

**arte**

DISTRIBUTION

# JOHNNY DEPP

## WILD CHILD

A 52' documentary

Directed by Régis Brochier

Produced by Arte France

and Tournez-s'il-vous-plaît Production

PROVISIONAL DELIVERY: JUNE 2022



# Pitch

Is it because of his own inner turmoil that, both on screen and behind the scenes, Johnny Depp seems to be so fascinated by the marginalized? As a matter of fact, the actor's life seems to be straight out of a film where death, love, drugs, motels and palaces are ubiquitous – think the America of the wretched, Marlon Brando, Hunter S. Thompson, Iggy Pop and billions of dollars. These multiple, sometimes contradictory layers are found in his most iconic interpretations: those of anti-heroes, often poetic, always offbeat, true American oddities. From Edward Scissorhands, a frightening creature with a big heart, banished from clean gardens; to Donnie Brasco, a cop lost between good and evil; to the loony Jack Sparrow, a Disney family hero; all of Depp's characters reflect the actor's own flaws. Those of an eternal teenager who resists the American dream, who has never given up walking on the wild side, and as a result has grown into an intriguing Hollywood monster.



# Intentions

Drowning in dollar bills, suffocated by popularity, Johnny Depp's destiny caught with him. The man who loved freaks ended up becoming one, to the point of making us forget that he is one of the most outstanding actors of the last forty years. Creative, inventive, poetic, he is like no other. A damaged child from the East Coast slums posing as the picture of success in an 80s TV series, a genuine icon in the 90s, a globalized star in the 2000s, a monster who was too rich in the 2010s, a ghost of himself since then... The actor's fall from grace over each decade mirrors the evolution of American society.

Johnny Depp killed Stallone: he rose to fame at the end of the Cold War, out with Rambo, in with the forgotten of the American Dream! And Johnny Depp, a trailer park boy, is one of them. A favourite actor of the grunge generation, he films with Jarmusch, Kusturica and Burton. By quoting Buster Keaton's *Go West*, re-enacting Chaplin's "dinner roll dance", and capturing the atmosphere of the *Bride of Frankenstein*, Johnny Depp tinges his "so nineties" anti-heroes with timeless references, a hint of the 20s, 30s and 40s, and offers a spellbinding journey through the history of cinema.

Johnny Depp, an unlikely combination of expressionism and grunge, attracts directors who share his fascination for America's outcasts and misfits: Kusturica, Jarmusch, John Waters, but especially Tim Burton, his alter-ego. Tim Burton sees in him an outcast who can act, much rather than an actor who can pretend to be one. *Edward Scissorhands* marks the honeymoon of these two soul mates. Johnny Depp-Tim Burton, two misfits so complementary that they made eight movies together, fascinated by the marginalized, the unhinged or the gently crazy.

Those whom America calls freaks, but whom the duo celebrate with a tender and poetic look. Depp has played some of the most eccentric real-life characters in contemporary America: gangster John Dillinger in *Public Enemies*, gonzo inventor Hunter S. Thompson in *Las Vegas Parano*, drug dealer George Jung in *Blow*, mobster James Whitey Bulger in *Strictly Criminal*, all played with an almost sickening desire to get as close as possible to what these gravediggers of the American dream really were – and to tell the story of their America.

With his interpretation of Hunter S. Thompson in *Las Vegas Parano*, we discover that few Hollywood artists have pushed method acting as far as he has – Depp lived with Thompson for three months and shot a lot of guns with him. Jack Sparrow, his character in *Pirates of the Caribbean*, is also an incredible love letter to freaks by Johnny Depp in spite of studio executives' wishes: "We hired the best-looking actor, and he ends up looking like this?" Disney CEO Michael Eisner spat out in front of the first rushes of the film. The drunk pirate would make Johnny Depp the highest paid actor in the history of cinema.

But when the star enters a dark period in his life, we learn that for years he has been spending an average of two million dollars a month, that he has bought 14 houses, including a château in France and several residences in Hollywood for \$75 million, a yacht for \$18 million, an island for \$4 million, 45 luxury cars, 200 paintings by artists from Warhol to Klimt and Basquiat, 70 guitars, that he employs more than 40 people, and that he spends \$200,000 a month on a private jet and \$30,000 on wine. "It's insulting to say I spent \$30,000 on wine," Johnny Depp retorted. "It was so much more."

Tormented both on and off the screen, Johnny Depp seems to be fascinated by characters on the fringe. Perhaps because the actor's life seems to have come straight out of a film itself, where death, love, drugs, motels, palaces, Marlon Brando and Iggy Pop meet...

These multiple, sometimes contradictory layers are found in his most iconic interpretations: often poetic, always offbeat anti-heroes, true American oddities. From *Edward Scissorhands*, a frightening creature with a big heart, to *Donnie Brasco*, a policeman lost between good and evil, to the loony Jack Sparrow, a Disney family hero, all these characters reflect the actor's flaws. Those of an eternal teenager who resists the American dream, who has never given up walking on the wild side, and as a result has grown into an intriguing Hollywood monster.



# **arte** DISTRIBUTION

## **Florence Sala**

Head of International Distribution

**Italy & USA**

f-sala@arteFrance.fr

## **Audrey Kamga**

Sales Manager

**South-America, Canada, Spain,  
Ireland, MENA region, Portugal & UK**

**Worldwide inflight**

a-kamga@arteFrance.fr

## **Sophie Soghomonian**

Sales Manager

**Eastern Europe, Israel, Russia  
Worldwide non-theatrical rights**

s-soghomonian@arteFrance.fr

## **Isabelle Monteil**

Sales Manager

**Asia, Oceania, Greece, Africa**

**Language versions**

i-monteil@arteFrance.fr

## **Franka Schwabe**

Sales Manager

**Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium,**

**France, Netherlands,**

**Scandinavia, Iceland.**

f-schwabe@arteFrance.fr

## **Whitney Marin**

Sales Assistant

w-marin@arteFrance.fr