

**CAPTURE [THE FLAG] FILMS**

**PRESENTS**

# **GOAL OF THE DEAD**

## **FIRST HALF**

by Benjamin Rocher

## **SECOND HALF**

by Thierry Poiraud

**DOMESTIC RELEASE : FEBRUARY 27TH, 2014**

France - Scope - 70' (first half) - 68' (second half)

### **WORLD SALES**

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# SYNOPSIS

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## GOAL OF THE DEAD - FIRST HALF

For the Olympique de Paris soccer team, this away match scheduled against Caplongue was merely supposed to be one last chore before the end of the professional season. Yet no one could ever have imagined that an unknown rabies-like infection was going to spread like wildfire, turning this small town's inhabitants into ultra-violent and highly contagious creatures.

For Samuel, the former golden boy who is nearing retirement, Idriss, the arrogant wunderkind, Coubert, the team's depressed coach and Solène, the young ambitious journalist, this will turn into the most important confrontation of their lives.

## GOAL OF THE DEAD - SECOND HALF

While the rabid supporters prowl about Caplongue, which is in a state of ruin, another nightmare begins for Sam. Barricaded in the police station with other survivors, he has to face the young Cléo, his grumpy father, and Solène, who hasn't forgotten him this time. Meanwhile, Idriss and Marco, hidden in the stadium and looking for a way to escape, are also settling a few scores along the way.

# BIOGRAPHY - BENJAMIN ROCHER

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After obtaining a diploma in design, Benjamin Rocher studied digital art from 1997 to 2002 and also directed two short films: **HOMINUS REX CREATOR** (1999) written with Johnny Alves, then **TICKET LAND** (2002), created in tandem with Dimitri Amar, who also plays the main character.



In 2003, in collaboration with his brother Raphaël, he founded Empreinte Digitale, through which he produced or directed programs for television (**OPÉRATION FRISSON, SEANCE INTERDITE...**), documentaries about creation (**SUCK MY GEEK, L'AMÉRIQUE ET SES FANTÔMES..**) and set designs for many different formats (TV shows, video clips, advertisements)

In 2008, the two partners developed a new segment of activity aimed at the big screen under the name Capture The Flag Films. Benjamin Rocher then got down to directing his first collaboration with the journalist Yannick Dahan, the short film **RIVOALLAN** (2008). A successful experience that led them to co-direct **THE HORDE** in 2009.

In 2013 he directs **GOAL OF THE DEAD - FIRST HALF**, his first solo feature film.

## SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Feature Films :

2013 **GOAL OF THE DEAD - FIRST HALF**

2009 **THE HORDE** (co-directed with Yannick Dahan)

Short Films :

2008 **RIVOALLAN** (co-directed with Yannick Dahan)

2002 **TICKET-LAND** (co-directed with Dimitri Amar)

1999 **HOMINUS REX CREATOR**

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT - BENJAMIN ROCHER

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## GOAL OF THE DEAD - FIRST HALF

**GOAL OF THE DEAD** is a declaration of love to 1980s exploitation cinema.

It's a horror film, a supernatural comedy and disaster movie all rolled up into one. In short, a homage to my childhood VHS experiences.

But it's also a schoolboy comedy like France used to make back then (like the comedies of Patrick Schulmann, Georges Lautner, Claude Zidi and Patrice Leconte).

In its overtly B movie treatment, as in its format (2 films, 2 directors) **GOTD** strives to be worthy of the finest Grindhouse Programs, but coming from good ole France.

It was important for us to offer a "double-feature" with decidedly French specificities.

The environment (a small town obsessed with soccer), its characters, as well as the situations (opposing Paris to the provinces) provided many opportunities to have fun with our national quirks and hang-ups.

In the first half, I put my efforts into presenting a gallery of off-the-wall, at times ridiculous, but never parodical characters. Laughing at these characters won't stop you from being afraid for them or being moved by them. Their hopes and their mediocrity make them more human, bringing them closer to us.

