



Stories from the Cast of **“Sam Hell”**

Osa Wallander “Jill”



It was a pretty amazing experience for me, not only because I met some fantastic new and super talented people but also because I might have been the last person to be cast. If I remember correctly I booked the role and got the script the night before I started shooting so it was a huge challenge just to memorize my lines, not mentioning trying to do something with the role. It was so much fun though, long hours, cold floors and one of the most fantastic Chris Walken imitations I have ever seen, hilarious! All around me were people working 50 times harder than me to make this movie happen. It's one of the greatest things about indie film making, low to no budget, crazy hours and great people making it

happen. And somehow cracking jokes through the whole thing....how do they do it?

What I remember the most is shooting the restaurant scene with Keith. I think I hadn't slept at all, I came straight from working in the bar, was learning my lines as I was getting my make-up done and then trying to focus and just ended up having the greatest time with Keith! He was awesome!

The other thing that was the most memorable was Michael! He is amazing to work with, so much fun and it truly shows that not only does he know what he's doing but he loves it! He made the whole shoot in my mind, without his energy none of this would have been possible.

The most difficult part was probably driving back from location somewhere in Ventura and fighting with everything I had not to fall asleep behind the wheel. I had 80 miles to drive one way...never made it home, called a friend in the Valley and slept there instead.

The atmosphere was great, I had a really good time, even though it was cold and late and long, long hours...I would mention the craft service but I can't remember...oh no that's not true, we had the guy with the truck that would come and serve us food. Oh it was good!

Brian Graves “Sean Taylor”



I first meet Michael Bayouth while we were both performing in a production of “A Flea in Her Ear” at the West Valley Playhouse. We hit it off right away. We would improve funny characters and situations backstage. Our favorite was something we called, “Don Carlos and his Dancing Monkey!” Michael would be this Spanish street performer and I was his misbehaving monkey. I’d hump people’s legs and eat crayons, and he would yell at me and chase me about the room. We talked about working together again on something and a lot of ideas were thrown around.

The show ended, and a couple of months later I got a call from Michael. He was working on a short film about a small town beset by a serial killer during Christmas and wanted me to play the killer. I was totally on board. A few weeks went by and he called me saying that he had some funding and now they were making a feature length version of the film. He still wanted me for the killer. Then a few more weeks went by and he called and pitched me a totally different script where I would be possessed by a demon. Then a few weeks went by and he called me and pitched me a new script. That went on for about three months. Every time the project changed, Michael would call me and update me. It was great. No matter how the movie changed, he always had this great part for me in it.

When it came time to fill out the cast, Michael, Robert (the writer), and I held auditions for Jill, our female lead. We found Osa, who was great, and most of the rest of our cast. Because of our production schedule, we wound up having to hold auditions on a Saturday, callbacks on a Sunday, and start filming on Monday. What was crazy about the whole thing was that although I had been part of so much of the process, nobody thought to actually give me a script. I didn’t actually even see the script until Sunday night - the day before my first day of shooting! It was crazy. I got to the location the first day and the producer was all, “Okay, let’s shoot scene 27.” And I didn’t know what that was. I was sometimes memorizing script moments before shooting it. It was the fastest, craziest thing I’ve ever done. And it was incredible. It was so much fun. Michael made sure it was fun. He’d run around doing Chris Walken impersonations. He does a great Walken. He’d crack jokes and have us improve stuff for him. He’d insert all this wacky stuff into the script just for fun.

My first few days, I didn't even see another actor. I had all these scenes with Sam – that little decomposing head in a cage. I'd walk around and talk to it, stroke it, make sweet undead love to it. The usual. It reminded me of Church. I started to hate that little fucking puppet. It's a terrible actor. Just sits there with that same stupid grin on its face. Never gives you anything. Won't respond to anything.

