

**INSURGENT
PICTURES**

PRESENTS A NEW CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE FROM THE AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR OF JAILCITY AND THE LOCAL

PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD

"... A STUNNING, VISUAL SYMPHONY OF A SOON TO BE INDEPENDENT CLASSIC."

- JEFF ATENCIO, JADEDVIEWER.COM

"DAN EBERLE IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL AMERICAN FILMMAKER."

- SEAN K. BERRY, CASTING COUCH RADIO

"...CINEMA IN ITS TRUEST FORM..."

- JOSH SAMFORD, ROGUECINEMA.COM

Written and Directed by

Dan Eberle

Release Date

October 19, 2010

Running Time

93 minutes

UNRATED

Official Website

www.insurgentpictures.com/vengeful

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SYNOPSIS

“... you will be left speechless.”

- Jeff Atencio, jadedviewer.com

Four months after he's brutally attacked in a violent home invasion, John Krause wakes from his coma. His own wounds are healed, but his wife Jennifer is dead. His life is gone.

John's body responds to physical therapy, but his mind is crushed by his grief, and he regresses to a child-like state. He tries to return to his work, but can focus on nothing but his misery. John's doctor administers meds to help him adjust, and John finds that, if he takes enough pills, he is able to retreat to an idyllic dream state, where he and Jennifer are together again. And then the pills wear off, and John is left to his dead life. So, John takes all the pills at once...

In a drugged haze, wandering the park in his pajamas, John happens upon a transient, who is into a territorial scrap with a couple of bums. The Transient dispatches the bums effortlessly. John is fascinated with The Transient's fighting skills. With a dime bag from some drugdealers in the park, John approaches The Transient and offers to share. The two convene in a trash bivouac in the trees, and the transient teaches John to smoke properly.

Later, at John's apartment, Jennifer's friend Gabby shows up to give John a bag of Jennifer's personal belongings. John goes through the bag and finds a freebasing pipe among her things. John turns to Gabby for an explanation. Gabby breaks down, telling John all about Jennifer's double life...it started with buying cocaine from a mysterious tattooed woman at a dance club, which lead them to a party at a drug house on the bad side of town, where Jennifer engaged in scandalous sex with the dark stranger who lives there.

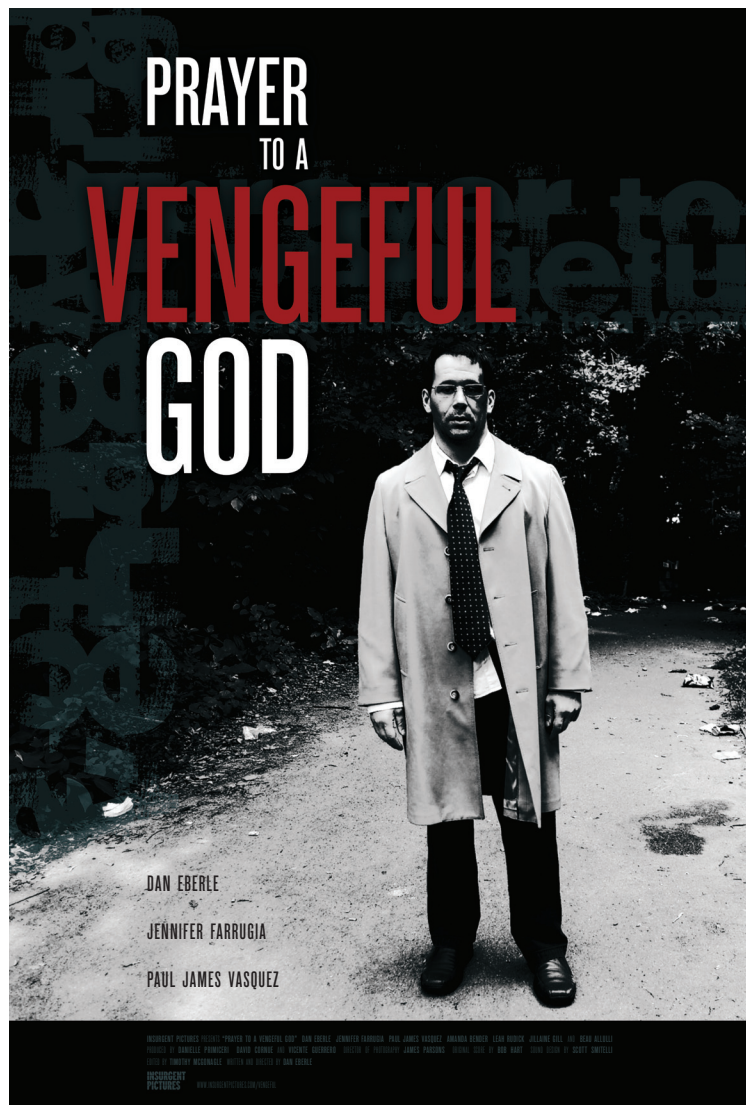
At first, Jennifer thought this event was a one-night stand, and she would return to her marriage, but Jennifer went back to The Stranger for more the very next day. Her experiment with The Stranger quickly devolved into a torrid, protracted parade of sex and drug use. An affair that ended the night Jennifer broke it off... The same night John and Jennifer were attacked.

