

Film Notes

By Maddie Martin

Strange Days

1995 | 205mins

Director: Kathryn Bigelow

Starring: Angella Basset, Ralph Fiennes, Juliette Lewis

      @FilmBathUK



Mayhem is brewing as the clock ticks on new years eve in 1999. *Strange days* is an underappreciated piece of thought provoking cyberpunk sci-fi, set in a riot fuelled Los Angeles. Heartbroken former cop Lenny Nero (Ralph Fiennes) spends his days pushing the illegal tech SQUID, a device that allows the user to experience others' memories and feel their emotions.

Lenny and his good friend Mace (Angella Basset) find themselves caught up in some dark business after Lenny receives a SQUID disk showing the brutal murder of a young woman. As the duo begin to investigate, they uncover a much more intricate mystery. Tensions rise on the streets of LA as the new millennium draws closer. Lenny and Mace race to release the information they've uncovered, knowing it holds the power to change everything in their time of political and racial unrest.

With a thrashy punk soundtrack, Kathryn Bigelow's film is a gripping 1990s gem. Basset shines as the film's action hero, and Fiennes portrays depth to a flamboyant sleazebag in a somewhat surprising role. As one of her earlier films, *Strange days* demonstrates Bigelow's directorial journey, utilising a provocative, almost seductive approach to violence through point of view shots.

This action packed thriller entices the audience right from the start, presenting a dark, chaotic version of the near future. Exploring the obsession with technology, *Strange Days* arouses thoughts to a new generation of audiences about the influx of AI and the escapism of social media.

'Despite the criticisms, *Strange Days* is the best piece of cyberpunk to grace celluloid since Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982)'

- Drew Morton

What did you think of the film? Please mark or tear the number.

Please add any further comments here

Excellent

Fair

Poor



Did You Know?

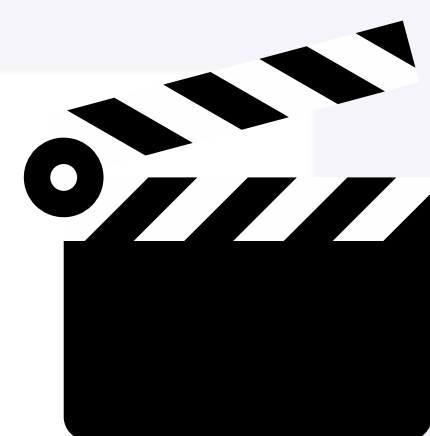
- Kathryn Bigelow was the first woman to win an Oscar for best director. She won in 2010 for *The Hurt Locker* (2008). Bigelow is only one of three women to ever win the award.
- Fat Boy Slims famous 1998 track 'Right Here Right Now' takes its title sample from Angela Bassett's line in *Strange Days*.
- Before filming could take place, the crew spent an entire year creating an 8 pound, 35mm camera that could be mounted on a portable rig in order to get the best Point of View shots.

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Do the Right Thing (1989)
A modern classic set on the hottest day of the year. Tensions rise in a racially diverse Brooklyn neighbourhood leading to a violent climax.



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Genius and tech wiz Dade moves to New York and meets a group of fellow minded cyber obsessed hackers. While messing around, they discover an oil company's crimes.

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