



PRODUCTION NOTES



A film by
The Brothers Strause

Starring
Eric Balfour
Donald Faison
Scottie Thompson
David Zayas

Release date: November 11, 2010

Running time: 93 minutes

Rated: TBC

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Production Information

In the sci-fi thriller *Skyline*, strange lights descend on the city of Los Angeles, drawing people outside like moths to a flame. Once outdoors, a terrifying extraterrestrial force begins to swallow the entire human population off the face of the Earth. In a matter of hours, we will all be gone.

Jarrold (ERIC BALFOUR of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*) and Elaine's (SCOTTIE THOMPSON of *Star Trek*) trip to Southern California was supposed to be a simple weekend away to visit Jarrold's best friend, Terry (DONALD FAISON of television's *Scrubs*), and Terry's girlfriend, Candice (BRITTANY DANIEL of *Club Dredd*), for his birthday.

But when sunrise arrives two hours early in the form of a haunting light from an unknown source, life as they know it is finished. As they watch in terror from Terry's penthouse windows, people across the city are drawn outside and swallowed into massive alien ships that have blotted out the L.A. skyline.

Now, it will take every survival instinct they have to elude capture from the thousands of monstrous creatures that are sweeping the city and searching for all humans in their path. From tankers to drones and hydra-like extraterrestrials, the aliens are inescapable and seemingly indestructible. In the sci-fi thriller *Skyline*, the end of the world has come...and it's just outside your window.

With *Skyline*, visual-effects masters THE BROTHERS STRAUSE (AVPR: *Aliens vs. Predator—Requiem*)—whose company Hydraulx has imagined visual effects for *Avatar*, *2012*, *Iron Man 2*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* and *300*—have directed, produced and financed an independent film of epic proportions.

The behind-the-scenes production team includes cinematographer MICHAEL WATSON (*A Perfect Getaway*), editor NICHOLAS WAYMAN HARRIS (*Sinner*), production designer DREW DALTON (*The Big Jump*), costume designer BOBBIE MANNIX (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*) and composer

MATTHEW MARGESON (*Burning Palms*). Creatures for the film are designed by the team of ALEC GILLIS & TOM WOODRUFF, JR. (*AVPR: Aliens vs. Predator—Requiem*).

Skyline is written by first-time screenwriters JOSHUA CORDES & LIAM O'DONNELL and produced by KRISTIAN JAMES ANDRESEN and Liam O'Donnell. The executive producers are RYAN KAVANAUGH (*Catfish*), BRETT RATNER (*21*), TUCKER TOOLEY (*Dear John*), BRIAN TYLER (upcoming *Columbus Circle*) and BRIAN KAVANAUGH-JONES (upcoming *Insidious*).

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Drawn to the Story:

Skyline Begins

Since their teens, brothers COLIN and GREG STRAUSE (collectively known as the Brothers Strause) have been immersed in the world of visual effects. They began their careers crafting VFX for music videos and commercials and created their firm, the Santa Monica, California, based Hydraulx, as a full-service VFX house. After several years directing shorter-form projects, they were hired to helm the latest chapter in the blockbuster franchise that pits brutal aliens against galactic predators: 2007's *AVPR: Aliens vs. Predator—Requiem*. When they considered making another film, they knew it would only happen if they could craft it in-house and control every aspect of production.

A few weeks before Thanksgiving in 2009, the brothers were having lunch with longtime animation supervisor of Hydraulx, Joshua Cordes, and frequent writer of their music videos and commercials, Liam O'Donnell. They began to discuss ideas for a project they could entirely create within their own team.

O'Donnell discusses the team's process: "I'd been working with Greg and Colin for five years, developing scripts and creating treatments for their commercials and music videos. Kristian had been a producer with them on a couple of music videos up in Vancouver. We were trying to figure out what we could do with our own cameras and other equipment, and we had just shot a music video with Joshua at Hydraulx studio. The brothers own all these great spaces, and we had these awesome cameras and wondered what we could do to take advantage of that. We realized Greg had this amazing view of the city, and our story quickly became the end of the world outside of his window."

Fortuitously, Cordes had written a horror screenplay and shared it with his longtime collaborators. Explains Cordes: “While I was writing that script, I gave it to Liam to get his thoughts. Then he started giving me his scripts, and we began a working relationship. When the brothers suggested doing something internally, Liam approached me about joining forces and tackling this project.”

