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THE SUNDAY TIMES

'I'm kind of obsessed with the devil'

Daniel Radcliffe's love of all things satanic, as he launches his new film *Horns*, spells the end of his Harry Potter image

Matt Mueller, Toronto Published: 7 September 2013

Daniel Radcliffe in *The Woman in Black*



The dark side has finally caught up with Harry Potter. Daniel Radcliffe, the actor who played the schoolboy wizard, has revealed an alarming interest in all things satanic.

Radcliffe, 24, grows horns in a new film after his angelic girlfriend is brutally murdered and he is the chief suspect.

In an interview for *The Sunday Times* at the Toronto film festival, the actor admitted the new appendages are not

his only devilish turn.

He said: "I think one of the things that actually got me the part was that I sat down with the director at our first meeting and said, 'You know I'm kind of obsessed with the devil.'

"Because I kind of am. Weirdly. I have a huge obsession with the way the devil is portrayed in pop culture, from \[the song\] *Sympathy for the Devil* to the fact that my favourite book is *The Master and Margarita*, which is all about the devil coming to Moscow in the 1920s."

Acknowledging the admission may dent the squeaky-clean image he enjoyed at Hogwarts, he added: "It's a phrase I should probably steer clear of, given my background, but magical realism — that's the stuff that excites me, and I love the fact that there's a scene where I meet the devil and we do a deal."

The son of a Northern Ireland Protestant father and a Jewish mother, Radcliffe is an atheist. He said: "I know it's very hard to say where it came from, but I also think that the devil's kind of an amazing character."

Horns, the movie, is one of three new films starring Radcliffe that are showing at the Canadian festival. *Kill Your Darlings* is about the emerging American beat poets of the 1940s and *The F Word* is a rom-com.

Yet Radcliffe freely admits that when Alexandre Aja, the director of *Horns*, first cast him and took the idea to the movie's financiers, they said: "We don't feel like Dan Radcliffe can open a film without a wand in his hand."

What changed that perception was the success of *The Woman in Black*, a horror film that parents took their children to see, expecting some Harry Potter magic.

"It was made for somewhere under \$10m," he said. "It made \$120m, or whatever it was, and does give people a certain amount more faith."

He hopes a lot of older Potter fans will see his new films. He has a sex scene in *Horns* and plays Allen Ginsberg, the gay poet, in *Kill Your Darlings*. But he added: "A lot of the very young ones shouldn't. *The Woman in Black* got more complaints to the censorship board than any other film that year because, I think, a lot of people took young children thinking that, because I was in it, it would be appropriate for them."

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 **Matt Mueller**



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