

Jaume Balagueró talks “SLEEP TIGHT,” “[REC] 4”

Written by Michael Gingold
Monday, 07 January 2013 12:59



With the apartment-house creepfest **SLEEP TIGHT** arriving on DVD and Blu-ray tomorrow from Dark Sky Films, Fango got some exclusive comments from director Jaume Balagueró—who also let us know what’s up with **[REC] 4: APOCALYPSE**, the next chapter in the franchise he helped create.

SLEEP TIGHT, scripted by Alberto Marini, stars Luis Tosar in a chilling performance as Cesar, the doorman of an apartment building where he has developed a fixation on pretty tenant Clara (Marta Etura). Obsessed with causing misfortune for others, Cesar subtly invades her space and gradually turns her life into a waking nightmare (see review [here](#)). It’s a return to familiar location territory for Balagueró, but a different, equally effective brand of horror than that showcased in his earlier hits.



FANGORIA: With **SLEEP TIGHT**, were you intentionally looking for a slower-paced change from the craziness of the **[REC]** films?

JAUME BALAGUERÓ: After the experience of **[REC]**, which was set up to be very intense physical horror in both plot and pacing, I felt the need to return to a more conventional and calculated film. The script for **SLEEP TIGHT** came to me at just the right time. It was the perfect opportunity to develop a classic story and to explore horror from a more conventional sense. Being calmer, it allowed me to create a much more sophisticated brand of suspense, with classic elements of conventional film language, such as its music, editing and staging.

FANG: We’re aware of what Cesar is up to from the beginning of the film; did that make creating suspense a challenge?

Jaume Balagueró talks “SLEEP TIGHT,” “[REC] 4”

Written by Michael Gingold
Monday, 07 January 2013 12:59

BALAGUERÓ: The biggest challenge for me with this film was to tell the story from the point of view of the villain and not the victim, as filmmakers usually do. That puts the audience in a very uncomfortable situation, as they have to participate in everything the monster does—to plan it, to live with him. That staging also requires them to identify with Cesar somehow. This format allowed me to create suspense that was different and, I believe, much more frightening and threatening.

FANG: What was Luis Tosar and Marta Etura’s offscreen relationship like? Did they keep their distance from each other?

BALAGUERÓ: While filming the movie, Luis and Marta were actually a couple in real life! I’m not actually sure how much their relationship changed the way they portrayed their characters. We should ask them!

FANG: Did you shoot in a real apartment-house location or on sets?

BALAGUERÓ: Clara’s apartment was constructed for the film, but the rest were real locations. We built her apartment in accordance to the needs of the story and the suspense. Everything was perfectly set up.

FANG: Did any scenes pose special difficulties, especially the cockroach scene?



BALAGUERÓ: That scene was indeed rather complicated, as we used nearly 700 real

Jaume Balagueró talks “SLEEP TIGHT,” “[REC] 4”

Written by Michael Gingold
Monday, 07 January 2013 12:59

roaches! Not everyone felt comfortable at first, but after a few hours, everyone got used to them. Another scene that was a bit uncomfortable for me was when Clara makes love with her boyfriend on the bed with Cesar below them. I think I found it disturbing because Luis and Marta were a couple in real life, but the scene ended up being very powerful, and a lot of fun for everyone.

FANG: Can you comment on the film’s fatalistic tone?

BALAGUERÓ: I’ve always thought of this film as a fairy tale for adults: We have an innocent princess and the big bad wolf in a dark fable about evil. Classic children’s stories often have a very dark and fatalistic tone, and I never knew exactly why.

FANG: How has the movie been received so far?

BALAGUERÓ: The film was a huge box-office hit in Spain, and has garnered rave reviews at all the festivals and countries we’ve brought it to. We’re so very happy with how it has been received.

FANG: What’s the current status of [REC] 4: APOCALYPSE, and how is it different from [REC] 3? Does it bring the series to a definitive end?

BALAGUERÓ: We are currently starting preproduction on [REC] 4, and shooting will start in March. [REC] 4 will be a return to very hard-edged horror, much more along the lines of the first two films. And yes, it will put a firm end to the saga.

For more from Balagueró on SLEEP TIGHT, see Fango #310.