

(Director)

Ways to pass

Christophe Gans is an enthusiast of the cinema. A fact. During normal times, he watches at least three films a day. Because of his ravenous appetite a remarkable memory adjusts which allows him to remember in a second the original title of an Italian Western made in the sixties or to remember a specific movement of the camera in a Czech mystery movie which he had seen 15 years ago.

A total passion, touching, obsessing sick. Because of that, the place behind the camera is inevitable.

Gans is 12 years old. With his friends he shoots, in the hinterland of Cannes, an ethnic film in super 8 inspired by Chinese cloak and dagger films, which were very popular. We are at the beginning of the 70s, the cinemas are full of Kung Fu films, big Japanese monsters, Spanish honor gangs, Italian erotic thrillers and German follow up series inspired by Edgar Wallace. This is the time of *Chateau des chiens hurlants*, of *L'Oiseau au plumage de cristal*, of *Cyborg 2000*, *Odysee sous-marine* and of *Griffes de jade*.

Not to miss one, Gans extended his research field up into film theatre of Cannes in 1973. Christophe Gans: "The month of May is the most fabulous because it's the time of the Cannes Festival and were I could spend my days at the movie theatre. A cinema director who took me under her wings gave me free entrance to all the movie theatres she owned at Cannes, Nice, Juan les Pins and Antibes. I could watch everything. My biggest pleasure was to tell my friends everything in detail." Because of this passion to share the films – and especially the most fantastic – a pure Fandom was born.

Gans could recall all the films he had seen. When he arrived in Paris to enter the IDHEC he had all these movies in his mind. With 18 he takes courses for 4 years at the national French Cinema school. He left the school with a diploma on film cutting and a short film produced on 16mm called *Silver Slime*, literal "Brave d'Argent" to honor Mario Bava and Dario Argento, the two

masters of the Italian horror film. A major influence which one can find later in “The Drowned”, the sketch he carried out in 1993 in Necronomicon ..

The rest of the time which he is not spending at the IDHEC or in the cinema he dedicates to work at specialized magazines like (L’Ecran Fantastique”). The Video market finally extended. He became director of the collection under the label <<Scherzo>> putting confusion stuff out like L’enfer des armes of Tsui Hark, some kind of “japanimés” or the mystic “Story of Joanna” of Gerard Domiano, the last title became a success because of him. Realizing this, the owner of <<Scherzo>> gave him the chance to start a magazine. That was “Starfix”, a journal about the now called mystic cinema. Parallel, he tried to launch short film projects, one of which was very important to him was “Gnomes”. The history of the tribute of small creatures resist more or less against the interior of a partition wall of an old house.

Christophe Gans: “I presented Gnomes in a short film. I got honored for getting the script right to the point, I had a detailed story line, sketches of the production in color, already developed photo sketches, in a nutshell everything! That’s why the negative response of the CNC had shocked me completely. I would like to know why my project was rejected. Big mistake. It was the president of the commission who answered the phone. This woman, who indeed was a well known producer stated that this film will never get life, that she would prefer a script with mistakes and printed on dirty paper than doing a long winded movie like mine.”

Deathblow! Finding that out I had the exact impression that I will never be able to make a film in France. Without ever letting himself down, he worked on long films.

The tiredness of the journalistic profession gained step by step – he tried to face it in making turns. That’s the time when he rejoins Antoine de Cannes at TV with <<Enfants du Rock>> and finally <<Rapido>>.

The following is known: Samuel Hadida asked him to develop projects for his firm David Film ... .

When Samuel Hadid decided to associate with Yuzna Productions and Ozla Pictures of Japan and Taka Ichise to finanze the adaption of Crying Freemann

a question causes tension. How to inspire Christophe Gans to the job as director? Hadida: "It was necessary to sell the film in order to get the necessary budget. Christophe could tell all his visions to the potential buyers. The Japanese had been the most difficult to convince because they saw a sort of national hero in the person of Freemann and wanted to have a well known director when producing an international film." The director finally won in proving them his knowledge and respect to the Japanese culture. Tempted, the Japanese invited him to show proof on *Necronomicon*, a film made on sketches at the studio with Brian Yuzka. They were missing a director for the first sequence. A moment to test the capability of the protégé of Samuel Hadida without too many risks. Everything went fine: Gans wrote in a quarter of a day a very rare adapted script to the novel "The Rats in the Wall" of Howard P. Lovecraft, which was the source which inspired the project.

He, who had not touched a camera for 10 years satisfied himself with a 3 week pre-production and a shooting of 10 days. On the other hand the post-production of *Necronomicon* took 6 months, because of uncountable special effects and a slow financing.

Speed test, Resistance test. *Necronomicon* gave him the advantage to put what he had learnt into action.

He finished the project with honor (a positive critic to his elegance and style in "Variety" the bible of Hollywood) and got an easy way to the adventure of *Crying Freeman*