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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SOULFLY	PAGE 5
VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY - TERMINAL SEQUENCE	PAGE 7
CALGARY CARNAGE - CHRON GOBLIN	PAGE 8
SHIVERS FILM SOCIETY	PAGE 10
MONTREAL MASSACRE - PARASYTES	PAGE 11
SHR-EDMONTON - VAN HALST	PAGE 11
VANCOUVER VENGEANCE - BUSHWHACKER	PAGE 12
SAINTS OF DEATH	PAGE 13
BRINKE STEVENS	PAGE 15
LLOYD KAUFMAN	PAGE 18
BUSINESS PROFILE - NETHERWORLD COLLECTIBLES	PAGE 20
INK SLINGERS - BRYAN TURNBULL	PAGE 22
ABSOLUTE LIVE REVIEWS	PAGE 23
ABSOLUTE FILM REVIEWS	PAGE 24
HALLOWEEN HORROR	PAGE 25
DEAD QUIET	PAGE 26
THE HOSPITAL 2	PAGE 28
DEFEST 2015 PREVIEW	PAGE 29
ORIGIN	PAGE 30
NICK CASTLE	PAGE 31
NOMEANSNO	PAGE 32
WES CRAVEN	PAGE 33
ASK THE CRETIN	PAGE 34



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SOULFLY

Soulfly

Interview with Max Cavallera

By André Laniel

Absolute Underground: Hi Max, What's new with Soulfly?

Max Cavallera: Right now we are getting ready to get on tour, it will start at the end of September. We will be playing most of the new songs from our latest album, *Archangel*. Next week we get together to prepare the set lists and practice with our new bass player, Mike from Havok. I'm really excited, I think he's going to bring a lot of the cool tribal vibe that Havok had. I'm just really excited to start the tour, I love the new album, and it got a good reception from the fans.

AU: Tell us about *Archangel*, how would you compare it to the other albums?

MC: It's more extreme and faster, compared to *Savages*. I like it better. I explore Biblical themes on this album, which is something I haven't done before, like in the songs "Sodomites," "Bethlehem's Blood," "Archangel," and "Ishtar Rising." Matt Hyde, the producer, did a great job on the sound. I also like the look album cover. What I'm proud about *Archangel* is that it's our tenth album and it has a lot of energy; some bands tend to slow down around their tenth album, go soft or commercial, but we decided to go hard with a heavier record.

AU: You mentioned there's a theme to this album?

MC: I was reading about the Old Testament, and I got some quotes from it for the song "Sodomites." I was also influenced by movies like *Prophecies* and the *Exorcist*, and I watched documentaries about the Bible, and the history of the Old Testament. All this helped me make up a theme for the record, and of course, Matt Hyde had a big influence; he was really excited about the topic. He helped me with the song "Archangel," adding some kabbalah words into it like "malkuth," "geburah," "gedulah," ritualistic words from the past. Things like that really helped the record, and the sounds between the songs that Matt added are really cool. At the end of the day, I feel it was a good record that I had worked hard on. I'm really happy that the fans liked it.

AU: I saw that on your website that there is a comic book where you talk to Archangel Michael, is that where you got your inspiration for the title of this album?

MC: No, that was done by a fan. He just had that idea that the Archangel talked to me... It was really nice and I liked it. The idea about *Archangel*

actually came from my mother. She told me that this year was the year of Archangel Michael. I thought that was cool, it sounded

underground, nobody knew about it and I decided to make a record out of it. I was looking for a new inspiration and all the Biblical stuff really helped me set the table for the album. It opened a door for me, and I feel that in the future I can make more records like this. I was also inspired by Behemoth; they explored the theme in the song, "Blow Your Trumpets Gabriel." I think it's a great song, I liked the Biblical aspect, it felt very similar to what I wanted to do with *Archangel*.

AU: Were there any songs that was left out of the album that we might hear later?

MC: No we used everything, we managed our time very well in the studio and there was nothing that was left out, apart for some riffs, but that is always the case. I might use those riffs in other projects like *Killer Be Killed*, or even a future Soulfly album. All the songs are on the album, we don't have any extras. I wanted to do a cover, and we ended up choosing "You Suffer" by Napalm Death, because the song is three seconds long - it just sounded so punk rock and wild.

AU: You usually use folk instruments from Brazil in your songs, do you get influenced a lot by folk music as well?

MC: For *Archangel* it was not the case, it was mainly inspired by Biblical text, so it sounds different in that sense, we tried to make it sound apocalyptic. We used keyboards and we even did chanting, I did some with my own voice. In the future I would love to do a tribal records similar to the first Soulfly album. I would like to go in Africa and explore their tribal music. It would be a great experience and make a powerful sound... it has never been done before and I would love to be the first to do that.

AU: Is it important for you to have a theme to start with?

MC: Every record has its own theme. *Enslaved* was about slavery. *Savage* was about humankind being the savage and, like I mentioned, *Archangel*



is Biblical. I feel it's good to have something to start with, it helps to keep you focus. *Archangel* had its name before I even went in studio. We knew where we were going with the album. When I explained [the concept] to Matt, he was totally on

board with it - he was excited and helped me make the best record possible.

AU: You mentioned you are coming to Canada with Soulfly, will you have special guests?

MC: I don't know for the moment. The tour is with *Decapitated*, *Soilwork* and *Shattered Sun*. It's a killer package, I love all the bands. I think they're going to be great nights for heavy metal fans. I might get some of the guys to come on at the end of the show, it's always fun to get everyone in on a drum jam. Hopefully we involve the bands somehow, you can get to develop a good friendship on tour, that's something that I like about touring and it feels good.

AU: Will you only play in venues or festivals also?

MC: Mostly venues, some theatres, smaller venues, which is cool since I love the small shows. The adrenaline and the energy that comes out

of them is a great rush. You get really close to the fans, it is a very intense feeling. I prefer those to the big shows; I prefer small shows for the proximity... it's much more real. You get the full experience of the band when you are in a small place.

AU: Do you change your setlist when you play in small venues compared to larger events?

MC: Yes, when we play in small venues we like to play fast songs. We get lots of circle pits, and the crowd is involved. We like to get the fans started and try to keep it alive with our songs. For festivals, we do a lot more jams, we play older Soulfly songs like "Tribe," because it has little bit of reggae in it, feels more appropriate for festivals. "Mars" has flamenco guitar, and we keep it for festivals. I would say it's like The Ramones on crack. What I like about festivals is seeing people with their hands up. Something I will always remember was a festival in Czech Republic where there was a huge circle pit of 500 people, it was amazing to witness.

AU: Any big plans coming up?

MC: I'm hoping to make another *Killer Be Killed* album sometime next year... and a big *Archangel* world tour, go to South Africa, Australia and South America. Maybe we'll even do a big Canadian tour with 20 shows, I never done that before. That's about it, always keeping busy.

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Terminal Sequence

Interview by Michael F. Carnage

Terminal Sequence is a death metal band from Victoria, BC; they create a sound that defies classification. Their songs twist and turn in unexpected and unconventional ways through a spectrum of brutally heavy to eerily ambient, the only constant being that the music is always vehemently powerful and passionate. Their lyrics focus on monstrous inter-dimensional abominations hellbent on taking earth by force, as well as real world political abominations hellbent on taking earth by force. After seeing them live a couple of times this summer, I decided to talk to guitarist Steven Winger to find out more about the band.

Absolute Underground: For all the people who don't know you, introduce yourselves!

Steven Winger: The terminal sequence has been initiated. It is the beginning of the end. Once it has begun, there is no turning back. The great culling is in effect. Your fate will be decided by an oligarchy. Fight back! Stand up and shout with us!

AU: You've played quite a few shows in the last few months, are you gonna be continuing with that?

SW: No. Our plan was to blast into the world like a shotgun, itting the local target hard at point-blank

and then spreading out from there. In the next few months, we'll be focusing on honing what we have and finishing some new material.

AU: What's been your best show in Victoria so far?

SW: The last show we played opening the night for the mind-

boggling grind quad, Fuck the Facts at Logan's. The crowd was absolutely insane. Monitors crashing all over the place and if you can believe it, crowd surfing! Early into our last song, right before things got crazy, the breakers blew and everything electronic suddenly shut off. It seemed like a fitting end since our set had gone so well up to that point. I like to think the fuse blew because we were so heavy, haha.

AU: How do you fit into the metal scene here on the island?

SW: We have a unique style which often makes us the odd band out on a bill - but it also makes us stand out, which works for us. Each member brings something different to the band and when combined, comprises our indescribable sound. It's ridiculous to say we are a blackened brutal progressive tech grind band, but I honestly don't know what else to call it. We're still waiting for someone to tell us. A lot of people among

the metal scene on the island are friends and acquaintances so everyone kind of fits in, it's just about playing shows and having a good time.

AU: What are your plans for the rest of the year?

SW: Our plans are to switch our focus from exposure to practicing and refining our metal! Improve the old, finish the new, then record an EP and start playing the mainland.. not that we'll turn down shows, if offered.

AU: I've found the Bandcamp recording, do you have any new recordings coming out?

SW: Hopefully sooner rather than later, we'll be

VICTORIAS LOCALS ONLY

getting an EP out - the next logical step, and one we are extremely excited about.

AU: Ok, now shamelessly promote yourself.

SW: Come check us out, witness one of the heaviest bands on the island, and grab a shirt while you're at it. Visit our Facebook page or email us at theterminalsequence@gmail.com if you'd like to have us play, or just to say hi. Thanks to all those putting on and attending shows and all the awesome people in bands - you're what makes the community amazing.



CALGARY CARNAGE



Chron Goblin

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are you and what are you most infamous for?

Darty Purdy: We are Chron Goblin and we're known for rippin' riffs, smokin' beers, and vannin'! Mike Bell of the *Calgary Herald* described us as "Calgary's nicest band" once, but that's probably because we bought him a pint at the Ship & Anchor- we're really just jabronis with nice beards.

AU: Who's in the band and who does what?

DP: Devin "Darty" Purdy, guitar; Josh Sandulak, vocals; Brett Whittingham, drums; Richard Hepp, bass.

AU: You're releasing a new album, *Backwater*, on Nov 13th, correct? Tell us about the new album! How does it compare to your previous releases?

DP: Yeah! Our third LP, *Backwater*, comes out Nov. 13th worldwide on Ripple Music. The album was recorded over a two-week period at Toadhouse Studios in Portland, OR, with Adam Pike. Adam recorded Red Fang's first album and also tours with them as their front-of-house engineer... it was an amazing experience being able to work with someone who's made an impact on the heavy scene.

We wanted to make the recording of this album a true experience, an adventure, and for the journey to impact what we were capturing in the studio. We have a lot of respect and reverence for

the Portland music scene, and it was an honour for us to be able to tap into the sounds and stylings of the area and have that influence our record.

The result is a record that is the next evolution of our sound. Moments of crushingly heavy riffage, plenty of space and dynamics, more direct and concise songwriting. We also have a track called "The Wailing Sound" that features guest vocalist Andrea Vidal of Portland band Holy Grove, which was something new and exciting for us - Andrea was a total pro in the studio. Adam also did an amazing job with the production of the album, capturing that raw and heavy sound that Portland is well known for.

This is also our first release on a label and we're really excited to join the ranks of Ripple Music alongside other great bands like Leaf Hound, Mos Generator, Mothership, and many others.

AU: Was the songwriting process any different this time around? Who does most of the writing in the band, or is it a collaborative effort?

DP: We were fortunate to work with Lorrie Matheson and Kirill Telichev to record some demo material of the new album in mid-2014, which helped us get Adam Pike on board to work with us. Those demos steered the direction for the rest of the material that made it onto the album.

For us, songwriting usually starts with guitar and drums setting the skeleton of the song, and then vocals and bass are added to build it out further. Writing is always collaborative for us, as we find the blend of our combined influences, styles, and tastes helps create something we like to think is unique.

AU: Speaking of art, you guys have amazing album/merch designs! Who does your stuff?

DP: We love working with different artists who utilize a variety of styles. Some of the recent artists we've worked with include Tom J Newell (London, UK), Arrache toi un Oeil (Paris), Martin

Ontiveros (Portland), Mark Kowalchuk (Calgary), David Paul Seymour (Minneapolis), Deano Robertson (Calgary), and Logan Morrison (Vancouver).

Being able to work with so many different talented artists has been one of our favourite aspects of being in a band, and it's always exciting to see an artist's visual representation of our musical stylings.

AU: You guys played Sled Island and followed it up with a mini-tour, correct? How was it? Any good stories from the road?

DP: We were fortunate to play Sled Island this year and open up for our heroes Fu Manchu! Playing Sled Island has been one of the highlights of our year and we always love participating in the festival, as it does so much to support arts and culture in Calgary by pairing amazing international artists with great local talent.

We played a few shows in Montana this spring, and also did a jaunt out to Kamloops and Vancouver with our pals Black Thunder from Regina. Touring with those guys is hilarious and there were plenty of beers smoked.

From what I recall, the highlights would have been a late night skinny dip in the South Thompson River in Kamloops and being locked into the venue after hours in Vancouver so that the remaining bands and patrons could carry on the fun and skating well into the morning. Vancouver has a great scene and we had a blast playing with Hopeleus, 88 Mile Trip and Seer.

AU: Do you have any plans for more tours to support the new album? What's next for Chron Goblin?

DP: We are hitting the road Oct. 31st - Nov. 14th in support of the release of our new album, heading from Calgary to Montreal and back to play about a dozen shows. This will be our first time playing east of Winnipeg, and we are amped to get out there! Our first show of the tour will be in Regina, which starts with an afternoon house party show and then a Halloween cover set show later that



night, where we'll be playing a bunch of Black Sabbath tunes.

We're also planning to link up with some of our new labelmates and tour the west coast of the US in the first half of 2016, and we also have our sights set on Europe. We played two shows in London, UK as part of Desertfest 2013, and we have been fending to get back over there for more touring ever since!

AU: Any final words for the readers of *Absolute Underground*?

DP: *Absolute Underground* is the shit! Thanks for letting us blather on about our music and make sure you check out our new album when it's out Nov. 13th. See you on the road!

PHOTO CREDIT: Alyssa Herrman
www.chrongoblin.com/

OCTOBER 2015

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+ MIKE MACKENZIE BAND + DON'T YOU MEAN PEOPLE
IF I LOOK STRONG, YOU LOOK STRONG + SEABLOOM
- 03 THE STANFIELDS
THE GIVE'EM HELL BOYS + THE SHILLELAGHS
- 07 NEGURA BUNGET
GRIMEGOD + DYNFARI + NEMENDREAM
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- 22 FAKE MUSTACHE
- 23 THE EVIDENCE
THE SUPPLIERS + ONE SHOT LEFT
- 24 WOOHOO! SIMPSONS TRIVIA
- 26 DRIVE-IN DOUBLE FEATURE
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- 04 WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIG BAND
- 06 FEMME FATALE 6
- 07 HATE ETERNAL
MISERY INDEX
- 10 CHIMERA
- 11 LONDON CALLING
BRITPOP • SHREDGATE • MANCHESTER • INDIE • NEW WAVE
- 12 FAKE MUSTACHE
- 13 TRIBUTE TO THE WEST
WC OF WESTSIDE CONNECTION + DJ DUSTIN DEF
- 18 TORCH NIGHT
- 19 K-MAN & THE 45'S
- 21 WOOHOO! SIMPSONS TRIVIA
- 21 HANG THE DJ
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- 2 GAMER SUNDAYS 4TH ANNIVERSARY
- 23 BOB ROSS PAINTING PARTY
- 24 CAFE ABSINTHE
- 26 HIGH VOLTAGE VARIETY HOUR
- 27 BLACK EARTH FINAL SHOW!
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Shivers Film Society

Interview with Vince D'Amato
By Ira Hunter



Absolute Underground: How did you get involved in the horror film community?

Vince D'Amato: This could be a long answer -- we started getting involved in 2001 when we launched an independent horror movie production company in Vancouver, Creepy Six Films. Over the last few years we have remained involved in the horror community through our Shivers Film Society, which screens independent horror and "fantastique" cinema; we programmed the Canadian Horror Show with VIFF in 2014 and have also been involved with The Cinematheque and the UBC Film Studies Department, in their Cult Film classes, specifically. Recently, we've been getting more involved outside of Vancouver as well, including being a part of the Calgary Horror Con this year.

AU: What film projects have you been associated with?

VD: Our own projects, the Creepy Six Films projects, are *Vampires vs Zombies* (also known by its original title, *Carmilla*, when Uneathed Film distributed the Special Edition) *Human Nature*, *Hell Hath No Fury* (which premiered at Fantasia 2006, what a great night that was!), *The Hard Cut*, *Catholic Cheerleaders for Satan*, and with our new company Brivido Giallo, the recent films *Reversed*, and *Glass*. In 2005 I also directed second unit, camera operated and edited Ryan Nicholson's first feature film, *Live Feed*. *Glass* is the most recent movie and is currently

playing at film festivals. But 2016 is going to be Creepy Six Films' 15th anniversary, and for that, we're releasing some very special and extremely limited editions of our films, two-disc version with loads of features and even some specially-printed postcards.

AU: What was the genesis of the Shivers Film Society?

VD: That's a funny story. I was living in London, England at the time, and the genesis was me and a friend, Justin Harries, sitting in a pub talking about screening movies and I told him I wanted to show our movie *The Hard Cut* theatrically in London. So he said to be (about five beers in) "Okay, you bring me five Canadian feature films and we'll do a Canadian Film Festival" - right there in London. So we did! After I moved back to Vancouver, I continued with screening films here and registered our non-profit film society in BC. This was back in 2012.

AU: What screenings have you done in past?

VD: Some of the highlights were the all-day Canadian Film Fest in London -- we've also done a series of all-day festivals in Vancouver called "CanadaDrome" - five of them now - that featured

a mix of indie Canadian horror films alongside some great Canadian cult/horror films, like *Cube*, *Pontypool*, and *Tucker & Dale vs Evil*. Last year, we programmed a retrospective of 1970s American road movies for the Cinematheque called "Two-Lane Blacktops," which was back-to-back with that Canadian Horror Show I'd mentioned, which we programmed for VIFF last Halloween. This year, we launched our first annual Cinemafantastique film festival, which we want to be our flagship event, and we followed that up with Vancouver's first-ever Tromafest, only a week apart! Under the "Cinemafantastique" banner, we're also launching the first annual 13-Hour Horror Film Festival this October, which will feature at least six cult horror movies from the 70s, 80s, and 90s - the but the catch is that we're not saying which films they are! There's a prize if you can guess the theme, though, on the day.

