

**It takes a village
to execute the
perfect murder**

ARCHITECT'S RENDITION



LOGLINE

Determined to marry his mistress, an architect enlists three associates in a complex scheme to murder his wife - and each other.

SUMMARY

Length: Feature film (~2 hours)

Genre: Psychological Thriller

Audience: Adult; likely R (language, violence, suicide, drug use)

Characters:

- 2 Leads (female (20s) and male (40s))

- 2 Supporting (female (40s) and male, (25-35))

- 3-6 Tertiary players

Locations: 4-6; primary shoots – offices, bars/restaurants, hotel, casino

Budget: Estimated low: \$2M - \$5M

WHAT'S THE APPEAL?

2023 Box office for the popular Thriller/Suspense genre exceeded \$430M¹.
The Thriller genre commands an 84% favorability among audiences².

The “Perfect Murder” trope has been a plot vehicle for countless successful movies, regardless of whether the murder was perfect.

A good vehicle for a mid-career actor looking for a juicy lead playing a charismatic, business-successful anti-hero along the lines of Patrick Bateman in *American Psycho*.

Expense benefits from small cast, limited locations, contemporary setting, no special FX.

Everybody loves a twist on the end. And the twist affords a potential sequel in which the authorities in the movie press on with further investigations into murky crimes.

MAIN CHARACTERS

GERALD

Handsome, driven, successful Manhattan architect in his 40s, conflicted by the role his wife and her wealth plays in his happiness.

Clever, amoral and shrewd, yet passionate about his young lover, Wren. He's surprised at the extent his desire to protect her is at odds with his innate selfishness.

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WREN

Intelligent, hard-working young woman looking for stability, and freedom from an abusive former boyfriend.

Tough, passionate, skeptical. Commands the strength to stand up to bullying. Harbors no interest in playing the gold-digger to the rich Gerald.

The part can be expanded through an alternate ending in which she turns against Gerald.

COMPS: AVARICE, DECEPTION AND DEATH



Gone Girl

WW gross - \$369M

Hollywood Film Awards
Best Picture 2014

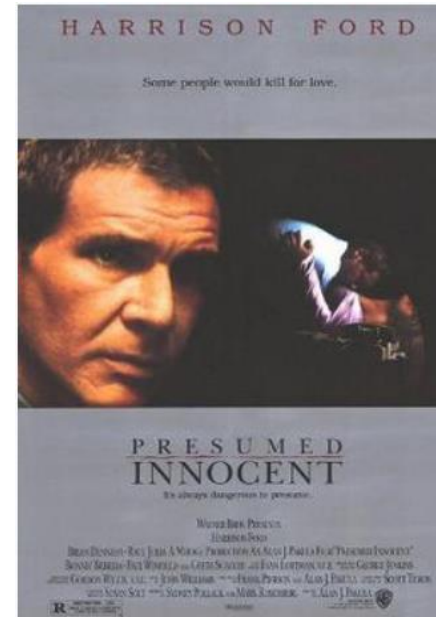
Golden Globe Best
Screenplay nominee 2015



Malice

WW gross - \$61M

Cognac Festival winner
for Best Director and
Audience 1993



Presumed Innocent

WW gross - \$221M

Edgar Allen Poe Award
nominee for Best Picture
1991



A Perfect Murder

WW gross - \$128M

ASCAP Award Top Box
Office Film winner 1999

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Disgusted after discovering one of the architects in his Manhattan firm has downloaded illegal pornography, Gerald Pfalzgraf walks the street, contemplating how he might exploit his compromised employee, Oscar. Gerald witnesses a physical altercation between a young woman, Wren and her brutish ex-boyfriend, Sinisa. With time, Gerald, a handsome man in his 40s develops a romantic relationship with Wren, a real beauty half his age. Gerald knows Wren is the one for him, but he's in a rocky 20-year marriage to a wealthy, manipulative woman, Morcilla. Gerald imagines moving Morcilla aside and confiscating her wealth.