We shot in these active Halloween Spooky Houses during off hours. The first one was up in Ventura. We were shooting from midnight until dawn most of the time. It was really spooky. I remember, they had to shoot this scene on the pier. It was around three in the morning, I think. And everyone left to do get this shot. And I mean EVERYONE left. Except for me. They left me in the Spooky House. I got this bright idea that I would walk through it and check out the whole set up. And this is a fully running scare fest. It had these motion detectors to activate a couple of pop up dummies and lights and sounds. All sorts of spooky stuff. Of course, I didn't know this. I walked right past this motion activated screaming, vibrating corpse. It lit up and started shaking and freaking out. I was up against the opposite wall screaming profanities at it. That was it. I spent the next few hours huddled in the make up room just willing someone from the production crew to come back. It was freaky. I don't think I ever saw the whole thing.

The ending of the movie was actually rewritten during filming. It originally had this horribly easy resolution. But about a week in, Robert came up with a nice conflict for the final climax. With some twists I'd never seen before. He came up with a great reversal for the action hero and villain, and a nice internal struggle for Sean. I was really happy to get the rewrites. It became a more demanding role after that. I was trying to get myself psyched up for that final scene, and was going over the script at home when My Chemical Romance's video of "The Ghost of You" came on the television. It just really affected me. I went out and bought the album. I would just listen to it over and over again in between takes. I find music a great way into an emotional release. It's probably because I don't know much about music, or rather making music, so it still has a great mystery for me. I played the trombone in my junior high band, but I sucked. I always wanted to learn a cool instrument like the guitar or piano. Or xylophone. The xylophone would be cool.

All in all, Sam Hell was a great experience. It was my first feature film and it really hooked me completely. Michael is a great guy, and I enjoyed working with him as a director just as much as an actor. He's done a lot with this little horror film and I'm very proud of him. We've already started talking about working together again. Hopefully, we can resurrect Don Carlos and his Dancing Monkey. That'd be a great movie.

Kristin Pfeifer “Patty”



Kristin left the world of full-time public educator and moved to LA just over four years ago to pursue her passion – acting. Since then, Kristin has appeared in independent features and shorts including “Torture Room,” “All In,” “Death’s Door,” “Postcards from the Future,” “The Exception”; television including “Untold Stories from the ER,” “Second Verdict,” “The Bold and the Beautiful”; theatre including “Spinning into Butter,” “Playing with my Mother,” “A Shayna Maidel,” “Funny Money”; commercials and infomercials for Brinks Home Security, Healthnet, Mercury Insurance, Lennox, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Cricket Wireless, “Your Baby Can Read”; and voiceovers/industrials. Kristin is a member of the Screen Actors Guild and The Actors’ Network, and is represented by DDO commercially,

and Synergy Talent theatrically.

Kenny Lombino “Café Manager”



Working on “Sam Hell” was a fantastic experience. I played the restaurant manager who winds up getting his neck slashed by “Sam Hell” First off, I would like to talk about the experience of working with Michael Bayouth the director. What an amazing man, so easy to work with. Michael’s direction came from a level of experience not only of being a director, but from his knowledge of being an actor. He would give you an idea of how he wanted the scene played, but then would be open for discussing on how you felt it should be played. Although he made the final call, Michael was able to communicate in such a way that it made it fun and natural to deliver what he wanted. Always made you feel like you were doing great work, even when he wanted another

take. His level of commitment, enthusiasm, and confidence made the work a pleasure to perform. This was my first time using an artificial devise applied by the special effect team. This was a little freaky. It took quite a while to apply and felt very unnatural to ware. The effect however worked quite well and my neck was slashed with blood everywhere. My favorite part was the dialog with “Sam Hell” right up to him getting me with the machete. My least favorite part was laying in a pool of COLD artificial blood on the table for so long. There were multiple shoots taken from different angels which required me to lay in that COLD pool of blood over and over again. I remember most about the film was the fun every one was having. Although we were there from around 6:AM to after midnight everyone was committed to not only doing the best work we could, but making sure everyone was laughing and having a good time making those hours go by. As I recall the experience it makes me think of what was the hardest and most challenging, it would have to be playing a violently dieing person. Having never been killed, let alone by a manic, this was tough to pull off. We took quite a few takes on this one. In the end I think I died well, but it took work to pull it off.