AU: Tell us all about the recent Tromafest you organized?

VD: Tromafest was a true passion project for me. I'd been involved with Troma and Lloyd Kaufman back in 2001. I'd first met him at the American Film Market in Santa Monica, from there I went to Cannes and then Park City with the Troma team. I love Lloyd's movies, I think they're subversive and hilarious, and his work just keeps getting better, some of the latest films are the best. He and Troma had been such an influence on me that I wanted to celebrate that, and hopefully, in some way repay him. In this case, I also got to repay him financially through his fee for his Master Filmmaking Class! But what an awesome day that was, a major retrospective of his work (they used those words in their own press release!) along with spontaneous Q&As, the masterclass, and the first-ever live commentary in the cinema! I'd love to do more of the live commentaries, I still think that's one of the best ideas we've ever come up with. One of the best things about Tromafest was that even days after it was over, I was still receiving some really great messages from people who had attended, saying that we'd given them the best weekend of their lives. It really meant a lot to people, and I'm so happy about that, because it meant a lot to me to, to have Lloyd and his wife out here in Vancouver.



AU: What screenings do you have planned for the Future?

VD: Next up, Cinemafantastique's 13-Hour Horror Film Festival on October 24th! After that, we're focusing on Cinemafantastique 2 for July 2016.

AU: Where do the screenings take place?

VD: The next couple of events will take place at the Norm Theatre at UBC (Vancouver).

AU: Who is a special guest and screening you would kill to put on?

VD: I'd really love to get Stuart Gordon up for Cinemafantastique 2. He's one of my all-time favourite directors, and 2016 is the 30th anniversary of *From Beyond*. Gabe Bartalos might take part next year as well, I've talked to him about screening his new film *St. Bernard* at Cinemafantastique 2. In the end, finances will dictate.

AU: Any special plans for Halloween?

VD: Actually, it's my 10th wedding anniversary. But my wife Nicki and I might be swinging up to IFCON, if we can squeeze that in. Our old friend Brinke Stevens will be there.

AU: Final words for Horror fans out there.

VD: I wish I could leave off with something cool and profound, but like a stellar comeback, I'll probably think of it after the deadline.

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Parasytes

Interview by André Laniel

Absolute Underground: Who is in the band?

Luke: Janick, Tom, Sticker, Nick, Luke.

AU: How did the band start?

Luke: I moved to Montreal, and about two days later, Janick contacted me and asked if I wanted to play in a band. Janick and Tom jammed a couple times with some other people before, and same with me and Nick. Sticker wanted to play drums in a band, so we jammed and it clicked.

Janick: My other band, Truncheons, was done the year before and I was pretty anxious to start something else, so when I heard Luke was moving to Montreal, it seemed like a great idea to see if he'd be interested in starting a band.

AU: What inspires the band?

Luke: Punk bands from the UK, Japan, Finland, Sweden and just daily life. Also, living in a house with about 20 other punks who do the same thing is pretty inspiring.

Janick: Always loved that style, but never got to really experiment with it in my previous bands, so this was the chance for me to try something else.

AU: You now have Demo 2015 available, is there a theme?

Luke: The demo songs were written pretty quickly, and there really isn't a theme.

Janick: Yeah, we kinda tried a few themes to finally find the direction that will be ours; you will definitely hear it on our upcoming EP in October 2015.

AU: What was the mood during the creation of the songs?

Luke: Most of the songs are fast and fun, with some melodies thrown in occasionally.

Janick: It's usually Luke that comes up with riffs, then Nick and Tom [contribute] and then the rest of us add our little touches.

AU: You have six songs on the demo, but can we expect more soon?

Luke: We have a three-song EP coming out in a few months on Distort Reality. We have already started writing songs for future releases. We get bored of playing the same songs all the time, so you can expect more in the near future.

Janick: Yeah we hope to record a full-length LP for next spring (March-April 2016).

AU: Do you feel your sound has changed since your beginnings?

Luke: I think now we have more of an idea of what we want to sound like. We have a few songs that were written earlier on, that I think wouldn't reflect the sound we are going for now.

MONTREAL MASSACRE

Janick: Definitely getting there, with songs like "Burning Down The Cities" and "Frantic."

AU: How was it to work with Chany Pilote



(Inpsy) for the new EP?

Luke: It was a great experience. He's been around and knows exactly what we were going for. Before he recorded us, he listened to our demo for a couple weeks and thought he could make it sound better. We couldn't be happier about it.

Janick: Yeah Chany is a pro and a long-time friend. I finally had time to play around with my vocals and try some stuff without being pressured, 'cause there's no more time at the end for vocals, haha! It felt great!

AU: You got your release on Runstate Records, will you bring out more on that label?

Luke: Runstate is a great label for tapes. We don't plan on doing tapes in the near future, as we're focusing more on vinyl right now, but if we ever decide to do another tape we will probably go through them again.

Janick: Yeah, I think the fact that Runstate has its own distribution network was good for a first release and J.P. did a great job.

AU: What's coming up for Parasytes?

Luke: Writing, recording, touring for now. We have a tour with Paa Kii from Finland coming in October and have had a few offers for other tours that are still in the works.

Janick: We also might tour Mexico and the West Coast in the spring of 2016, we'll see what happens.

AU: Do you guys have other projects?

Luke: I play bass in another Montreal band called The Diskonected. Tom is in Napalm Raid, Sticker's in like 1000 bands!

Janick: I just wanna concentrate on this band and make it great!

www.facebook.com/parasytes
parasytes.bandcamp.com

Van Halst

By AU Editorial

Billed as socially-conscious goth rock, Edmonton's Van Halst actually began as a solo project by the band's namesake, Kami Van Halst. Her virtuosic vocal style, which includes both soaring operatic arias and pummelling growls, now forms the centre point of a five-member band; Scott Greene and Strathon J. Bajowsky on guitars, Brendan McMillan on bass and Brett Seaton on drums.

Van Halst's songs are strongly lyrically driven, focusing on disenfranchised and marginalized populations. Songwriting duties are shared between Greene and Halst, both of whom cite black metal as an influence, because of the genre's focus on "...people suffering from isolation and rising to overcome the preconceptions of a judgemental society." Evocative and emotional, the music of Van Halst conjures vivid images of social injustice and calls for restitution. The band backs up the intensity of their music with an equally compelling live performance; their songs are delivered in true traditional goth rock form, with full costumes, make up, props, the works.

SHR - EDMONTON

Van Halst has just recently released their first single, titled "Save Me," from their upcoming 2016 release, *World Of Make Believe*.

Of the single, Kami Van Halst says, "Save Me is about religious extremists. We chose it for our first single because it's a statement piece. We wanted to come out with a bang and show everyone what we're about. We're very excited to release the song to the world."

The release of the single anticipates the band's upcoming Toronto tour dates: October 16th sees them performing two sets as part of Indie Week, and the very next day they'll be gracing the stage of the Hard Rock Cafe for Pinktober 5.0.

There are great things on the horizon for this humanitarian goth quintet – if you're in Toronto for either of the above events, Van Halst will not be a band to miss.

Stay tuned to their website, www.vanhalstmusic.com, for updates about the new album and future shows.

BUSHWHACKER



Bushwhacker

Interview by Michael F. Carnage

Former Yukon band Bushwhacker has been making some noise in the last few years, with their relocation to Vancouver, EP release and subsequent cross-country tour. This year has added more ferocity to their groove/prog sound and their live performances keep getting better. After seeing them live recently, I put together a few questions for the band.

Absolute Underground: Give us a quick introduction!

Bushwhacker: We are Bushwhacker, a four-piece metal band originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, now residing in Vancouver. We are avid followers of the three laws of rock.

Absolute Underground: And those are?

Bushwhacker: Sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll, period.

AU: Fuck yeah, dude. How has the move to Vancouver changed you guys and the band as a whole?

Bushwhacker: Perspective. It was a very humbling experience to see how many talented musicians/bands are active in Vancouver, it really pushed us to work hard. Living paycheck-to-paycheck in a grungy yet beautiful city has really changed our views and opinions, which can

be heard through the raw intensity of our newer songs. We also wear tighter jeans now, and have ditched the marshmallow skate shoes.

AU: I saw you guys play recently in Victoria, are you planning any more travelling for the rest of the year?

Bushwhacker: At this time, nothing is planned for the rest of this year. However in 2016, we will be hitting the road again to go cross-country and do whatever else comes up, as well.

AU: What would you count as your best band roadtrip so far?

Bushwhacker: Overall best trip would be our cross-Canadian tour last summer. Although our last stint of island gigs with Ancients were a rad time. Short and sweet, but rad as hell.

AU: Yukon to Vancouver was a big move, how long did that decision take?

Bushwhacker: When we started the band in high school and realized that this was something that we wanted to pursue, we knew leaving Whitehorse at some point would be necessary. There were some other considerations but Vancouver became the obvious choice.

AU: How does the songwriting usually work with you guys?

Bushwhacker: It really depends on who starts the song and how much is already written. Nowadays there is an evident communal writing style between the four of us where as in the past, songs were written exclusively by one guitar player or the other. The addition of Rory O'Brien (current bass player since 2012) has added a new cook to the kitchen. With a wide variety of styles to blend, there really is no formula to writing a Bushwhacker song.

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

AU: Now your chance for shameless self promotion, what do you have coming up?

Bushwhacker: We have two shows planned in Vancouver: October 24th with The Hallowed Catharsis at Funky Winkerbeans, and we are playing the seventh annual Diecemberfest, on Friday December 11th at the Rickshaw Theatre

AU: Any last things you want to add?

Bushwhacker: We are stupid garbage.

PHOTO CREDIT: Rick Forgo

bushwhackeryukon.bandcamp.com/
www.facebook.com/BushwhackerYukon



Saints Of Death

Interview by André Laniel

Absolute Underground: Who does what in the band?

Saints Of Death: Twan Holliday does vocals and plays eight-string bass, Phill Henri plays guitar, Christopher James plays drums, and our newest addition, Stony Gingras, plays five-string bass.

AU: How did Saints Of Death start?

SOD: Twan, Phill and Chris, being long-time friends and tourmates, decided to form after Twan and Phil put their successful Motorhead tribute band to rest in order to start working on original material. They had a couple of riffs and Chris, who had toured with the guys (but not played with them), decided to jam and put his twist on the songs, completing a solid writing lineup.

AU: What's the challenge with having two basses in the band?

SOD: The main challenge with having two basses playing in the band was in finding each other's tones. Although they are different types of basses, if we aren't careful, we will have overlapping frequencies, making certain notes oversaturated and distorted. It really took us a long time to balance everything out and find out where each member fits.

AU: What inspires the music of the band?

SOD: The world; we're expressing our views on the problems in today's society. The raw power of metal and playing live is our addiction, so we choose to express our views through metal.

AU: You have a new demo out, what was the mood when you guys recorded the songs?

SOD: We were excited to be in the studio and

finally recording the material we have been working on for a year. We really wanted to show the world what we created.

AU: Is there a link between the songs?

SOD: No, all our songs seem to stand alone. Although some of them have similar concepts or structures, they all are fairly unique.

AU: You have five songs on the demo, are there other songs that were not recorded?

SOD: Yeah, we have two songs that were written before we went into the studio, but got left off the EP. They are really awesome songs, but we had to be selective. We also have two new songs that we have written after the studio, so in total we have four songs that have yet to be recorded. Right now, you can check them out by coming to one of our tour dates this fall.

AU: What can we expect from SOD on stage?

SOD: You can expect A LOT of amps, noise, lights, blood, sweat and



metal.

AU: What's to come for Saints Of Death?

SOD: We are doing this batch of touring in September, then we're going to take some time to write and record some tracks for the full-length album. Hopefully we will have some time to do a music video as well before tour season starts back up again next year! Beyond that, we hope to be touring and travelling as much as possible, and hopefully sharing the stage with some awesome bands.

www.facebook.com/SAINTSofDEATH

<http://www.saintsofdeath.com>

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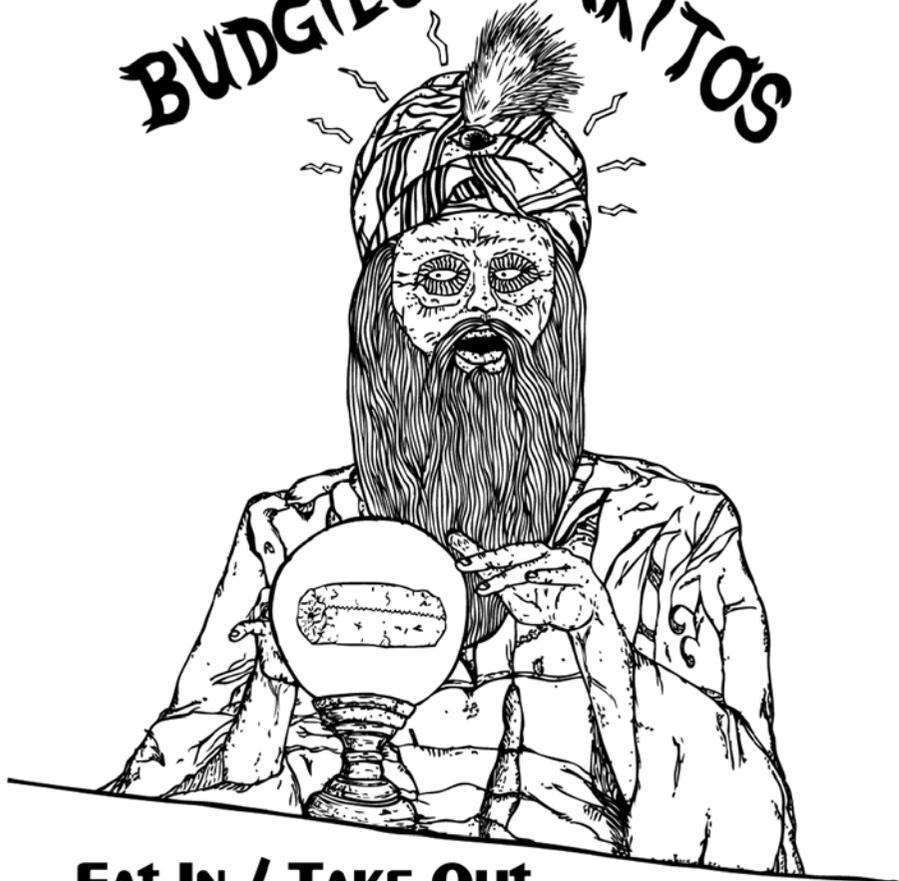
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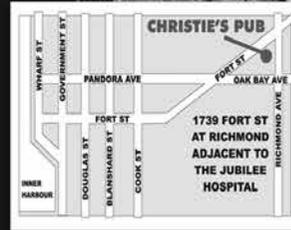


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Brinke Stevens

Interview by Ed Sum

Brinke Stevens is certainly one classy dame. In the movie world, she'd be one to kill for; as one of the few scream queens from the years of my youth (who is still working today), she's certainly shown that she has the chops to last in an industry that typically favours youthful fervour. As each decade tends to introduce new talent and genres for horror fans to get fast and furiously rabid about, I'm not always going to fawn over what's the latest. I'd rather stick to what was impressed upon me at an early age. When video movie rentals became widely accessible, that's when Stevens' work caught my eye... perhaps more so in magazine spreads than anything else, but I was like every other horror enthusiast at that time, consuming everything I could find.

I saw that Stevens knew how to make the screams count. Later on, I'd learn that there's more to this talent than meets the eye. She's branched out to work behind the scenes and market herself. Zombies may be hungry for her brain, but knowing her, she can outwit any of them in an instant and still save an animal species at the same time. To enjoy the projects she's been involved in has certainly been a pleasure, and recently, I became one lucky

fanboy when Stevens agreed to answer some questions about her long and varied career.

Absolute Underground: Having been to Victoria at least twice before for this convention (even though it was under different names at the time), why do you like returning?

Brinke Stevens: Victoria is such a charming city! I first visited it with my family when I was a young girl and totally fell in love with it. I was happy to return for that past convention and again for this year's show. I have many friends in BC now. When I shot the horror film *Carmilla* (Creepy Six Productions) in Vancouver, I made sure to stay an extra week in Victoria to see more local sights, such as Butchart Garden and Salt Spring Island.

AU: How long have you done voice-over work, like *The Many Faces of Cleopatra*? That documentary is not always mentioned in your filmography, so I'm very curious about what else you've been involved in.

BS: I've actually done quite a lot of voice-work over the years, like various radio spots; a *Garfield* cartoon show; audio books and short stories such as *The Adventures of Red Cloud*, *Brad Linaweaver's A Real Babe*, and the Atlanta Radio Theatre Company's *The Man Who Traveled in Elephants* by

Robert Heinlein. I've dubbed Spanish and German movies into English, and I've narrated several documentaries like *The Many Faces of Cleopatra* (which hasn't been released yet) and *Women of the Wild West*.

Right now, I'm recording a new audio book in my home studio, Glenn Porzig's horror novel *Darkness Unbound: Lady in Black*. It'll be available on Audible.com in August.

After that, I'll do a voice-role in an upcoming animated sci-fi film, *Earth's Next Tenants* by David D'Champ.

AU: Although your marriage with Dave Stevens was short, only lasting months, what made you decide to keep using your stage name of Brinke Stevens?

BS: Dave was my college sweetheart. We dated



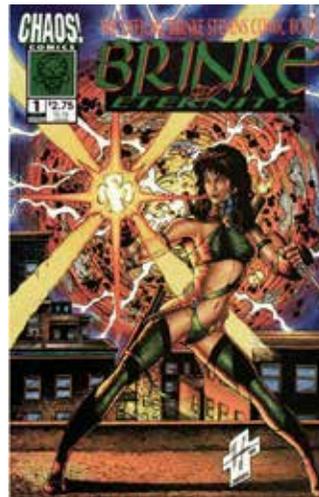
for six years before we were married. I also continued to model for him for another six years after our divorce. After his untimely death of cancer, his sister sent me a dozen boxes of reference photographs he'd taken of me, thousands of shots. I was the model for most of his comic sketches in the 1980s, mainly of Bettie in *The Rocketeer* but also for many of his other characters too. He was a brilliant artist and I am proud to have been his favorite muse.