Once the characters and what is at stake for them are presented, the massacre can begin. Like in a disaster movie, the protagonists all end up in the same place, initially for a fun purpose: the soccer game. They all have their reasons to be there and achieve their goals, but the violent arrival of supernatural events is going to stop them.

At the end of the first half, they have all lost their way, everything they have ever known has crumbled to pieces, and everything remains to be proved. I was very keen on progressively contaminating the comedy with small strains of fantasy gore, then horror. First in a funny way, almost ironic, then in a much more head-on approach.

Even if from the start we have the esthetics of a comedy, I felt it was very important never to ridicule the genre: the monsters had to be a real threat. In my mind, this progressive slide towards horror and the sudden break in tone are what give **GOTD** its identity. It's a real comedy, a real fantasy film, like those made by Joe Dante, Sam Raimi, Dan O'Bannon and Stuart Gordon almost 30 years ago.

Always with equal parts of affection and cruelty, I strove to progressively derail the train before handing over the controls to Thierry for the second half.

Hardcore destruction is also the spirit of the 80s.

# BIOGRAPHY - THIERRY POIRAUD

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After attending Paris Beaux-Arts, Thierry Poiraud co-directed, with his brother Didier, the short film **LES ESCARPINS SAUVAGES (THE WILD HEELS)** that mixes animation with film. Their short received a warm welcome in a number of festivals, and in particular won the Fantasporto Grand prize in 1996.



Thierry and Didier Poiraud have co-directed a number of commercials (Hollywood Chewing Gum, Reebok, Orangina Red, Peugeot, MasterCard, Canal+...) and several music videos (Scratch Massive, The Little Rabbits, Etienne Charry). In 2004, they wrote and directed their first feature film, **ATOMIK CIRCUS, THE RETURN OF JAMES BATAILLE** with Benoît Poelvoorde and Vanessa Paradis (in her grand return to cinema).

In 2007, they directed the documentary of Vanessa Paradis' **DIVINIDYLLE** concert tour, for which they received a Victoire de la Musique (French equivalent to Grammy or Brit awards) in the category of Year's best musical DVD.

In 2013, Thierry directed the second half of the comedy-horror film **GOAL OF THE DEAD**.

He is currently directing his second solo feature film, **DON'T GROW UP**, a sci-fi thriller in which a group of teenagers is confronted with an epidemic that touches all the adults.

## SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

### Feature Films :

- 2014 **DON'T GROW UP** (in production)
- 2013 **GOAL OF THE DEAD - SECOND HALF**
- 2003 **ATOMIK CIRCUS, THE RETURN OF JAMES BATAILLE** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)

### Shorts Films :

- 2003 **DAS FANTASTICHE NACHT** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 2002 **METAL SPIKE** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 2001 **ALIENS WITH 2000 ASSHOLES** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 1998 **DUVET MAN** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 1997 **MEURTRE D'UN BROUTEMÉCOUILLES CHINOIS** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 1995 **SALINAS** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)
- 1994 **THE WILD HEELS** (co-directed with Didier Poiraud)

## GOAL OF THE DEAD - SECOND HALF

A comedy-horror film, *GOAL OF THE DEAD 2* was conceived like an urban Western.

The action is restricted to the main street of a small town called Caplongue. It takes place in its police station, its local horserace betting office, its streets... As the genre demands, the final duel takes place where the greatest number of people can gather in this small town: the playing field in the town's soccer stadium.

I wanted to create a sci-fi horror framework with all its codes, inspired by John Carpenter, then take advantage of this backdrop to superimpose a carefree, intimist comedy centered on family life.

Beyond this larger-than-life film genre that I'm so fond of, it was also the gallery of colorful characters with whom each person can identify that I found extremely interesting.

My screenwriter, Marie Garel Weiss, and I really fleshed out this aspect along with the surreal encounter of zombie horror film and offbeat comedy.

It's a genre unto itself, exhilarating and good-natured, a "popcorn" film, which is the worthy heir to 1980s comedy-horror films that made me discover cinema, for better or for worse.

