

Todd Phillips Appears For Rare Screening Of Early Documentary 'Hated: GG Allin and the Murder Junkies'

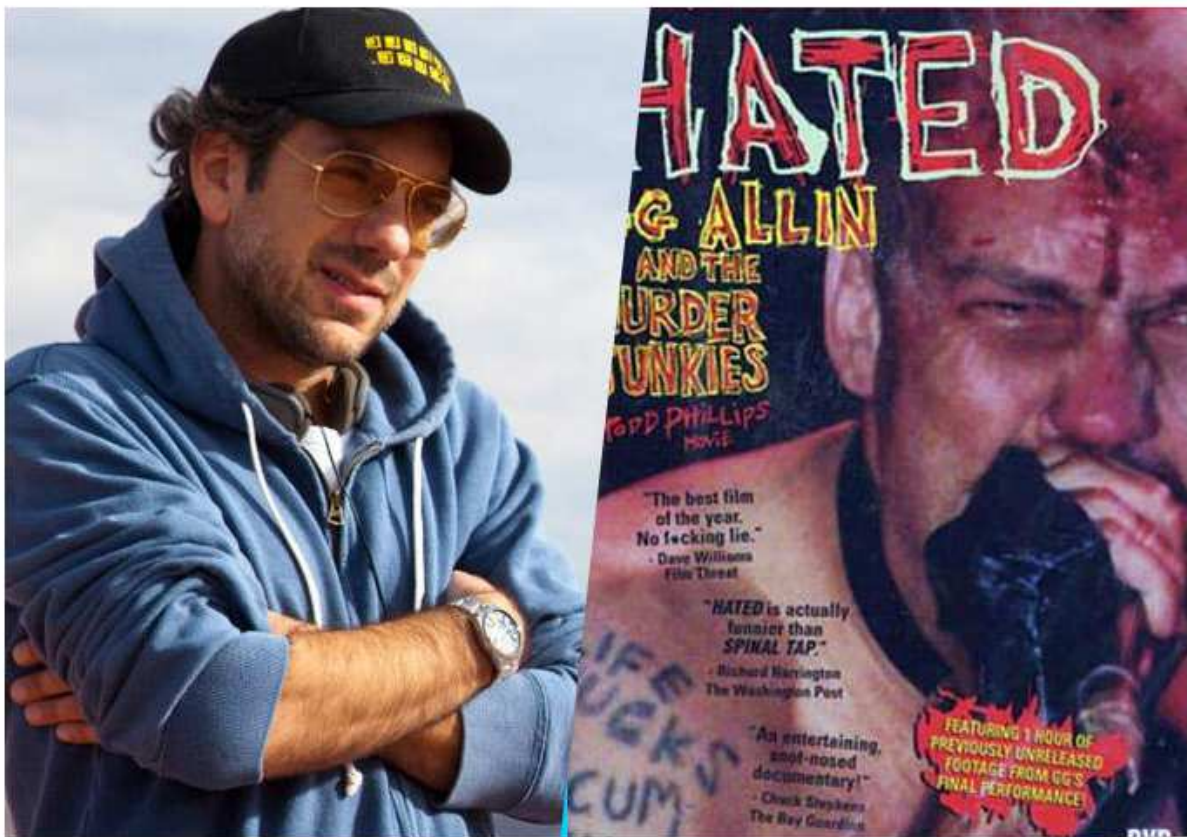
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It's been approximately 11 years since the release of the infamous documentary about the arguable rock god GG Allin, "**Hated: GG Allin and the Murder Junkies**," but that didn't stop the Nitethawk in New York City from screening a rare print late last week to a sold out audience. To top it off, the director of the doc, **Todd Phillips**, known for such hits as "**Old School**," "**The Hangover**," and "**Due Date**," to name a few, was present for a little Q&A.

Phillips was only a junior at NYU during filming, and it's safe to say this was the start to a career in acidic comedic pieces revolving around deeply flawed figures. The primary difference between "**Hated: GG Allin and the Murder Junkies**" and Phillips' later work is the fact that this doc centered on an actual, real-life individual and the filmmaker has rarely done documentary films since becoming a go-to R-Rated comedy director. GG Allin has been described as one of the most depraved and degenerate figures in the history of rock—a figure so unbelievable, you have to see him (or the doc) to believe it.