ACT II

At the bank Gerald spots Tom, an old school chum whose highway construction firm is in financial trouble. Gerald recalls that Tom had been a sharpshooter in the Army. He offers to help Tom who mistakenly presumes Gerald needs work on a project. Wren informs Gerald that Sinisa has stepped up his abusive harassment, convincing Gerald that the ex-boyfriend poses one more impediment to his happiness, and must be taken out of the picture.

SYNOPSIS

ACT III

Gerald bribes sharpshooter Tom to shoot Morcilla from afar in what would appear to be a random act of violence. Holding the threat of incarceration over Oscar's head, Gerald coerces his employee to push Tom into the path of an oncoming subway train. Under the guise of a fixer for a client, Gerald hires Sinisa to kill Oscar and stage it to look like suicide. In the briefcase containing Sinisa's payoff, Gerald includes a bag of cocaine laced with poisonous ricin, knowing Sinisa cannot resist snorting the contents post haste. After dispatching Oscar, a choking Sinisa dies after falling down a flight of stairs.

EPILOG

With all the people who could interfere with his happiness, Gerald marries Wren..

All is well until the case of Morcilla's murder is re-opened after new evidence comes to light. Gerald contemplates his next move as he fears renewed interest in him as a culprit.

ALTERNATE ENDINGS

Wren concludes Gerald has been behind the slew of deaths and

- a. Brings him down
- b. Is herself reluctantly eliminated by Gerald (like the final scene in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*)

WRITER BIO

Herb Schultz

Former marketing executive for Supercomputing at IBM, now retired.

Writer of five spec scripts

Architect's Rendition – An architect enlists three associates in a complex scheme to murder his wife, and each other.

Double Blind Test – A woman conned by identical twins gets revenge.

*Tempus Fu*it* – The life of a scientist who hunts for the thief of his invention is upturned by the invention itself.

The Stoooper – A racetrack stoooper fights to recover a valuable lottery ticket that rightfully belongs to him.

Stalled – Imprisoned in a bathroom stall, two disabled men plot an escape from their sadistic captors.

Author of three novels, a collection of short stories, and a collection of essays

RonnieandLennie about conjoined twins who are saddened after becoming separated.

Architect's Rendition, a story of a Machiavellian man who gets random people to kill each other for his benefit.

Double Blind Test, a tale of deceit, romance and lex talionis.

Sometimes the Sun Does Shine There and Other Stories - Winner of the 2012 Indie Reader Discovery Award for best short story collection

Culture Justly Scrutinized: A Take on Six Years of Virtue and Venality

www.majorterata.com for more.



THE SCRIPT AND MORE

Read the treatment and script at www.majorterata.com/architects-rendition-2

Check out the novel *Architect's Rendition* from which the screenplay was adapted at www.majorterata.com/architects-rendition

More screenplays at www.majorterata.com

Contact Herb Schultz

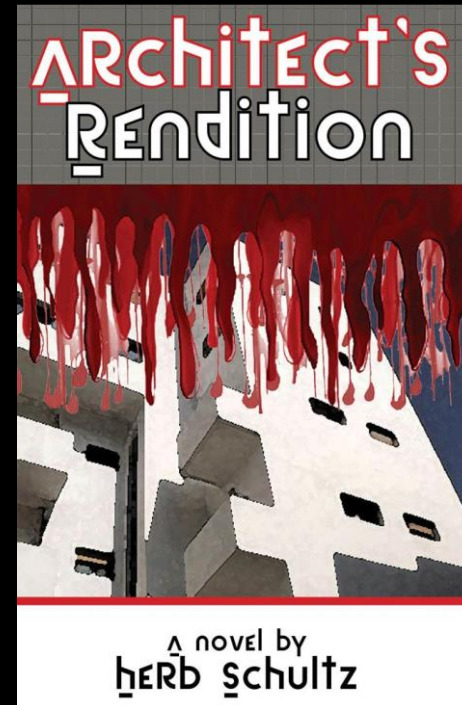
herbschultz@majorterata.com

[linkedin.com/in/herbschultz/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/herbschultz/)

PO Box 391

Saugerties, NY 12477

212 242-4520 / 845 224-7088



THANK YOU