As to other work I have done. I had the pleasure of doing 6 plays over the last couple of years, one with Michael were we met for the first time. I have played everything from a murdering drug dealer, an English detective, to a very religious

Jewish father. I have also done a couple of independent movies playing character parts and have been on way to many auditions for commercials.

Rachel Beth Blaha “Stacey”



It was a rainy and eerie day when I walked through the doors of Sam Hell's set, the “spooky house” and was introduced to Missy who'd be doing my make-up. Missy immediately made me feel welcome and provided me with a synopsis of how things would be operating. Missy also proved to be very talented in her work, from the special effects to the simplicity of the everyday look, her

make-up was exceptional. I was readily excited and anxious to see how the horror film process would unfold. Beside me sat Osa, the lead actress in the film and we immediately struck up a conversation. She was warm and friendly, and having the opportunity to act with her was a great learning experience. Busting through the doors was Michael, the director; he was so full of energy and possessed a passion for creativity that was contagious! Michael's joy and inspired imagination made me want to excel as an actress. Through out the entire process Michael's determination for success and delight in the production was a foreshadowing for success. Brian entered the room shortly after....I was to be playing the role of Stacey, Brian's characters assistant in the film; I was to have little knowledge that my boss was in fact the killer! Brian was very kind and it was fascinating to see his transformation into the dark villain he played when he was on set.

The days were long and the nights even longer; the film was shot in a very short and condensed time. I remember being at work -serving tables, and receiving a phone call from one of the producers asking me to be on set in an hour! I of course wasn't told I was shooting that day, but I got my shift covered and raced out the door! All I knew is that I wanted to act and I wanted to be on the set and that I wanted to be part of this film and when you really want something you make it work.

Through the blood, guts, and gore of it all, the energy was high and the cast and crew were full of enthusiastic deliberation.

It was bitter sweet on the last day of shooting for me, but I was eager to see the finished product.

Thank you for making the experience something that I truly enjoyed and I can only wish for the best on this film!

Bruna Raynaud “Alice’s Mother”



Should unpredictable be a color, this is probably the one I would chose to describe how everything went for me on Sam Hell.

I was initially called in to read for the part of Jill. When I walked in, its Director Michael Bayouth started by giving me a brief synopsis of what the story was about. You could tell that movie was his baby and a project he was certainly committed all of his talent and energy to. A project he also had great faith in. While he and I were talking, he ended up telling me that he would actually be interested to see me do an improv exercise on Alice’s Mom character instead and to start with, which I was even happier to do as I love Improv. He asked me to improv.

on a guy walking into a restaurant where I would be with my husband and daughter, someone I would recognize for being the same guy who had hurt my kid years ago. His enthusiasm when I was done was quite contagious and I left the room Oh-So-Happy after he exclaimed “That’s exactly it! That’s exactly what I was looking for! You are Alice’s Mom! We’ll be in touch within the next few days” He was so happy, and so was I.

However a few weeks went by and as I still hadn’t heard anything back from them, I ended up thinking they had probably gone another direction and was quite disappointed....until two or three Saturday nights later when I got an unexpected phone call from one of his producers saying: “We are shooting your scenes tomorrow. 5:45am is your call time.” - - -OK !! 5:45am it is!!...I don’t think we actually got to my scenes until 8 or 9 pm that day and here we are now, a couple years later, all awaiting SAM HELL to show his scary self...

Bruna Raynaud studied Acting at the San Francisco American Conservatory Theater, a.k.a. A.C.T, under the artistic direction of Bruce Williams, and after a first stop by Jean Shelton Actor’s Lab.

Even though she has been quite passionately obsessed with acting and writing ever since early childhood, Raynaud initially spent a few years wandering between political science studies and law school, which she quit in 1997 to pursue her true passion for Acting.