Maybe this stems from Allin's tragic childhood—his father attempted to convince GG to join in a mass, cult-like suicide. Phillips' portrait provides a much needed comic relief to the sad, tragic, almost embarrassing punk rocker whose brash antics included defecating on stage and then devouring his feces in front of fans or, in several cases, becoming violent with them. The documentary is not the faint of heart, but Phillips' perspective gives makes this world more palatable, funny, and approachable.

Below, we have excerpts from Phillips Q&A following the screening, about the making of the movie and more.

How did the movie come together?

The first thing I'd say is I literally haven't seen the movie in 15 years, so for me it was an experience and it pulls back a lot of memories about making the movie and about GG and it feels so horrifying to hear your own voice and your like oh, the writing is so bad in this movie and stuff like that. And it's so amateurly made but it's part of sort of what you love about it. I think it's fitting with the subject, but as filmmakers some of it is horrifying for me to watch for, you know, just ridiculous reasons, but I've moved on. But it was a pleasure to see it with an audience again and it just kind of made it very cool and I wish like Merle—who I'm still friends with, Merle's his brother—I wish those guys could've seen it again because GG was something back then and it was interesting. It was really a time capsule to come and see this.

"A lot of people will shoot 50 to 1 ratios, meaning they shot 50 hours of film to make an hour movie. This is literally a 2 to 1 ratio."

How did you first hear about him? Was it through a record store?

I just heard about him through the scene of music back then. My sister, who's here, introduced me to sort of that music scene of punk rock. She brought me to **The Cramps** when I was fourteen or fifteen. From then on I just got into the scene of music. I had been coming into New York, we lived on Long Island, to see shows, and I remember I went to see a show of GG's, like I said at the beginning of the movie, when I was like 17, and that was, I just kind of got exposed to him back then through the magazines like Flipside and Maximum Rock and Roll. You'd hear about him and I went to see him.

And then I met his brother Merle Allin. I was working at Kim's Video, which was a video store at St. Mark's Place, when I was going to NYU in like 1989, and Merle came into the store and he was wearing like a GG Allin leather jacket. And I was like, "Who's this guy?" And I wanted to do something about GG, so I started talking to this guy, and go, "Do you know GG Allin?" And he goes, "He's my brother." And I go, "You know I'm trying to do this thing, I want to do this film about him, I wrote him some letters in jail, and I hadn't heard back." And Merle was like, "Give me the letter I'll get it to GG," and that was how it started, at Kim's Video. Merle would come in renting videos. Merle was a huge bootlegger of movies back then. He would come, he would rent five movies a day, and he would tape them from VCR to VCR, and then he would sell them to Maximum Rock and Roll. So everyday he'd come in.

Was there a documentary that influenced your approach?

Yeah, I mean for me one of my favorite movies, not even documentaries, was "**Gimme Shelter**" which the **Maysles Brothers** did on the **Rolling Stones** and that's really one of my all time, probably top five movies. This isn't that, but that was always the idea. With this movie, it's just a shame to me when I watch because I just wish we had a little bit more money or a little more access to equipment because, back then we were shooting on 16 millimeter film, and it was an 11-minute roll. You know, we could shoot a better movie on an iPhone now, literally, and it just, to me, it would've been nice to have more time and footage. People shoot documentaries and they talk about their ratio of how much footage they shot to how long the movie is, so if the movie's an hour long, a lot of people will shoot 50 to 1 ratios, meaning they shot 50 hours of film to make an hour movie. This is literally a 2 to 1 ratio. We've got 2 hours of film and the movie's not even an hour, I mean, it's ridiculous.

A film crew in that neighborhood was not the most common thing than it is now either.

Yeah, and it was true, and it's funny because I was watching this, thinking of all the things, GG was staying at the St. Mark's Hotel, which back then was literally, I don't know eight dollars a night, something ridiculous, and we went to shoot that interview with GG at the St. Mark's Hotel and they wouldn't let us in with film equipment because they thought we were like making a porno, pornography or something. So they were like no, no, no filming here you can't film here, so that, where GG's being interviewed is actually my dorm room around the corner. We made it look like it was the St. Mark's Hotel, but the best part about that was GG didn't have any ID so we couldn't sign him into the dorm, we had to sneak him into the dorm, and then pretend we were at the St. Mark's Hotel, but it was around the corner so it wasn't that big of a proximity.

*"Hated: GG Allin and the Murder Junkies" is available on home video via **MVD Entertainment**.*