-@ minute length of the screenplay . It was then edited down to a more marketable 85 minutes . Raimi was inspired by the fact that Brian De Palma was editing his own film *Blow Out* with John Travolta at the same sound facility . One of the most intricate moments during editing was the stop @-@ motion sequence where the corpses " melted " , which took hours to cut properly . The film had unique sounds that required extensive recording from the crew . Several sounds were not recorded properly during shooting , which meant the effects had to be redone in the editing rooms . Dead chickens were stabbed to replicate the sounds of mutilated flesh , and Campbell had to scream into a microphone for several hours .

Much like *Within the Woods* , *The Evil Dead* needed to be blown up to 35mm , then the industry standard , to be played at movie theaters . The relatively large budget made this a much simpler process with *The Evil Dead* than it had been with the short film .

= = Promotion and distribution rights = =

With the film completed , Raimi and the crew decided to celebrate with a " big premiere " . They chose to screen the film at Detroit 's Redford Theatre , which Campbell had often visited as a child . Raimi opted to have the most theatrical premiere possible , using custom tickets and wind tracks set in the theater , and ordering ambulances outside the theater to build atmosphere . The premiere setup was inspired by horror director William Castle , who would often attempt to scare his audiences by using gimmicks . Local turnout for the premiere exceeded the cast 's expectations , with a thousand patrons showing up . The audiences responded enthusiastically to the premiere , which led to Raimi 's idea of " touring " the film to build hype .

Raimi showed the film to anyone willing to watch it , booking meetings with distribution agents and anyone with experience in the film industry . Eventually Raimi came across Irvin Shapiro , the man who was responsible for the distribution of George A. Romero 's *Night of the Living Dead* and other famous horror films . Upon first viewing the film , he joked that while it " wasn 't *Gone with the Wind* " , it had commercial potential , and he expressed an interest in distributing it . It was his idea not to use the then @-@ title *Book of the Dead* , because it made the film sound boring . Raimi brainstormed several ideas , eventually going with *The Evil Dead* , deemed the " least worst " title . Shapiro also advised distributing the film worldwide to garner a larger income , though it required a further financial investment by Raimi , who managed to scrape together what little money he had .

Shapiro was a founder of the Cannes Film Festival , and allowed Raimi to screen the film at the 1982 festival out of competition . Stephen King was present at its screening and gave the film a rave review . *USA Today* released an article about King 's favorite horror films ; the author cited *The Evil*

Dead as his fifth favorite film of the genre . The film severely affected King , who commented that while watching the film at Cannes , he was " registering things [he] had never seen in a movie before " . He became one of the film 's largest supporters during the early efforts to find a distributor , eventually describing it as the " most ferociously original film of the year " , a quote used in the film 's promotional pieces . King 's comments attracted the interest of critics , who otherwise would likely have dismissed the low @-@ budget thriller .

The film 's press attracted the attention of British film distribution agent Stephen Woolley . Though he considered the film a big risk , Woolley decided to take on the job of releasing the film in the United Kingdom . The film was promoted in an unconventional manner for a film of its budget , receiving marketing on par with that of larger budget films . Dozens of promotional pieces , including film posters and trailers , were showcased in the UK , heavy promotion rarely expended on such a low @-@ budget film . Woolley was impressed by Raimi , whom he called " charming " , and was an admirer of the film , which led to his taking more risks with the film 's promotion than he normally would have .

Fangoria started covering the film in late 1982 , writing several articles about the film 's long production history . Early critical reception at the time was very positive , and along with Fangoria , King , and Shapiro 's approval , the film generated an impressive amount of interest before its commercial premiere . New Line Cinema , one of the distributors interested in the film , negotiated an agreement to distribute it domestically . The film had several " sneak previews " before its commercial release , including screenings in New York and Detroit . Audience reception at both screenings was widely enthusiastic , and interest was built for the film to such an extent that wider distribution was planned . New Line Cinema wrote Raimi a check large enough to pay off all the investors , and decided to release the film in a unique manner : simultaneously into both cinemas and onto VHS , with substantial domestic promotion .

