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# FRIGHT NIGHT



## **Bares Its Fangs**

A sequel that had to happen reunites Charley Brewster with Peter Vincent. Toss in a lady vampire for good luck.

The stars of Fright Night— Part 2 do their darnedest to outdo The Lost Boys' fashionable attire. (Left to right: Jonathan Gries, Brian Thompson, Julie Carmen and Russell Clark.)

h ollywood Rule #1: Never kill a goose laying golden eggs. Take, for example, Friday the 13th, Part VII (soon to be Part VIII), or A Nightmare on Elm Street 3 (soon to be Part 4), or ALIENS (soon to be . . . well, you get the picture).

So when a rather small but FXcrazed little exercise in vampire tomfoolery called *Fright Night* proved not only a critical success (i.e. somebody other than FANGORIA liked it) but a box office bonanza (an

### By MARC SHAPIRO

estimated \$50 million worldwide to date), it seemed a safe bet that there would be further adventures for Peter Vincent and Charley Brewster.

#### The Set Visit: Day One

Tommy Lee Wallace plays footsies with shower steam. First take: It's too thick. Second take: It's too thin. Are you ready, baby bear? Third take: Wallace motions the cramped camera crew slowly back. The steam

> Steamed up over the death of her brother Jerry, Regine seeks vengeance on his stakers.

snakes around an open bathroom door while the shower beats a background *ratatatat*. Wallace is satisfied and yells, "Cut."

The studio where the lion's share of Fright Night—Part 2 is being filmed is a little-used relic from the 1940s. The sucker's also pretty drafty, which explains why, after exiting a mock-up of Charley Brewster's apartment, Wallace puts on a heavy jacket to snuggle up for a quick script read. Jeffrey Sudzin, the film's line producer, could do without the chill wreaking havoc on his ongoing head cold. But, between sniffles and sneezes, Sudzin chronicles the history of Fright Night—Part 2.

"There was never any question that a sequel to *Fright Night* would be made," swears Sudzin. "But when a new regime took over at Columbia, a number of projects were dumped, including the *Fright Night* sequel. When that happened, Herb Jaffe, who produced the first *Fright Night*, got the rights back from Columbia and took the project to Vista."

Of course, Fright Night—Part 2, budgeted at \$7.5 million for a 45-day shoot, would have been nothing without Roddy McDowall as fearless vampire killer Peter Vincent and William Ragsdale as perpetual victim Charley Brewster. "Getting Roddy and Bill back was no problem," claims Sudzin. "They were happy to do it once they saw the script."

The second chapter in Fright Night's stylish bloodsucking saga

begins three years after the original ended. Charley Brewster, now in college, celebrates the conclusion of three years of intense headshrinking that has convinced him everything that happened in the first film was all a dream. Brewster and his latest main squeeze Alex (Traci Lin) pay a visit to TV horror host Peter Vincent (McDowall), whose continued on-air tirades to beware of the unknown have once again gotten him fired.

Charley begins to get that old uneasy feeling again, a feeling that's justified with the appearance of female excitress Regine (Julie Carmen) and an equally eerie group of cohorts. Regine, as the tale unfolds, turns out to be the sister of the dear departed Jerry Dandridge, come to take revenge on Charley by seducing him into the vampire life. After a series of near-misses, which include girlfriend Alex's fending off the amorous advances of some of Regine's ghouls, Charley, once again aided by horror host Vincent, sets about doing battle with the vampiress and her horror horde.

Fright Night-Part 2's cowriters-director Wallace (who plotted the course of Halloween III: Season of the Witch) and the duo of Miguel Tejada-Flores and Tim Metcalfe (of Revenge of the Nerds infamy)-have invested the sequel with so much '80s hi-tech and glitzy hipness that one is sorely tempted to compare Part 2 to an episode of Miami Vice. Sudzin is quick to laugh that comparison off, but Carmen, putting on makeup in preparation for a heavy seduction number, feels Fright Night-Part 2's attitude is definitely now.

"Intellectually, it's clever in a very new wave sort of way," judges Carmen, whose exotic appearance makes her the ideal candidate to suck Charley's blood. "This film sits on the cutting edge all the way down the line. Regine is definitely a freaked-out personality, kind of like a cross between Tina Turner and Catherine Deneuve."

Carmen, whose talents are on display in *The Penitent* and *The Milagro Beanfield War*, hasn't always waxed so enthusiastic about the film. In fact, she remembers an early draft of the script that sent her looking for a stomach distress bag. "I was afraid of the part because Regine's character was nothing more than an Elvira imitation," the actress winces. "The revisions made her a more multidimensional being who happens to like sucking blood."