## ONE GOAL : SURVIVE !

**A face off between rabid zombies and soccer players on a playing field is the harebrained scheme for this singular comedy-horror film Goal of the Dead.**

On top of a pitch that combines two normally very distinct film genres – in the vein of Stephen Chow's *SHAOLIN SOCCER - GOAL OF THE DEAD* gives moviegoers a novel experience in that it is presented as two films with an intermission, like a soccer match with a half-time break. Each of the two directors puts his individual mark on his half, a captain leading his own team: Benjamin Rocher, who has already worked with zombies in *THE HORDE*, and Thierry Poiraud, who made the eccentric film *ATOMIK CIRCUS - THE RETURN OF JAMES BATTLE*. Initiated by Empreinte Digitale Productions, Raphaël Rocher, who was responsible for *THE HORDE*, and the "screenwriter without borders" Nicolas Peuffailit, who agilely shifts from science-fiction, [Chrysalis], to prison drama, [A prophet], *GOAL OF THE DEAD* is a project that was originally destined for the small screen as a mini-series where soccer players and zombies confront one another in a life and death battle. Although the format has mutated into two full-length features shown together in an atypical screening setting (with a half-time intermission), the basic storyline has remained the same: the famous Olympique de Paris team finds itself obligated to play a Coupe de France soccer match against a team from a godforsaken town in Northern France. However, this is also the Paris team's star attacker's forgotten hometown and he's dreading having to face the somber memories he left behind. He will not be spared, as it turns out, not even by the supporters whose spooky behavior is more rabidly enraged than your everyday group of soccer hooligans.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH BENJAMIN ROCHER & THIERRY POIRAUD, RAVING MAD CHARACTERS THEMSELVES...

**A comedy-horror grindhouse type film on a restricted budget shown in two parts with an intermission or half-time: this is the crazy bet two lovers of the genre have taken!**

### How did you get involved in directing *GOAL OF THE DEAD* ?

**Benjamin Rocher** : I had been following the project from a distance as it was being developed by the production company. It looked like a really great concept, so I decided to get involved. Raphaël and Nicolas had seen the English series *DEAD SET* and decided that they were going to do something similar in France. English production companies don't have any more money than we do, but they are really much better at it. We thought that it would be a good idea to take this direction, especially since we had just wrapped up *THE HORDE*. There was more to be explored in the genre, but from the point of view of a comedy. In the end, the project took a path similar to *ZOMBIELAND*, which was also initially supposed to be a television series.

**Thierry Poiraud** : As I was developing another film with Empreinte Digitale at the time, I was around when they were working on different elements of the project and they ended up giving me the opportunity to direct it. Nicolas Peuffailit spoke to me about it first. I liked the

idea, because personally I find that French fantasy films don't tap enough into what could be their specifically French signature. Other countries do it commonly, we don't. I'm not really a huge soccer fan, but mixing France with soccer and rabid zombies gives you a real French recipe. This project couldn't have been done in the United States, for instance.

### How did you rework the screenplay?

**Benjamin Rocher** : Each working with our respective screenwriters, we used a collection of crackpot characters as our raw material, as well as ideas that were developed for a big-budget film that had to be streamlined. The first thing was to decide who the main character would be and adapt the story to a realistic budget. To start with, there were too many leading roles: several players, one of their agents, a coach, a hysterical fan, etc. There were just too many people. So we tried to maintain a gallery of portraits that would illustrate the main character's journey. As Thierry and I were sharing the project, we exchanged ideas and

tried to sketch out a story in two parts that would be entertaining and a lot of fun.

**Thierry Poiraud** : The screenwriters had originally started off with an idea for an ensemble series that was so much about the group that it practically didn't have a hero standing out from the rest and as a result there was little at stake for the characters. The first thing Benjamin and I did was to build a storyline together, then each of us went to work on his own with his screenwriting partner for his half of the film. I worked with Marie Garel Weiss, with whom I am also writing my next project. The subject matter was so versatile that we easily appropriated it and made it our own. Presently, now that the editing is done, we realized that even if there are two films, the whole is still an ensemble film – which is also part of its charm.

## TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

### Why did you choose to direct two films?

**Benjamin Rocher** : The idea to make two films had already been embraced when we came on board, for economic and production reasons. It allowed us to combine our resources, resulting in more for everyone. For the audience, the double feature format is also something I wanted to see happen, so the idea appealed to me, and this very exciting artistic excuse was validated by a sound economic rationale.

**Thierry Poiraud** : Dividing up the roles this way allowed us to experiment more than is usually possible. Each film is 70 minutes long, an uncommon length, along with the atypical format, making for a very enjoyable viewing experience. Even if the story is a continuum between the two parts, the movies are very different, as we both allowed ourselves to make the movie we really wanted to make. The actors may at the beginning have felt this method to be a bit schizophrenic, but very quickly it all turned into great fun. In general, series have a real free-wheeling tone, a freshness that you don't often see in movies today, and with our unique format, we could preserve this aspect. We had much more freedom to follow the characters and enjoy ourselves.

### You didn't co-direct this, each of you made his own film. However, did you try to find a common style or tone?

**Benjamin Rocher** : The idea was to develop the storyline together, choose the actors together, as well as the sets and locations, costumes and lighting. However, our collaboration stopped there, we didn't intervene in any

way with the direction and staging of each other's films. We weren't at all worried about the possible differences that could arise between the two films.

**Thierry Poiraud** : What was funny about the film shoot itself, was that sometimes when it was my turn after Benjamin, I had the impression of going into this rather untidy bedroom and wondering who could have made such a mess! (laughter) Each film has its own particular tone, I hope it won't bother the audience, but I feel this particularity adds a delightful aspect to the whole.

### This is the first time you are alone behind the camera. Benjamin, you co-directed *THE HORDE* with Yannick Dahan; Thierry co-directed *ATOMIK CIRCUS* with his brother Didier Poiraud: logically that must change things...

**Benjamin Rocher** : Yes of course, although when you direct a film you are never really alone. You are always surrounded by collaborators whose opinions you take into account. What changes on a film shoot, when you are the only director, is the immediacy of the choices you have to make in relation to the doubts you may have. You tell yourself: "at worst, if I make a bad decision, it will be my mistake, I'll have to own up to it."

**Thierry Poiraud** : My brother wasn't very far - he collaborated on the storyboard for example. The reason we didn't work together is that we both wanted to do different things, but we're never very far from each other and we will probably make some new films together. The work I did on this film is probably very close to what I would have done with him. In co-directing, it's all the preliminary decisions that are important. During the shoot, it's pragmatism that takes precedence.

### Weren't you worried that the differences would disconcert the public?

**Benjamin Rocher** : I think it's a real positive argument for the movie as far as the audience is concerned. It's what I really appreciated in the film *FROM DUSK TIL DAWN*. You have the impression that Quentin Tarantino directed the first part and Robert Rodriguez the second. I really like this difference and I always enjoy seeing this film again with its amusing beginning, which is very dialogue oriented, and the second part that is much more action-driven and wild. Going to see a double feature is a thrilling experience.

**Thierry Poiraud** : There's a hidden-surprise side to it. You don't know what to expect. The films themselves tell different parts of the story. Even if Benjamin and I had co-directed both features, the structure as it was



written is such that one has nothing to do with the other. The story has an abrupt break in tone because the hero changes at the end of the first film. Where we aligned ourselves the most was between the final scene of episode 1 and the opening scene of episode 2 when we are reunited with the hero. You get the impression that it's the same sequence. It's simple. In the first film, Benjamin traumatizes the characters and I pick up the pieces after this initial trauma: they are depressed, battered and bruised, and I put them back together as best I can. And that's exactly what I like to do.

I love these types of characters, like in **SHAUN OF THE DEAD** : they are so off-the-wall that when they end up in extreme situations, it doesn't change things all that drastically for them. What is really great about fantasy and horror films is being able to put protagonists in outlandish situations and see how they work things out.