= = Commercial release = =

Because of its large promotional campaign , the film performed above expectations at the box office . It grossed a total of \$ 2 @, @ 400 @, @ 000 worldwide , nearly eight times its production budget . However , the initial domestic gross was described as " disappointing . " It opened in 15 theaters and grossed \$ 108 @, @ 000 in its opening weekend . Word of mouth later spread , and the film became a " sleeper hit " , making over \$ 600 @, @ 000 domestically and nearly \$ 2 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 overseas . In its first week of release in 1983 two years later , the film made £ 100 @, @ 000 in the UK and quickly became that week 's best @-@ selling video release . It became the best @-@ selling video in the country that year , out @-@ grossing large @-@ budget horror releases such as The Shining . Its impressive European performance was chalked up to its heavy promotion there and the more open @-@ minded nature of audiences .

The film 's release was met with controversy . Raimi made the film as gruesome as possible with neither interest in nor fear of censorship , which led to the film 's receiving an X rating and being named a " video nasty " . Films with this label were quite violent and disturbing , and the rating was often held by pornographic and other X @-@ rated films . While The Evil Dead was not pornographic in nature , it was considered one of the most violent films of its time , and censors had issues with the film 's content , which impacted some of its commercial potential . The film was called the " number one nasty " in a nod to its status as both a nasty and the year 's best @-@ selling video release . Writer Bruce Kavin described The Evil Dead as one of the most notorious splatter films of its day , along with Cannibal Holocaust and I Spit on Your Grave . The film was banned either theatrically or on video in some countries .

= = = Home video release = = =

The first VHS release of The Evil Dead was by Thorn EMI in 1983 , and Thorn 's successor company HBO (Time Warner) / Cannon (MGM) Video later repackaged the film . Congress Video , a company notable for public domain films , issued their version in 1989 .

The resurgence of *The Evil Dead* in the home @-@ video market came through two companies that restored the film from its negatives and issued special editions in 1998 : Anchor Bay Entertainment on VHS , and Elite Entertainment on laserdisc . Anchor Bay was responsible for the film 's first DVD release in 1999 , and between them , Elite and Anchor Bay have released six different DVD versions of *The Evil Dead* , most notably a 2002 " Book Of The Dead " edition , packaged in a latex replica of the *Necronomicon* sculpted by Tom Sullivan . The film 's high @-@ definition debut was in a 2010 Blu @-@ ray .

= = Reception = =

= = = Early reception = = =

Upon its release , contemporary critical opinion was mostly positive . Bob Martin , editor of *Fangoria* , reviewed the film before its formal premiere and proclaimed that it " might be the exception to the usual run of low @-@ budget horror films " . The *Los Angeles Times* called the film an " instant classic " , proclaiming it as " probably the grisliest well @-@ made movie ever . " In a 1982 review , staff from the trade magazine *Variety* wrote that the film " emerges as the ne plus ultra of low @-@ budget gore and shock effect " , commenting that the " powerful " and inventive camerawork was key to creating a sense of dread .

British press for the film was positive ; Kim Newman of *Monthly Film Bulletin* , Richard Cook of *NME* , and Julian Petley of *Film and Filming* all gave the film good reviews during its early release . Petley and Cook compared the film to other contemporary horror films , writing that the film expressed more imagination and " youthful enthusiasm " than an average horror film . Cook described the camera work by Raimi as " audacious " , stating that the film 's visceral nature was greatly helped by the style of direction . Woolley , Newman , and several critics complimented the film for its unexpected use of black comedy , which elevated the film above its genre 's potential trappings . All three critics compared the film to the surrealistic work of Georges Franju and Jean Cocteau , noting the cinephilic references to Cocteau 's film *Orpheus* . Writer Lynn Schofield Clark in his novel *From Angels to Aliens* compared the film to better @-@ known horror films such as *The Exorcist* and *The Omen* , citing it as a key supernatural thriller .