This quickly led her to being cast in the two lead female parts onstage in Russian playwright Vicki Kozel's "The King of Kinds" and "Rain Check", the latter having won the New York Sirens Festival in 2001. Her brilliant performance in both plays not only won her acclaimed press reviews, but also San Francisco-based filmmakers' attention, Michael Hudin and Caveh Zahedi.

While Hudin instantly decided to cast her in his first feature "Dying in your Sleep" upon seeing her amazing dramatic-turned-comedic turn in "Rain Check" onstage, she could soon after be seen in Zahedi's successful indie comedy "I am a Sex Addict" which went on to win the "Best Film Not Playing in a Theatre Near You" awards at the 2005 New-York Gotham Festival.

While Raynaud never stopped practicing her craft onstage in the Los Angeles area either, getting notable critics' attention for her wonderful portrayal of Catherine Stockman in Ibsen "An Enemy of the People", she has also been expanding her talent to extensive voice-over work, and has continuously been working on films, in both dramatic and comedic parts.

If you missed her brief appearance in Clooney's masterpiece "Good Night, and Good Luck", as Jeff Daniels's wife, you may have seen a little bit of her in Boston Legal or in one of her hilarious French comedy skits. Because this is also what sets Raynaud apart, it's that while she speaks perfect standard American-English, she equally masters Parisian French and can also surprise you in Russian or Spanish.

Bruna Raynaud is represented in Los Angeles by Karl Sanger at Sanger Talent Agency, while on a personal note, she is married to musician/guitar-maker William Raynaud, and the happiest mother to one year-old twin baby-girls, Victoire and Celeste.

Skip Pipo "Sam"



I'm Skip Pipo and I played Sam in the movie. We shot the scenes the "live" Sam is in in a few days with a day of voice over later for when Sam "the head" talks. The "live" scenes were shot in the Spooky House and neighboring abandoned cafe. The thing I remember most would, of course, be the blood when Sam goes crazy and starts slashing everybody. I was squirted from below by a member of the crew who had the blood in a syringe. One squirt got me right in the eye but we had to do it in one take so I kept slashing away. Working on Sam Hell has been a great experience. I've had the pleasure of working with Michael on a couple of theater projects and hope we can continue if he has a role for me in the future.

Skip Pipo - Sam Hell - Skip is a Seattle native who has been in LA for about five years and keeps himself busy working on various theater, film, TV, and commercial projects throughout the year. In addition to Sam Hell, Skip can be seen in another horror flick called the Janitor available on DVD.

Trevor Nystrom – D.P.



Q: What do you remember most?

A: The long nights, we would take turns taking power-naps. At one point we all became the zombies.

Q: What was your favorite part?

A: Working with the director Michael, defiantly. I grew up watching monster movies but Michael grew up living in these monster movies. The horror genre really is his labor of love. He totally gets it. Only someone raised by Jason Voorhees could do what he does, it's in his blood.

Q: What was the most difficult part?

A: The long nights. We were shooting all day and sleeping in spare moments. However we had a great crew and an extraordinary cast, so it was worth losing sleep.

Q: Describe the atmosphere and the conditions under which you worked.

A: I'm not going to lie. It was a little creepy. We were shooting in black rooms with fake cobwebs and creepy haunted house gimmicks. [This may be off the subject] I was alone in the control room, this is where they trigger the spooky traps on the unsuspecting thrill goers. I was left with a few warnings from Michael, "don't touch any of the buttons" he said. The next moment I see Michael looking right into one of the traps. He's literally gazing into it. I hit the button. A mighty gust of wind blasts into his face. To this day, I still have not seen anyone as high as he did. That was a good day.

Q: Did you have effects make-up done and what was it like?

A: No. But it looked fantastic. I think I almost lost my lunch a few times.

A: How was the craft service?

Q: It was good. I don't complain at three in the morning, be-it a burrito from Jack in the Box, to corndogs and animal crackers. The only thing I needed was gallons of coffee which thankfully I got.

For Up to the Date Info on

SAM HELL

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