As the team discussed ideas for Hydraulx’s first “homegrown” film, they imagined what could possibly happen to entice hundreds of thousands of people outside to stare up at the sky, just before they are sucked into alien ships and Earth becomes a vacant lot. They knew they could deliver the iconic visuals that had made the company the go-to group for VFX, but they also realized they had to answer big questions for the audience. Once all the people have been abducted, what happens to them? What do the people who are left to survive do next?

The screenwriters and the brothers asked: “What if aliens were to come to this planet and trick us?” They imagined the concept of “Siren light” that played off of the ancient Greek tales of exotic women who would sing and lure sailors to crash their boats into the rocks. By emitting a seductive, beautiful sound that would pique our curiosity, the light would make us run to the window and take a look. Once we did, it would render us into powerless zombies and make us walk out of our building and out into the open. From there, newly susceptible, we would be abducted by the aliens.

Director Colin Strause elaborates: “It’s a visually powerful epic alien-abduction movie with a great character story and heart. The premise is mass abduction on a global scale. For example, most people driving on a freeway who see an accident would look at the wreck. If some entity used these instinctual weaknesses against us, then it would wipe us out instantly. The event makes everyone equal. Everything flatlines at that point, and they are trying to survive what could be the end of the Earth.”

He reflects that what most interested his brother and him was that there would be no compromise on their vision with *Skyline*, as they had the capabilities to make an independent film with enormous scope. “One of the

coolest things about what the filmmakers behind *Paranormal Activity* did was that they just did it themselves,” Colin Strause says. “They didn’t have to answer to anyone. We thought, ‘We could do that, but we could do that 100 times bigger...because we have an effects studio, we’ve worked on almost 70 movies and we own our own equipment.’”

Along with brother Greg, he knew that creating this project independently would be freeing and limit how much they would have to give in to a financing studio’s requests. “If you’re spending \$100 million on a movie, a studio is going to want what it wants,” Colin Strause adds. “There’s always going to be some compromise. If it’s our money, then there is *no* compromise.”

Greg Strause concurs: “One of the reasons we embarked upon *Skyline* was that in this day and age, movie budgets have become enormous. At the same time, movie studios have generally been cutting down the number of films they make. We were just at the boiling point. We said, ‘We’re going to shoot a movie ourselves.’ *Skyline* has gone from concept to release date in less than a year.”

As they were going it on their own, they knew they had to have an even tighter organization for the production than a big-budget picture would. “One of the things that made it so efficient was our ‘power structure,’ as we call it,” Greg Strause continues. “The committee, the multiheaded dragon, only had five heads: Liam, Josh, Kristian, Colin and myself. It was easy for us to all do a group huddle. We have almost a decade working together with Josh and over five years with Liam. We’ve known Kristian for about 10 years, and we all speak the same language.”

The tightly knit group they had assembled would make the casting, designing, shooting and editing of *Skyline* much more streamlined. It didn’t hurt that two siblings were helping the process. Explains Cordes: “Because you have co-directors and because they’re brothers, it allows for more collaboration.”

O’Donnell adds: “At the same time, they are businessmen; they know the financial implications of a day of shooting. At Hydraulx, they have 120

employees. They don't frivolously shoot or go over budget or schedule to feed their egos."

To prove that *Skyline* could be done on the budget and with the schedule they imagined, the production team put a teaser trailer together in a one-day shoot and acquired the necessary financing for a full film (and international presales) at the Berlin International Film Festival in February 2010. Explains Greg Strause: "We told our investors, 'Well here you go! That was a one-day shoot, so check out this teaser.' Everyone was sold and believed we could do it. We were off to the races."

Finding Abductees:
Casting the Sci-fi Thriller

When they were developing *Skyline*, the Brothers Strause and writers O'Donnell and Cordes were committed to having a character-driven movie. Knowing that tropes of many sci-fi screenplays include enormous visuals and disposable characters, they vowed to avoid the obvious traps. "We wanted the characters to be the main point of the movie that this huge visual world is wrapped around," shares Colin Strause. "One of the fun things was creating moments of pure terror as our characters watch this event unfold. But then all of a sudden, the cast finds themselves right in the middle of these huge set pieces."