= = = Later reception = = =

The film continues to receive universal acclaim from modern critics . The review aggregator website *Rotten Tomatoes* reported a 95 % approval rating with an average rating of 8 @. @ 1 / 10 , based on an aggregation of 55 reviews . It summarized the film : " This classic low budget horror film combines just the right amount of gore and black humor , giving *The Evil Dead* an equal amount of thrills and laughs . " *Empire* magazine stated the film 's " reputation was deserved " , writing that the film was impressive considering its low budget and the cast 's inexperience . He commented that the film successfully blended the " bizarre " combination of *Night of the Living Dead* , *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and *The Three Stooges* . A reviewer for *Film4* rated *The Evil Dead* four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five , musing that the film was " energetic , original and icky " and concluding that Raimi 's " splat @-@ stick debut is a tight little horror classic that deserves its cult reputation , despite the best efforts of the censors . "

Slant Magazine 's Ed Gonzales compared the film to Dario Argento 's work , citing Raimi 's " unnerving wide angle work " as an important factor to the film 's atmosphere . He mused that Raimi possessed an " almost unreal ability to suggest the presence of intangible evil " , which was what prevented the movie from being " B @-@ movie schlock " . BBC critic Martyn Glanville awarded the film four stars out of five , writing that for Raimi , it served as a better debut film than Tobe Hooper 's *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* or Wes Craven 's *The Last House on the Left* . Glanville noted that other than the " ill @-@ advised trees @-@ that @-@ rape scene " , the film is " one of the great modern horror films , and even more impressive when one considers its modest production values . "

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Filmcritic.com 's Christopher Null gave the film the same rating as Glanville , writing that " Raimi 's biggest grossout is schlock horror done the right way " and comparing it to Romero 's Night of the Living Dead in its ability to create stark atmosphere . Chicago Reader writer Pat Graham commented that the film featured several " clever " turns on the standard horror formula , adding that Raimi 's " anything @-@ for @-@ an @-@ effect enthusiasm pays off in lots of formally inventive bits . " The make @-@ up effects in one of the final scenes was called " amazing " by Time Out critic Stephen Garrett , who commented that although the film was light on character development , the " relentless " barrage of violent imagery made for an entertaining film . The same site later cited the film as the 41st greatest horror movie ever made . Phelim O 'Neill of The Guardian combined The Evil Dead and its sequel Evil Dead II and listed them as the 23rd best horror film ever made , announcing that the former film " stands above its mostly forgotten peers in the 80s horror boom . " Complex Magazine composed a list of the twenty @-@ five best horror movies available on Netflix , listing The Evil Dead at No. 21 . Don Summer , in his book Horror Movie Freak , and writer Kate Egan have both cited the film as a horror classic .

J.C. Maçek III of PopMatters said , " What is unquestionable is that the Raimis and their pals created a monster in The Evil Dead . It started as a disastrous failure to obtain a big break with a too long , too perilous shoot (note Campbell ? s changing hairstyle in the various scenes of the one @-@ day plot) . The film went through name changes and bannings only to survive as not only ' the ultimate experience in grueling horror ' but as an oft @-@ imitated and cashed @-@ in @-@ on classic , with 30 years of positive reviews to prove it . "

= = Aftermath = =

While The Evil Dead received favorable critical comment when it was initially released , it failed to establish Raimi 's reputation . It was , however , a box @-@ office success , which led to Campbell and Raimi teaming up again for the release of another movie . Joel Coen and his brother Ethan had collaborated as directors and released the film Blood Simple , to critical acclaim . According to Campbell , Ethan , then an accountant , expressed surprise when the duo succeeded . The Coen brothers and Raimi collaborated on a screenplay , which was released shortly after The Evil Dead . The film , Crimewave , was a box @-@ office failure . The film 's production was a " disaster " according to Campbell , who stated that " missteps " like Crimewave usually lead to the end of a director 's career . Other people involved with the film expressed similar disappointment with the project . Fortunately , Raimi had the studio support to make a sequel to The Evil Dead , which he initially decided to make out of desperation .

Evil Dead II was filmed and released in 1987 , and was also a box @-@ office success . A second , and currently final , sequel was released in 1993 , Army of Darkness . Campbell returned as the lead character Ash Williams in both films . At that time , Raimi had become a successful director , attracting Hollywood 's interest . His 1990 superhero film Darkman was another box @-@ office success , which led to an increased budget for Army of Darkness . Army of Darkness had 22 @.@ 8 times the budget of the original Evil Dead , though it was not considered to be a box @-@ office success like its two predecessors . Evil Dead II received general acclaim from critics and is often considered to be better than the original , and Army of Darkness received mostly positive reviews . The series has often attracted attention because each sequel featured more comedic qualities than the last , progressing into " weirder " territory with each film .