AU: Not many people may be aware that you've made your own comics like *Brinke of Destruction* in 1995... Was there a reason why you did not continue producing them?

BS: Growing up reading *Wonder Woman*, *Vampirella* and *Modesty Blaise*, I'd knew that I always wanted to make my own comic book someday. Chaos! publisher Brian Pulido collaborated with me to produce my first book, *Brinke of Eternity*. It sold very well and got good reviews. I then took over the writing and publishing of a new trilogy, *Brinke of Destruction* Although I successfully completed that set, I had so much trouble with my team... the penciller was in a terrible car accident, the inker had to return to Asia to care for his ailing parents, and my investor absconded with the profits. It was just too difficult to proceed with my next proposed trilogy, called *Brinke of Madness*. My assistant, however, did take over the imprint and published two more one-shot comics later on, including *Brinke of Disaster*.

AU: Do you think the definition of what a scream queen is has changed over the years? What made you decide to continue working in this industry of B-movies and horror for as long as you have? To be honest, I'm not aware of many people who made a sustained living in such a niche market save for a few.

BS: I'd say there were only three original scream



queens in the 1980s: me, Linnea Quigley and Michelle Bauer. We're all still working together. Recently, our trio appeared in *Cougar Cult*, *Three Scream Queens*, *The Trouble with Barry*, and *Trophy Heads*.

I've been able to sustain a living for so long in the B-movie business because I expanded laterally and diversified — by doing conventions and mail-order, and creating my own merchandise (photos, comic books, T-shirts, trading cards). I've also continually reinvented myself by becoming a writer, producer and director.

AU: Do you find work behind the screams, er screen, more

rewarding? If given a choice, would you rather be a writer, producer or director (which is what you're doing now with *Terror Toons 4*)?

BS: *Personal Demons* is my latest big project. I wrote, starred in, and directed this story of temptation and redemption, along with co-stars Debbie Rochon and Linnea Quigley. It's due for release this summer as *Terror Toons 4*.

I absolutely love being a director! I'm slated to direct *The Halloween Party* in Florida soon, and I hope to get even more offers in the future.

AU: What do you think the future is for people wanting to work in this horror film industry?

BS: Everything has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. Other than Charles Band's Full Moon company, there are no longer any major indie horror studios. In fact, there are no longer even stores to rent such videos and DVDs! Everything is going online now, and digital streaming is the wave of the future.

I think it's very hard to make any profit on low-budget horror films these days. Presently, it seems like there's a big slump in that industry.

Brinke Stevens will be appearing at Island Fantasy Convention (Oct 31 - Nov 1) in Victoria, BC.

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3 Inches of Blood

A Farewell Interview with Cam Pipes

By Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Cam Pipes: My name is Cam Pipes and I'm the lead singer of 3 Inches of Blood.

AU: How did the band originally form? Was

there a game of Dungeons and Dragons involved?

CP: No, a love of heavy metal was all it took to get everyone together.

AU: What type of D&D character are you and what type of character would the other band members represent?

CP:
I



photo by Omar Corbell

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guess we're all multi-class characters, I'd be a mix of bard and something else. Magic users, thieves, and fighters, I imagine.

AU: What bands influenced you starting 3 Inches Of Blood?

CP: Iron Maiden was probably the biggest influence, especially early on. There were a lot of galloping riffs in early 3 Inches, which is kind of Maiden's signature. Over time, the influences have become more varied. Judas Priest is a common comparison, but mainly for the vocals. It's all good comparisons, usually made by fans. No shitty metal references like Korn or Disturbed, thankfully.

AU: How would you describe 3 Inches Of Blood's sound?

CP: Heavy metal. Stripped-down and no bullshit. Music before fashion.

AU: How long has the band been around and what are some of the highlights?

CP: The band was formed in late 1999. Highlights include the 2008 Wacken festival, Loud Park festival in Japan in 2010, the

Australia/New Zealand tour, also in 2010, and opening for Iron Maiden in Irvine, California in 2006.

AU: Seeing you play Wacken Open Air in 2008 was a proud moment for all British Columbians, what do you remember about that show?

CP: That was a very special day. We were the first band of the day, we played at 11am on the main stage. 50,000 heavy metal maniacs poured into the field by the time we started... biggest crowd we've ever played to. Saw several Canadian flags and BC flags being waved around during our set. After we were done, a few fans sang "O Canada" as we exited the stage. It was a proud moment... almost brought a tear to my eye.

AU: Take us through your discography and mention themes or concepts behind each album.

CP: 2002, *Battlecry Under a Winter Sun*
Our debut full-length, recorded over the course of several months in Vancouver when we were able to get into the studio with

Jesse Gander. It was an experiment of sorts, given the first batch of songs that were written with me in the band. The songwriting definitely got more mature later on, but these songs were fun and almost innocent in a way.



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2004, *Advance and Vanquish*

Our first of two albums with Roadrunner Records, recorded in Chicago, Illinois and produced by the legendary Neil Kernon. The new bassist and drummer came in right before recording started. It was a weird time of turmoil, both before and after this was recorded. 2004 was a pivotal year for the band... [we went through] quite a bit of personnel changes happened but we persevered.



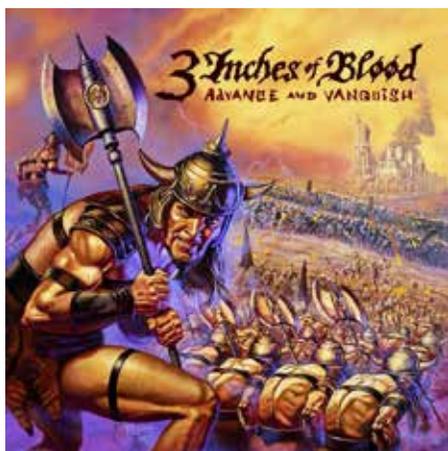
once, how did that come about?

CP: It was Beefcake the Mighty, actually and he's done it twice. The first time was at the Vancouver stop on the Sounds of the Underground tour. I'd heard that Beefcake had done it to another band before, so I asked Todd Evans, also of Mobile Deathcamp, who was Beefcake at the time, if he would come out and kill us during our last song, "Deadly Sinners."

Todd was more than happy to oblige. GWAR were playing right after us, too, so the timing was perfect.

2007, *Fire Up the Blades*

Second and final album with Roadrunner records, recorded late 2006 in Vancouver and some of it in Seattle in early 2007. Produced by former Slipknot drummer Joey Jordison, and the first time we hear the songwriting of Shane Clark and Justin Hagberg. Nick Cates, who will be playing bass at the final shows, plays on and toured for this record. A lot of fans say this is their favourite record. The recording process was long and at times arduous but it got done.



The second time came in December 2007 in Providence, Rhode Island, and we were on tour with GWAR. It was the second-to-last night, but it was easier than doing it on the last night, for some reason. We asked Todd again and he was delighted at the opportunity. There's video on YouTube of this one. "GWAR kills 3 Inches Of Blood in Providence," or something like that.

2009, *Here Waits Thy Doom*

First album with new label Century Media, recorded in Seattle in the spring of 2009 with another legendary producer/engineer, Jack Endino. This recording was our first with drummer Ash Pearson, and without a permanent bass player in the band. Shane and Justin handled bass duties on the recording for this and the next album, as well. We opted for a more stripped-down production, we wanted to let the music speak for itself without an overly polished sound getting in the way. It was a laid-back session, only took a month and a bit to record and mix the album.



AU: Why have you guys decided to call it quits after 16 years?

CP: There are a few reasons, mostly personal ones that involve one or more members. I'm not gonna name names, but there are different paths that must be followed, and that means people want to stop playing in 3 Inches Of Blood as a result. It was decided that we'll close the book on the band.

2012, *Long Live Heavy Metal*

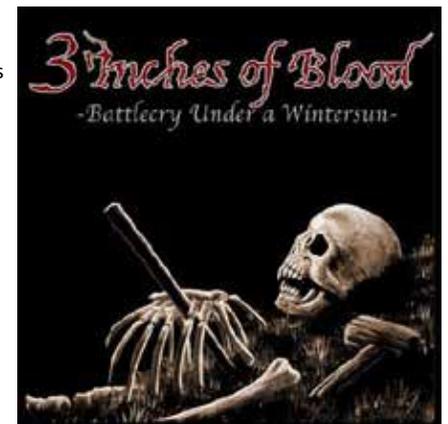
Second album with Century Media, with the same lineup as previous album. We recorded in autumn of 2011 in Vancouver, and co-produced the album with Terry "Sho" Murray. I think this is our best album. The songwriting is at its strongest and most mature. The process of writing, recording and mixing only took a few months. We knew our sound so well by this point in our career and the lineup was solid with just the four of us, it was the easiest record to make that I've been involved in.



AU: What does the future hold for the band members?

CP: We'll keep playing music in various forms... some guys are already at it with other projects. I'm waiting until after these final shows are done before I make any moves towards a new band.

AU: I remember whe Oderus from GWAR killed you onstage

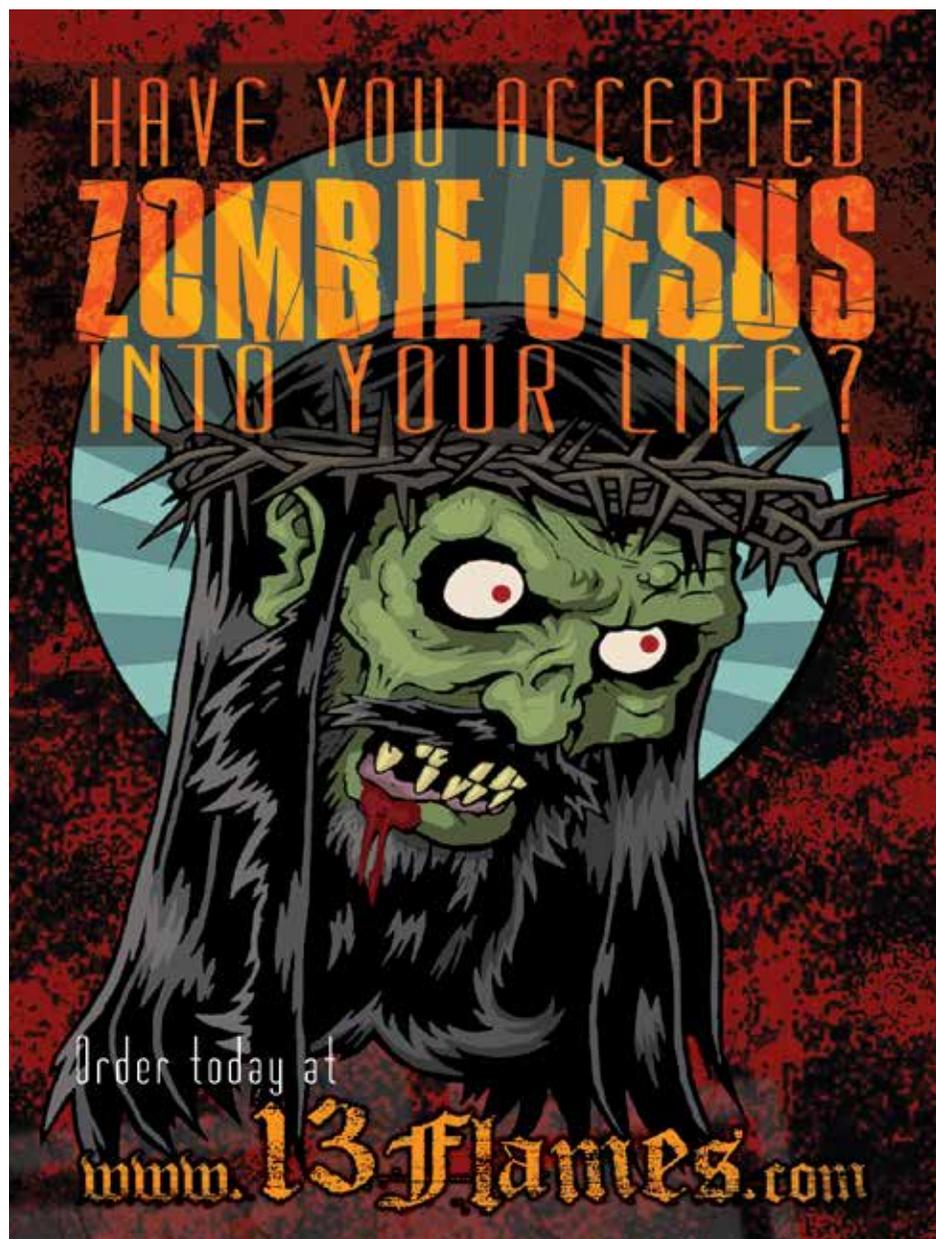


AU: Tell us about the final shows you are playing at the Commodore Ballroom on Nov 7th and 8th.

CP: We haven't played in Vancouver in over three years, so we wanted our next headlining show to be at the Commodore anyway. Now that it's our farewell, we especially didn't want it to be anywhere but the Commodore. It's our favourite local venue.

AU: Final words for Canadian metal fans?

CP: Our fans are amazing, and we will never forget how awesome our Canadian fans are. We loved touring Canada and always had such consistent support from coast to coast for every tour. Enjoy what we created and thanks for being there for us over these past 16 years.



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Getting Tromatized with Lloyd Kaufman

By Ed Sum

Talking with Lloyd Kaufman, the cheerleader for Troma Entertainment, is a treat. He's very knowledgeable about the industry and has more than 40 years of experience in how to entertain the masses. He's making a return to Victoria, BC this Halloween for Island Fantasy Convention (formerly known as Victoria Comic Book, Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention back in 2009). One of his long-standing philosophies in life is to share what he knows and not play with the evil conglomerates. His work in the independent B-movie scene is well-respected all over, and perhaps the best way to summarize his thoughts is in what he told me, "We're all friends of the underground and we're very important to help develop each others' well-being."

Both Kaufmann and Michael Herz founded Troma, and together, they will conquer the world. They are the dynamic duo of the B-movie world. His wife, Patricia Swinney, has also helped. As Kaufman likes to note, she's a retired New York Film Commissioner. Together, they make for an interesting dynamic of how a film industry can work. Both will be in Victoria, BC to interact with

fans and give their insight to an industry at large.

But just what will the Troma team be bringing? I had a chance to really chat with Kaufman to get his take in what's going on in the industry today.

Absolute Underground: Of course, I have to ask, what can people going to IFCon expect from your

attendance this year?

Lloyd Kaufman: We're going to have the Canadian premiere of *Citizen Toxic: The Toxic Avenger IV* for the first time on Blu-ray, and also be bringing the Toxic Avenger (the mask). We'll have another screening, the debut of *Extreme Juke Box*. I'll be bringing that. And of course, I'll have my special selection of stuff to sell. I'm going to have at least 20 different video titles there, along with T-shirts, mugs, beers, etc. We'll have *Toxic Avenger* cups and we might bring shot glasses, too. And we'll sign any Tromabilia for free. You'd be surprised where people have asked me to put my signature on. I've seen many people with *Toxic Avenger* tattoos and my face ... but they usually put my face on their ass. My wife is not so fond of that.

AU: Are there any other films or presentations?



LK: We could also show volume one of *Return to Nuke 'Em High*, which hasn't had any screenings in BC that I know of. And we can have the focus group for the rough cut of Volume Two. I did one at University of Southern California and we handed out questionnaires. We had 150 people giving us very good feedback in how to improve the film.

I will be presenting a two-hour version of the *How to Make Your Own Damn Movie* master class. I have examples of how we raise money, how we do special effects, how we squash a head, open a movie. I've taught this course worldwide.

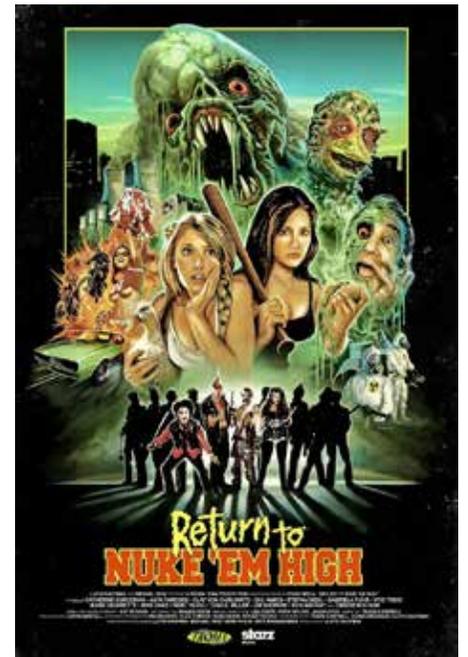
AU: Prior to dedicating yourself as a filmmaker at post-secondary, did any of your course work in college influence your filmmaking style? That is, as most readers know, you majored in Chinese Studies.

LK: When I was in high school, I thought it heavily emphasized western culture. I studied Latin and French [for example]. When it was time for Yale, I decided to devote my time to studying Asia

and Africa. In fact, I stayed a year in Chad — central Africa — in the bush, no electricity, no phones, no running water ... it was difficult.

But afterwards, since coming home, I've led my life according to Daoism (the Tao Te Ching and Zhuangzi) and I

believe in the Yin and Yang. They certainly govern the universe. You can't have the good without the evil, comedy without the tragedy ... they're all together. I believe going with the flow of nature than against it. I'd say [what I learned about] Chinese philosophy has become very much a part of my life, and as part of my Asian Studies, what I learned certainly had an influence when filming *Toxic Avenger Part 2* in Tokyo and it was also prominent in the creation of *Sgt Kabukiman NYPD*.



When you look at *Tromeo and Juliet*, you will see daoist signs. Where I put it is subtle, but it's everywhere.

AU: And as I've heard, that's also influenced how you run your business.