Subsequent rewrites so impressed Carmen that she began turning things down right and left in order to thoroughly prep herself for her



Louie transforms, as McDowall's stunt double hangs on for dear life.

Fright Night—Part 2 romp. Carmen read everything concerning vampires and watched every vampire movie she could lay her hands on. Naturally, she watched the original Fright Night until she was blue in the face. poured on her body, thanks to the ordeal by fire required in the creation of a glamorized vampire mask by FX supervisor Bart Mixon and key sculptor Brian Wade. "The six hours required to get the neck and face piece on was hard enough, but

"I picked up some mannerisms from the Jerry Dandridge character, such as his wink and the Bela Lugosi way he held his hand, that I use in this film," Carmen reveals. "But I stopped looking at the first movie when I realized I could very easily fall into the trap of being a female clone of the Jerry Dandridge character."

The actress jokingly claims she and gave myself up to the weight will have a clause in future contracts against any latex being I went home that night and cried.

ordeal by fire required in the creation of a glamorized vampire mask by FX supervisor Bart Mixon and key sculptor Brian Wade. "The six hours required to get the neck and face piece on was hard enough, but the actual molding of the mask was a killer," groans Carmen. "I had never had prosthetics applied before, so you can imagine what happened when Brian and Bart poured alginate and plaster over my head. When the plaster began to harden, I got totally claustrophobic and started to panic. The only thing that saved me was that I meditated and gave myself up to the weight of the plaster. But I was so freaked that

during a break in his action. "I'll tell you. I meet a lot of people who say, 'I don't go to those kind of movies, but I hear you were very good.' "

Ragsdale, attired in a bathrobe (he spends a good part of this movie in the vicinity of a bed), remembers he took the persistent rumors of a *Fright Night* sequel in stride, but was more than willing to repeat the role of Charley when the rumors got serious, and he's happy to report

"The effects are a variation of things that have all been done before." —visual FX coordinator Gene Warren Jr.

that his second turn at Charley is not a carbon copy of the first.

"Charley gets involved in more of an emotional battle," he assesses. "The first film was more of a physical thing. He's been in therapy and is trying to cope and decide whether or not to believe in all this strange stuff that's happened to him. What he has to deal with is much more troublesome, emotionally, and so the role has a lot more substance.

"Charley is a character that is very close to home for me at this point," continues Ragsdale, "but I don't think it's gotten to the point where I'm sleepwalking through the role." Following Fright Night—Part 2, Ragsdale hits the road in the national touring company of Neil Simon's play Broadway Bound, a sign that Ragsdale is avoiding the stereotype of "horror film actor."

Gene Warren Jr., Part 2's visual FX coordinator, is one slow-talking dude. You could empty a bottle of ketchup in the time it takes him to complete a sentence. But slow does not equate with evasive; Warren bluntly points out that the most ambitious bit of wizardry in Fright Night—Part 2 never got off the drawing board.

"In an early version of the script, Evil Ed was still in the film," explains Warren. "There was this sequence where he falls off the top of a building, makes a number of transformations while falling and, just before he hits the ground, changes into a bat and flys away. But once we lost Evil Ed, doing the same stunt for another character



McDowall warns Regine (and our reporter) not to cross him.

"A few minutes after I stopped crying, the phone rang," she sighs. "There was a problem with the mold, and they wanted to know if I could come in early the next morning to do it again."

Day Two: Charley and Gene Speak Sudzin still coughs. Wallace and his camera crew are back in We'd love to see *one* vampire movie in which the bloodsuckers dressed like slobs.

Charley's apartment, where Charley is about to get a rude awakening.

There's a knock on the door. Brewster mumbles as good buddy Richie (Merritt Butrick) enters in search of a power tie, the better to impress the babes. Charley freaks when he realizes he's slept through half his classload. He rushes into the bathroom while Richie goes through Charley's drawers, looking for the proper cloth strip. Wallace halts the action and, true to his growing rep as a stickler for detail, confers with Butrick on the proper way to cross to the dresser from the door.

Wallace collars Ragsdale and Butrick when the scene ends, and they retire to a darkened corner of the soundstage where, amid animated gestures and verbal rimshots, they rough out the tone of an upcoming scene.

"What has being in Fright Night done for my career?" howls Ragsdale outside the soundstage just didn't seem to fit."

Warren, whose Fantasy II shop did an estimated 300 bits on Nightflyers before hitting the Fright Night trail, still has the majority of his stop motion, rear projection and other visual FX work in front of him in what will be an estimated three months of postproduction work. But he proves a good source of information on the FX highlights other people on the film have dished out thus far.