## THROUGH THE PRISM OF SOCCER

**Did you watch again any of the films having to do with soccer like Jean-Jacques Annaud's *COUP DE TÊTE (HOTHEAD)* or Jean-Pierre Mocky's *À MORT L'ARBITRE (KILL THE REFEREE)* to familiarize yourself with this universe?**

**Benjamin Rocher** : I saw films like Tom Hooper's **DAMNED UNITED**, but you have to realize that although soccer is a framework that we enjoy depicting and within which our story evolves, we're not so much treating the action linked to the game but the characters who are in this environment. It was fascinating to take stock of today's soccer scene and the clichés concerning players and find ways we could play on it all.

**Thierry Poiraud** : The most fascinating aspect was the behind-the-scenes side to soccer. Moreover Franck Annese, the editor in chief of **SO FOOT**, who I know, very quickly came to lend us a hand. He sort of coached us, telling us what to read. He recounted several anecdotes. All of this background information gave us inspiration. In fact, the film speaks more about the mindset of a small town, its story, the bad blood that can exist between teammates, the backstabbing. Soccer players are already atypical characters; it was interesting to put them in a situation that is even more off-the-wall than they are. Our main character really symbolizes this abnormality. He left this small town behind, forgot where he came from. Success gave him a big head. He is a little lost and now he is coming back to the very root of it all.

**How was Franck Annese involved in the development of the project?**

**Benjamin Rocher** : He proofed the screenplay and corrected a few errors. Journalists who contribute to the magazine coached the actors so that they could play some soccer, even if the idea wasn't to shoot matches but to get swept up by the action sequences. Soccer is used above all as a way to delineate the characters. We were more interested in their state of mind than what happens during the actual match.

**Thierry Poiraud** : The actors truly started learning soccer from scratch. The coaching taught them different postures of play: how to position themselves, how to make credible calls for passes, it was very interesting. Soccer isn't easy to film. I'd already tried my hand at it for television commercials and I knew that it was complicated.

**SHAUN OF THE DEAD seems to be a reference you openly refer to.**

**Thierry Poiraud** : That reference comes closest to the mindset of both our films. Edgar Wright and Simon Pegg were able to successfully make a light-hearted work while avoiding the pitfalls of parody. They just have characters in very English situations that border on surrealism.

**Benjamin Rocher** : It was our model, in terms of tone, our objective was at the crossroads of **SHAUN OF THE DEAD** and Christopher Smith films, like **SEVERANCE**. In this film, the tone and the humor may be slightly scathing, but it also respects the genre.

## TEAM SPIRIT

**How did you cast the film?**

**Benjamin Rocher** : We had a lot of freedom. In any case, given the budget, no one could impose a specific actor on us. It turned out to be a compromise between actors who were interested in the project, those who were willing to take a pay-cut, and especially people we liked. We had developed many characters and parallel stories over the course of rewrites with the actors, however, during the shoot and the editing process, some characters took on either more or less importance.

**Thierry Poiraud** : It's always a good thing not to recognize a specific actor when you watch a movie, the discovery of the film itself thus remains the main part of the experience. As it's an ensemble film, it was important to have a homogeneous group. Having had this experience on my first film, I know that when you

work with famous actors and their different entourages, it's difficult to create a cohesive group. For this movie, everybody was in the same boat, so we could really develop a team spirit. That's another reason I always wanted to do the fantasy genre. I particularly like the family feeling that is generated when making this type of film. Benjamin and I were very impressed by 1980's cinema, especially Joe Dante movies. He had a fun and fresh mindset, all the while being serious; that's the spirit we were going for, but in our time period. Even if we have different artistic sensibilities, we were exactly on the same page concerning at least one element: to have fun with the actors.

### **In addition to offering a double feature, how have you conceived GOAL OF THE DEAD's theatrical release?**

**Benjamin Rocher** : The idea is to have a festive atmosphere surrounding the theatrical release, and not to make the audience buy two tickets for two 70 minute films. In addition to a grindhouse style release in a special theater in Paris, the film is going to go "on tour" in a limited number of theaters, in the case of some towns choosing the date to fit in with local events (festivals, special evenings). The idea is to have a place with activities going on, a little like the **ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW**. This will make the project even more atypical.