LK: In our Troma building in New York, yes. We have one big room just like in Japan when I visited in 1967. Here, all the people can talk to each other openly. They don't have private offices. Maybe the executives do, but it seemed to me that most of the people in the corporations have a huge room to talk in. I liked that idea and that's how we run Troma all these years.

Back then, I didn't get to visit China to see how they operate because Nixon had not yet visited. It's different now. Nobody expected China to open up so quickly.

When we were making *Return to Nuke 'Em High*, we lived in a vacant funeral home. Most of the people slept on the floor, they had air mattresses, and only the two stars had their own room. We had about 80 people living together in that space

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AU: Wasn't that really creepy, though?

LK: Yes. It was haunted too. Some of the cast and crew said that they saw ghosts.

According to the New York Times, the mafia owned the place and they did kill people downstairs in the basement. They were brought down to the basement, killed and incinerated ... Now how cool is that? I mean, you can work for Spielberg and yet, you will not get to see the real thing. You can work for Ching Siu-tung (*Chinese Ghost Story*) and might be making movies about spirits but won't see em. If you go on our YouTube channel, you can see some documentaries that

we have made about the places we've been. It's mostly about the movies we made, but there, you can see what we've done.

AU: What's the one thing you've noticed from all the people that have become part of the Troma Cooperative?

LK: I say the Troma experience is pretty interesting. We're here for making art. It's not about making money or getting the glamour. We're not Paris Hilton or Kim Kardashian. We want to make a film that people will really be impressed with. Plenty of famous people got their start with us, like Samuel L. Jackson, Eli Roth, Kevin Costner and Oliver Stone.

When you go to California, I think almost every film company there will have had someone who got their start with Troma.

Even Mark Torgl is doing well. I think he specializes in editing trailers now. He's making a movie called *Toxic Tutu*, which is a mockumentary, an homage, about him and his life after playing Melvin. You may be able to find clips online.

AU: With such a huge fan base for your products, where do you see the growth happening?

LK: We are still a very small company and our emphasis is in making movies, which is what we are more about. People come along and they can easily license T-shirts from us, toys, and etc. In fact, I believe there are *Toxic Avenger* energy drinks and beer.

It's possible that if somebody wanted to do a proper convention they can talk to us and get the rights to do it. But I think for us, we have too many things in our plate. Like we're still working on *Return to Nuke 'Em High Volume 2*. It's taking us three to four years now, since we started to try and finish it up.

AU: When do you hope to have it out?

LK: It should be completed by the end of the year but we are victims of the fact that the international conglomerates control all the theatres. We have to find a venue to show this product.

[Before releasing it,] I want to make it really, really good so fans will be happy. We don't have the big money, so we can't go fast. We have a small staff in the office and lot of the work is stuff we have to do ourselves. We can't bring in specialists to create the effects and do colour correcting of the negative. There's also the sound work and that takes a long time.

AU: What do you know about *Toxic Avenger, the Musical*?

LK: The New York Broadway production played for one year, and I loved it. I heard it cost six million dollars to produce. They invited me to go to Hawaii

for a show, and we even went to Toronto where I was brought in to host. It's played in 15 cities now. I think they are booking it as a road show or something. I'm happy to hear it's coming to Vancouver. I know that MTI agency just licenses the rights to local groups, universities and the like so they can put on the production. I wish them, the Vancouver group (Last Chance Productions) the best of luck.

AU: How about for your own continuation for the *Toxic Avenger* series?

LK: We've written the fifth *Toxic Avenger*, but unfortunately we don't have any money. But other than that, full steam ahead... I'm being ironic. So we've got to somehow find someone who'll give us enough.

At Tromafest [held in Vancouver, BC last July - Ed], the fans were very helpful, and gave me many good ideas for the next *Toxic Avenger* film. They also gave great ideas on what's going on in the world of underground film. There's a really intelligent fan base here [in Canada].

AU: Well you can always and move base to Canada where you can get more support.

LK: Maybe, maybe but I have to finish Volume 2 of *Return to Nuke 'em High*. Once I finish that, I can turn my attention to trying to find some money and to get the *Toxic Avenger* Part Five organized. We want to make it in Chernobyl. That's the setting we're going to use.

We actually had a billionaire from Ukraine who was going to give us about half the money but then the civil war in the Ukraine broke out and the Russians came in ... The daughter is a big fan of our works and she wanted to break into the movie industry. She got her father to agree to pay for half of the movie but unfortunately they've disappeared now. So we're fucked.

AU: What's in the future for Uncle Lloyd?

LK: Fernando Allei, the special effects person for *Return to Nuke 'em High Volume 1* and *Volume 2* wrote a script called *Mutant Blast* that we are financing. He will direct it and he asked me to play a small part so we'll go to Portugal in December to hang out a bit and I'll make a cameo.

AU: How does it feel for you to see your crew

move on to make their own independent work or make ways into the Hollywood system, or elsewhere in the entertainment industry?

LK: It's a great honour, it's wonderful! They remember me and keep Troma alive at the same time.

I feel that it's very difficult for us to be a 100% independent movie studio. We have no help from the mainstream so we really depend on you, James Gunn, Eli Roth and those folks to keep us going.

AU: Do you have anything to say in closing?

LK: Thank you to all our Troma fans that've supported us for over 40 years. To those who want to make movies, I believe Shakespeare said it best: to thine own self be true. Do what you believe in. Express your soul.

www.lloydkaufman.com/

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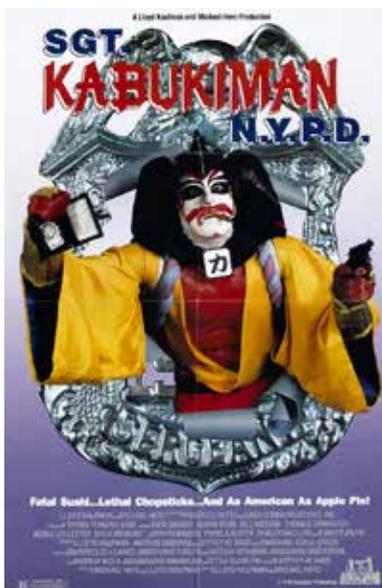
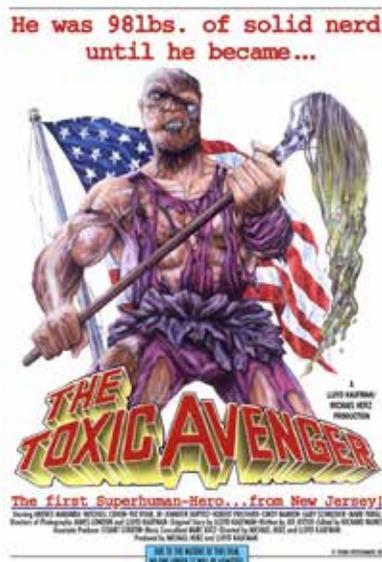
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NETHERWORLD COLLECTIBLES

THE LOWER MAINLANDS HORROR STORE

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Please introduce yourself.

Darryl Gasbarri: Hi, My name is Darryl Gasbarri, owner/operator of Netherworld Collectibles.

AU: What made you decide to open your store?

DG: I've always loved the horror genre, and have a 20-year background in retail and customer service... so when I came to a crossroads in my life a few years ago, I decided to put my love of horror and my retail experience together... and Netherworld Collectibles was born.

AU: What types of products do you carry?

DG: I carry a variety of horror movie-related merchandise: action figures, statues, comic books, magazines, DVDs and Blu-Rays, books, posters, T-shirts, novelties, some taxidermy and props when they're available.

AU: How did you first become fascinated with

horror?

DG: When I was very young... I saw Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* on TV... and I loved it! I started

watching reruns of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Night Gallery*, and *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*. My love of the genre was solidified at that point. I went on to see all the Universal monster films, then on to hammer horror and so on...

AU: What are some of your favourite Horror films?

DG: Most of my favourite horror films are older ones, likely because of the fond memories that come flooding back each time I watch them again. There are very few modern horror movies that I can hold in the same light. But for a short list... *Creature From the*



Black Lagoon will always be one of my favourite movies (In fact, the original name for the store was going to be Black Lagoon Collectibles) *Evil Dead*, *A Company of Wolves*, *Haxan*, *Re-Animator*, *Twins of Evil*, *Jaws*, *Godzilla* (1954 original), *Prince of Darkness*,

Nightbreed, *They Live*, *Carrie* (original), *Alien*, *People Under the Stairs*, *Serpent and the Rainbow*... Haha, I could go on for days!

AU: What sets your store apart from others?

DG: I think the fact that

Netherworld is a genre-specific store sets it apart... As far as I know, there's only one horror store in the lower mainland.

AU: What's been the secret of your success?

DG: The customer base is definitely the main reason this store survives. For the most part, I find horror fans are fiercely loyal. And in turn, I do everything in my power to retain each person that comes in as a customer. Repeat business is key in

this industry, and a lot of the time that means going above and beyond being just the guy behind the counter.

AU: Any plans for Halloween?

DG: Haha, for Halloween I'll have my hands full with the 600+ trick-or-treaters I'll get at the store! Last year I went through about 30 pounds of candy... and I still ran out!

AU: Any special events on the horizon?

DG: On October 24th Shivers Film Society is putting on a 13-hour horror fest in the Norm Theatre at UBC... I'll be set up there as a vendor there in the evening.

AU: Final words?.

DG: My final words of advice... you don't need a big budget to make a great horror movie. I find that in recent years, I tend to watch a lot of independent horror films... there's a lot of new, fresh, and intriguing ideas out there for your viewing pleasure, without

BUSINESS PROFILE



the need for a gigantic budget or flashy effects. In fact, the Hollywood horror scene seems to have lost my interest for the most part - too many remakes, relaunched, and re-imaginings of older properties.

netherworldcollectibles.com/



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Bryan Turnbull

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: What shop do you work at?

Bryan Turnbull: I work at Government St. Tattoo in beautiful Chinatown.

AU: How did you get started tattooing?

BT: I started in jail with Colin Wiley!



INK SLINGERS



AU: What was the first tattoo you received and what was the first tattoo you did on someone else?

BT: The first tattoo I got was a shitty skull thingy that I was spray painting around Toronto in the 90s, real smart move.

The first tattoo I put on a guy was a dirty lil' kanji, I was terrified! The poor kid was probably 15 and I fucked him up good!

AU: What styles would you say you specialize in?

BT: My job is a tattooer, so I like to be able to do anything, but I love to do portraits, sci-fi and pop culture tattoos all day long.

AU: What do you love most about tattoos?

BT: I love that I get to draw all day, work with

my friends and meet nice people.

AU: Been to any tattoo conventions lately?

BT: I was making tats at the Edmonton Fan Expo last week. Remember, I bought a T-shirt off ya?

AU: Do tattoos always have to have a deep meaning or can they be solely about the art?

BT: They can be what ever you want! They can have deep meaning or they can be just something to piss your parents off.

AU: Absolute craziest tattoo you've ever done?

BT: All my tattoos are wholesome

and grandparent-approved.

AU: Any favourite types of music you like to listen to while working?

BT: Straight gangster rap.

AU: Excited for the new Star Wars movie?

BT: I'm very excited but apprehensive as well, us Star Wars fans have been let down before.

AU: Any plans for Halloween?

BT: I'll be the guy in the slave Leia costume.

AU: Advice for young artists?

BT: Don't quit yer day job.

AU: How do people get ahold of you?

BT: For portraits and nerdy-themed tattoos, email turnbull1138@gmail.com. Instagram is [@bryanjturnbull](https://www.instagram.com/bryanjturnbull), Facebook is <https://www.facebook.com/bryan.j.turnbull>



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Absolute Live Reviews



AC/DC
BC Place
Vancouver, BC
Sept. 22, 2015

"AC/DC! AC/DC!" The chant of 40 000 people gathered in Vancouver to take in the sold-out show, right be-

fore the legendary rockers took the stage to a sea of waving devil horns that nearly sent me into epileptic shock. The arena lights dimmed and the chanting grew louder... then a light shone down on Angus, at center stage, as he strummed a three-



chord riff that sent ripples through my spine. The first song, "Rock or Bust," made me buy their new album post-show. After that, it was classic AC/DC. These aging rockers gave their all in a 20-song set that I have been waiting years to see live. No foxy band stadium tricks or long-

winded bullshit, just Brian saying, "Hello Vancouver!" and, "Good night, Vancouver!" The rest was pure. I still have "A Whole Lot of Rosie" in my head while I am writing this. It was definitely worth the the ticket price; one hundred and fifty bucks later, for a nosebleed seat and I couldn't be happier. Go see them before they are dead. Angus' guitar solos were short but ripping, and the vocals were straight out of my youth, listening on my Sony Walkman. The recent issues with Malcolm's dementia and Phil Rudd's legal problems did not faze these seasoned veterans one bit; they had all the classic moves, pyrotechnics, cannons, big screens. I was reconnecting with my youth, and tons of friends at the best concert I have seen in years. I will finish this review by simply chanting, "AC/DC! AC/DC! AC/DC!"

-Brydon Parker

**Ancients
Bushwhacker
Torrefy
Distrikt Nightclub
Victoria, BC
Aug 27, 2015**

Oh Distrikt Nightclub, the club that changes its name every single year. Luckily after each change, they still end up booking metal shows. It still looks way too nice to have metal shows, but it's a good venue with a full stage, great pit, and the PA and sound are always good.

Hard-thrashing locals Torrefy were up first as the crowd was still streaming in. They started up full-out with a song called "8%" and just kept



thrashing into their next song. The thing I enjoy about Torrefy is that they play like they're in front of a million people, regardless of the show. They didn't play a long set, being the first band of the night, but went all-out. If they keep this up there's gonna be a lot of new fans for them.

Next up were Bushwhacker, originally from the Yukon but now out of Vancouver, calling themselves prog metal. I don't think prog metal is the right term, even though I kind of get it. It sounds more like groove metal with some time changes. They keep the set fresh with a lot of changes from heavy riffs to solos then slow tempo interludes. Halfway through, they started doing nice long intros for each song, and showed a lot of good musicianship. There's not of lot of vocals, but that works with what they play. I really would like to see these guys play live again, and I was glad that they didn't just stick to the regular old prog formula.

Ancients starts the set the way they do, a full blast of stoner metal in all its droning awesomeness. Their grooves and heavy riffing make them favorites around here. Along with most of the crowd at this time, I have been drinking and that just makes it all better. I can't really tell you what songs are being played, but I'm not sure it matters, there's isn't one I don't like. The fog rolling throughout

the crowd mixed with the smell of fresh-smoked weed, conjuring memories of Kyuss' live show... that's meant as a great compliment; the vocals, music and vibe felt and sounded great.

I was fairly impressed with the turnout to a Thursday night show. The crowd was totally into it, and there was a pretty good vibe throughout the night. I'm happy that Distrikt is still helping metal with the random weeknight shows. I looked forward to seeing more.

-Michael F. Carnage

Troma Fest Review

Although I'm not a huge Troma team fan, I am interested in cult flicks. I was happy they got on at the UBC local cinema, so I decided to check out *Poultrygeist* to review for my site, as I am a horror film critic as well as an actor. However, Lloyd Kauffman was signing autographs and taking

pictures at the Network's Horror Store the evening before, which was a nice treat, as they had cupcakes and cookies there, making the moment a lot of fun. I got Lloyd to autograph my *Blood Hook* VHS box cover. He and I were in a few films together, but in separate scenes, by the filmmaker Derek Young in *Psychotic State* and the upcoming flicks *Family Property 2: More Blood* and *Toxic Tutu*. My stuff was done in my hometown in Canada and his were, of course, filmed in the Big Apple. It was a pleasure to finally meet him and was great to talk to him and his lovely wife at the festival. I despised the film as I found it to be totally gross, but there's a message in how much crap is put into fast food, since it took place at a fast food chain. I enjoyed myself a great deal. I gave Lloyd a copy of the first *Family Property* flick, as well as *Psychotic State*, since he didn't have any copies and in return, he gave me a free poster of *Mother's Day*, which was very generous of him. I hope there will be another Tromafest next year, which I will for sure attend.

For anyone who wants to check out my horror movie review site go to www.racksandrazors.com, there are also interviews and soon a gallery where you can submit pictures of yourself with a horror celebrity or an autographed piece as well as any horror art, and I will gladly place it on the site for you. I once had a podcast talk show for many years, which is now archived along with 10-minute horror audio podcast plays in the same vein as *Tales from the Crypt*.

-Greg Russell Tiderington

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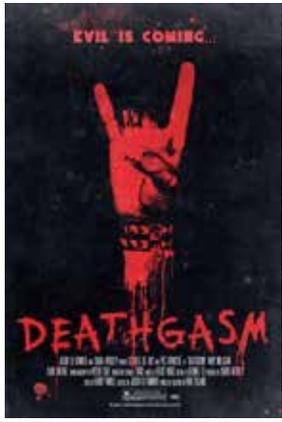
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Absolute Film Reviews



Deathgasm Metalheads Production Company

Metalheads will certainly love the pointed stab at which bands truly belong to this musical subgenre in the movie *Deathgasm*. This film screened at the Vancouver Film Festival October 3rd, and is now out on Video on Demand (VOD) in select markets (iTunes, Amazon Video, Vimeo, Google Play). It's worth checking out sheerly for the absurdities that go on. I had to laugh when Poison's *Look What the Cat Dragged In* is hurriedly put back in the record stacks in favour of Autopsy's self-titled album when this film's hero Brodie (Milo Cawthorne) meets Zakk (James Blake) for the first time.

Bashing glam metal and loving death metal is a detail that few will pick up on, and I have to praise that kind of attention to detail by writer/director Jason Lei Howden in a movie that's truly dedicated to the music. From its Frank Frazetta-style cut scenes of the heroes posing powerfully atop a mountain to the anime-inspired gore-fest that goes on later, this movie is a gem coming out of Kiwi-land that also unleashed the vampire mockumentary, *What We Do In Shadows*, last year.

If there's ever a true psycho circus to really experience, this movie comes close to being it. While these two boys bear a similarity to the attitudes of what the Starman and Demon represent in *KISS*, all anyone has to do is look at how Zakk is dressed up to get that feeling. These two form a garage band after finding a strange page of sheet music from a stoned-out guardian. They unwittingly summon an evil horde that takes over the quiet New Zealand town of Greypoint. Brodie wants to do what's right rather than to unleash the chaos Zakk craves. Although these two vagabonds think they don't belong in this sleepy community, that unison is displaced when their motives are revealed.

