

Written by Tony Timpone

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Last December, the producers of RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE granted FANGORIA exclusive access to the Toronto set of the fourth chapter in their action/horror franchise, derived from the best-selling Capcom video games. Fangoria.com has been presenting a series of one-on-one interviews with the movie's cast and crew since July, which finally concludes today with the movie now in theaters from Screen Gems. Today we finish our talk with British-born (now Toronto-based) FX artist Paul Jones (see previous part [here](#) ).

FANGORIA: Talk about the uniqueness of some of your AFTERLIFE creations.

PAUL JONES: Well, Paul did the first RESIDENT EVIL, so for him it's his return to the throne, and I know there are a lot of the elements of the third movie and fifth game that he liked. So without giving too much away, it was a case of, "This works, but let's make it even better." So with the dogs, for example, he was really pushing the dogs to be so much better than the last one, which essentially happens on every movie; you get to the next and want it to be better than the last. These dogs, not only are they more visceral and more elaborate, they also mutate. The dogs themselves aren't the dogs you've seen previously. There are whole new elements to the dogs, which will really freak people out.

FANG: What could you say about the Majini, the zombies with the mandibles?

JONES: One of the effects that the T-virus has had on these zombies was to create an internal parasitic mandible that comes out from within the zombies, allowing them to kind of hook on to their victims. So it's a cross between an octopus and a shark's mouth all mixed together. Again, it's an element from the game that Paul was really impressed by. And my job was to create it three dimensionally and make it work as a reference prop within the movie and work hand in hand with Dennis Berardi so we'd have a hybrid effect. I'd create a physical working, camera-ready mandible that thankfully didn't have to move. And Dennis will create a three dimensional CGI version using my mandible as a reference and doesn't have to come up with

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something from scratch.

FANG: I wonder if BLADE II's similar-looking Reaper creatures inspired the game designers.

JONES: I think so. I know Paul had a worry about that, he didn't want to make it look like BLADE II as great as that movie was, and we'd have to be totally separate. It will look different enough because there was a different style immediately. And it's not something that drew comparison at first. Even when you see them coming out of the person's mouth, BLADE II doesn't jump right to mind, so we're pretty safe. We'll come up with something that will be as striking as the BLADE II stuff.

FANG: What were the challenges of shooting your FX in 3-D?

JONES: I haven't worked in 3-D at all. It's definitely a new technology for everybody, and I know there are a lot of complications that 3-D brings on. The main thing is if you're working in the virtual world, with CGI, everything has to be rendered twice. With prosthetics, it's not so much of a problem. It's been more of a novelty for me because I've been doing this for 20 years. I've seen many, many monitors on many different movies, but everything I've seen has been two-dimensional. I've only seen three dimensional in my workshop, so to go on set, look at the monitor and see a sculpture I've done in 3-D, it's pretty damn cool.

FANG: What about the movie's hi-def component?

JONES: HD is definitely something to contend with especially when you're doing certain types of makeups. Luckily, there are a lot of layers Paul has added to our zombies, layers of dirt and depth and slime that have helped us organically to create the look we wanted, which tends to work very well in HD. HD has been developing and all the materials we're using have been developing along with it, so a lot of the application techniques and translucent materials we're using were created with HD in mind and are very HD friendly.

FANG: What are some of the techniques that have gone into this army of the dead?

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JONES: As far as techniques go, there's a little bit of everything. I don't think you can ever do away with foam latex as a material, it's so user friendly, so cost effective, and when it's used in the right context, it's still as perfect as it needs to be. Obviously it doesn't work for every makeup. There are certain lighting conditions and certain design issues that foam latex will always run into a hurdle, so we've had to switch to certain types of silicones and urethanes to achieve a certain kind of look. But we've pretty much used everything on this: silicone, gelatin, transfer appliances, foam latex. The job dictates the material you use.

FANG: What's a transfer appliance?

JONES: Transfer appliance is something [PASSION OF THE CHRIST's] Christien Tinsley developed and it's thickened Pros-Aid [an adhesive] made into a mold that's a self-sticking prosthetic. And it has become the industry standard, everybody uses it and it's the most user-friendly technique that has ever been created.

FANG: How many zombies did you wind up designing for AFTERLIFE?

