

Discussion Guide for The Man of the Year

The film begins with Maiquel dyeing his hair. How does this event act as a catalyst for subsequent events in the film?

After murdering Suel, how is Maiquel encouraged to continue a life of violence? How does Maiquel's dentist propel him further into violent, criminal activities?

What social commentary is the film making?

When Maiquel tells his friends about Suel's murder, the scene cuts back to images of Erica cradling Suel's body. Later in the film director José Henrique Fonseca uses parallel action to show the car-jacking scene and Maiquel's party. What is the purpose and effect of these techniques?

What is the significance of showing the news footage of President Bill Clinton, and calling the pig "Bill?" as well as the McDonald's sign seen through his apartment window. What is Fonseca trying to communicate?

Cinematographer Breno Silveira creates dark scenes highlighted with ultra bright spots of light and often utilizes skewed camera angles. What effect do these and other cinematographic elements create?

How does the film's score help move the action along (particularly in the scene where Maiquel purchases the gun)?

How do Maiquel's interest in animals and his job at the pet store contrast with his other career in the murder for hire business?

There are several conversations about how people protect themselves from violence. Is this also a comment on how people protect themselves emotionally (i.e. the distant, unattached Maiquel) or just a reference to the increasingly violent culture? How does Maiquel's use of Novocain drops to treat the pain in his mouth correlate with other ways he numbs himself and ignores pain in his life?

Though Maiquel is hailed as a hero, even called The Man of the Year, there are times when his conscious still plagues him. Does Maiquel ever come to terms with his feelings of guilt, and if so how? Does Maiquel think that murdering a criminal is justified? What is the film's message about violence?

What purpose does Erica's religious devotion serve to her character? To Maiquel's character? To the action of the film?

Why does Maiquel choose to keep his hair blond though he initially only dyed it because he lost a bet? What is the significance of Maiquel changing his hair color at the end of the movie?

Toward the end of the film Maiquel states, "Learning to kill is like learning to die." How do Maiquel's attitudes and predilections towards violence and murder change through the film and what contributes to that change?

In the opening of the film, Maiquel discusses God's plan for himself, but by the end, his attitude is, "Each of us chooses his own fate." Were the events of Maiquel's life determined by chance circumstance, or choices he made? How does Maiquel's idea of fate change by the end of the film?

If you have seen City of God, to which Man of the Year, has been repeatedly compared, what are the similarities and differences between the films?

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