As the script centered on Jarrod and Elaine, the Brothers Strause wanted to bring the audience to the crossroads where this young couple has found itself. Offers O'Donnell: "The main character, Jarrod, has a metamorphosis from an overgrown boy into a father, a protector. The theme of fatherhood interests us; both Colin and I are fathers. The moment you find out that you're going to be a dad is a really intense, life-changing experience that we felt hadn't been tackled this way in many films."

Greg Strause explains who they imagined the character to be: "We meet Jarrod, and he's around 30 years old. He's coming to terms with adulthood—time to stop being a boy and grow into being a man. There's also a fish-out-of-water story with Jarrod and Elaine coming from out of town. There's nothing worse than being in a crisis situation in a strange land. You don't have this home-field advantage playing for you. He made his ascent to this lap of luxury at Terry's during a catastrophe."

To portray the role of the first character cast, they selected Eric Balfour. Commends Andresen: "Everybody knew that Eric Balfour was our Jarrod. After he read for the part, we were sold that he should be the guy that the audience wants to help save his family."

Selected as Elaine, Jarrod's girlfriend who is suspicious of the actual reason that they are visiting Jarrod's old friend in Los Angeles, was Scottie Thompson. Though the young actress had landed many supporting roles, *Skyline* would prove her first lead. Notes producer O'Donnell of Thompson's selection: "Scottie was the wild card. She came in and did this amazing read. We never called her back for anything; she was perfect."

Chosen as Jarrod's best friend, special-effects wizard Terry, was an actor much more well known for his comic roles than his dramatic choices: Donald Faison. Cordes offers that Faison took the casting quite seriously and showed a side of his talents they'd never seen. He says: "Donald is a huge science fiction fan and always wanted to fight aliens. We would recite *Star Wars* dialogue to each other on set. When the cameras rolled, he slipped into action hero mode."

The screenwriters actually penned the role of Oliver, the building's concierge, for *Dexter*'s David Zayas. Recalls Andresen: "We didn't even audition him, it was just an offer. We were thrilled that he agreed to come onto the project."

Another performer primarily known for her comic work was brought onto the production to play Terry's self-absorbed socialite girlfriend. Brittany Daniel was asked to join *Skyline* as Candice. O'Donnell recalls her casting: "Brittany has the same manager as Donald. She came over to read the script after Donald was cast. She loved the character, and we loved her."

Rounding out the core cast of the production were two other young performers: actress CRYSTAL REED as Terry's assistant, Denise, and NEIL HOPKINS as Ray. Hopkins is most well known as the heroin-addicted Liam from the juggernaut series *Lost*.

As the bulk of *Skyline* was shot in one location, there were not the luxuries that a typical big-budget film set would offer. Colin Strause explains: "We didn't have trailers. We literally had another condo in the building. Everyone hung out together. Our cast hung out with the crew, and we all spent time in the same living room. It wasn't like you had to grab all these people from their separate little camps."

Acting opposite stunt performers who served as stand-ins for the attacking aliens was a challenge for the cast, to say the least. It was a treat for them all to be shown clips of the film before their panel at San Diego's Comic-Con in July 2010. Recounts Andresen: "None of the talent had seen any of the footage until San Diego. Faison freaked out the night before Comic-Con. Then I showed the rest of them when we were about to go on for our panel and everybody was blown away, saying, 'Are you kidding me?'"

One archetype the audience won't find in *Skyline* is the nebbish genius who walks the audience through the aliens' rationale. Laughs Colin Strause: "We didn't want any scientists or anyone to explain what was happening in the film. You always get that moment in a movie when you ask, 'How'd that guy know that?' We thought, 'What if you have this regular group of people instead?' It becomes more interesting because you wonder how the aliens do what they do and what makes our group of humans unravel."

An Indie Epic:
Designing and Shooting the Film

While the brothers had to be unerringly strict with certain aspects of production, they had many luxuries of which other shoots can only dream. That included having people they know and trust serve in multiple capacities on the project. Though Joshua Cordes co-wrote the script, he also served as second-unit director, pre- and post-VFX animator and occasional camera operator. Kristian Andresen was not only producer of the sci-fi thriller, but also worked as first assistant director and location manager. As well, co-writer O'Donnell served as script supervisor for the 42-day shoot.

