

Wednesday, 10th December 2025
 Studio 609, 7.45 pm

Heretic

USA, 2024, 15, 1 hr 51 mins

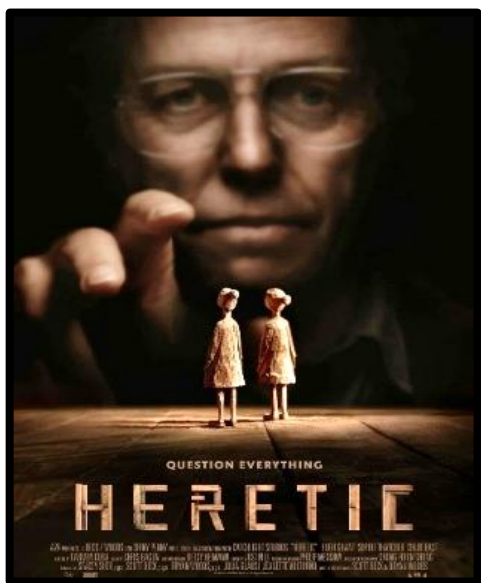
Written and Directed by:

Scott Beck and Bryan Woods

Producers: Stacey Sher, Scott Beck, Bryan Woods

Julia Glausi, Jeanette Volturno

Horror, Thriller



A pair of female Mormon missionaries are invited to the home of a man to discuss matters of faith but become prey to his sinister take on religion.

Cast includes (selected)

High Grant
 Sophie Thatcher
 Chloe East
 Topher Grace

Mr Reed
 Sister Barnes
 Sister Paxton
 Elder Kennedy

Film Notes by Mike Darbon

For decades, Hugh Grant was the stuttering, floppy-haired poster boy of British romance. But in recent years, the “Hugh-naissance” has seen him embrace character acting with a darker, grittier edge. In **Heretic**, that transformation is complete. Grant delivers a performance of reptilian charm and sinister intellect that anchors one of the year’s most provocative films.

It is crucial to state upfront: **Heretic** is not a “slasher.” There are no masked killers chasing teenagers through the woods. Instead, this is “chamber horror”—a sub-genre closer to **Misery** or **10 Cloverfield Lane**. It relies on the terror of confinement and the violence of ideas rather than gratuitous gore.

Written and directed by Scott Beck and Bryan Woods, the film begins with a scenario familiar to us all: a knock at the door. Sisters Barnes and Paxton (superbly played by Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East) are missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are welcomed into the cottage of Mr. Reed (Grant), a seemingly kindly, sweater-wearing Englishman who claims to have a deep interest in theology.

Once the door clicks shut, the film shifts into a high-stakes theological debate. Mr. Reed is not a generic villain; he is a scholar of comparative religion. He doesn’t want to hurt the missionaries physically—at least, not initially. He wants to break their minds.

The film’s view of Mormonism is surprisingly nuanced. Rather than treating the young women as naive punchlines, the script respects their knowledge. They are smart, resilient, and capable of parrying Reed’s intellectual blows. Reed views all religions—Mormonism included—as iterations of the same control mechanism, likening religious history to the rules of a board game or cover versions of a pop song. The horror comes from watching a charismatic narcissist dismantle the innocent faith of his guests using logic, history, and manipulation.

Visually, the film is stunning. Shot by Chung-hoon Chung (the cinematographer behind **Oldboy** and **Last Night in Soho**, shown at FILMBOX in 2022), the cosy cottage slowly reveals itself to be a brutalist labyrinth. The production design mirrors the psychological state of the characters: what starts as warm and inviting becomes cold, concrete, and confusing.

The film plays heavily on the concept of “choice.” Mr. Reed presents the Sisters with doors labelled “Belief” and “Disbelief,” forcing them to confront whether their faith is a true conviction or merely a lack of curiosity.

If you are hesitating because of the genre label, rest assured that **Heretic** is an exercise in tension, not revulsion. It is a film about the power of language and the danger of blind faith—whether that faith is in a god or in a charming man who claims to have all the answers.

For our December programme, **Heretic** offers a chillingly perfect counterpoint to the festive season. It invites you to sit in the dark and think, leaving you with questions that linger long after the lights come up.

Our Next Presentations

Thursday, 15th January 2025

In Studio 609 at 7.30pm

Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy

France/US/UK, 2024, 15, 2 hrs

Dir: Michael Morris

Romantic Comedy

After jumping back into the dating pool, single mother Bridget Jones finds herself caught between a younger man and her son's science teacher.



Wednesday, 28th January 2026

In Studio 609 at 7.30pm

The Ballad of Wallis Island

UK, 2025, 12A, 1 hr 40 mins

Dir: James Griffiths

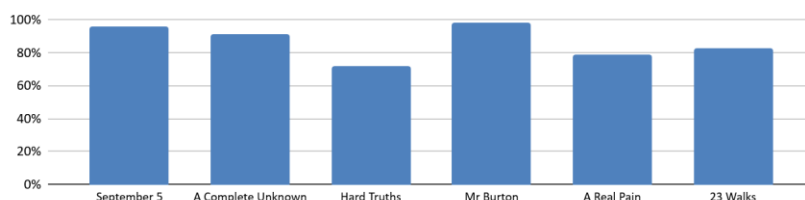
Romance, Comedy, Drama

An eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote island tries to make his fantasies come true by getting his favourite musicians to perform at his home.



Latest Audience Film Ratings

How did you like our recent offerings? % voting "Excellent" or "Good"



Note: The audience rating for **My Sweet Paro** shown with **23 Walks** was 81%