

# Scream & scream again

BY MICHAEL GILTZ

4-6-08

Like zombies crawling out from their graves, old teen slasher movies refuse to die.

So-called "classic" horror films of the 1980s like "Prom Night" are brought to life again with bigger budgets, more gore — and cuter, familiar casts culled mostly from TV.

A new "Prom Night" opens Friday and stars Brittany Snow from TV's "American Dreams," Scott Porter from "Friday Night Lights" and Johnathon Schaech of "Models Inc."

Yet Anthony Timpone, editor of fanboy horror magazine Fangoria, says the trend is nothing new. "Hollywood was making remakes in the silent days," says Timpone.

"Hollywood realized they had these movies with audience awareness, so they just kept going back to the well. There've been umpteen versions of 'Dracula' and 'Frankenstein' and 'Dr. Jeckyll & Mr. Hyde.' All those old chestnuts get trotted out every so often."

But some splatter-film fanatics may be getting tired of this trend. Go to the Web site Ain't It Cool News, at [www.aintitcool.com](http://www.aintitcool.com), and you'll hear rumblings of discontent. The site's West Coast editor, Drew McWeeny, aka Moriarty, begins one post by stating, "I know we're supposed to get furious over every single remake that's announced these days. ..."

Fangoria's Timpone echoes that complaint. "It definitely has reached its saturation point when you realize that George Romero's first three zombie movies — 'Night of the Living Dead,' 'Dawn of the Dead' and 'Day of the Dead' — have all been remade, and 'Night of the Living Dead' has been remade twice," says Timpone, who is based in New York.



Remakes of '80s slasher hits such as "Prom Night" (l.) often feature familiar faces from TV like Brittany Snow (r.), who stars in the new version.

"It gets to the point where enough is enough already." Indeed, "Prom Night" is just the tip of the butcher knife. The first version starred Jamie Lee Curtis — and practically the entire oeuvre of the Queen of Scream has been reworked in the last few years.

Rob Zombie rebooted "Halloween" in 2007 — the 1978 original, credited as the first of its genre, starred a then-teenaged Curtis — and 1980's "Terror Train" has been reinvented as the upcoming "Train." Even John Carpenter's "The Fog" (1980) was done again in 2005.

Not all of the era's slasher films have aged well, however, so it's not always a bad idea to give them another shot.

"I'd rather see bad movies remade and done right as opposed to classic films where you can't do them better," says Timpone, who points to 2003's "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" as one of his favorite do-overs.

"At least the American remakes have been better than the Asian remakes, like 'Shutter' and 'The Eye,'" says Timpone. "There, they took the great originals and just dumb-ed them down, whereas some of the American slasher movies they're remaking were dumb to begin with."

But they are obviously making money or the studios wouldn't keep turning them out. That recent post on Ain't It Cool News had to do with who might play Jason in a remake of 1980's "Friday the 13th," scheduled to come out in February 2009. Despite negative reaction to the spate of remakes, fans excitedly parsed and debated what needed to be done to make this new "Friday" a good one.

"The fans have come to accept remakes as a fact of life," says Timpone. "Even the horror fans who complain are there opening night." ♦



"The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" thrilled audiences in 1974 (above) and also in the 2003 remake (below).



**a cut above**

For more of New York's best movie coverage plus reviews of all the latest films, go to

[NYDailyNews.com/entertainment/movies](http://NYDailyNews.com/entertainment/movies)