

# FANGORIA

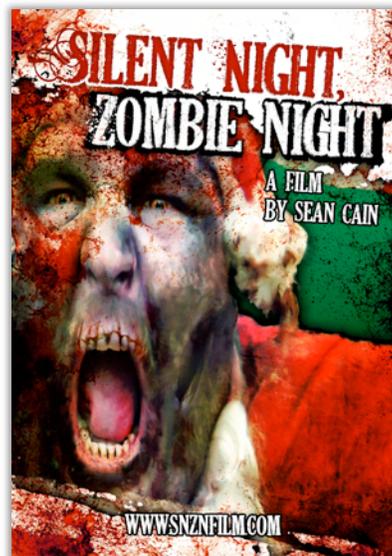
## FANGO has a SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT

by Sean Decker  
(January 12, 2009)

It's early December 2008 and in the a.m. when Fango arrives on the set of writer/director/producer Sean Cain's SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT. And while there isn't, at first, much to distinguish this seldom-traveled area of North Hollywood, CA from similar areas of the San Fernando Valley, a certain house on the corner—and its copiously blood-splattered facade—let this scribe know he's in the right place.

A Velvet Hammer Films production, SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT is shooting day six of a scheduled 12 days, and Fango's on hand not only to document the carnage being unleashed on the mixed-use neighborhood (Cain's aforementioned gore-drenched home, in which he is shooting, rubs elbows with a smattering of apartment buildings and industrial structures), but also to take part. This scribe has been roped into portraying the film's "Death Metal Zombie"; see the first photo above for the post-makeup goodness—and no, there were no complaints on this end.

Ready with tape deck, camera and coffee in hand and conversing with various cast and crew, it's not long before Cain spots Fango chatting with one of the production's PAs, who has been tasked with power-washing the grue from the director's eaves. Cain offers an enthusiastic greeting, toting a script as crimson-spattered as his abode. "He had a brand-new blood cannon he used that just rained blood!" the filmmaker says of the device that 1313 FX man Tom Devlin, tasked with creating the flick's zombies and the mayhem they create, employed the previous day to turn the place crimson. (cont'd) →



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"On the second and third take," Cain continues, "our director of photographer Jim Wright just turned on the camera and sought shelter before 'Action!' was called, 'cause he didn't want to get blood all over him!"

Executive-produced by Mary Laurie with producers Cain and Wes Laurie, *SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT* "is kind of a love story between two cops," Cain explains. "Not that they are 'in love' with each other, but they've been friends a long time, and they love each other in a manly, macho sort of way. One guy's wife is leaving him, and his partner is about to transfer, and they are all breaking apart, and then here come the zombies."

Portraying the central trio are TV actors Jack Forcinito as Officer Frank Talbot and Nadine Stenovich as his wife Sarah, with Andrew Hopper filling out the role of policeman Nash Jackson. All three are on hand for the day's shoot, as are co-stars including *THE ROAD WARRIOR*'s Vernon Wells, *WICKED LAKE*'s Luke Thompson (as one of the undead), filmmaker Chris Gabriel (as "Zombie Santa") and *SLEEPAWAY CAMP*'s Felissa Rose. Rounding out the ensemble are *THE DEVIL'S REJECTS*' Lew Temple, *THE GHOULS*' Timothy Muskatell, Domiziano Arcangeli, Ricardo Gray, John Karyus and Sara Tomko.

Written over the course of a month, with preproduction lasting about just as long, *SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT* has been a fun experience for Cain, regardless of the production's frenetic pace. "We did 70 set-ups yesterday," he says, and if that wasn't challenging enough, the project's low-budget nature has proved to be an additional hurdle. "We also had one guy roll through last night in a truck playing really loud mariachi music. He was obviously drunk, because he parked in the middle of the set right next to our [stunt] police car. The whole time, we were running around the street filming our zombies getting beaten with baseball bats, and he was just totally passed out!"

The filmmaker then takes time out to give Fango the lowdown on his flick's diverse undead, while at the same time directing talent to the rear of his home, where Devlin and makeup assistants Bill Snyder, Karen Sartorao and Tina Shults have set up shop and are turning the actors into bloodthirsty flesheaters. "We have 'The Pack,' which are our fast-moving zombies, and our Romero-type ghouls," Cain explains. "We don't really get into why there's a difference, although our characters wonder why, and think, 'Which type would I turn into?'"

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→ (cont'd)

At that, a viscera-covered mother and daughter shuffle by, and Cain smiles. "We're on one of our big zombie days right now."

Retreating to the makeup tent, it's not long before this scribe is in Devlin's chair, and the artist is steadily airbrushing away. Sartorao works nearby, turning the jovial Gabriel into a rather disturbing Kris Kringle, and he's more than happy at the prospect. "All of my dreams are coming true!" says the Arizona filmmaker, who wrote and directed the upcoming sci-fi comedy S4. "I get to be a zombie Santa, I get my head blown off and I get to talk to FANGORIA! Yay!"



Gabriel also gets to emotionally scar any and all children who happen to wander through the neighborhood, something he does with great glee as everyone later gathers in the street to shoot our scenes. The day's a blast, and in addition to finally employing on film my long-practiced zombie gait, along with FX man/zombie performer Snyder, and getting gunned down in multiple takes by Wells ("Dude, Wez from THE ROAD WARRIOR just shot me!"), I and the other walking dead on hand encounter a rather distraught driver.



With the cameras at speed and the dozen or so undead in character and awaiting "Action" at various corners of the intersection (Cain is shooting an establishing shot from a second-story window, thereby showing no outward signs of a film production), a wayward motorist drives into frame, only to lock up his brakes. A beat, and the car's backup lights pop on, the tires smoking as the driver throws it in reverse and careens backward down the street from whence he came.

Laughter ensues.

"He thought it was the beginning of the zombie holocaust!" someone yells.

Unfortunately, on the following day, so did the LAPD. Cain, who is now in postproduction on SILENT NIGHT, ZOMBIE NIGHT and hopes to have the movie completed by March, tells Fango when we recently catch up with him, "We were rolling on a scene when a [police] helicopter came swooping in and told our actors to lay their weapons down! When I came outside, the LAPD had them all lined up, sitting on the sidewalk. Luckily, they were cool about it when they realized the mistake, but sadly, everyone was too freaked out to shoot any behind-the-scenes footage of the event!"

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