John insists Gabby take him to the club where it all started. Gabby obliges, but when they find The Tattooed Woman and John loses control, Gabby abandons him. John follows The Tattooed Woman back to a house in a disheveled neighborhood. When he tries to follow The Tattooed Woman into the residence, he is stopped cold by a doorman. John tries to push his way in, but the doorman throws him into the street. Outside of the residence, John is attacked by muggers, who beat him unconscious and take all his money.

The next morning, John goes to The Transient and demands the old man teach him how to fight. Over time, as The Transient trains John, hardening him physically and dulling his fear, John travels further down a dark road. A road paved with the corpses of vagrants and street skels. A road that leads directly to The Stranger's stronghold. The road to vengeance.

PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD

Presented by Insurgent Pictures, LLC



“... a force to be reckoned with”
- Sean K. Berry, Casting Couch Radio

“Dan Eberle’s Artistic Vision Remains Strong.”
- Gavin Schmitt, killerreviews.com

After his wife is tragically murdered, and he is mortally wounded at the hands of her murderer, John Krause rouses from a four-month dream to a waking nightmare of pain, addiction, violation, loss, and finally, all-consuming vengeance.

PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD is the story of one man’s journey from upstanding citizen, to debilitated mental case, to battle-hardened street killer. And all to kill a man he’s never met, to commemorate a wife he never really knew.

Tacitly told in a lyrical cinematic style, entirely without dialogue, PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD is a silent study of how the lust for vengeance twists and rends, and despite its carnal satisfactions, never changes the past.

WRITER/DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Dan Eberle

“Eberle continues to blaze a trail of artistic genius.”

- Gavin Schmitt, killerreviews.com

PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD is my examination of revenge as a disease, and how it consumes and ravages everyone and everything in it's path. John Krause loses everything that matters to him, and rather than rebuild his life, he chooses to destroy it. To destroy his enemies. To destroy his body. To destroy his humanity.

Krause's recurring vision of his dead wife as an idyllic sexual object, and his willingness to anesthetize himself with drugs in order to escape into this vision, further deepens his descent into a state of "all id, all the time". These rituals and patterns are integral to Krause's process of self immolation.

In the shattering climax, when Krause finally takes his revenge, he learns the hard way that, ultimately, vengeance is a liar.

BACKGROUND

“...sheer guts and artistic integrity...”

- Josh Samford, roguecinema.com

Prayer to a Vengeful God is a feature-length narrative film with no dialogue. The genesis of Vengeful came from a desire to create a contemporary film comprised entirely of visual storytelling. Writer/Director Dan Eberle hypothesized that a modern revenge tale told with a singular, strong visual narrative, unencumbered by tedious exposition and ultimatums, would bring the audience closer to the visceral experience that is Prayer to a Vengeful God.

At inception, the script for Vengeful was less than 50 pages of terse prose. Typical movie scripts in proper formatting run about a minute per page. In the case of Prayer to a Vengeful God, it was difficult to speculate whether the film would time out to a short or feature length. Despite the brief script, the initial rough assembly of Vengeful was over two hours long.