**Thierry Poiraud** : It's showing movies in a way that is fun and timely and matches the current zeitgeist. There is definitely a side that is like a "happening," akin to a concert, and I find it a very clever idea to give movies a new identity this way. This festive type of concept can't be done on television. It celebrates the spirit of the horror films that I've always loved, with a festival atmosphere and the mentality of people who make this type of movie. This playful side is an inherent part of horror and sci-fi films' DNA.

## **FAMILIAR TERRITORY**

### **Do you find similarities between your half of GOAL OF THE DEAD and your respective first films?**

**Benjamin Rocher** : **THE HORDE** and **GOAL OF THE DEAD** have nothing in common, except for the presence of zombies. Without wanting to make comparisons, it's the same kind of difference as **DAWN OF THE DEAD** and **SHAUN OF THE DEAD**. Even if there are passages close to comedy in **THE HORDE**, this is very different.

**Thierry Poiraud** : There are similarities in tone and

for some characters, it is mingled with the desire to go down forbidden paths. These characters aren't the living dead, but rabid monsters that contaminate one another. Zombies are often anchored in a social situation, whereas our monsters are symptomatic of mass alienation. We're not saying anything new about zombies; these are rabid and raving people who mutate into monster-fans.

*Interview by Sébastien Floc'h*

## CAST

Sam LORIT	<b>Alban LENOIR</b>
Solène	<b>Charlie BRUNEAU</b>
Cléo	<b>Tiphaine DAVIOT</b>
Idriss DIAGO	<b>Ahmed SYLLA</b>
Pitt	<b>Alexandre PHILIP</b>
Nounours	<b>Vincent DEBOST</b>
Michel	<b>Benoît MORET</b>
Pierre	<b>Renaud RUTTEN</b>
Coubert	<b>Patrick LIGARDES</b>

With the participation of **Bruno SALOMONE**

## CREW

Executive Producer : **Raphaël ROCHER - CAPTURE THE FLAG FILMS**

Original Story : **Nicolas PEUFAILLIT**

Script, adaptation and dialogues: **Tristan SCHULMANN** (1st half), **MARIE GAREL WEISS** (2nd half)

From an original screenplay by:

**Quoc DANG TRAN, Marie GAREL WEISS, IZM, Tristan SCHULMANN** and **Laëtitia TRAPET**

Original Music : **Thomas COUZINIER & Frederic KOOSHMANIAN - KOUZ PRODUCTION**

Music Supervisor : **Grégoire COUZINIER** for **KOUZ PRODUCTION**

Stunt Coordinator : **Manu LANZI**

Assistant Directors: **Stéphane 'Stane' REUS** (1st AD), **Laure - Anne NICOLET** (2nd AD)

Script Supervisor : **Florence WEYNE - ROBERT**

Production Manager : **Delphine BELLONNET**

Post-production Manager : **Alexandre ISIDORO**

Location Manager : **Laurène LADOGÉ**

Director of Photography : **Matias BOUCARD**

Editors: **Dimitri AMAR** and **Nathalie LANGLADE** (1st half), **Stéphane ELMADJIAN** (2nd half)

Assistant Editor : **Olivier GALLIANO**

Sound Boom : **Guillaume LE BRAZ**

Set Design : **Armelle DEMANGE**

Costume Design : **Marion MOULES** and **Matthieu CAMBLOR**

Make-Up Artist : **Amélie GROSSIER**

Special Effects : **CLSFX Atelier - Olivier AFONSO**

Digital Effects : **Geoffrey NIQUET - BUF CIE** et **Vincent VACARISAS - PIXEL STREET**

Sound Editor : **Frédéric ATTAL** and **Mourad LOUANCHI**

Sound Mixer : **Stéphane DE ROCQUIGNY**

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