

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Guy Pearce

Elisa Leonelli · Thursday, January 23rd, 2025



Guy Pearce-The Brutalist © A24

[Guy Pearce](#) has been getting well-deserved recognition for his performance in *The Brutalist*, directed by Brady Corbet and starring Adrien Brody, where he plays an American millionaire who hires a Hungarian architect, a Jewish immigrant escaping the Holocaust, to build a monumental community center in Pennsylvania. He spoke to press about the complexity of the Van Buren character, who recognizes Laszlo's artistic talent and envies it, so he tries to own it and possess it, because of his insatiable greed.

As a journalist in the Hollywood Foreign Press, I interviewed Pearce numerous times, about movies like *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994) with Terence Stamp and Hugo Weaving, *L.A. Confidential* (1997) by Curtis Hanson with Russell Crowe, *Memento* (2000) by Christopher Nolan, the TV miniseries *Mildred Pierce* (2011) with Kate Winslet directed by Todd Haynes from the 1941 novel by James M. Cain, among many others.



Elisa Leonelli, Guy Pearce © HFPA 2014

However, the Italian publications I was a correspondent for from Los Angeles: *Ciak*, *Marie Claire*, *Gioia*, *Donna Moderna*, *Glamour*, *Best Movie*, the Spanish *Cinemanía*, were not usually interested in him. Until finally in 2014 the editor of *Myself* asked me to write a long interview-profile of Guy Pearce for the August issue. Sadly Condé Nast Italy scrapped that magazine before it was published. So now I rescue some excerpts from his answers that are still relevant today, after the devastating Los Angeles fires, while he talked about his movie *The Rover*, a dystopian western set in the Australian outback.



***The Rover* is set in a bleak desert landscape, 10 years after the collapse of the world. Are you a pessimist or an optimist about the future of mankind?**

"I feel like I can be both, I can be pretty pessimistic about the trajectory that we are on, but I am a Libra, and it's all about balance for me, so I reckon I am equally optimistic. The interesting thing, when you look at post-apocalyptic films like this one, is that it's relatable to the world that we live in now, because that situation already exists in some countries. It's an extension of the way we are living now, based on greed and the difference between the rich and the poor getting larger. I guess that, as human beings, we take for granted the civilized things that we experience in our lives, but we have all come from an uncivilized background, as far as our history as animals or creatures on this planet, and this whole thing called civilization, that we have developed through evolution, is fairly precarious. So, depending on multiple things that may happen to us, we could easily turn back into violent survivalists.

Did this film make you reflect about the fate of the earth, with global warming causing droughts in so many places around the world?

"Obviously water is something that we need to survive, and we all know how scarce it can be at times. So being out in the desert of Flinders Ranges North of Adelaide shooting *The Rover* certainly made you think about why people would choose to live out there and how they managed

to survive. And I am sure it's exactly the same in other parts of the world, there are some fairly arid places as well, just like in Australia."

In *The Rover* you play a man who has nothing left to lose. Have you ever felt that way?

"No, but I certainly imagined losing family members or whatever in your life, and in past times it was easy for me to assume the worst. I feared that, if you didn't get any more work and you had your house repossessed or if you fell out of love with somebody, it wouldn't take many steps to feel like you had nothing left to live for. So, in a way, it's been helpful, as far as not taking for granted the things that I do have, the people that I live with."

How would you describe the soul of Australia?

"I think there's a lot of sadness in the soul of Australia, and when you look at the two worlds coming together, the aboriginal culture and the whites, the community that's made its way there over the last 100 years, there's a lot of unresolved stuff between the coming together of those two cultures. So there's a bit of a sad heart to Australia."

Guy Pearce was nominated as Best Supporting Actor for *The Brutalist* at the Golden Globes and at the Academy Awards.



Guy Pearce-Photo by Tibrina Hobson-Courtesy SBIFF

P.S. On February 13 Pearce was honored with the Cinema Vanguard Award at the Santa Barbara Film Festival

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