All Brodie wants is a brotherhood to which he can belong; just whom he meets are a pair of gamer nerds — Dion (Sam Berkley) and Giles (Daniel Cresswell) — rather than like-minded musicians. When there's a girl involved, I'm not surprised at the fact he falls in love with Medina (Kimberley Crossman). The

chemistry Cawthorne and Crossman share is certainly sweet. To see her transition from loving easy-listening music to metal is certainly like taking one shot of poison to help set her free. It's a shame that the music of Lita Ford was not used. Instead, the music of Midnight, Nunslaughter, Pathology, Axeslasher and Skull Fist are featured. Had this movie been a Canadian product, I'm sure Lee Aaron would have been given a lot of love, as Medina becomes the next metal queen.

The high school hysterics are familiar and fun. This film is like *Todd and the Book of Pure Evil*, where there is an occult group searching for that stolen page Brodie and Zakk have. If there's a sequel to this film, perhaps more of what this evil group represents can be explored. They seem to have gotten the shaft for being the true villains, because their presence was only a blip on the radar. In what's splattered with punk, this film is very sexually charged with the gore-fest that also includes the creative use of adult toys to defeat the beast.

What this film delivers is a wonderful setup for more hijinks in a vein similar to *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, and a possible tie-in to *What We Do In Shadows* if Howden wants it to. The Kiwi-style humour in both products will gel. With this motley gang now united as a group, there's no time to go smokin' in the boys room.

-Ed Sum



Beautiful People Raven Banner Entertainment

Beautiful People is a film from Rome, Italy. The film features practical effects and it will be released by Raven Banner Entertainment shortly. The film also blends two horror sub-genres: the zombie film and the home invasion thriller. The blend of genres works here, but, *Beautiful People* is no *Funny Games* (2007), nor *28 Days Later* (2002). Instead, the film stumbles to find a relevant reason for all of its violence. The character Brett (Alex Southern) tries to find a moral compass and fails. All of the other characters are even more amoral. In the end, *Beautiful People* is an exercise in depravity.

One review mentioned that *Beautiful People* is nihilistic. However, the trio of writers have introduced a reason for the instigation of terror; it is instigated by governments, or by another, even more intangible group — the illuminati! Three killers, one sporting an illuminati-inspired tattoo, target a home for murder, rape and robbery. The Pontecorvo can do little to stop the attacks, which last a good half-hour. Finally, the tables are turned when John Pontecorvo's (David White) illicit and poorly controlled human experiments are released. Villain faces villain, with no one to root for. Though, the rape videographer Brett shows some promise.

Brett, a minor character, models an unbelievable character arc. Initially, Brett is reluctant to film his brother Nibbio's (Danny Cutler), misdeeds. Nibbio forces one married couple to engage in a sex act, in front of their daughter. If that was not enough, he also murders them when unsatisfied by the couple's performance. In a later sequence, Brett becomes physically sick as his brother psychologically tortures another family. And, Brett shows an understandable reluctance to partake in all of the terror and he even helps two characters escape his brother's murderous clutches. Yet, Brett quickly changes late in the picture. His actions will not be revealed here, but they are equally brutal when compared to those of his brother. The late change comes, in this viewer's estimation, to close out the film. A closed ending is not always necessary, though, and Brett's change into a villain comes about with a very weak set-up.

As previously mentioned, the writers of the film work with two horror sub-genres: the home invasion thriller and the zombie feature; one is dominant over the other. The home invasion thriller predominates the first two acts, while the zombies invade the final third. The home invasion thriller has become more and more popular. Films such as *Panic Room* (2002), *Funny Games* (2007) and *Martys* (2008) have worked within this genre, to terrifying effect. All three of these films incorporate elements of psychological torture, and so does *Beautiful People*. The reason for the violence is authoritative in nature, in that an unseen group is leading events, e.g. financing John's experiments, covering up these same experiments. These experiments are what lead to zombie-influenced final act, with patient zero escaping the lab. The two genres work well together here, with the home invasion sub-genre proving most interesting to this viewer.

The film offers too much amorality, therefore, the tone of the film is overly dark and overly serious. There are no light moments here to help balance out the film. All of the characters, outside of two youngish children, are amoral; the two male children are simply neutral. The character John uses kidnapped people

as part of his experiments. You can see an innocent, young woman murdered through the credits, in John's lab. His wife, Elena (Kate Marie Davies) is also amoral. She lies about one of her son's paternity, to John's surprise. The villains are even more amoral. Each partakes in murder, rape and robbery, to varying degrees. So, where is the moral courage or even kindness? There is no one to stand up to so much vice and only Brett shows any move towards virtue, but even he succumbs to the darkness. A moral message of hope will not be found in *Beautiful People*. As it is, this film offers lots of psychological torture, without the introduction of virtue. This viewer began to feel dread as each scene led to more and more brutality. It would have been better to have had some light at the end of the tunnel. In the end, *Beautiful People* offers lots of great makeup effects, but very little hope to overcome so much evil.

-Michael Allen



Antisocial 2 Black Fawn Films

Cody Calahan and Chad Archibald of Black Fawn Films reunite in the sequel to 2013's *Antisocial*. This viewer is not a fan of the first film, so we already got off on the wrong foot, but, having enjoyed Black Fawn's recent release, *Bite*, there was still hope for redemption. Unfortunately, even with some great atmospheric shots and some decent gore, *Antisocial 2* is simply uninteresting. While the message that social media turns people into zombies has potential, the concept is overthought and under-executed, thus rendering it powerless.

The plot in the second film is driven by an update being installed on the social media site, The Social Redroom. The update will supposedly force everyone to become users—to connect. Suffice it to say, watching the film is about as exciting as waiting for an update to complete. The characters are flat, the acting is uninspired, the script is riddled with exposition, and the story is dull enough to make you want to check your Facebook feed. So much for establishing a connection.

The sequel does not pick up where the original left off, and that's unfortunate. The ending of the first film

was arguably the best part, because Sam's character was finally starting to have agency. The final scene instills some excitement, then cuts you off. Surprisingly, the first half hour of the second film is much better than the original, and even carries the action forward. Calahan and his team manage to create a somber, desolate atmosphere that builds tension and an overall feeling of unease; this is exactly what you want in a zombie film. In the first scenes, Sam is isolated, appearing further removed from society, adding to the antisocial vibe. Unfortunately, the film's decline begins shortly thereafter.

Sam gives birth to her baby, and the newborn is immediately stolen from her. The character then shifts gears from survival to retrieving her son. Along the way, she meets a young runaway called Bean who has escaped from her father and the military base she once called home. The two loners seem to form a bond partly based on the fact that they're both classed as "defects" (they've had the operation to remove the tumour caused by The Social Redroom virus). It appears that most people have turned on the "defects," which could have made for a compelling aspect of the story, but it never lives up to expectations.

Rather than exploiting the disturbing discriminatory side of humanity in an interesting way, the story gets too caught up in the countdown to installation, and an equally underwhelming facet involving Sam and her son. Sam and Bean are kidnapped by military personnel and taken back to the base where Bean's father is conducting experiments on Sam's son. He seems to have developed at an alarming rate and possesses supernatural powers, presumably as a result of the virus. Apparently, three years have passed since his disappearance. Time sure elapses strangely in this film and is liable to catch you off guard. Shifting the plot to Sam's son and his higher powers is a miscue; the story becomes even less believable, and moving the setting from the barren wastelands to the confines of the military testing facility takes away from the outside tension, rendering it less scary.

In addition to the story being lacklustre, the acting and character depth leave much to be desired. With the exception of Bean, the film is plagued with flat, unlikable characters. It's hard to tell whether the actors are in fact unskilled, or if the script was the bigger problem. The characters are indeed poorly written, with many one-sided conversations and story exposition as the meat of the dialogue. There is an overwhelming feeling of indifference toward the characters in this film, particularly with the protagonist, Sam. If a story produces a general feeling of apathy toward its lead character, it is ultimately doomed. Luckily, the film is not a total wash; visually, it is fairly satisfying. Calahan and his team do a nice job of maintaining a dark, eerie atmosphere throughout the story, particularly in the scenes on the military base. The lighting is manipulated well,

creating a dream-like quality. The special effects are also on-point; the crew even throws in some tricky effects that, while not necessary, are certainly entertaining. That said, the visual appeal is not nearly enough to catapult this film into the category of enjoyable, or even tolerable.

Antisocial 2, much like the first instalment of the series, had the potential to be a successful commentary on society's unhealthy preoccupation with the internet and social media. Unfortunately, a poor script with dull characters and a story that goes off in too many directions makes this film unenjoyable, and almost unwatchable. Great directing and special effects can only take a film so far, and this film barely made it off the starting line. More work and more money would have best been put into the writing department in order to create a more believable and enjoyable story. *Antisocial 2* tries to do too much and, in doing so, is successful at very little. If ever you've been considering disconnecting, this would be the time. It will be interesting to see where Black Fawn goes from here. Hopefully in another, more sophisticated direction.

-Kenna Rae



Bite Black Fawn Films

Director Chad Archibald (*The Drownsman*) is guaranteed to make your skin crawl in his icky entertaining horror film, *Bite*! What begins as a seemingly banal scenario with stereotypical females on a bachelorette party vacation, turns out to be a gripping grim tale of transformation, betrayal and revenge. Archibald is clever in setting his audience up with a potential snore fest, then creeping in to deliver a strong story with good characters and a healthy dose of gooey gore. Somewhat reminiscent of Cronenberg's *The Fly* (1986), though revolving around infection rather than experiment, this film belongs inside the category of "body horror." That said, it nearly crosses over into a creature-feature, and dips its feet into the realm of horror comedy. Whatever you want to call it, *Bite* serves up an incredibly enjoyable horrifying experience that is sure to infest your mind for quite some time.

The film begins with Casey (Elma Begovic) and a couple of friends on a fairly tame Costa Rican stagette

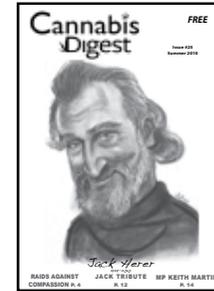
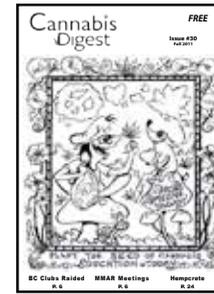
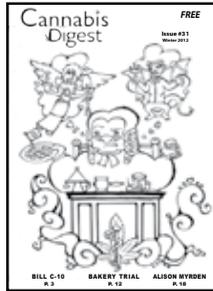


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Halloween Horror



Tales of Halloween
Epic Pictures Group

Tales of Halloween is an upcoming horror film anthology. Developed by Axelle Carolyn, this anthology offers ten tales of terror from directors such as Lucky McKee (*The Woman*) and Ryan Schfrin. Each short tale creates either a creepy or comedic vibe. The best shorts, including "The Ransom of Rusty Rex," combine both of these tones. This viewer also

enjoyed Lucky McKee's "Ding Dong," which is influenced by folk tales of old. Almost all of the tales are top notch. And, this film fan enjoyed the comedic ones the most. This is a film not to be missed by horror fans.

There are simply too many tales to cover, so this critique will look at this viewer's top two, starting with "Ding Dong." Other reviewers have critiqued this entry negatively, yet the use of a complex subject, infertility, build's this short film's tension. Meanwhile, Hansel has to walk on glass, to stay out of reach of the cruel the witch. The eventual conflict between this twisted pair is unwound with a clever and classic payoff. The fiery ending offers some great CGI and a chilling conclusion.

This viewer's favourite short film was "The Ransom of Rusty Rex." The film's creepiness factor is created by a demonic being; very little make-up is required for this monster. Rusty appears at the most inopportune moments. Sometimes, Rusty likes to appear over the shoulder of an ignorant kidnapper. The scene is hilarious, because viewers know what is coming next - more terror from

Rusty. Rusty also likes to puke on his captors, or hide in the backseat of a creeper van. Rusty's smiling, happy visage is contrasted by his horrifying appearance. This viewer laughed out loud several times during this short film's runtime.

Many of the best shorts offer comedic moments of a comedic tone; "Bad Seeds" parody of Halloween III: Season of the Witch (1982) was well-developed. "This Means War" offered a hilarious plotline - a competitive Halloween house dressing. Two homeowners square off in an attempt to out-decorate each other. Events come to blows as the differences in style reach out-of-control proportions. Also, "Friday the 31st" spoofs the *Friday the 13th* series of films. A deformed villain, a la Jason Voorhees, chases after a beautiful protagonist, until the tables are turned via a small alien invasion. The gore is over-the-top as arms fly off and a chainsaw rips through everyone. Many of the shorts are developed tongue-in-cheek and the witty delivery was appreciated.

Tales of Halloween is moving towards an October 16th, 2015 release through home entertainment formats, so horror fans should take note of this date. Fortunately, an anthology format offers a diverse

range of shooting and writing styles, so at least one, but likely many more, of the shorts will sit well with the watcher. Each of the tales is expertly crafted. Viewers will find lots to be thankful for in this one-of-a-kind release, which often tickles the funny bone, or demands the use of a barf bag. A true horror roller coaster, *Tales of Halloween* is one of the best horror anthologies to come out this year.

-Michael Allen

Halloween Double Feature: The House of the Devil / The Innkeepers

I love double features! Sitting down with a big bowl of popcorn and watching two films back to back is a great way to spend an evening. And with Halloween coming up, I thought it would be the perfect time for me to pair two films up for a scary movie night. For this double feature I went with two more modern horror films that are, in my opinion, really good and work really



well together: *The House of the Devil* and *The Innkeepers*, both directed by Ti West. *The House of the Devil* was one of my favourite films that came out in 2009. This slow burn spends the first two acts establishing atmosphere and a tension so thick you could cut it with a serrated blade. Sam is a struggling college student who has just asked for an extension on the down payment to her new apartment. She needs some quick cash and finds a babysitting job opportunity that should take care of her financial troubles. But upon arriving at the house, things aren't exactly what they appear to be. Ti West's incredible use of music and camera work amp up the feeling of overall dread right up to the climax were, you as a viewer, will be gripping onto your seat. The music by Jeff Grace does an exceptional job of setting the tone to the film and doesn't let up from start to finish. And the fact that Ti made the film as homage to early 80s horror flicks makes *The House of the Devil* a very fun watch! For the second film, I chose *The Innkeepers* to keep with the scary, high tension category of this double header. The film focuses on Claire and Luke, two staff members of a closing hotel in a small US town. The staff has become very bored with the lack of clientele and

takes advantage of their downtime to look for paranormal activity. *The Innkeepers*, like *The House of the Devil*, is a slow burn that uses music and sound effects (or lack thereof in some cases) to drive up the scare factor. Some scenes are completely silent and will have you turning up the volume on your TV to see if you can actually hear a ghost whispering or not. The cast does an outstanding job of bringing you into their world of ghost hunting, and you'll find yourself rooting for them to eventually find something (even if it means they'll probably die horrifically). It's nice to have newer horror films come out that don't just use the same old formula, but try something new. On October 31st if you find yourself sitting at home and looking for some great films to scare yourself with, try watching *The House of the Devil* and *The Innkeepers*.

-Cody No Teeth





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adventure; they drink girly drinks, dance at bars and take advantage of the beautiful beaches. Questions about the bride-to-be's relationship arise early on as drunken Casey complains of problems with her fiancé's overbearing mother, among other things. Her friends try to convince her to relax and enjoy their time away, and the three go off to a secluded swimming spot that most tourists cannot access. While playfully splashing around, Casey gets bitten by something under the water. Upon returning home, the bite on Casey's leg becomes grossly infected and she begins experiencing strange symptoms. As the bite festers, tension mounts between Casey, her fiancé and his mother,

and Casey decides to postpone the wedding. Too bad the virus has other plans. As the infection spreads and her body deteriorates, Casey endures a gruesome transformation. What begins with flu-like symptoms escalates into constant twitching and a heightened sense of awareness, particularly in hearing. Her discoloured skin bubbles up, eyes bulge out, and she continues to throw up a disgusting yellow gelatinous substance that is the stuff of nightmares. In contrast to a film like *An American Werewolf in London* (1981) where the grisly shift takes place in one scene, *Bite* is more like *The Fly*, where the protagonist mutates slowly, over the course of the film. This chilling, horrific trans-

formation extends to Casey's apartment where we see a nasty, sticky mess of what appears to be webs and eggs that look more akin to a fish than a bug. Although her twitching and heightened senses are certainly likened to an insect, her eyes conjure up an image of *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954). Either way, it is exciting witnessing the once tormented bride-to-be emerge as a badass, bug-like broad with an appetite for vengeance. Casey's transformation isn't the only awesome element in this film; the cinematography is brilliant, the effects are fantastic, the acting (for the most part) is superb, and the story moves along at a steady pace. It may sound weird, but this movie

is visually beautiful. The contrasts between dark and light set the tone perfectly and the shots, particularly during the most gory scenes, are stunning. It's hard to shake that icky feeling after watching the copious amounts of pus and blood and mucus and goo—it's disgusting, and amazing! The writers do an excellent job mixing humour into these scenes as well, creating an homage of sorts to films like *The Evil Dead* (1981) trilogy. Although some of the acting is lacklustre, Elma Begovic's portrayal of the protagonist, Casey, is captivating, especially during the metamorphosis. Her performance is impressive to say the least, capturing the perfect essence of the film's marriage of dark creep factor and

humour. All-in-all, Chad Archibald's *Bite* is sure to satisfy the appetite of any horror hound. It has the ideal blend of splatter and story, and trucks along at the perfect pace. While the film certainly throws back to its horror predecessors and steers in the direction of a typical revenge plot, there is a freshness about it. Perhaps it has to do with the new faces of the cast, and the fact that a strong female lead is hard to come by (though seemingly emerging as a popular entity in the horror genre). Or maybe it has to do with Archibald's style—he seems to have a knack for creating an ambience of sinister darkness mixed with good-time gore that oozes its way through the

film, giving viewers an ultimate feeling of yuck (in a good way). This film is fun to watch, like a B-movie from the Golden Age of the 1950s (perhaps that's why *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* comes to mind). If that's not your thing, don't be deterred, as this film still manages to hold onto its creepiness. Perhaps if the film leaned even more toward horror comedy, it would have been even more enjoyable for this viewer. Regardless of a few weaknesses, this clan of Canadian filmmakers at Black Fawn Films successfully construct a horrific yet fun film that is sure to create a lot of buzz.