Principal photography of Vengeful shot for 50 days over the course of four months in locations spanning several boroughs of New York including Washington Heights, Grand Central, and Brooklyn's Prospect Park.

Director of Photography James Parsons used a combination of carefully crafted, austere cinematics, and handheld run-and-gun style lensing, capturing the disparate duality of Vengeful's story, in all its halting, speechless glory.

Prayer to a Vengeful God features performances by Dan Eberle (JailCity, Children of Invention, The Local), Paul James Vasquez (Lonesome Dove, Blind Fury), Beau Allulli (The Weekend, Memorial Day), Amanda Bender, and Jennifer Farrugia as Jennifer Krause. The film also showcases standout performances by Leah Rudick, Jillaine Gill, and Ariel Pavon, in his first feature role.

The artwork featured in Prayer to a Vengeful God was done by world-class artist Gayle Madeira. In addition to her classic catalogue of realist watercolors, Gayle also rendered original portraiture of the main characters of Vengeful, including the half-finished portrait of Jennifer Krause.

Fight direction and choreography was done by martial artist and producer Jonathan Berman (Human Weapon). The unique fighting style featured in Prayer to a Vengeful God was derived in part from Tony Blauer's close quarter personal defense S.P.E.A.R. System™, which Berman is expert in.

The sweeping original score of Prayer to a Vengeful God was created by Brooklyn-based bassist and composer Bob Hart. A driving wall of strings, woodwinds and percussion, the soundtrack of Prayer to a Vengeful God is as much a character in the film as its protagonist, John Krause.

CREDITS

Insurgent Pictures Presents **PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD**

Starring

Dan Eberle, Jennifer Farrugia, Paul James Vasquez, Beau Allulli,
Amanda Bender, Leah Rudick and Jillaine Gill

Produced by

Danielle Primiceri, David Cornue and Vicente Guerrero

Associate Producers

Santiago Rodriguez and Antonio Hernandez

Executive Producer

Tim Guetterman

Director of Photography

James Parsons

Original Music by

Bob Hart

Sound Design by

Scott Smitelli

Edited by

Timothy McGonagle

Written and Directed by

Dan Eberle



DAN EBERLE

Writer/Director/Actor

Dan Eberle was born in 1974 in San Diego, California to Paul and Mary Eberle. He was a prodigious Jazz guitarist in his youth and played and taught professionally for 15 years before making his first serious foray into film.

Eberle's first feature, the gripping urban drama JAILCITY, centers on two men, their fractured families, and the journey to reconcile the trespasses that tore them apart. JAILCITY earned Best Feature at the 2006 Avignon/New York Film Festival. Eberle was awarded the "21st Century Filmmaker Award" for his directorial achievement.

In 2009, Eberle wrote, directed and starred in THE LOCAL, the story of an indigent drug runner hired to effect the return of a wealthy man's daughter from the drug den of her lover, a murderous drug trafficker. THE LOCAL was released in 2009 by Vanguard Cinema and Boulder Creek International.

Mr Eberle's work continues to evolve, unfolding high-conflict storylines, and making strong, uncompromising artistic statements that challenge, move, and inspire his viewers. Dan currently resides in Brooklyn, New York. He co-owns the production company INSURGENT PICTURES, LLC with Tim Guetterman.



PAUL JAMES VASQUEZ

Actor - "*The Transient*" in Prayer to a Vengeful God

Paul James Vasquez began acting in a fourth grade production of *Bye Bye Birdie*, and hasn't stopped yet. Veteran of the stage and screen, Paul has worked with luminaries such as David Mamet, Denzel Washington, F. Murray Abraham, and Peter Riegert. He has appeared in over 350 professional stage plays including *Hamlet in Hamlet*, *Tom in Glass Menagerie*, and *Richard Lionheart in A Lion in Winter*. His film credits include *Lonesome Dove*, *Blind Fury*, *JailCity* and *The Local*.

In *Prayer to a Vengeful God*, Paul plays *The Transient*, a seemingly indigent man in self-imposed exile.