"Greg Cannom does a real solid transformation on a monster character named Louie," praises Warren. "It's a limited, two or three cut transformation done in reverse. The character changes from a wolf back to a person. And that mask for Regine, which switches from normal to monstrous and back again at certain points in the movie, is something just that little bit different.

"But I'm not going to sit here and jazz you that, effects-wise, any of us are doing anything totally off the wall," he admits. "What the effects on this film are is a variation of things that have all been done before. We may run into some unexpected things in postproduction that may necessitate our stretching a little bit, but effects people have been literally turning people inside out for years. What you're going to see are some very good special effects, yet nothing you haven't seen before."

#### Day Three: Werewolf Drops, Roddy Bites Fango

Subtitle this day "Just Hanging Around." To wit: Easily 50 cast, crew and assorted visitors, crowded into the corner of a soundstage adjacent to the one housing Charley's digs, share small talk—who's doing what to whom, who's going where over the weekend, why the He-Man movie didn't wow them at the box office.

The buzz carries on beneath the false front of an upper-story window, complete with cornices, genuine imitation brickwork and all those things that make a place oldlooking. A rather substantial air bag/mattress is hustled in and placed directly under the facade's open window. Off to one side, glancing from mattress to window and back again, is a stuntman in werewolf chic who will shortly take a jump out the window.

But before the swan dive, Wallace maps out a shot in which Roddy McDowall, with stunt double, will hang precariously off the window's ledge as Charley and his girlfriend try to pull him in. McDowall mounts a ladder and positions his hands on the ledge. For a series of close-ups, the actor expresses appropriate fear, then gives way to his stunt double for the long shots of Peter Vincent hanging in space.

But while McDowall seems hardly the worse for his experience, the veteran actor is obviously in a snit about something. The vast majority of his responses to questions about character—or about differences between *Fright Night* and its sequel, or about on and off set anecdotes—are "I don't think that's a question you can ask me," "Asking something like that is asinine," and "This line of questioning upsets me."

McDowall, however, does find a few questions to his liking. "I liked the script," he notes. "That's why I decided to play Peter Vincent again. Play the character differently? Why would I do that? Peter Vincent is Peter Vincent. To change his character in any way would not be wise."

McDowall goes for your reporter's throat when asked if *Part 2* will be a picture to stand on its own merits rather than just as a sequel. This correspondent takes the hint and turns his attention back to the werewolf who, having climbed to the window and positioned himself upside down on the ledge, awaits Wallace's signal to take the flop.

We're talking one-take territory, folks, so the director looks through the camera's eyepiece, makes like Rembrandt checking the angles and finally, with just about all the blood having rushed to the stuntman's head, calls for action. There is a moment's hesitation before the werewolf slowly pushes himself away from the window, executes an Olympic-caliber dive and lands dead center on his back.

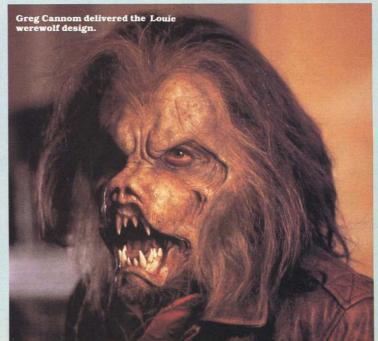
Applause rings out. The werewolf leaps off the bag and raises his arms in triumph. The only thing missing is the overture from *Rocky*.

Wallace disappears shortly after the werewolf plunge, according to Sudzin, into a meeting where he cannot be disturbed. But splatter scribes are known for persistence, and Wallace is tracked down. The director is attempting, in reality, some sack/snack time in his trailer. Wallace does not pull a McDowall at being discovered and offers some quickie insights on the care and (continued on page 68)

Make-up FX Unlimited's second stage dummy head for the fleshmelting scene. The Fright Night sequel won't skimp on the FX.







# CONTRIBUTORS'

arry Barsky reports on C.H.U.D. II and Waxwork in future issues. John Brunas contributed to Famous Monsters in its hevday. Alex Gordon produces Gene Autry's Melody Ranch Theater (Nashville Network). Peter Bloch-Hansen covers The Kiss in our next issue. David Kuehls wants to know what we have against Cleveland. Dave Louapre & Dan Sweetman's A Cotton Candy Autopsy is due soon from Piranha Press. Steve Newton hails from British Columbia. Gregory Nicoll keeps pounding away at his first horror novel. Look for Phil Nutman's short story debut in Skipp & Spector's upcoming Book of the Dead. Marc Shapiro visited the sets of They Live and Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. Bill Warren reviews movies for an LA newspaper. Tom Weaver's first book, Interviews with "B" Science Fiction and Horror Movie Makers, is due soon from McFarland.

