

LOCAL INDIE FILM TO DEBUT IN INDIAN TRAIL, MARCH 15

Featuring area talent and locations, UNTIL THE BLOODY REIGN IS OVER blends post-apocalyptic future genre with 1950s monster movie sensibility

MONROE, NC (February 24, 2014)...UNTIL THE BLOODY REIGN IS OVER, an independent film with a unique take on the post-apocalyptic future genre and the monster movies of the 1950s, will premiere March 15 at the Stone Theater Sun Valley 14 in Indian Trail. The film was written, directed and shot in and around Monroe, NC, featuring Union County talent.

“This project began as a labor of love with my sons,” said filmmaker Ben Martin of Monroe, who directed BLOODY REIGN. Martin, whose day job is director of global marketing for Colfax Fluid Handling in Monroe, wrote the script when his two sons, Hunter and Trace, expressed interest in making a movie. “They knew I made movies when I was a kid,” Ben explains. “And with today’s technology, it’s relatively easy for anyone to make a movie for a relatively low cost. Of course, I say that, but really, it’s never really easy to make a film.”

From this beginning, Martin’s project evolved into a seven-month shoot on weekends and holidays and a film that “packs a lot of entertainment into a fun 77 minutes.”

“BLOODY REIGN takes us to a post-apocalyptic future where zombie-like mutants roam and strange, blood-thirsty monsters prowl the wilderness hunting for the scant few survivors fighting to stay alive,” said Martin, adding that BLOODY REIGN harkens back to earlier creature/adventures such as those produced by Ray Harryhausen.

“Into this savage land enter five young fighters who seem to possess a special gift for fighting strange creatures. Or maybe they are just lucky. Either way, they are the last, best hope for survival to the last 800 people left on earth.”

This premise may sound a tad ambitious for non-professional, low-budget production, but the concept itself actually helped get this do-it-yourself epic produced. “It’s an old trick they used for old-fashioned, bargain basement monster movies,” explains producer Hunter Martin, a 2013 graduate of the Central Academy of Technology and Art, Appalachia State freshman and son of Ben Martin. “Write a film where 80% of it can be shot in the wilderness and you save a bundle on sets, props and shooting permits.”

One area the filmmakers believe really gave the production an extra boost of quality and professionalism was in the actors who were tasked with bringing to life a wide variety of characters. “There is some really great performing talent among young people in Union County,” says Ben. “We had no problem finding the right actors at the right time for the right roles.”

And most of the cast took on responsibilities behind the scenes as well. For example, Tatum Katz, 2013 graduate of Cuthbertson High School, not only played a key acting role as settlement leader Beaujolais, she also assumed costume and production design responsibility and performed executive production duties as well, along with Bethanne Martin, wife of Ben and mother of Hunter. “At one point Mr. Martin was thinking about casting the film with all 12 or 13 year olds,” said Tatum. “But that all changed once we older kids got into it.”

Still, the main protagonists are five young warriors blessed with the special ability to fight the monsters dispatched by the evil Dr. Mots (played by director Martin). These key characters are played by Bailey Boryczewski, Trace Martin, John

Bryant, and Sam Knittel, all Parkwood 7th graders at the time of filming, and Kelsey Millett, a CATA sophomore who tackled the challenging role of Bootsie, leader of this ragtag warrior team.

“If we were forced to skimp on props, sets and special effects,” explains Martin, “we more than made up for it with really great performances from this extraordinarily talented young cast. Kelsey is amazing. So are all of them.”

The monsters in the movie are strictly of the man-in-a-rubber-suit variety (except for one critical exception – computer generated imagery (CGI) was used for a giant monster), and the props/weapons are mostly plastic and rubber for cost and safety reasons.

“Yes this may not look like a Hollywood movie,” producer Hunter says. “But the plot is exciting, the characters three-dimensional, and the film itself looks great, mostly because of Leo and his great camera work.”

Hunter is referring to Leo Riot, a Griffith Road neighbor of the Martins who lent his camera and videographer skills to the project which brings an extra level of class and quality to the look and feel of the film.

What were the biggest hurdles? Weather for one. It was an unusually hot and muggy summer when most of the shooting took place. On the other hand, the first day of shooting (March 21, 2013) had the cast in summer-like costumes with temperatures in the low 40s. Other problems include the wide variety of locations (local farm fun Aw Shucks was a key location thanks to owner Bonnie Miller), crazy schedules for the school aged kids, and continuity. “When a film takes seven months to shoot,” explains Hunter, “you see a lot of crazy haircuts and growth spurts in a young cast like this. That makes cutting the film together later quite difficult.”

For a key scene that takes place in a wilderness settlement, the cast were told to ask their friends and family to come to the Martin house and, oh yeah, bring a tent if you have one. “It actually worked out real well,” says Tatum. For a scene where a giant cliff was needed, a small group of the filmmakers climbed Crowder Mountain just in time to hit a major thunderstorm. “It was a grueling seven hour day for literally only four seconds of film,” explains Hunter. “People have no idea what goes into stuff like this.”

But by all accounts it was worth it. The few who have seen it have been impressed. “When Ben asked me to do post production work on the film,” says Giovanni Guitierrez, a multi-media professional at Big Ring Interactive in Monroe, “I was happy to help but I wasn’t expecting much. Once I dug in and assembled the finished product, I was more than impressed. I’m bringing my entire family down from my home in Raleigh to attend the premier. I am very proud to have my name on this project.”

UNTIL THE BLOODY REIGN IS OVER is the second production from Simpatico Films. Martin’s ONE LAST STOP IN A VIOLENT TOWN, which dealt with essentially good people fooling themselves into thinking their actions have no consequences, explored themes of loyalty, friendship, growth and acceptance. All with a few monsters and a masked Mexican wrestler thrown in.

To order advance tickets, watch the trailer, learn more about the making of BLOODY REIGN, and see dozens of photos taken from the movie and behind the scenes, visit <http://bloodyreign.com>.



The top-billed stars in the movie are (kneeling) Kelsey Millett, a sophomore at CATA, and (standing) Bailey Boryczewski, Sam Knittel, John Bryant and Trace Martin, all Parkwood Middle School 8th graders.



Mots has unleashed his creatures on unsuspecting plague survivors in *Until the Bloody Reign is Over*.



Evil Doctor Mots and assistant Shanks have captured the desperate Bootsie.



Aw Shucks made a great movie location for the independent filmmakers.