This was enormously helpful as the team designed and shot *Skyline* with the multitalented production designer Drew Dalton and DP Michael Watson. "How many movies have writers on set every single day of the shoot?" Colin Strause asks. "How many times is the writer also the camera guy...so he knows why he's pointing the camera at the big, empty sky? It saved us a lot of communication because Josh and Liam wrote a scene, we previsualized everything out in the computer with my 1980s-style video-game animatics and blocked out all the scenes. Since everyone was there every day, there was never an instance when we had to phone someone and ask them a question."

Joshua Cordes explains: "By pre-vising what the monsters were going to do, I knew when Jarrod would be moving a certain way. When I had a camera in my hand, I could see the tentacle whipping around and stabbing his leg. So when I got the timing just right, I whipped it around. If you have that natural camera movement, it makes the final effect that much more convincing; it's like a camera operator is following something that's there."

While many sci-fi thrillers are set and shot at night to compensate for any issues with the inevitable CGI, it was important to the brothers to showcase the terror during the day. They felt confident their work on dozens of big-budget films had prepared them to pull it off. States Colin Strause: "We combined the scale of an event movie with the action of an invasion film.

Having people watch as dozens of motherships are sucking up millions of people off the face of the Earth...that's something you have to see during the day. At nighttime, that wouldn't look like much. In the daytime, there's a constant reminder that there's nowhere else you can go."

O'Donnell also appreciated that they were able to shoot outside during the day. He notes: "You don't need it to rain and for it to be nighttime to be scary. Daylight exteriors can be your best friend because you can move so fast and you can get so much done. Our big pool chase only took half a day."

As the production didn't follow a typical script to pre-vis to shooting to postproduction trajectory, the team needed to be very flexible as they created *Skyline*. Form would always follow function. Greg Strause offers: "We wanted to do a big event movie in a smaller budget range and go very cinematic with the visuals. That comes from a camera operating standpoint as well as a lighting standpoint. When we were developing the script, there was a bit of the cart drawing the horse. Here's the location: we're shooting in my condo. Here's the garage in the building: we have access to that. We had the pool, an elevator; we had the ingredients that our budget would allow. It was about pushing Josh and Liam to be as smart as possible to utilize these spaces so that they still served the most important aspect of the film: the story."

When deciding upon the best method to meld the live-action performances with the aliens' attacking the City of Angels, the brothers decided that they didn't want to use green screens to re-create the action. Rather, they chose to rely on the specificity of their lightweight RED cameras to film everything. According to Colin Strause: "One of the big things we've encountered with using green screen is that it's usually a weird crutch. It should only be used in extreme situations. It feels artificial because you often shoot your foregrounds but don't get the same lighting on your backgrounds. Everything feels out of sync."

In order to make the action look realistic, the team shot all the interactions between the actors and stunt players (who served as points of reference) on camera. That way, the actors could punch, knock down or get knocked down by the "aliens" without the DP, camera crew and directors

fussing over the green screen's placement. Greg Strause elaborates: "In order to have green-screen coverage everywhere, you can't physically put the lights you want to create the fill light for an exterior; that's because the green screen is there. So now you're trapped. Doing something that was the most cost-effective allowed us to get shots that looked better and cost a lot less to create in post."

More complex rigging and stunts also benefitted from this logical choice to shoot complex sequences entirely in camera. One of the more intricate sequences stunt coordinator MARK NORBY choreographed was something few in Los Angeles—not to mention in the Marina del Rey complex—had ever seen. Colin Strause shares: "We built this giant wire rig on the helicopter pad of the building, pulling actors up into the air and shooting the whole thing in camera with fans blowing. We actually had the real sun setting in the background as the actors were being hoisted up. The shots just look beautiful, and you'd never get that on a green screen."

Indeed, the actors on the helicopter pad were a full 20 stories from the ground for these shots. As the filmmakers lined up their cameras and framed shots against the marina, they already knew exactly where a menacing mothership would be hovering. That allowed the brothers and team to add the ship into the shot in postproduction...as opposed to creating the whole background from scratch. Colin Strause explains the rationale: "Once more than 50 percent of your imagery is CG, it can start looking faker much more quickly. But with our method, we start with a completely real place and we're just augmenting that reality. It just makes it look more photo real."