## THINGS TO COME.

ou've got to get the most out of summer while it lasts. Summer means much more than working on your tan and listening to the Beach Boys. Summer means reading Fango.

Or else, how would you know the news about our dear friend Freddy? Yes, A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master is on its way, and this is the place to get the full story! Hear the words of director Renny (Prison) Harlin and Robert Englund.

But you don't want to miss the rest of the issue, either, because you'd pass up definitive coverage of **Elvira**, **Mistress of the Dark**. When one of the genre's loveliest ladies ever decided to make her motion picture debut, it's big news.

Did we mention that this will be our annual special makeup FX issue? That explains why we've got an in-depth interview with Mr. Splatter himself, **Tom Savini**, plus a look at the FX of **The Blob** and **Fright Night—Part 2**.

Only one way to squeeze every drop of fun out of the season—by reading FANGORIA #77!

**ON SALE: AUGUST 11** 

HELLBOUND —

(continued from page 38)

promotional tour of Japan, takes great pleasure in showing your correspondent a rough cut of Julia's resurrection scene. Officially credited as executive producer on Hellbound, Barker is delighted by the reaction the footage generates. The material breaks taboos in its compelling combination of sexuality and selfmutilation; more than that, it is incredibly gory, despite Christopher Figgs' great pains earlier on to stress that the sequel would not attempt to outdo the original in terms of splatter. Even in rough form, the footage is damn uncomfortable to watch, with Oliver Smith screaming nonstop throughout the proceedings as he repeatedly slashes his body with a straight razor. The mattress and room steadily becomes awash with blood that sprays the watching Channard. Then, from inside the fabric, the skinless Julia appears. caressing the still screaming Browning character before forcing her fingers into his neck and gorging herself on his life force. Strong meat, for sure.

"I think Tony Randel has been getting a little carried away, don't you?" Barker chuckles as he calmly puffs away on his cigar. This impression is confirmed on my return to the soundstage, where I find the director, goresplashed and happy, assisting the makeup guys in bloodying up several lunatics for a scene in which the Cenobites slaughter a ward full of inmates. The attitude seems to say, "If you want blood, you got it!"

As the day comes to a close, we are left with one of those bizarre images that you only get to see during the making of a horror movie. Their day's work over, the actors playing the now dead inmates stagger off to their dressing rooms. One older woman, who looks like a splattered bag lady, turns to the Butterball Cenobite (Simon Bamford) and inquires, "Where's the tea trolly, love?"

"On the other side of the stage," replies the hellspawn in a soft, carefully enunciated English accent.

"Thank you, love," chirps the dead woman as she changes direction, trying not to drip blood on the floor.

Sadomasochism, gore, cups of tea and cream cakes. Only on a Clive Barker movie.

FRIGHT 2

(continued from page 47)

feeding of Fright Night—Part 2. "My biggest surprise on this film has been how long rubber takes," chuckles the native Kentuckian between bites. "Prosthetics are unpredictable and hard to deal with, but given the time and the circumstances, I can see that we're getting some real quality."

Wallace, returning to the theater of the fantastic after a radical departure directing Aloha Summer, does not see any obstacles in creating a sequel to something with a definite pedigree. "I don't think shooting a sequel is substantially different from shooting anything else," he reasons. "There are no particular advantages to making a sequel. There's some history and conventions you have to follow; in that sense, this is a classic example of a sequel. But Fright Night 2 owes its story to itself. We knew going in that the characters from the first film would be back and that they would once again be involved with vampires. Beyond that, however, this story stands on its own."

Since signing on, Wallace has reacquainted himself with the inevitable script rewrites (which succeeded, among other things, in weeding out the characters Amy and Evil Ed) and the expected rumors of sour grapes from people associated with the first Fright Night.

"Yeah," frowns Wallace, "I've heard all about how Tom Holland was supposedly running around town telling anybody who would listen that our film was a rip-off. Well, I had lunch with Tom last week, and I can tell you that he's been real enthusiastic and supportive about this project."

Wallace explains that directing Fright Night has given him the opportunity to relearn some tricks of the trade. "Like patience, and ways to get what I want out of a sequence. The art of compromise is always there," he lists. "And a sense of humor sure helps."

Wallace rattles on, alternating bits of cinema narrative with kicks at the open trailer door, until he eventually hints that he could sure use 40 winks. OK, we'll let him snooze.

Over at the dinner break, Jeff Sudzin sneezes into his hanky. Around the corner at a pay phone, Julie Carmen tells her child she's going to get home a little late. Back at the trailer, Tommy Lee Wallace's eyes begin to close. To sleep, and on the *Fright Night—Part 2* set, perchance to dream.