-Kenna Rae

DEAD: QUIET

Dead Quiet

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are you and what are you most infamous for?

Kevin Keegan: I'm Kevin and I'm not sure what I'm most infamous for... some might say my farts unfortunately, but I'd like to think it's for playing guitar and yelling at people.

AU: Who's in the band and what do they do?

KK: Jason Dana plays drums, Brock Macinnes plays guitar, Aaron Gustafson plays bass and I play guitar and sing.

AU: How did you all come together to form Dead Quiet?

KK: I moved back from Montreal almost two years ago now and wanted to get some dudes together to play some tunes I had been writing since the demise of my former band, Barn Burner. Dana and I had been talking about playing together for years prior, so it was just a matter of me moving back and getting things going. Aaron and Brock joined shortly after and here we are!

AU: You've mentioned that Dead Quiet is your personal project - how does writing for this project compare with your work in Barn Burner? Was the songwriting process drastically different between the two projects?

KK: The songwriting process is very similar in both bands, I come up with a basic arrangement and then hash it out with the band. Depending on the players and how much input they may have on the song, the songs have varying qualities. However, the writing process has never been identical from song to song, often the other fellas have a riff or an idea and we go from there.

AU: You've just released your self-titled debut album... We love it! How have you found the

reception, in general?

KK: So far the reception has been really positive but releasing it ourselves has been a much slower process. The audience who we've reached is still very small, and we hope that in time the record will get some more attention and open up some new avenues. We're still figuring out how to be a record label and get the music into new hands, which is not necessarily our [area of] expertise.

AU: Are there any themes or ideas in particular that you explore with this release?

KK: The themes on the record follow a certain period in my life that went from a very low point to a much higher one in terms of conquering certain obstacles and navigating a lot of tragedies. The original title for the record was *Triumph and Defeat*, but we didn't want to pin it down that way. By going with the self-titled debut, we thought we'd just let the music speak for itself.

AU: What can you tell us about the recording process? You went with Jesse Gander and Rain City here in Vancouver, but sent it out to Audiosiege for mastering, correct?

KK: I've been a huge fan of Jesse's work for a long time, so it was a huge deal for me to get to work with him. The other guys had recorded various other projects with him so there was a lot of familiarity there. For me, it was a chance to work with someone new who I admired, so it was a real treat and we got along and saw eye-to-eye on the direction of the album. The choice to go with Audiosiege was just because we are big fans of all the stuff Brad has done and knew he was the right fit.

AU: Any plans for a physical release of the album?

KK: The vinyl version of the record will be available in November!

AU: You guys just released an amazing music



video for the song "Foul Words," with lots of familiar Vancouver locations and faces throughout... tell us about the making of! Where did the concept come from? Any good stories from filming?

KK: The song is about the lengths we go to to escape reality, whether that's drugs or religion etc... all are arguably harmful but we do them anyways. So in the video, I wanted to portray some very exaggerated acts of self-harm that were done in a sort of indulgent way. Nothing too exciting happened during the filming, snorting icing sugar over and over again was a little harsh and breaking the fake bottles over my head was a lot of fun!

AU: What's next for Dead Quiet? Will you guys be hitting the road for a tour anytime soon? Many of the band members have other groups and commitments... will this limit touring possibilities?

KK: We're working on going to Europe in the spring, nothing's confirmed yet but that's a goal of ours. The other guys have projects yes, but

nothing has been too obstructive for us. We're a new band and aren't looking to move things faster than they need to right now, just enjoying things as they come.

AU: Any final words for our readers? What should we know about Dead Quiet?

KK: November 26th at Fortune sound club is our LP release show with Ritual Dictates, Brass and HEDKS! Come check out the gig and get a copy of the record!

PHOTO CREDIT: Taylor Ferguson Photography

<https://deadquiet.bandcamp.com/>

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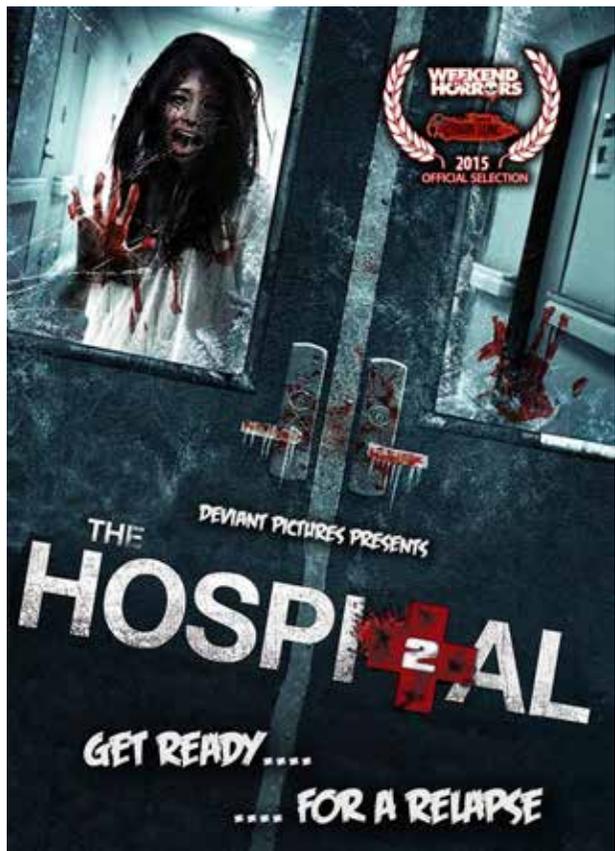


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Serving up a Canadian Screaming of The Hospital 2

An Interview with Jim O'Rear and Scott Tepperman

By Ed Sum

Independent filmmakers and paranormal investigators Jim O'Rear and Scott Tepperman are teaming up to produce 80s-style cinema with a modern edge, and they are not just limiting themselves to horror. In the works is a police drama, but as for what's next, they will be unveiling *The Hospital 2*, a sequel to the cult hit, at Island Fantasy Convention this Halloween at Pearkes Recreation Centre. They'll be hosting an evening party that will bring the first Jason (Ari Lehman, *Friday the 13th*) and Man the Wolf (Eric Fortin, Giancarlo Laertini, Cliff Thiessen) to shake up the night at the Royal Canadian Legion, Esquimalt Dockyard Branch 172 (622 Admirals Road). More information about this party can be found at this convention's website.

Jim has been working in the entertainment industry for over 30 years, beginning his career as "The Youngest Professional Magician" and transitioning to the world of film and TV as an actor, stuntman and makeup effects artist. He's done work in projects like Stephen King's *The Boogey Man*, *Star Trek IV* and *Fall of the House of Usher*. As a writer, he wanted to get more of his ideas on screen and print, and developed screenplays like *Wolfsbayne* to scare the world with when he's not looking for ghosts. He's also written a fair share of paranormal books.

Scott is best known as one of the stars on SyFy Channel's *Ghost Hunters International* and he's appeared in *I Dare You! Truth or Dare 5* (by Tim Ritter, *Creep* and *Killing Spree*). Before being cast into this side of the entertainment industry, he studied English and theatre in college and, upon graduation, he knew what he wanted to do. After his work in this paranormal reality show became better known, he used the networking skills he acquired to get his foot in the door. "I have been very fortunate to land some great roles so far, and haven't looked back since," said Tepperman.

Both these talents balance their love for horror films and looking for ghosts. They will be showing convention attendees proper techniques in how to use the tools of the trade in paranormal investigations and answer questions for even the most experienced. This roving Absolute Underground ghost hunter had the chance to talk to them about these two worlds:

Absolute Underground: What drew you into working in the horror entertainment genre? Was there an encounter that got you going in either working in this industry or paranormal investigation?

Jim O'Rear: I accidentally fell into it. Basically, I got a call from my agent to play a zombie in *Day of The Dead* back in the 80s. I wasn't going to do it, but I changed my mind at the last moment. From then on, people started contacting me to be in their horror films and I was typecast as a genre character actor. My background is actually in musical comedy, so falling into it was a total fluke. I love the horror genre, though, so I'm happy to be working in that playpen.

Scott Tepperman: [When I got my start], I just thought the street the Amityville House [A haunted house located in Long Island] was on was very weird... Had a stillness and heaviness in the air. I'll never forget that feeling.

JO: My paranormal interests developed when I was in kindergarten. It's a long story that I actually go into in one of my books, but basically I had some strange things happen to me when I was young.

Around that same time, Disney World opened and I rode The Haunted Mansion ride. My young mind tried to apply my paranormal experiences to the fake paranormal show that Disney had going on inside their ride, and it made me question what was real and what was altered perception. It interested me in finding out more about hauntings, which then started my early interest in horror.

AU: Do you still investigate now while doing work in the horror entertainment industry?

JO: I never stepped away from the paranormal to focus on horror. I've always been an actor/stuntman. It's something I've done professionally for over 30 years. The paranormal, for me, has just always been a personal journey and I've investigated when I've had time.

Performing has always come first. I started performing magic for audiences when I was in kindergarten, so entertainment with a horror/mystical/paranormal edge has always been my thing and has been a professional job. Investigating is just something else that I do.

ST: I always wanted to do horror movies more than anything else. When *Ghost Hunters International* came out and I became a little more "known," I hit up a bunch of independent horror production companies, telling them that I wanted to work with them on some of their projects.

AU: The first Hospital movie was certainly fun, as it featured a team of investigators going into a dangerous situation. How much of that would you say is based on real life situations?

ST: Minus all the torture and nastiness (you'll have to see the movie!), I'd say it, sadly, is probably pretty accurate for the state of paranormal investigators nowadays. Many are just out to make a quick buck.

AU: I've seen quite a number of films that use this formula (Haunted Changi, Death of a Ghost Hunter and Hollow's Grove) of sending would-be investigators into a dangerous situation, and I have to ask, what makes this trope so enduring?

JO: I have no idea! I actually thought that very few people would like the movie and that it would only have a small cult following. The movie was made to look cheap, grimy, and dirty and was basically there just to piss some people off and get them talking, which it did ... but who knew it was going to blow up and become an

international success?

The addition of the ghost hunting angle in the script was, basically, us saying, "Fuck you," to the reality shows and poking fun at them. We were using the ghost hunting as a joke as opposed to it actually being a major component of the plot, as those others you have listed did. I think a lot of the films that have done that, though, have benefitted from the popularity of the reality shows.

AU: How long would say it took to come up with the right story for The Hospital 2?

JO: We didn't want to make a sequel, and we had no idea for any kind of follow up... that's why, basically, everyone dies at the end. However, once it became an international hit the distributor contacted us and asked for us to make a sequel. We told them, "No," at first, but then they said that they would take the sequel sight unseen.

Well, no indie filmmakers ever get that kind of deal, and we knew that if we didn't make a sequel, we would be walking away from money on the table. So, we came up with an idea in about three weeks and put the script together... which is a much, much better script than the original.

AU: What is the plot?

JO: Five years after the brutal events that befell Skye and Beth inside Old Saint Leopold's Hospital, the two survivors continue to pick up the shattered pieces of their lives. With news of the past violent events resurfacing in the press and media, the two ladies face dealing with those ugly memories all over again. Soon, though, the events become more than just memories as Skye and Beth are hurled into another fight for survival against some very real demons from their past that are hell-bent on destroying them and everything that they hold dear. The film stars Betsy Rue (*My Bloody Valentine 3D*, *Halloween 2*, *Sons of Anarchy*), Debbie Rochon (*American Nightmare*, *Wrath of Crows*, *Return To Nuke 'em High 2*), Daniel Emery Taylor (*Return of The Swamp Thing*, *Road Trip*), Scott Tepperman (*Ghost Hunters*

International, *Camp Massacre*, *Truth Or Dare 5*), and myself.

AU: What can fans expect from this film?

JO: With *The Hospital 2*, we revisit the formula that made the first one a success — extreme violence mixed with a very dark sense of humor. We're giving the fans more of what they want, but it's a very different product. The first one was, basically, a movie about people making snuff films... and it was shot amateurishly to mimic the feel and style of a snuff film. *H2* is a much, much slicker film. It's our *Devil's Rejects* to our *House of 1000 Corpses*.

AU: Would you say The Hospital series is more like splatter punk material? That is, to go for the visceral rather than the psychological.

ST: I think Jim's goal with the original was to push the envelope and turn heads. He certainly did both.

AU: Do you think either of you will venture into producing or acting in horror-comedy films?

ST: Horror/comedies are great, goofy fun. I'm one of the stars in *Camp Massacre*, along with Jim (who also directed it). Good stuff!

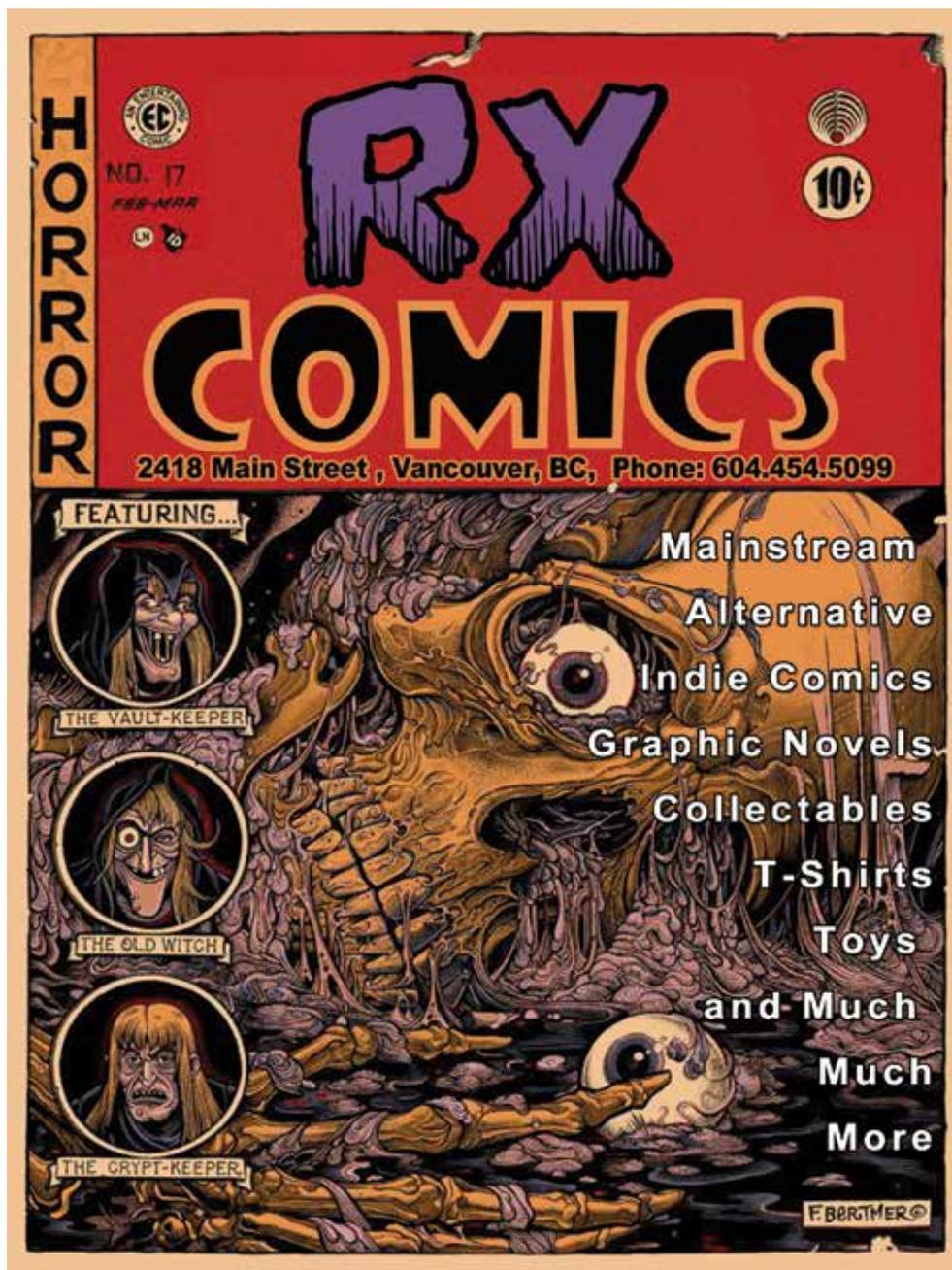
JO: That's out, on the shelves now.

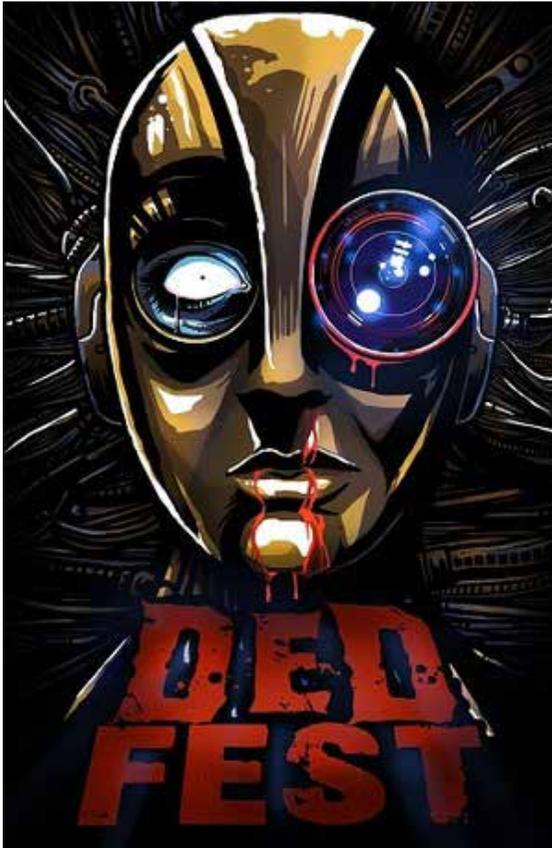
AU: In closing, do you have any final words you'd like to say to our readers?

