

## “SANCTUM” PRODUCTION NOTES

Principal photography commenced on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009 on James Cameron’s *Sanctum*, a fast-paced action thriller. It is being filmed in 3D, on location on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia and at the Warner Roadshow Studios.

RICHARD ROXBURGH (“Moulin Rouge”) heads a young and energetic cast that includes RHYS WAKEFIELD; IOAN GRUFFUDD (“Black Hawk Down”, “Fantastic Four”); ALICE PARKINSON and DAN WYLLIE.. The film is directed by ALISTER GRIERSON (“Kokoda”), who was hand-picked for the job by executive producer JAMES CAMERON. It is produced by ANDREW WIGHT who helped Cameron road-test and hone his 3D cameras and technology on documentaries such as “Aliens Of The Deep” and “Ghosts Of The Abyss”, that they co-produced. *Sanctum* is utilizing the same Cameron-Pace Fusion camera system as used on “Avatar”. Wayfare Entertainment is financing the film which Relativity Media and Universal Pictures will distribute. Universal is releasing the film in North America, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. FilmNation Entertainment has sold the film in all other territories.

In 1988 producer (and renowned cave diver) Andrew Wight, led an expedition to explore and dive a remote cave system hidden beneath the Nullarbor Plain in Australia. During the course of the expedition a freak storm caused the cave entrance to collapse, leaving thirteen people trapped deep underground. A rescue mission was mounted and incredibly everyone survived. The experience left an indelible mark on Wight and led him to develop, with Cameron, a film inspired by the experience. The script was written by Wight and JOHN GARVIN, and is a classic coming of age story. Set in an alien world both beautiful and terrifying, it examines the strength and fragility of the bonds between us when faced with the onslaught of nature.

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At the centre of the story is a team of underwater cave divers, on an expedition to the most beautiful, unexplored and least accessible cave system in the world. We meet Frank McGuire (Richard Roxburgh), a single-minded master explorer, his seventeen year old son Josh (Rhys Wakefield), participating under protest, and billionaire Carl Hurley (Ioan Gruffudd), who is underwriting the expedition. When a tropical storm arrives suddenly, their only exit is cut off in a flash flood and they are forced to move forward deeper into the cave. With ever-dwindling lights and supplies, they must navigate the treacherous terrain and raging water, in search of an unknown escape route to the sea. But the cave is unforgiving of mistakes and soon they are each confronted with the unavoidable question – will any of them make it out alive?

Comments James Cameron: “Five years ago, Andrew Wight, my long-time collaborator, brought me the idea for *Sanctum* and I loved it. Andrew and I had previously been on some great adventures together. We dove deep into the ocean to uncharted depths to explore and discover never before seen parts of the ocean floor and marine life, for “Aliens Of The Deep”. We dove the Titanic (“Ghosts Of The Abyss”) and the Bismarck. Along the way we developed a new photographic system that could operate in these extreme environments and deliver a cinematic experience beyond any other. A system I was thrilled to use on my latest film “Avatar”, and which Andrew is utilizing on *Sanctum* – the Cameron-Pace Fusion camera. A stereoscopic HD camera system that delivers such incredible results we can print up to deliver flawless IMAX projection in 3D. But as mind-blowing as all this new technology is, filmmaking is not about the equipment, it’s about ideas, it’s about images, it’s about imagination, it’s about storytelling and I believe in this story.”

*Sanctum* has parallels to both “District 9” and “Taken”, in that all three are modestly budgeted films, helmed by directors new to Hollywood, with each mentored by an iconic filmmaker - “Sanctum”/James Cameron; “District 9”/Peter Jackson and “Taken”/Luc Besson.

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*Sanctum* is directed by Alister Grierson and produced by Andrew Wight. It is executive produced by James Cameron and Wayfare principals Ben Browning, Michael Maher and Peter Rawlinson, along with Relativity CEO Ryan Kavanaugh. FilmNation's Aaron Ryder serves as co-producer. Jules O'Loughlin ACS is director of photography; Mark Warner is editor and David Booth is the visual effect supervisor. Chuck Comisky ("Avatar") is 3D Supervisor.