JENNIFER FARRUGIA

Actress - "*Jennifer*" in Prayer to a Vengeful God

Jennifer Farrugia was born in 1983 in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. She is a published author, playwright and actress working in the US and Canada. Jennifer's previous starring roles include the independent features *Ektha* and *The Last Goodbye*.

Ms Farrugia's published work includes her compendium, *No Nailpolish and other Short Stories* - Life Rattle Press, Toronto, Canada 2007.

In *Prayer to a Vengeful God*, Ms Farrugia plays *Jennifer Krause*, an emotionally erratic woman who drifts away from her husband, and seeks solace in a dark place.

REVIEWS

Prayer to a Vengeful God (Review)

Jeff Atencio, Jadedviewer.com

New York City has always had two sides of its personality. The glitz and glamour that the tourists love and the residual grime of the world unseen.

The latter is Dan Eberle's playground. With *The Local*, he showed us the underbelly of NYC and it shined. I loved the film praising it has a Charles Bukowski poem come to life. With Eberle's next film, *Prayer to a Vengeful God* I have to admit I was a little skeptical. Why? Because the movie would attempt to tell a story WITHOUT DIALOGUE.

Would I enjoy a movie void of conversation from the actors? How could anything be conveyed appropriately without talking? These and other questions entered my head and though the trailer showed me glimpses of a love story turned vengeance quest, I had my doubts.

Well I've been proven wrong.

Prayer to a Vengeful God is simply a stunning, visual symphony of a soon to be independent classic. The world Dan Eberle creates is filled with drug addicts, criminals, low lives and vagrants. They all participate in a cinematic ballet where our main character John Krause seeks his vengeance served cold. The performances by the entire cast are spectacular in the fact they must convey the story without saying a thing. And they do this perfectly.

It's not just a gimmick, but a tool to push the envelope of how we, the audience process a story. The plot is background noise here. What the film seems to do is show you images that are warm or cold and make you feel that type of positive or negative emotion. When the characters are angry, you become mad as well.

After the movie is over, you will have been through a roller coaster of emotions. And you will be left speechless...something that seems fitting.

After the tragic murder of his wife, and mortal wounding at the hands of her murderer, John Krause wakes up from a four-month dream, to a waking nightmare of pain, addiction, violation, loss, and finally, all-consuming vengeance.

PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD is the story of one man's journey from successful, upper-class citizen, to debilitated mental case, to battle-hardened street killer. All to kill a man he's never met, to commemorate a wife he never really knew.

Told in a lyrical cinematic style, entirely without dialogue, PRAYER TO A VENGEFUL GOD is a silent study of how the lust for revenge twists and rends, and despite its carnal satisfactions, can never change the past.

John Krause is our protagonist. His journey is going to be hard to watch. His wife murdered, he wakes up from a coma to rebuild his life. But soon he discovers his wife has a past that he didn't know but soon will. It's a path filled with bigger than

(Jeff Atencio, Jadedviewer.com Cont'd)

life characters who, in their own way help or hinder John's quest of vengeance and redemption.

We first meet Jennifer, his wife who soon becomes a ghostly image that guides him. Later, we encounter "Urchin", a girl who helps him in a critical moment. As we trudge along John meets Gabby, a friend of Jennifer who explains his wife's "other activities" (a spiral towards tricks for drugs). John who had been a common office worker than proceeds to metamorphosize into a junkie turned Travis Bickle. With the help of a Transient (who performs some Mr. Miyagi lessons) he seeks out the men and women responsible for his wife's demise. "Bearer" and "Miscreant" are on his list as well as an unseen man who his the mastermind of this drug den operation.

I emphasize the movie is without dialogue. It's important to note because we have to watch closely to understand what's going on. At times, I got lost on exactly what was happening as the transitions to flashbacks wasn't entirely clear. But like riding a bike, you become use to the fact nobody is talking. What you begin to focus on are the character's actions and I began to fill in the gaps of what might have been said.

There are scenes where the characters "want" to talk but you don't hear a word. Screenplays start writing themselves in your head and even a few times I got slightly irritated. But I focused on what I felt the characters were feeling and that's how it should be watched.

Eberle's performance is fantastic. His face wreaks of emotion. You see pain and anguish. You see despair and hopelessness. And later you see anger and blood lust. It's very gripping and jam packed with so many highs and lows, you feel what he feels.