JONES: There are three different kinds of burrowing zombies. We had the regular LA zombies. We ended up churning out 25 different faces, plus another 50 or 60 multiple appliances that we could mix and match because we had multiple days where we had crowd scenes, so not only were we having prosthetics, but we were having some body painting. We also had background masses. Every zombie movie needs a background mass because when you have 150-200-300 people, the back 50 you're not really going to see that much, they're just kind of filling the frame, so you're able to cut corners a little bit. All the close-up guys are custom built appliances; we were able to go A, B, C and D zombies. The Axe Man was a big undertaking. We also had a whole new set of prosthetics for the water zombies that we had to design with the underwater element in mind.

FANG: So you had to use materials that wouldn't soak up the water like a sponge...

JONES: But still keep it within the same aesthetic look for the movie. You couldn't make it look totally different from the other zombies, because the T-virus is responsible for everything.

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Everything has to look like it's from the same genetic strain.



FANG: So what's the deal with Wesker (Shawn Roberts)?

JONES: We threatened Shawn with a lot of makeup on this. He was supposed to be quite extensively covered in makeup through the movie, but because his look is so good, Paul was going, "Nah, let's keep it just Shawn." He's one of the heads of the Umbrella Corporation, but he's been infected himself by the T-virus so he's been genetically modified. He's basically indestructible. This happens to him halfway through the movie. He gets completely trashed in this helicopter crash, and the next time you see him he's healed, he's perfect again. And then Milla blows a big chunk of his head away.

FANG: Canadian actor Kim Coates [SKINWALKERS, SILENT HILL, SONS OF ANARCHY] also gets ugly.

JONES: We did our nice little makeup on Kim; he has cheek appliances that hollow out his face a little bit. He escapes the prison and ends up on Wesker's ship and becomes his bitch. Wesker drains his life force a little bit, so he looks awful. So Kim was like, "Great...another prosthetic makeup," but he's awesome. He is the man.

FANG: What was the greatest number of zombies you had going at once?

JONES: The biggest day I was involved in was 178. That was a crazy day because I've done crowd scenes before like 20-30 characters, but once you get over 50, your mind starts

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scrambling. You really have to depend on the excellent prosthetics team I have here in Toronto. Sean Sansom is my on set supervisor, and he's done a fabulous job. Either I'm on set and he's back at the shop building stuff, or he's on set and I'm back at the shop. You really can't do a movie this size without a having a great team to work with.

FANG: How many people are on your team?

JONES: I had up to 19 people working in my workshop crew, and we've had up to 25 on set doing zombies and application, hair people, prosthetics people and straight makeup people. It's been an army creating an army of the undead.

FANG: You got some gore gags going on too?

JONES: Yeah, there's a few gore gags, but it hasn't been too bad. We've only gone through 20 gallons of blood on this so far, so it's actually been a pretty blood free movie with only 20 gallons.

FANG: There was talk that AFTERLIFE was going to be a reboot of the series and lead to a whole new trilogy.

JONES: That is definitely Paul's intention, he's left the door wide open, and the end of this movie is basically the beginning of the next one, it's more of the same so I'm looking forward to seeing what he comes up with. Whether or not he comes back here, I don't know.

FANG: So this looks like the biggest film of your career so far.

JONES: SILENT HILL probably had the most exposure, but compared to this, it's just so nice to work on a movie that people are actually going to see. I did SOLOMON KANE last year and the year before that was 100 FEET and neither movie has been seen much, and then OUTLANDER, I worked on that, and that didn't come out for a year and a half. So RESIDENT

## "RESIDENT EVIL": Conversations from the "AFTERLIFE" Part 12: Paul Jones, makeup FX artist, pt. 2

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EVIL is guaranteed an audience, it's guaranteed distribution and it's guaranteed a trailer on TV, so that's great. In the workload alone, this is the biggest movie I've done in terms of the amount of stuff I have to build.

FANG: Would you call RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE your dream project?

JONES: Absolutely. Zombies have always been close to my heart because the first movie I ever owned on Betamax when I was 14 was Romero's DAWN OF THE DEAD. So zombies have always been up there for me.

Check out FANGORIA #296, now on sale, featuring an all-different AFTERLIFE set-visit cover story.

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