

“A lot of those people, like Mick Jagger and Anthony Hopkins, were at superstardom level, so I definitely treated them with kid gloves.”

**John Sanders on
Freejack**

DV You've been a prop master on both television series and motion pictures. Do you prefer one over the other when it comes to your job?

*JS I feel films are the longer versions of a television show, mainly because many of the television shows I've worked on feel like features. **The Walking Dead** is just a 16mm feature film, you know? So I don't prefer one over the other. I just try to bring everything I can bring to the show I'm working on. It's not that big a separation for me as it might be for other departments.*

DV The projects on which you have worked span a wide variety of genres. What impact does a film or television series' genre have on your job?

*JS Certainly, if it's a period piece, the research is important. Even if you're doing a romantic comedy there's some research, but it's especially true for a western or a post-apocalyptic show or a show like **Freejack** where you have to know what's possible and what has changed in the world. With **The Handmaid's Tale**, there were new things in that show. We had to design things that were never built. What and how those things should be takes research. Everything in the prop business takes research.*

DV Lastly, John, what would you like movie and television audiences to know about your job that they may not? What can you reveal that may surprise them?

JS One, there are no awards for prop masters. No Oscars or Emmys. I think it may be because people don't understand what we do as much as I wish they did. The prop department is a lot of work and most viewers don't grasp the whole process. I don't think they realize that Rick Grimes had three belts and ten badges and four knives plus various duplicates. They think the effects guys or the stunt guys do those, and that's not true—the prop department does that work. I don't think people know the depth of what prop people do, and I'm hoping to change that. It's a vital part of filmmaking. ☿

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WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO SOLANGE?

(1972) ☿☿☿

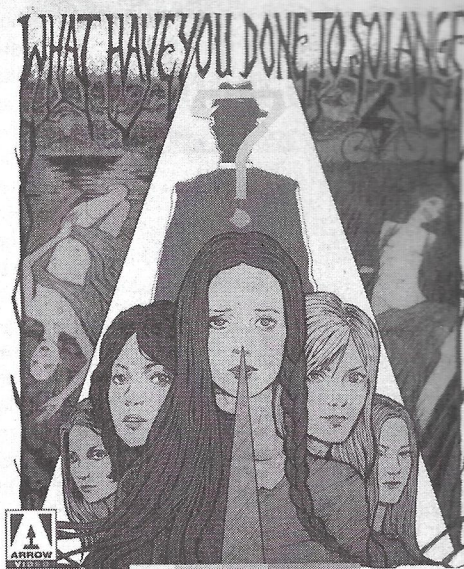
D: Massimo Dallamano. Fabio Testi, Cristina Galbo, Karin Baal, Joachim Fuchsberger, Gunther Stoll, Camille Keaton. 107 mins.

Teacher Henry Rosseni (Testi) is having an affair with his student Elizabeth Seccles (Galbo) behind his wife's back. While spending a lazy afternoon drifting in a rowboat with Henry, Elizabeth thinks she sees someone on shore behaving strangely, followed by a flash of light. She later believes it to have been the sun reflecting off a knife's blade and when a murdered girl is found, she's sure she witnessed the killing. Henry can't be involved with a murder case since he is married and carrying on with an underage girl, and so panics. More gruesome murders occur, and Henry is forced to become involved with the police investigation. It doesn't take long before Henry is a prime suspect. Herta (Baal), Henry's wife, knows her husband is a sleaze but also knows he is not a murderer. She helps prove his innocence. Killings continue as schoolgirls spill their darkest secrets in a confessional, only to later spill their innards at the feet of the unseen slayer. The couple soon encounters young Solange (Keaton), the schoolgirl who may be the link to the murders. Based on a novel by Edgar Wallace, **What Have You Done to Solange?** is a taut, grisly thriller that hits all the giallo beats while shaking up the conventions of the Italian mystery genre. The story unfolds slowly, building to a revelation that is genuinely disturbing. This was Keaton's first film. Years later she would go on to earn notoriety for appearing in the cult flick **I Spit on Your Grave**. Director Dallamano served as cinematographer on Sergio Leone's **A Fistful of Dollars** and **For a Few Dollars More**. The film looks and sounds great and is a nice improvement over Shriek Show's earlier DVD release. Alan Jones and Kim Newman deliver an informative and entertaining commentary. This is considered by many to be one of the best giallos ever produced. ☿

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SEQUEL RITES!

SINISTER 2 (2015) ☿☿☿

D: Ciaran Foy. James Ransone, Shannon Sossamon, Robert Daniel Sloan, Dartanian Sloan, Lea Coco, Lucas Jade Zumann. 97 mins. (Universal Studios) 1/16

Though it has a few plot holes, this sequel to the 2012 sleeper smash (\$77 million gross against a \$3 million budget) is an enjoyable and sometimes scary chiller. Adolescent newcomer Zumann is particularly memorable as a ghostly, disturbingly creepy boy who leads young Zach (Dartanian Sloan) to the basement so he can watch a series of hair-raising home movies in which entire families are murdered. Ransone, a superb and rising Hollywood character actor, returns as Deputy So & So from the first film. He's investigating houses in which mass murders have taken place, sometimes burning them down so that history can't repeat itself. At one such abode—a desolate Victorian next door to an abandoned church—he finds Sossamon living with her two boys (the real-life Sloan twins). They're hiding out from her abusive hubby. Though Coco is marvelous as the foulmouthed dad who likes to throw punches, his scenes almost feel like they're from a different film. Part of the movie is indeed a spooky supernatural tale, while other sections seem to be a drama about domestic battery. Though that abuse is what gets Mom and the boys to move into their haunted abode, where they hope Pop won't find them, those scenes go on a bit too long. The supernatural sequences, however, are quite well done—a number of them might have viewers jumping. Other parts of the film, most notably those involving Zumann and several other ghost kids, might give you goosebumps—some of the murders we see in those home movies are genuinely shocking. **Sinister 2** is no masterpiece, and the film would benefit from a little trimming here and there, but it's still a nice thrill ride. ☿

—David-Elijah Nahmod