

## “WAKE WOOD” director talks his next chiller

Written by Michael Gingold  
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Irish director David Keating (pictured) made his first foray into the horror genre with his superior rural occult tale WAKE WOOD, which debuted this week on DVD and Blu-ray from Dark Sky. And he's planning to stay there; he gave us some info about his next fright outing, THE CHERRY TREE.

Not to be confused with British director Paul Andrew Williams' recent thriller CHERRY TREE LANE, Keating's movie will continue the familial themes of WAKE WOOD, in which a couple engage an occult ritual to bring their dead young daughter back to life, with grisly results. "THE CHERRY TREE is really about how much a daughter loves her dad," he tells Fango. "It's a contemporary film, set in the U.S., and it's the story of a single father who lives with his 16-year-old daughter, and to save his life, she has Satan's baby. As anyone would, really. Wouldn't you?" he laughs.

One of WAKE WOOD's strengths is its strong sense of place, community and rural atmosphere in the titular Irish town. Keating says this will continue into his new States-set project: "I very much hope you'll get a strong sense of the northeastern U.S. from it," he says. "I've spent a bit of time in Massachusetts and Maine, so while I was working on the script, that's really where I was thinking of. It's also very much a suburban story, so it'll be interesting to explore that sort of setting—interesting for me, as a journey. I've got family in the U.S., I've been coming since I was a little boy and I'm curious to work here and explore it. Also, there is such a strong American film tradition that I'm also intrigued to be a part of. I'll always be a European, and probably a European filmmaker, but I'm excited to explore a story set in America."

THE CHERRY TREE also belongs to the tradition of films about bearing the devil's child, going

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back to ROSEMARY’S BABY, and Keating says he’ll be taking the same character-based approach as the Roman Polanski classic. “I like films that have strong performances, where the people hook you in at the very beginning and you really care about them. For me, films don’t really work, no matter how good the story is, if I don’t care about the characters; I just not into it. So that’s always what I’m trying to do. But just to make sure I’m outside my comfort zone on this, we’ve added a visual effects component that’s going to be very creepy, visually. That’s quite an interesting element.” We’ll keep you posted as THE CHERRY TREE bears fruit; see our feature on WAKE WOOD and Keating in Fango #305, now on sale.