

Saw Franchise

Released
2004
Director
James Wan
Genre
Horror

**Words and
Illustration**
Stephanie Jade



Saw at its core is a game of death, but also a game of life. After a terminal cancer diagnosis, John “Jigsaw” Kramer assumes the role of the ultimate puppet master, and seeks to rehabilitate misguided souls by all manner of elaborate contraptions and tests to see just how far they will go to be given a second chance at life, and make moral retributions for their wrongdoings. Considering my inability to make it through a scary film until I was well into my teens, Saw holds a special nostalgic place in my heart as my favourite franchise. To me, Saw’s scattered, overly edited, and even campy plotlines are the very essence of fun and games. The acting is over the top (bordering on comical at points) the traps are entertaining, cringe-inducing, yet enticing at the same time. For what it lacks in a lesser polished storyline and confusing character arcs, it makes up for in grit, gore, and creativity that doesn’t take itself too seriously; while still packing enough of a punch to turn your stomach, leaving even the hardest of us feeling very grateful that our fingers stay firmly attached. So, anyone want to play a game?

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In 2004, when the first film was released, the United States was still coming to terms with the traumatic impact of 9/11 and its aftershocks. The attack shattered many Americans’ illusion of an impenetrable homeland security and plunged the country into an ongoing War on Terror. Some viewed Saw as a veiled commentary on the Bush administration’s approved use of torture to extract information from prisoners it often wrongly believed were withholding it.

