

Carnage

Cert 15 France 2011 79 mins

Crew

Director	Roman Polanski
Screenplay	Roman Polanski & Yasmina Reza
Cinematography	Pawel Edelman
Film Editing	Hervé de Luze
Original music	Alexandre Desplat

Cast

Jodie Foster	Penelope Longstreet
Kate Winslet	Nancy Cowan
Christoph Waltz	Alan Cowan
John C. Reilly	Michael Longstreet

Synopsis

New York, the present. Eleven-year-old classmates Zachary Cowan and Ethan Longstreet have an argument in the park which ends when Zachary hits Ethan across the face with a stick, causing him to lose a tooth.

The boys' parents learn of the altercation through Ethan's parents questioning him about his injuries.

And so the Longstreet parents invite the Cowan parents to their Brooklyn apartment to discuss how to deal with the incident in a civilized manner.....



- The film premiered at the 68th Venice International Film Festival where it won the Little Golden Lion
- Kate Winslet and Jodie Foster were nominated for the 2012 Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture (Comedy or Musical) Golden Globe.
- Although set in Brooklyn, New York, the film was shot in Paris, because of Polanski's fugitive status.
- Roman Polanski appears in the film as the neighbour who opens the door to take a look at what is happening in the hallway.



Reviews

....A comedy of malice, *Carnage* is a tight film expertly paced by Polanski who demonstrates a talent for tickling ribs that will probably come as a surprise to many. Adapted from Yasmina Reza's play 'Le Dieu du Carnage' the film (a collaboration between Reza and Polanski) falls into three acts - or bouts - of steadily worsening relations. Skewering the upper middle-classes with wry observations of their neuroses and petty obsessions, Polanski just about manages to sidestep snootiness and stays in the realm of the cheeky. In fact the script does have some very clever judgement to pass, although there is an unfortunate reliance on some tired gender tropes in the film's final stretch.....

What really keeps the simple premise buoyant are the pitch-perfect cast who are all sickeningly authentic. Foster especially stands out as having got into her liberal guilt-laden writer, running with the idea - straight over the edge. It's great fun to watch the disgust form in her brow as her prim sensibilities are ruthlessly jabbed at, even if she is the most identifiably sane of the lot. Waltz's slightly threatening air, Winslet's hysterical misery and Reilly's goofy chauvinism tie the script together nicely and it looks like they're all revelling in the chance to misbehave as 'lord and lady of the flies'. Even if there are some predictable script choices it's consistently funny and refreshingly nasty.

Terry Mulcahy, Film 4

If you want to see four performances that in other years might well have each won an Oscar nomination, Roman Polanski's short but sharp adaptation of Yasmina Reza's hit play *God of Carnage* is the film you shouldn't miss.

But it isn't just the acting that should make your evening. It is the impish and highly skilled way Polanski directs this ineffably middle-class quartet, mostly in one very accurately furnished New York apartment, as they tear each other to pieces, much as Luis Buñuel was wont to do with his bourgeois nincompoops.....

The whole isn't just very funny, it is also highly pertinent. Not exactly sympathetic to anyone except the boys themselves, who are finally seen in the park being a good deal more worldly about their fracas than their parents. The film is well able to make us think exactly how we might have behaved in similar circumstances.

Derek Malcolm, London Evening Standard