Greg Strause reflects on being able to create a look and feel for an invasion film that has more effects than most \$100-million-plus blockbusters can boast: "The nature of the visuals is something that can't be filmed. Hydraulx played a huge role in allowing us to create these visuals in our independent budget space. In all, we have more than 900 VFX shots."

The scale and omnipresence that the crew imparted upon their invading aliens creates an inescapable situation for our characters; as well, it makes for one helluva exciting moviegoing experience. Greg Strause proudly states:

“Although it was a small indie, we had a very high-tech, full-HD editorial system and wireless HD feeds from all the cameras. We were able to very quickly drop visuals in and look at the cut. Everyone was watching the movie grow and evolve on set. Using technology to our advantage to make *Skyline* better was a critical theme throughout production.”

By previsualizing the movie at Hydraulx, shooting the film in Marina del Rey, managing the acquisition of the material and then cutting it with editor Nicholas Wayman Harris, the brothers maintained a consistent, structured pipeline. Adds Colin Strause: “Even as we moved through post, we were doing the DI out of our theater. We basically did everything here but sound.”

Tankers, Hydras and Drones:
Imagining the Creatures

As the team designed the invading aliens, they wondered what kind of sentient beings would attack when we're most susceptible...in the wee hours just before dawn. Though the standard in sci-fi movies is that invaders will arrive in big metal spaceships, when this group pondered the look of their creatures...they decided that their alien ships should be organic. As they worked to distinguish *Skyline*, the production team wondered: "What if it's not a mothership? What if it's just a giant organism, and everything is biologically designed?"

The key alien characters in the film are the haunting siren light, the tankers, the drones and the hydra. The brothers explain the distinctive purposes. "The siren light is similar to those deep-sea fish that have a floating front lure with a light that attracts all the other fish," Colin Strause offers. "From there, you have the tankers, which are King Kong-sized creatures with tentacles that serve as the cleanup crew. They're the heavy lifters that drop down and quell any fighting resistance from humans. There are also creatures called hydras and drones."

His brother elaborates upon the latter creatures. "The hydras are flying jellyfish crossed with a fighter jet," says Greg Strause, "while the drones are the smallest critters we have in *Skyline*. Their size allows them to get into buildings, seek and hunt out any of the stragglers that the sirens missed during the first pass of abduction."

As they began preproduction, the brothers looked to a certain cephalopod for inspiration. "One of the movement references we had was the octopus," Colin Strause notes. "They have tentacles to support their weight, and there's a weird ballet to their motion that's smooth and beautiful. They can also be very frightening and lock on to things. We used that as our base animation reference for the drone and the hydra. For the tanker, we went much more gorilla. It has less of a zero-gravity propulsion and more of an

actual physics-based one. For example, the big brother that drops down and checks things out would naturally come down to the surface. It was always a galloping, pissed-off 65-foot-tall gorilla.”

The *Skyline* team brought aboard visual effects house Amalgamated Dynamics, Inc. (ADI) to assist with creature designs, and creatures for the film are designed by the team of Alec Gillis & Tom Woodruff, Jr. Producer O'Donnell notes that the entire team quite enjoyed making up aliens from scratch. As this is the first possibly in a series, there were no expectations for the creatures' look and feel. He notes: “It's freeing to wonder, ‘What if this guy has tentacles that come out of his arms?’ You don't have to go back and have it line up with any history or canon. It was fantastic to create our own mythology, biology and MO of how they take us out.”

“We knew that the monsters needed to be iconic,” screenwriter Cordes explains. “We wanted to see what ADI could come up with without any limitations on them. The final drone was taken from one of the original tanker designs and became a smaller monster in the film. They nailed our main flagship alien within the first day of designs. And in post, we added bioluminescence to the creatures that brought a whole new dimension. Our main designer at Hydraulx, KINO SCIALABBA, created all the amazing ship designs, which really sets the movie apart from its predecessors.”

The production wanted to honor the work of Hitchcock and Romero and keep the events fast-paced and interesting for the audience as they watch people who are stuck in one setting. Knowing that the characters' vantage point was key to understanding the scope of the creatures and the destruction, the team had to guarantee that every visual was stunning.

