

Blood Spattered Blog: The Art of the Con

Written by Chris Alexander
Sunday, 16 May 2010 07:37



It has been a long time since I've been an active presence at a horror convention. When I worked for that "other magazine," I immersed myself in all manner of geek-out goings-on, from moderating Q&As with legends like Dario Argento, Elvira and Jeffrey Combs to performing a duet of "The South's Gonna Rise Again" with H.G. Lewis. It was a blast being able to do these James Lipton-esque riffs with my horror heroes in front of a captive audience. I loved it. And you know what? I've missed it...

That's why being asked to be a guest myself at Seattle's Crypticon this year (June 18-20) was such a nice, exciting surprise. There's a gaggle of really fascinating folks coming to this thing, and a few of them are people I've long admired and idolized. See, no matter how long I do this movie journo thing, the thrill is never, ever gone. I truly consider myself a professional student of cinema, someone who loves to learn, study the past and hear war stories from the front lines of fright. It's why I do what I do, and it never gets tired.



At Crypticon 2010, there are a couple of figures who I'm really looking forward to sharing space with. One of them is Thomas Jane, he of the underrated second PUNISHER flick, the Darabont/King masterpiece THE MIST and HBO's hilarious show HUNG, and director/star of the oddly ignored 2009 neo-noir DARK COUNTRY. I've always believed Jane to be one of the best male actors of our generation. He has this solid, almost Robert Mitchum-esque roughness about him, something very 1950s and brutish, yet he also has a contemporary vulnerability that gives him an accessible humanity. His turn as the under-pressure pop in THE MIST is the kind of performance that Oscar should reward, but rarely does. And that's why I love this guy: He's a brilliant actor, but still just a bit under the wire. Mainstream, sure, but also cult, and it's awesome to see him make an appearance. Maybe he'll bring his missus, Patricia Arquette...that would be nice.

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I'm also pretty jazzed about meeting F. Paul Wilson, whose book *THE KEEP* devastated me as a kid and was spun into a very odd Michael Mann film I also adore. I still have my dad's paperback that he laid on me when I was 8, and—although I've never been an autograph hound—I totally plan on having Wilson ink it. And Stephen Geoffreys from *FRIGHT NIGHT*; man, I've been a major obsessive of Tom Holland's 1985 classic since I saw it theatrically for my 11th birthday, and some of its freakshow punch was supplied by Geoffreys as Evil Ed. As many fans have read, he fell off the radar in the '90s to do adult films, but he's back from the beaded curtain, doing horror again and occasionally appearing on the con circuit. Interesting fella, with tons of tales to tell about the long, strange trip he's been on so far, no doubt.

The final guest list has still not been finalized, and I've heard a few names dropped that make me even more thrilled about attending. Go to Crypticon's official website <http://www.crypticonseattle.com> for up-to-the-minute additions and events.

Hope to see you there. I'll be available to talk about what's going on in *FANGORIA*, I'll be reading my silly words from my latest book and I'll be having as much fun as my wife will allow. And I'll be blogging about it, uploading pics, videos and Polaroids in manila envelopes, so stay tuned...

Alexander out.

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