

## Get Out, 2017

“I wanted to make something I hadn’t seen before.” –Jordan Peele

### Major Credits

Director: Jordan Peele

Screenplay: Jordan Peele

Cinematography: Toby Oliver

Cast: Daniel Kaluuya (Chris), Allison Williams (Rose), Bradley Whitford (Dean), Catherine Keener (Missy), Lil Rel Howley (Rod), Lakeith Stanfield (Logan/Andre), Caleb Landry Jones (Jeremy), Betty Gabriel (Georgina), Stephen Root (Jim Hudson), Marcus Henderson (Walter)

### Production Background

Jordan Peele appeared in movies and television shows before achieving fame in the Comedy Central hit series *Key & Peele* with co-star Keegan-Michael Key. His first feature, *Get Out* grossed nearly \$230 million dollars and was nominated for four Academy Awards, winning for Best Original Screenplay. Peele has cited the horror classics *Rosemary’s Baby* (1968), *The Stepford Wives* (1975)—both based on novels written by Ira Levin—and *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) as influential sources for his screenplay. One might add *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* (1967) as a different point of reference.

### Cinematic Qualities

1. Long take: The extended sequence shot (another name for “long take”) comprises the entire pre-credit scene, creating real-time verisimilitude, continuity, and suspense.
2. Sound design: Peele worked closely with the Sound Department to create an unusually subtle and varied sound track for a genre movie. Note, for example, the ominous sound effects as the mystery builds in the first half and the ironic use of two songs, the familiar “The Time of My Life” and the 1930s British vaudeville ditty “Run Rabbit, Run,” at dramatic moments.
3. Close-Ups: All the more effective because they are used sparingly, close-ups reveal the “craziness” of Logan (from a slight high angle) and Georgina (from a slight low angle) as well as the sadness and terror the normally self-composed Chris feels at crucial points. The close-up allows Daniel Kaluuya to act with his eyes, the most significant physical feature of his character.

### Questions for Discussion

1. The pre-credit sequence is crucial in setting the tone for the narrative, combining comic and horrific elements. (Don’t arrive late!). How does the scene inform the audience’s response to subsequent events? How does it situate the story in the immediate present, thereby establishing a basis for social critique? Respond to the reviewer from The Austin Chronicle, who complained that “the pre-credits sequence would benefit from better integration into the story.”

2. Peele has an uncanny knack for producing uneasiness in the form of familiar images: an old console television, a deer head mounted on the wall, a stirring teaspoon. (The devil is in the details.) Consider how these and other banal objects take on a sinister symbolism.
3. While the professional skills of the Armistads serve an obvious purpose in the developing plot, very few commentators have noted the significance of Chris's career as a photographer—his work is on display at the beginning of the film. How does his profession help to define his character as well as certain themes within the film?
4. Peele has defined his movie as a “social thriller.” What commentary does *Get Out* offer on post-Obama, “post-racial” American society? Given Rod's role as a TSA agent, might the film also comment on the society's anxiety about terrorism?