JO: There are a lot [of films] coming up in the future. To stay in tune with it all, I recommend checking out my website (www.JimORear.com). You'll find a link to both of my Facebook pages and my Twitter account there, and I stay pretty active on those.

ST: I'm just looking forward to meeting all the fans who support *Ghost Hunters*, myself, or the films I am involved in. It should be a great weekend!

www.facebook.com/thehospital2





Dedfest 2015 Preview

By Lacey Paige

Now entering its eighth year, Dedfest—Alberta's premiere alternative cult-genre film festival—runs from October 20-25, 2015 at the Metro Cinema in Edmonton. Dedfest recently announced its biggest special guest appearance to date: none

other than former Black Flag front man, Henry Rollins. Rollins will be in attendance at the festival on Thursday, October 22 to present his latest acting feat, *He Never Died*, which will be followed by a Q&A discussion with the man himself.

The full festival schedule hasn't yet been announced, but so far, the program features the following titles that are currently stirring up audience reactions at other genre film festivals across North America: writer/director Jeremy Saulnier's neo-Nazi bar-brawl romp, *Green Room*; Chad Archibald's infectious body horror flick, *Bite*; Gabriel Carrer's vigilante justice thriller, *The Demolisher*; Karyn Kusama's psychological mind-bender, *The Invitation*; Jason Krawczyk's aforementioned Rollins-starring comedy-horror, *He Never Died*; and Dedfest-favourite Jeremy Gardner's latest, *Tex Montana Will Survive!* The 2015 lineup also boasts a special 20th anniversary screening of *Tales from the Crypt's Demon Knight* (featuring the signature antics of our favourite ghoulish Crypt-keeper from the EC-comics-inspired television series from the 90s), and a highly anticipated screening of the Halloween-themed horror anthology, *Tales of Halloween*, featuring segments from some of contemporary horror's most prolific filmmakers—just in time for Hallow's Eve!

Additionally, Dedfest will be hosting a special '666' short film contest, as well as a vendor market in the lobby of the Metro Cinema during festival times, featuring some of Alberta's finest retailers of horror memorabilia, including movie poster guru Jeff Hlrich's Smuggler's Hold, and Kevin Martin's The Lobby DVD Shop.

Stay tuned to dedfest.com for more information, the full film schedule and to purchase passes. Tickets are also available at The Lobby DVD Shop, 10815 82 Ave Edmonton, AB.



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ORIGIN

Interview with vocalist Jason Keyser

By Lacey Paige

Absolute Underground: Origin's notoriety as one of the founding outfits of technical death metal has given you guys the opportunity to reach the upper echelon of contemporary metal, yet you guys remain mostly grounded in borderline obscurity. Why have you guys chosen to remain rooted in the underground instead of establishing yourselves on a vaster scale?

Jason Keyser: That's a borderline sad question! I think we've never been a band that has been one to do PR stuff and look pretty and play the game of glossy promo photos and corny gimmicks and stuff. We do our share of corny gimmicks but it's more because we're goofballs. I think it's just a matter of never wanting to play that game. Some bands do that stuff just to have that label push. Once you start doing that then more and more people tell you what to do and what music to make, what direction to go. We just never really wanted that.

AU: On that note, you guys no longer have an official website, and you generally manage to evade publicity. Why so?

JK: We're just lazy. We don't hire a whole team to do that stuff for us; it's just not really our thing.

AU: With all of you residing in different states, how do you guys stay connected and maintain a sense of communal musicianship when you're not touring?

JK: I think the fact that we live in different states is what saves the band from if we were to live in the same area and had to jam out together all the time; we'd probably hate each other and would have broken up a long time ago. So now we have enough breathing room from each other, so that's cool. Paul lives in California, Mike lives in Kansas, John and I live in New York, so we're as physically as far as possible from each other in the States. But, you know, through Skype and the magic of the Internet, it's pretty easy to keep in touch and work on the basic structure of songs. Whenever we do the actual 'meat and potatoes' and stuff we get together. Kansas is our home base, so we just meet up in Kansas.

AU: How would you say the distance affects the way you guys write and perform your music together?

JK: I think it allows for more spontaneity in writing and in playing because we don't jam every Wednesday and Friday and have that structure. So it allows us to just go on the fly, and I suppose that's part of our niche charm.

AU: Some metal critics have offered the opinion that although the extreme technical proficiency of your music is impressive, the song writing and diversity of song structure is often sacrificed. This opinion could apply to all technical death metal. What are your thoughts?

JK: I guess that could be true for anything. Honestly, I don't think we sacrifice anything for the technicality. Nowadays I think maybe we're less interested in what was popular in the late '90s-early 2000s—which was the typewriter-attack-blast that Origin's first few albums were. We've moved more into diversity of songwriting these days. Times change, we change, Paul—who does the majority of the songwriting—never wants to write the same album twice. I think that gives us a lot of dynamic when we do play live. We can play two tracks from every album and have something to offer everybody.

AU: Although this pre-dates your integration into the band, how did the dynamic of the band change once the guys signed from Relapse to Nuclear Blast?

JK: I guess this goes back to the earlier question about how much of a hand the label and other people have in what we do, and

we've always had total autonomy in whatever we wanted to write or as far as art work or how we present ourselves and stuff like that. So it hasn't really changed anything. Nuclear Blast has been very cool and supportive. If anything, it has been better. It's been more of a push to have bigger tours with more people all the time, and stray away from the underground style that.

AU: Although you haven't been with Origin since its inception, the original lineup released their debut album at the turn of a new millennium, and at the beginning of a new wave of much faster and technically proficient death metal. From your perspective, how would you say Origin's music has evolved over the last 15 years especially considering



that Origin basically spearheaded the tech-death movement?

JK: Years ago, people would come to an Origin show just for the specific purpose of standing in the front row—guitar players would come to watch Paul and bass players would come to marvel over Mike's playing. Drummers would just stand there at the side with their jaws dropped, watching Jon the whole time. So it was less of a fun vibe and more of a showcase every night. And we don't try to grimace or mean-mug or pretend. We just want our concerts to be enjoyable. So I think we've moved away from just being something for people to come and watch the playing; people come to enjoy the show now. Crowds get a little more off the hook, pits are wilder, and we condone that sort of thing. So it's not as stiff as it once was.

AU: With the 2014 release of Omnipresent being touted as one of Origin's heaviest, most complex albums to date, what's in store for the next studio release?

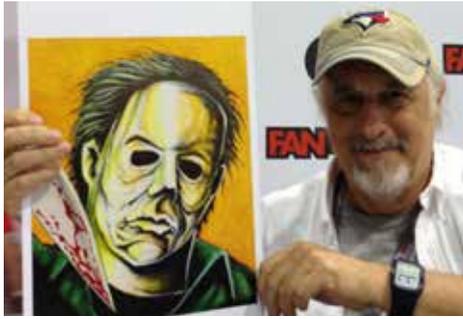
JK: The old cliché: the next album will be even more of the heaviest and most complex album to date! Hahaha. Nah, I don't know. We haven't really started much work on it yet, just the very basic skeleton of it. I think we're going to start writing and recording next year, and I'm excited to do it! It might be a little bit back in the tradition of *Antithesis* vein than *Omnipresent* was—that one got a little more experimental and artsy with the instrumental tracks and stuff. So we might do away with junk like that, but we'll keep it heavy and write a new masterpiece.

AU: What do you think the future holds for metal—particularly technical death metal?

JK: It's tough to say. I mean, pulling the old man card, it's a whole different time now with the Internet where people can learn their instruments a lot faster; people can just have instant access to the craziest techniques imaginable. Years ago you just had to power through on your own and come up with your own shit. So there's a whole new breed of bands that're getting churned out because people are just getting better earlier. And that's not an insult or anything derogatory at all. It's just that the market is getting flooded with kids with incredible talent. So it's going to be interesting to see where it goes and see the next level of extremity. I think Origin is just a bunch of old men and we'll be dead before the next giant new breakout of action happens. It's been fun!

PHOTO CREDIT: Ron Brand

www.facebook.com/Origin



Nick Castle

The Original Michael Myers

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Nick Castle: Hi, my name is Nick Castle, I am a director and writer, but one of my first projects was being the killer in John Carpenter's *Halloween*, the first one.

AU: So you were Michael Myers, but they just call him "The Shape" in the credits?

NC: That's right, they just called the character The

Shape, and basically he was the one that killed everybody. The Michael Myers they credited with a guy named Tony Moran, when he took off the mask, they wanted that look and that was the way it was divided up in the movie.

AU: I heard also that John Carpenter and Deborah Hill had to become the Shape too, when you weren't around?

NC: Oh, occasionally yeah, when I wasn't around and they needed some hands or feet or something like that, they would put some people in the suit, in the distance.

AU: You mentioned that you wanted to learn film directing and so Carpenter said to come on the set?

NC: Yeah that's right, John and I both went to the University of Southern California film school, and this was John's third movie, they were doing it in Los Angeles, so I asked if I could be on the set to watch how things went and kind of demystify the experience for when I directed, and he said, "Well, why don't you play the killer? So I said okay, and that's how I stayed on the set and did it.

AU: What was your method of acting to be such a creepy guy?

NC: Well I guess it was just good fortune because I didn't do much other than walk and not talk and roll people up and stab people. The pace I guess, John told me how fast to walk, but that was about it. There was not a lot of communication, but that mask goes a long way in making things creepy.

AU: You mentioned you started directing after that, tell us about *The Last Starfighter*.

NC: Yeah my second film was called *The Last Starfighter*, it was made in 1983 and released in 1984 and it was the first movie that used photo-real CGI, that's its claim to fame as far as the history of motion pictures, an important first step there, and now of course everyone uses



that method when they do visual effects.

AU: Was that an idea you came up with, *The Last Starfighter*?

NC: No, the idea of *The Last Starfighter* came from a screenplay by Jonathan Betuel, and this was his first film produced, and he did a very nice job of doing the characters, we worked a lot on the subsequent drafts together, with little areas to improve on. But we were real partners during the production, he was very helpful in terms of ideas for casting and everything else.

AU: What do you have planned for Halloween this year?

NC: Me personally? Get some

chocolate for the kids that come by, which is not very many in my house, I don't do a big Halloween thing and I don't encourage it being said that mine is the house that Michael Myers lives in, there'd be too much of a pilgrimage there.

AU: Thanks for time! Final words for Canadian horror fans!

NC: Thanks you guys for enjoying this movie and keeping it alive all these years, John is a great director, I'm sure he appreciates it too.

AU: It is a movie that has lasted forever, it's just such a perfect independent horror film, sort of a template for all of them, so thanks again!



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NoMeansNo

Hall of Fame Inductees at the 2015 Western Canadian Music Awards

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with here today?

John Wright: John from NoMeansNo.

Tom Holliston: I'm Tom, also from the aforementioned NoMeansNo.

AU: We're here for a big gala event, the Western Canadian Hall of Fame Awards... are you used to doing award shows?

JW: No I have to admit, this is the first time for us, that's for sure. It was a little bit bizarre when we first heard about it, we didn't really know what to make of it, but everyone's been really nice. It's flattering and it's just nice to be recognized, for sure, I think any artist or musician appreciates the fact that they feel they've made an impression and so we're here to have some fun.

AU: Who are some notable names that you'll be joining now that you get this Hall of Fame award?

TH: Trooper, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Loverboy...

JW: This is sort of what I mean, it was like, "What? NoMeansNo?" But some people working with Break Out West, these are people who know us from back in the day, so to speak, so we're not unknown to a generation of people that were around Victoria especially in the 80s mostly, and we are still working in the music scene, so I think it's genuine and we appreciate it.

AU: I think you'll always be considered a Victoria band, and they were probably weighing the options between inducting the Daylo Abortions or NoMeansNo... haha.

JW: They couldn't afford the beer bill if they got the Dayglos...

TH: I think if the Salty Seamen got back together we'd be supplanted.

AU: When you guys came out, it was a sound that no one had really heard... I'm wondering how you came to that sound.

JW: The thing about it was that in Victoria in the late 70s and early 80s, no one really knew anything

about anything musically, in the alternative scene. It was like, do what you want, just play. And there was almost an emphasis on, "Be yourself, it's all about your energy, don't sound like you're a commercial band." And for us, it was really a logistical thing that when my brother and I started making music, we didn't know any guitar players... well we did, but not anybody we were going to play with. I had joined the Infamous Scientists, we were playing with Andy Kerr and Kev Lee at the time and there was all these bands and music happening, and Robbie and I had been making music together, but not performing anything, and Rob said, "If we're going to be a band, we need to write some music and it's just gonna be us, because we don't know anybody else to play with." So starting out with just bass and drums... actually, Robbie primarily played the guitar up until that point, he really learned to play the bass in order to play bass and drums with NoMeansNo. He'd only just dabbled in it, and as it turns out, he's a far more natural bass player and that's why his style is so guitar-like on the bass. So mostly Robbie wrote a string of songs, specifically for bass and drums, he'd just come up with some lines and some words, and then the drumming with no guitar, and with just repeating riffs, or not even riffs, just basslines, for the drumming I had to be more musical and I was already coming out of high school jazz program, and my approach to drumming was already musically oriented, I wasn't a punk rock beat box or anything by any stretch. So all these factors kind of made the first songs seem so strange, different-sounding. Often when you get most creative is when you have these boundaries placed in front of you, or you're given an instrument you've never played before, and so you have no pre-conceived idea of what to do with it, you just start to make sounds and start to make music, and since this parameter of bass and drums was nothing like we'd listened to, it just inspired ideas and creativity around what we could do with this and make it more interesting.

AU: Yeah, maybe living on the island, living in a vacuum...

JW: Yeah definitely, Victoria was in a vacuum.

TH: Until Scott Henderson opened up Richards

Records. Before that, you had to get on the bus and go to Vancouver, we found out where Quintessence Records was... I'd have 20 bucks and I could buy five singles, everything from The Rotters "Sit On My Face Stevie Nicks" to XTC singles, just like, "What's this, this looks fun."

AU: How did you put out that first record, was that all DIY?

JW: Oh yeah, the "Wormies" single that we put out, and *Mama*, we had it pressed in Vancouver at IRC Pressing Plant, which I think someone tried to revive recently because of the need for vinyl these days. But yeah, we did our own artwork and all that, there was no one else going to do it, and all the bands in Victoria were just doing things themselves. You just did, there was no record labels interested, and I don't think anybody really knew how to approach one anyway.

AU: How did you end up with Alternative Tentacles?

JW: Laurie Mercer, our longtime manager, had recently joined up with us in 1985, and in 1986 he had booked a tour right through the United States and Canada, a two-and-a-half-month tour, and one of the stops was in the Bay Area, and we end up playing a show with Victims Family, who were on Mordam Records with Ruth Schwartz, so she was there and also Debbie Gordon from Alternative Tentacles, who was Ruth's friend, was also at the show and was like, who is this NoMeansNo? She later convinced Jello Biafra to come to one of our other shows in the Bay Area and he was really impressed and was like, "Oh, okay these guys are real and it's good stuff." Sex Mad was the record we had just finished and were sort of touring on, so they put it out in 1986 and that was that, we were on Alternative Tentacles for the next 14 years.

AU: When did you finally add Tom into the mix?

JW: Yeah, Tom actually was with the Hanson Brothers.

TH: '93 was the first time I actually started playing with NomeansNo. We went down to New Zealand and Australia with DOA, and a really good band called Front End Loader, so that was good because we were middle, so it was only a 45-minute set, so it was nothing to learn a lot of new stuff and technique and the same time. I will never forget finding myself on a children's kiddie train in Australia, sitting next to Joe Shithead.

AU: Your solid approach to grassroots do-it-yourself that you've maintained this whole time, what were some of the opportunities that you might have said "No" to, like if Disney came knocking...?

JW: Well Laurie was being courted by Atlantic Records, they had signed The Melvins and they were trying to gobble up a lot of the stuff, after Nirvana broke, suddenly we were on the radar, and so Laurie fielded some stuff, there were some bites, but we wanted nothing to do with it, it would have been the end of the band. Alternative Tentacles was the perfect tone for us, we could do what we want, we had label support in the sense that our records were made and distributed reliably.

AU: For the awards show tonight, I hear you guys are doing an acoustic set?

JW: Yeah basically, just logistically for this show format, it wouldn't work at all, it would just be a nightmare, I'd have to have my own drums on the side of the stage, it's just not gonna work, we're too loud, so right off the bat, we said that if we do this thing, we've just gotta do it really, not low-key, but unplugged, do something different.

AU: What is it, like a 20-minute set?

JW: Not even, like 12 minutes. Four songs.

AU: So is this something you've never really done before?

JW: No, I don't think we've ever really done this before. I've played keyboards live, once for a Mr. Wright and Mr. Wrong show. And when Ken

Kempster joined up with us for a couple of years we thought we'd go with double drums, too, and it just changed things up, Andy left the band, Tom was joining, it was a good opportunity to do something a little different. One tour, for the encore, I played keyboards and sang and Ken played the drums, so other than that, this acoustic thing is first-time.

AU: Gary Brainless finally closed the doors on the Rat's Nest... is that where you played some of your first shows?

JW: Yeah we played several times there, and rehearsed in his basement for years.

TH: It's where I played my first NoMeansNo show.

JW: That's right! Gary's definitely on our thank-list, because there's another person who was so pivotal in the scene in Victoria, the Rat's Nest was the place where most shows happened, shows that would never ever have happened if it wasn't for that basement.

TH: DRI played there.

AU: The CBGBs of Victoria.

JW: Kinda, yeah. Just thank god it never burned down, 'cause there was no way out of that basement.

AU: Any comments on the upcoming election?

JW: Oh yeah, well I would encourage everyone to help fight the rise of fascism in Canada and



just don't vote Conservative, not for the Harper regime, that's for sure.

TH: I agree, especially I think for older people with a social conscience who used to have a great pride in Canada as a peacekeeping nation.

JW: Yeah that's the trouble with this election, you're forced with the situation where it's about getting someone out.

AU: I'm assuming since you started this band in 1979, and now here you are over 30 years later, getting this award, that you probably didn't see this coming at the beginning.

JW: No, in a word.