Paul James Vasquez as the Transient is superb as well. In a few scenes, John and the Transient have a Morpheus/Neo training and it breaks the tension with some hilarity. But that's soon gone as the mission is foremost on John's list.

You may think the movie will be one big montage without dialogue. It does have that montagy feel at times. But whenever you see a montage in a film, typically you tend to pay more attention to what's going on. And that's how Prayer plays out.

Again like The Local, the visuals and photography are shot to NYC perfection. Brooklyn (see Richmond Hill), Queens and Manhattan become more lively and a character in itself. The typical NYC background is replaced with a more mom and pop neighborhood feel. It's what I like about Dan Eberle's movies. I feel like I'm watching where people actually live.

Like I said, the movie gives you warmth or coldness depending on the scene. After losing his wife, John despairs into suicide. The brightness goes slowly into dark and by the end we are engulfed into complete blackness. There are continuous takes that peer into each of the characters but as John goes all Kill Bill, the movie rapidly encounters an edited frenzy. The action scenes are brutal and hardcore. John now fully trained becomes a masterful madman. In one scene, a tied and beaten up drug dealer sits in a fully lit room with playful paintings of a dog and cat. I noticed this shift of insanity and I hope others do to.

By the end, we are as frigid as Antarctica and it's all going to Oldboy at this point. How we perceive John is entirely

(Jeff Atencio, Jadedviewer.com Cont'd)

up to us. From a typical office drone, to a junkie and finally to a Robin Hood machete wielding vengeance machine. Some will be happy of the outcome, others will shrug.

I sincerely believe dialogue wouldn't have hurt the film but I'm glad Eberle went without it. There are times the movie falls into cliché land but that's going to happen when you delve into this genre.

Prayer is not a typical revenge movie but a tale of misery meets morality. The world is not always the happy face we think it is.

When something bad happens, we pray for things to get better. Usually those prayers are said silently.

It's probably exactly how Dan Eberle imagined it.

Dan Eberle's Artistic Vision Remains Strong

Gavin Schmitt, KillerReviews.com

John Krause (Dan Eberle) lives a successful life, but his wife wants a little something more, moonlighting in the world of sex and drugs. She makes a tragic mistake, and ends up a target of the local dealers. John becomes collateral damage, left for dead (but luckily only in a coma). Upon waking, he soon decides upon a course of revenge.

Eberle, who is also the writer and director, continues to blaze a trail of artistic genius. I had seen his previous film, "The Local", and was thoroughly impressed by his ability to make a low budget independent feature have the same level of style, quality and intensity as a Guy Ritchie crime drama. "Vengeful" is a different sort of film, perhaps more artistic, but the talent is equal to or better than that in "Local".

Besides Eberle, who is a skilled writer, director and actor, a few other stars stand out and should be given credit: first and foremost, the late Paul James Vasquez who plays the Transient. Vasquez has a way of combining a glamorous Fabio and a dirty, homeless thug into the same character.. and it works. It really, really works. Due to Vasquez's skills and physical stature, no one else could have filled this role, and Eberle is lucky to have a friend and teacher like this.

The other actor who stood out was Jillaine Gill, who played the Urchin. Her role is less defined -- no real name, no distinct alliances. Gill has called her role that of "guardian angel", which I think is appropriate, but what are her motivations and where does she come from? That Jillaine was able to play this part and make it so believably mysterious is a strong credit to her... I hope to see her in future Eberle productions and other films.

The making-of featurette (sent to me by Eberle, and I'm not sure where else this will be available) is a fifteen minute behind the scenes that refers to "power in silence". And I think that really sums up this film: it epitomizes the idea of less is more.

(Gavin Schmitt, KillerReviews.com Cont'd)

By lacking dialogue, we are sucked in more, left to analyze more deeply on visuals and actions... and the varieties of interpretation come into play. There is a set narrative, but some aspects are ambiguous -- but this adds to, not takes away from, the film; you can watch it again and again.

I do not have the expertise to analyze and critique the technical merits of the film, but truly this is a professional film disguised as an independent one. Dan Eberle does what the big studios do without the aid of millions of dollars and A-list actors. But the fact of the matter is this: Eberle and crew do it better.