Unofficial sequels were also made in Italy ? where the film was known as La Casa (" The House ") ? by Joe D 'Amato 's Filmirage . In 1988 , D 'Amato produced two films labeled as sequels to Evil Dead II , Umberto Lenzi 's Ghosthouse (La Casa 3) , and Witchery (La Casa 4) , starring Linda Blair and David Hasselhoff . In 1990 , D 'Amato produced his final La Casa film , Beyond Darkness (La Casa 5) . House II was reissued in Italy as La Casa 6 , and The Horror Show was then released in Italy as La Casa 7 .

= = = Legacy = = =

The Evil Dead and its sequels have become one of the largest cult film trilogies in history . David Lavery , in his book *The Essential Cult TV Reader* , surmised that Campbell 's " career is a practical guide to becoming a cult idol " . The film launched the careers of Raimi and Campbell , who have since collaborated frequently . Raimi has worked with Campbell in virtually all of his films since , and Campbell has appeared in cameo roles in all three of Raimi 's Spider @-@ Man films , (as well as a very brief appearance at the end of *Darkman*) , which have become some of the highest @-@ grossing films in history . Though it has often been considered an odd choice for Raimi ? a director known for his violent horror films ? to direct a family @-@ friendly franchise , the hiring was mostly inspired by Raimi 's passion for comic books as a kid . Raimi returned to the horror @-@ comedy genre in 2009 with *Drag Me to Hell* .

Critics have often compared Campbell 's later performances to his role in *Evil Dead* , which has been called his defining role . Campbell 's performance as Ash has been compared to roles ranging from his performance of Elvis Presley in the film *Bubba Ho @-@ tep* to the bigamous demon in the *The X @-@ Files* episode " *Terms of Endearment* " . Campbell 's fan base gradually developed after the release of *Evil Dead II* and his short @-@ lived series *The Adventures of Brisco County , Jr .* He is a regular favorite at most fan conventions and often draws sold @-@ out auditoriums at his public appearances . The *Evil Dead* developed a substantial cult following throughout the years , and has often been cited as a defining cult classic .

The *Evil Dead* has spawned a media empire . A video game adaptation of the same name was for the Commodore 64 in 1984 , as was a trilogy of PlayStation and PlayStation 2 games in the 1990s : *Evil Dead : Hail to the King* , *Evil Dead : A Fistful of Boomstick* and *Evil Dead : Regeneration* . Ted Raimi did voices for the trilogy , and Campbell returned as the voice of Ash . The character Ash became the main character of a comic book franchise . Ash has fought both Freddy Krueger and Jason Voorhees in the *Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash* series , Herbert West in *Army of Darkness vs. Re @-@ Animator* , zombie versions of the Marvel Comics superhero team *Avengers* in *Marvel Zombies vs. The Army of Darkness* , and has even saved the life of a fictional Barack Obama in *Army of Darkness : Ash Saves Obama* . In January 2008 , Dark Horse Comics began releasing a four @-@ part monthly comic book mini @-@ series , written by Mark Verheiden and drawn by John Bolton , based on *The Evil Dead* .

In addition , the film has inspired a stage musical , *Evil Dead : The Musical* , which was produced with the permission of Raimi and Campbell . The musical has run on and off since its inception in 2003 . A remake of the film was released in 2013 , directed by Fede Alvarez and produced by Raimi and Campbell . It features actress Jane Levy as the main character , with Ash not appearing . Campbell does make a brief , uncredited cameo appearance at the end of the film in a short post @-@ credits scene .

In 2015 , an ongoing television continuation of the films called *Ash vs. Evil Dead* premiered on the Starz Network . The first episode was directed by Raimi , and Campbell is reprising his role as Ash . The series is being produced by Renaissance , and follows an older Ash as he encounters more spirits and demons from the *Necronomicon* .