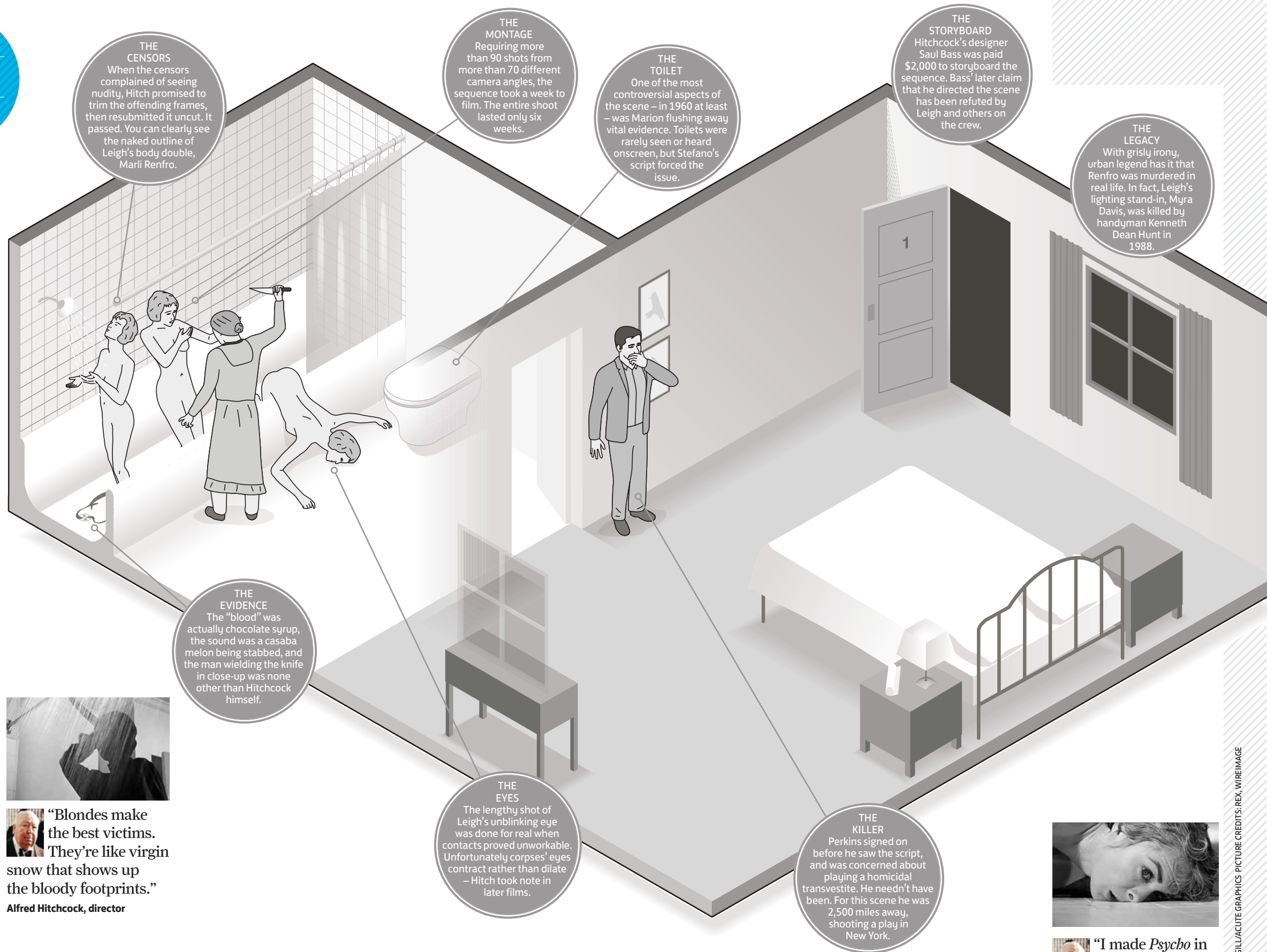




The big scream: Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) prepares to make her exit.