AU: Any advice for new bands starting out? What is the secret of your longevity as a band?

JW: If you base your ambitions on award shows, then you may or may not have longevity, but if you play what you want to play and get in front of people and play it all the time, you may not become rich, but you'll probably do it your whole life.

AU: Are you guys going to be coming out of hibernation anytime soon?

JW: No, we don't have any plans yet. My brother's still pretty busy with his kids, and that's his priority, and I totally understand it, he's 61 and he has a young family, you only have so much time. My family is, not grown up, but they're 16 and 20 years old, they're getting up there... my brother's eight years older than me and he's just gotten started.

TH: I think next August if there was a scenario where it was like, "Let's go play Victoria, Vancouver, and Lund, without all the trappings of having to get T-shirts made or getting airline tickets, let's just play three shows, it'll be fun.

JW: Yeah, definitely, my brother hasn't said no...



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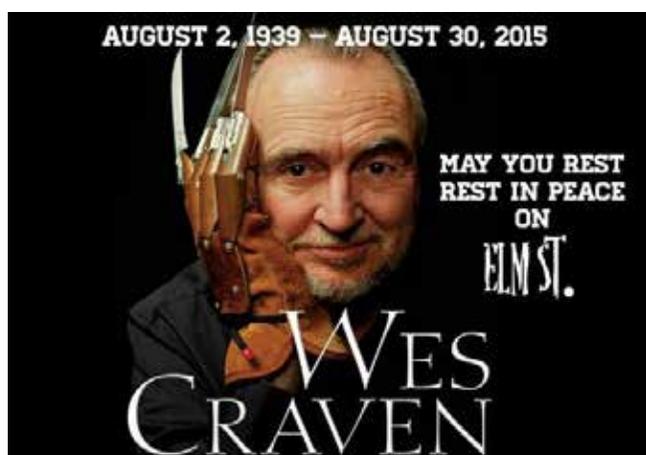
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Illustration by: Ehren Salazar



Remembering Wes Craven

By Lacey Paige

When we think of the most prolific masters of contemporary horror, generally the same few names come to mind: John Carpenter, George A. Romero, Dario Argento, Lucio Fulci, Stephen King, etc. But one could easily argue that the crimson crown of cinematic carnage belongs to a man who stands out among that impressive roster of macabre masterminds as having not only spawned the most beloved, memorable and despicable villain in the history of 1980s horror cinema, but several remarkable game-changers in the ghastly realm of nefarious nightmare makers. That man was Wes Craven.

In the early 1980s, the landscape of horror cinema was a vibrant hodgepodge of dime-a-dozen slasher pictures that drew blood from the same vein as John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1979) and Sean Cunningham's *Friday the 13th* (1980). No-name novice filmmakers were churning out cheap horror flicks like hot cakes. Sci-fi horror was moving to the forefront of the genre with

Carpenter's masterfully crafted remake of *The Thing [from Another World]* (1982), Douglas McKeown's *The Deadly Spawn* (1983) and Harry Bromley-Davenport's *Xtro* (1982). Special effects artists were making their big break with creature features and werewolf thrillers that allowed them to flex their FX wizardry and display the fruits of their craft front and centre in films like John Landis' *An American Werewolf in London* and Joe Dante's *The Howling and Gremlins*.

In 1984, a then-infantile New Line Cinema released Craven's magnum opus, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Horror fans and filmmakers alike were blindsided by the birth of the Bastard Son of 100 Maniacs. Craven and character actor Robert Englund customized the disfigured face, tattered red and green sweater, and razor-sharp bladed glove that established Krueger's signature aesthetic, and subsequently spawned the most widely recognized (and most frequently quoted) horror icon all over the world. *Elm Street* marked Craven's eighth directorial feat, and his fifth soiree into major motion picture horror. Most of the films that preceded it were monumental exhibitions of genius in their own right. As a filmmaker who never wanted to be pigeonholed into one specific genre and didn't exactly embrace his unintentionally earned moniker as a "Master of Horror," Craven used his synonymity with the genre to create thought-provoking, socially conscious horror that often inverted genre tropes and scrutinized the political landscape of whatever era production of a film took place in. To summarize: Craven made it universally known that scary cinema can and should be smart, and that "horror films don't create fear; they release it."

Horror fans can easily attest to the fact that Craven single-handedly revolutionized the horror genre, for not one, not two, but three decades in a row: first with his 1972 directorial debut,

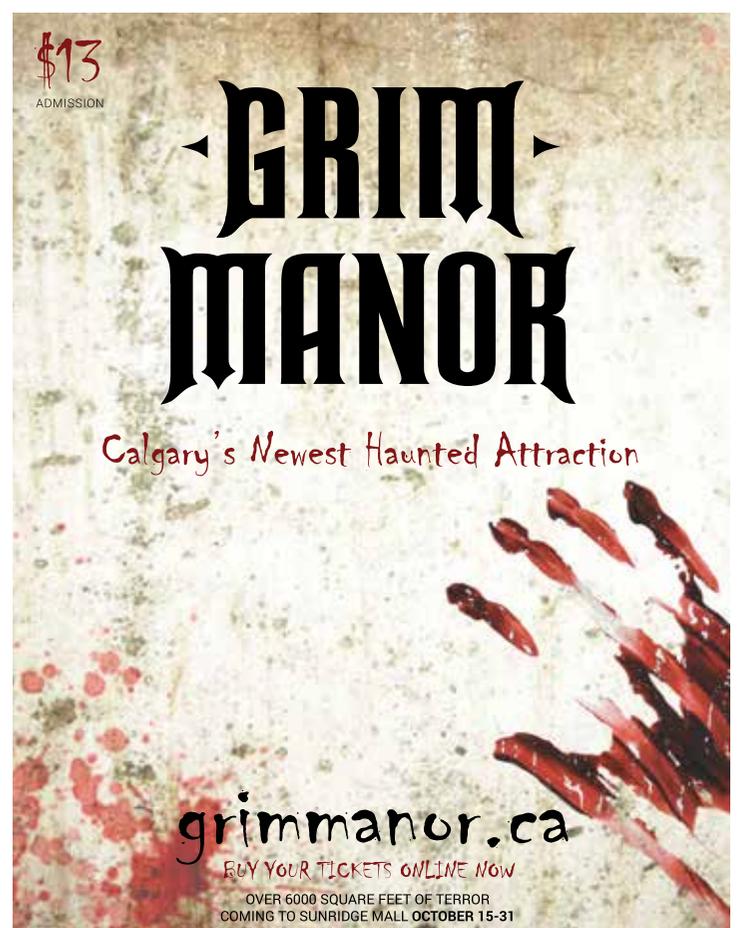
The Last House on the Left—a collaboration with *Friday the 13th* creator Sean S. Cunningham—then with 1984's *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, and finally with 1996's slasher revival/meta-horror jaunt, *Scream*. However, humble as Craven always was, he never disregarded his roots or the many facets of his creative output. As a college professor of English and humanities, as a visionary writer and moderately accomplished novelist (*Fountain Society, Coming of Age*), and as the well-established and highly-esteemed filmmaker who first embarked on his journey in the early 1970s, enthusiastically tackling any and every opportunity that presented itself to him—from sound editor to production assistant to director of smutty 42nd Street-style softcore porn—Craven did it all with the utmost sophistication and modesty.

To the uninitiated—those who casually view horror movies on date nights or during the Halloween season—Wes Craven was merely the guy who created Freddy Krueger and brought us *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. But to those of us who know more than a thing or two about horror, Craven will always be the man who, regardless of intention, rightfully earned that crimson crown of carnage, and the heavy-

weight title as Master of Horror.

This article was written in memory of the late, great Wes Craven, who left this world much too soon, but left behind a monumental body of work greater than many an artist could ever hope to accomplish.

Wes Craven
August 2, 1939 – August 30, 2015
Forever remembered and never forgotten





Ask The Cretin

Murray Acton, also known as "The Cretin" and main man from the Dayglo Abortions, has some words of wisdom to share that may just change your life!

I was just sitting around, getting stoned, listening to tunes, playing a bit of guitar, and I got to thinking.

There are a lot of different kinds of intelligence. Some people are good at recognizing patterns. Some have very accurate memory recall. I have heard it said that pretty well everyone who has been granted full access to their mental abilities has at least one mental function that they excel

in. For instance, I have a friend who is a walking encyclopedia of punk rock. He has, at best, average intelligence and a bit of artistic skill, but his knowledge of punk rock music, and specific details about punk rock bands is truly amazing, albeit of limited use in his adult life. Now I am not really sure which mental faculty I personally excel in, but I started this train of thought so I might as well use a bit of old-school scientific reasoning to figure it out.

First, what is, "The thing that I do most of the time"? Well, I don't fucking work, that's for sure, not at a job anyway... I mostly just sit around, get stoned, listen to tunes, play guitar, get stoned, sit around some more... that kind of stuff. And what mental abilities are required to be able to do, "the thing that I do most of the time," effectively? Hmmm, that's a good question.

Well, it's actually not that easy to not have a job. Especially when lots of other people want you to have one. You have to be always ready to come up with creative believable excuses for why you can't get a job, or why you can't pay your bills. Not only that but, you will also have to devise a method of acquiring drugs to get stoned on, and access to the technology that you will require to listen to tunes, and play guitar. On top of that, you will need a place suitable for doing "the thing that you do the most" in. Wow, when you look at it like this, it looks unbelievably difficult. I'm thinking it is going to require a lot of thinking to accomplish this.

Wait a minute, maybe that's the key. Or even better, maybe that's the answer. The mental function that I am best at is...thinking... I think. That might be more than one mental function. Who cares, eh? I have heard that music engages the human mind more than any other activity. I have also heard that when biological organisms are confronted by an unsolvable problem that threatens their existence, they will, as a last resort, consume a quantity of a toxic alkaloid substance that alters their thinking and perception in such a way that, if they are lucky, allows them to see a solution to their problem. In simple words, they get stoned. Holy crap cakes! I must be having one of those "moments of clarity" that you hear mentioned occasionally. I have inadvertently discovered the amazing power of my own mind. Jesus Fucking Christ, eh? Who would have fucking think it? Well, it would be a shame to let something like this go to waste, so I will make my new-found ability of thought and reason available to the general public.

I approached the editor of this fine magazine that you are reading, and told him about my discovery. He was so impressed that he will allow me to write a small column in his publication. It will be a general advice column similar to "Dear Abby" or Anne Landers, but you will get answered by me instead of some stuffy old bat with her head stuck up her ass. Ask me anything you like, information on any subject, advice about anything that worries you, whatever. So what if I'm not a

qualified counsellor? I'm much more than that... I not only have no qualifications as a counsellor, I also have successfully not had a job in years. You can be assured that I keep my brain in top problem-solving condition by getting stoned all the time, listening to music, and playing guitar. So... got a problem? Ask the Cretin!

What the fuck does Anne Landers know anyway?

Bonus Bulletin:

The Dayglo Abortions have released an anti-Stephen Harper song, "Canadian Hate-Triot" (Canadian Hatriot), courtesy of Unrest Records.

The Cretin has this to say on the topic:

"Occasionally, I get personal in a song, and when I do, it's not going to be complimentary. This is no catchy campaign jingle full of meaningless slogans and empty promises in the hopes of redirecting the voters' gaze away from the many crimes that the Harper government committed while in office.

No, this is a punk song, blunt as a blackjack. To the point, like a stick in the eye. Stephen Harper and his party have betrayed Canada and our future, by selling our resources to foreign interests and allowing the wholesale rape of some of the last pristine wilderness areas on the planet. They are choosing short-term profit over future prosperity, and setting our justice system back to the Middle Ages, not to mention turning the medical marijuana industry into a corporate cash bash.

He is nothing more than a towel boy for the corporate gangsters and the international bankers that are ruining our planet. We can do better than this."

"Canadian Hate-triot" will be available for download from CD Baby on Oct 9th, and from iTunes on Oct 16th.

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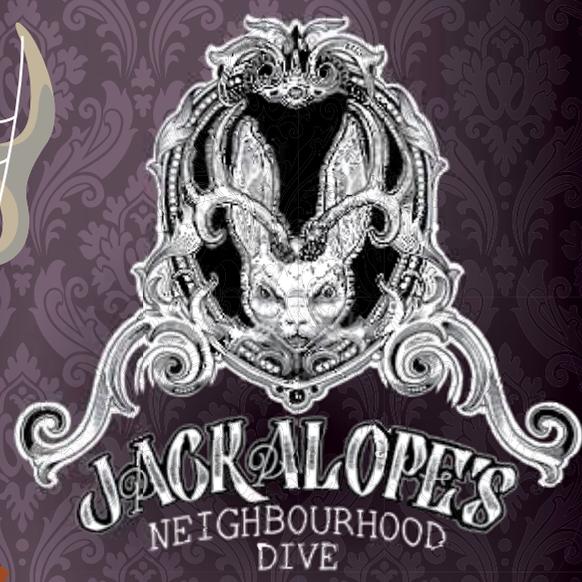
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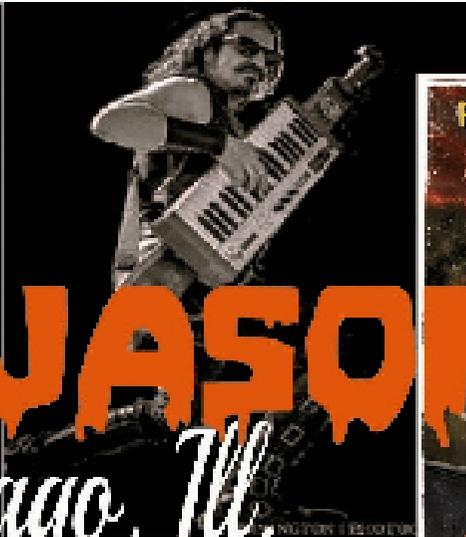
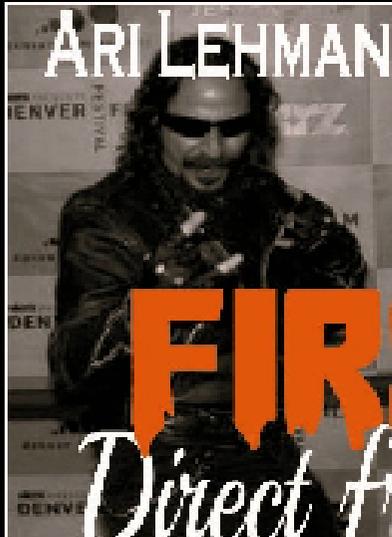
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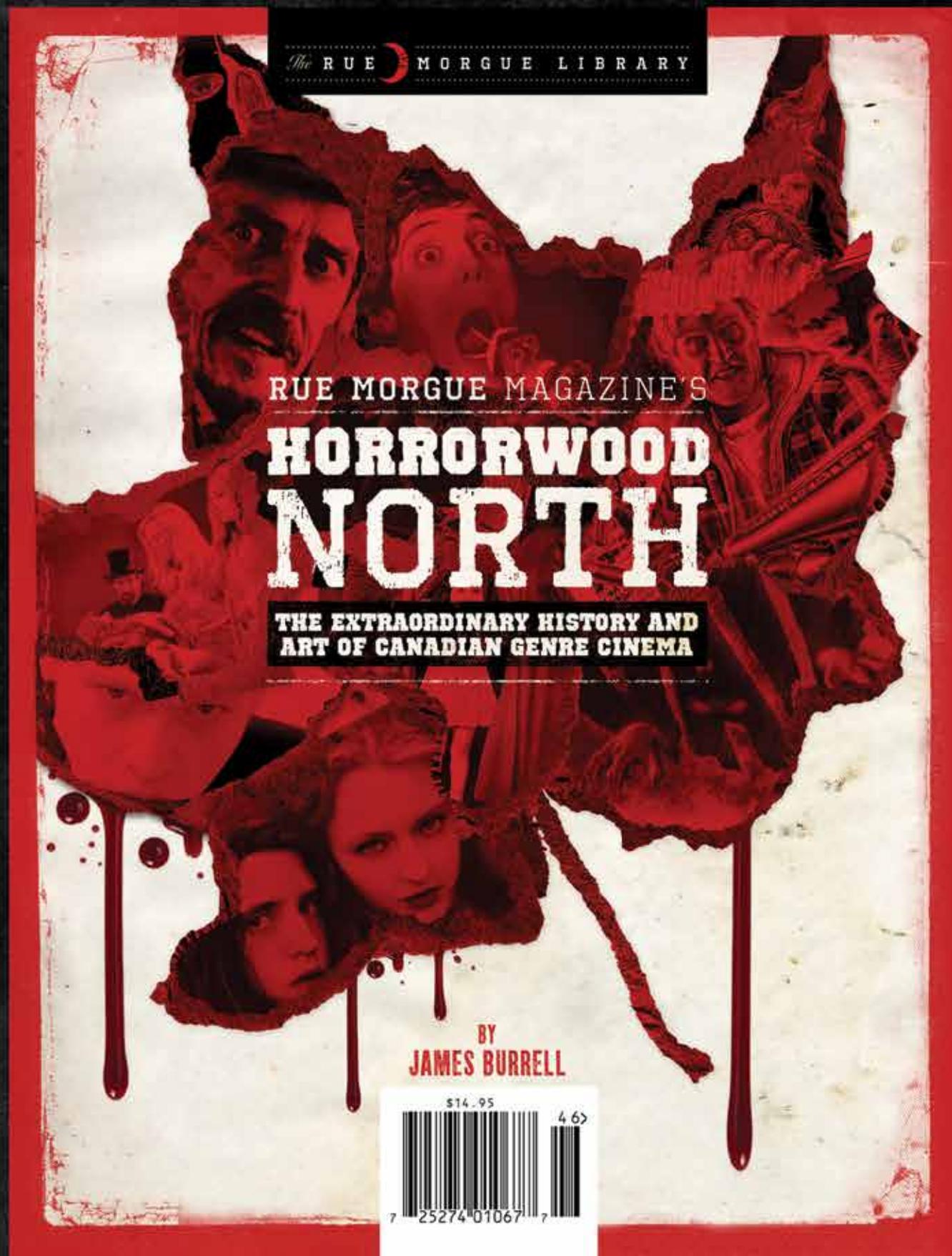
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