Prayer to a Vengeful God (2010)

Josh Samford, RogueCinema.com

Dan Eberle is one of the most interesting filmmakers I have come across that currently works in the realm of no-budget independent cinema. I was sent his previous film *The Local* for review here on Rogue Cinema some time back and I was thoroughly impressed with it. A small story about redemption that packed highly polished visuals with a very sick sense of decay that encompassed the entire project. The feature, like the one we'll be discussing today, starred Eberle who is actually a strong actor as well as director. These are two concepts that don't always work well with one another, but Eberle has a vision and he does what it takes to bring that across for his audience. He is a low budget auteur of sorts, with a focus on life as it hits the skids. *Prayer to a Vengeful God* sort of solidified this for me. Although it is not as conventionally entertaining as *The Local*, it is even more ambitious. How is that, you ask? *Prayer to a Vengeful God* is almost entirely a silent film.

John Krause (Dan Eberle) is your average white collar type. Doing well for himself, sophisticated and set within his ways. His life takes a horrible change however when his apartment is broken into and he is shot in the back, while his wife is murdered. Krause awakens in the hospital and has to re-learn everything within his life. All of this while he is haunted by the death of his beautiful and caring wife. When John is released, he is given prescription medication in order to deal with his pain and he soon finds out that if he takes the medication to excess, he can actually imagine his deceased wife standing there with him. As John discovers this new world of drug addiction and vagrancy, he finds a group of thugs who may have been involved in the death of his wife. With this information, and the help of a homeless man who teaches him to fight, John sets out on a path towards vengeance.

Following in the footsteps of Eberle's previous film *The Local*, *Prayer to a Vengeful God* continues a fascination with the downtrodden and the weak in our society. Although the photography is stunning at times and beautiful at every moment, it is caked with the grime and feel of urban life. The grit simply pulsates through nearly every frame of film, only giving us a break when we see the character John and his previous life before the death of his wife. The pristine and proper look of his apartment gives a stark contrast to the urban decay that lives just outside of his doorstep. As this character sinks into this horrifying new reality, so do we become accustomed to it.

(Josh Samford, RogueCinema.com)

The fact that this is all but a silent film is something that is going to split audiences right down the center. Despite my having some reservations about the concept, which I will get to shortly, I can't help but admire the sheer guts and artistic integrity that it takes to do such a thing. It is the equivalent of a cinematic dare in this day and age. Many art house features are minimalist in their nature and feature very little in the way of dialogue. South Korean filmmaker Kim-Ki Duk comes to mind when I think of such filmmakers. Eberle however looks to take the concept to its notable climax, by removing all dialogue and instead focusing on cinema in its truest form which is the visual. It is what separates this art form from all others and Eberle takes the challenge to present his story simply in the realm of the visual. Does it pay off? That is a difficult answer, but I will say that for the most part I think Eberle succeeds in his goals and crafts a very engaging piece of experimental cinema.

Making this as an experimental silent film was certainly a brave choice, but at the same time it does limit itself in many ways. The audience is obvious a key factor. Although I do know several people I plan to recommend the movie to, there are some others who could possibly lose interest along the way and may not even invest their time due to how involved one has to be while watching. This isn't like your traditional silent film from the pre-talkie era, this has no title card to fill us in on the unspoken emotional moments that come about. It makes the film slightly difficult to parse out in your head as a viewer, as characters float into the picture and then back out. You have to consistently remind yourself who is who, without the benefit of hearing their voice in order to differentiate themselves further. These are pet peeves more than anything, as I did enjoy the picture quite a bit and am giving it a solid recommendation, but with that recommendation comes a warning.

There's no doubt about it, this one won't be for everyone. However, it does help to cement Dan Eberle in my mind as one of the most talented filmmakers you have probably never heard of. It is a dark and gritty tale of vengeance, but it leans more towards the art house side of things than it is a work of genre cinema. I absolutely recommend it and I can't wait to see more from Eberle as he continues to grow and to thrive as an artist. You can read more about the film at the official website: <http://insurgentpictures.com/vengeful>