7  
The Classic Scene  
Marion Crane comes clean.



**THE CENSORS**  
When the censors complained of seeing nudity, Hitch promised to trim the offending frames, then resubmitted it uncut. It passed. You can clearly see the naked outline of Leigh's body double, Marli Renfro.

**THE MONTAGE**  
Requiring more than 90 shots from more than 70 different camera angles, the sequence took a week to film. The entire shoot lasted only six weeks.

**THE TOILET**  
One of the most controversial aspects of the scene – in 1960 at least – was Marion flushing away vital evidence. Toilets were rarely seen or heard onscreen, but Stefano's script forced the issue.

**THE STORYBOARD**  
Hitchcock's designer Saul Bass was paid \$2,000 to storyboard the sequence. Bass' later claim that he directed the scene has been refuted by Leigh and others on the crew.

**THE LEGACY**  
With grisly irony, urban legend has it that Renfro was murdered in real life. In fact, Leigh's lighting stand-in, Myra Davis, was killed by handyman Kenneth Dean Hunt in 1988.

**THE EVIDENCE**  
The "blood" was actually chocolate syrup, the sound was a casaba melon being stabbed, and the man wielding the knife in close-up was none other than Hitchcock himself.

**THE EYES**  
The lengthy shot of Leigh's unblinking eye was done for real when contacts proved unworkable. Unfortunately corpses' eyes contract rather than dilate – Hitch took note in later films.

**THE KILLER**  
Perkins signed on before he saw the script, and was concerned about playing a homicidal transvestite. He needn't have been. For this scene he was 2,500 miles away, shooting a play in New York.



**"Blondes make the best victims. They're like virgin snow that shows up the bloody footprints."**  
Alfred Hitchcock, director



**"It is the Hamlet of horror roles, and you can never quite get enough of playing Norman Bates. It's always interesting."**  
Anthony Perkins, actor



**"No one dreams Marion will get killed. When it happens, people are blown away. Hitch and I were saying we've stolen your central character!"**  
Joseph Stefano, writer



**"I made *Psycho* in black-and-white because I knew I did not want to show all of that red blood in the white bathroom."**  
Alfred Hitchcock, director

## Curtain call

**PSYCHO** | The shower to end all showers.

Forty seven misleading minutes into Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 classic comes one of the most shocking things ever to happen in motion pictures. Lost soul Marion Crane (Janet Leigh), running to her lover with a stolen \$40,000, prepares to take a shower in cabin No 1 of the Bates Motel, peeped on by nervy, pervy proprietor Norman Bates, a gentle man with big Freudian issues. The water is, for a moment, glorious, cleansing her of all sin, but there's a greater reckoning on its way. When a figure pulls back the curtain and rains knife blow after blow upon her body, the violence of the montage – all jagged cuts and stabbing strings – matches the violence of the act. Though Marion tries in vain to defend herself, her blood spatters the bath and she collapses, lifeless, on the floor – a beautiful, dead-eyed doll. The entire attack (the filming of which is recreated in recent making-of biopic, *Hitchcock*) lasts just 45 seconds, but neither the film – nor film history – would ever quite recover. **MG**

*Psycho* is out now on Blu-ray. *Hitchcock* opens on 8 February and is reviewed on page 53.



**"It was perfectly planned but it was still a week of standing in the shower. It was a drenching experience."**  
Janet Leigh, actor

**Setting the scene**  
● Based on the crimes of Ed Gein (also the inspiration for *Deranged*, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and *The Silence Of The Lambs*), Robert Bloch's original novel followed a much older, less appealing Norman. Joseph Stefano's script shifted the focus to Marion.  
● Hitchcock shot the film in black-and-white, for \$850,000, using the crew from his *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* TV show to appease the squeamish studio.  
● Originally intending the scene to play without music, Hitch was quick to rectify his mistake when he watched it with Bernhard Herrmann's iconic score.