O'Donnell shares a story of how this process evolved from page to screen: “There was a line in the script that describes the characters watching a firefight in the distance through a telescope. You're just supposed to see a few plumes and explosions. Instead, Colin thought it would be cool to have a tanker that is ripping apart all these people and throwing a truck over and smashing them. That's better than explosions on the horizon.”

Keenly understanding that owning your own effects shop meant the sky was the limit, the brothers gave their team the freedom to go bigger and bigger with their monster designs. After all, there was no reason that invading aliens needed to be proportional to the humans they were grabbing.

Remembers producer Andresen: "We went from a 20-foot-tall tanker to a 60-foot-tall one because Colin and Greg thought that it needed to look as if the tanker could cross over to the 10th balcony. Everybody said, 'Alright...60-foot aliens it is!'"

Take Your Shoes Off:
Shooting in Los Angeles

Skyline shot for 42 days in the Los Angeles area, primarily on the 19th floor of the building in which Greg Strause lives. The writers and directors believed that when you're in the contained areas of the luxury skyscraper, you must feel an intimate connection with the characters and focus on their survival story. They also wanted to ensure that every time our heroes open the blinds, there would be something huge that was happening. All this had to be accomplished with a crew of approximately 20 people.

While many productions that shoot in Los Angeles use the vantage points of such locations as Hollywood, downtown L.A. or the Santa Monica pier, the production was uniquely situated to take advantage of another locale. As the events happen just before sunrise from the vantage point of our heroes in a Marina del Rey skyscraper, no one could expect what was next. It turns out their location gave them front row seats to the end of the world.

Colin Strause sets up the characters' viewpoint: "Some of the people at Terry's place are still hungover. They're just waking up, and they are trying to orientate themselves. Even with natural disasters or a terrorist attack, you can rationalize them to a point. But when it's something that you can't actually comprehend, we wondered how people would interact with each other. Do you hunker down, or do you try to be the hero?"

When it came to deciding on the location for the film, there was only one option: Greg Strause's condominium. Fortunately, the rooftop of his building offered a breathtaking 360-degree view with many geographical advantages. The team could see everything from the ocean across Santa Monica to downtown L.A. "I'd just finished a year-and-a-half remodel of the condo," Greg Strause notes ruefully. "A couple weeks after we finished, we decided to shoot a movie in my house. What the hell was I thinking?"

The No. 1 rule for the cast and crew: "No shoes!" Greg Strause recalls saying to his colleagues: "You have to have booties on, and we can't scratch my

floor!” He laughs, “We were more concerned about a location than we’d ever been in our lives. We also used all our gear. It gave people a different sensibility; they knew they couldn’t just throw stuff around.”

His brother adds to their rationale for using this location: “Liam also lived in the building for over a year. It’s an extremely versatile location, and he knew every corner. It’s a \$75-million brand-new complex, which has a huge pool, multistory parking structures and beautiful lobbies.”

O’Donnell explains how he used his working knowledge of the building to set up shots: “I was on the fourth floor, not the 19th like Greg, but that helped Josh and me with the writing and planning everything out.”

Fortunately, the screenwriters had intimate knowledge of where every stairwell went as they penned the script. “The action scenes were written knowing exactly where all the geography was,” Joshua Cordes adds. “Then we went through and blocked everything. Normally, you write a script and then you try to find a location. Then you bootstrap it into what the writer came up with in his house, not wherever your actual location is.”

Because they were shooting in a residential building and wanted to be respectful of neighbors, the team knew *Skyline*’s first unit had to leave a very small footprint. Shares Greg Strause: “Movies inherently have a lot of gear. The group of trucks on a production is called ‘the circus.’ On *Skyline*, we were in a condo and in different parts of the building. There were only two elevators so we couldn’t have racks and racks and racks of gear.

“Everything had to be very lightweight because we had to do the work of 80 people with only 20 people,” he continues. “We couldn’t physically fit more than that many people on set. At a certain point, you have too many lights, cameras and stuff everywhere, and you can’t move or shoot anything without having all the gear in the shot. We had to be very guerilla in that regard.”

They had to guarantee that they possessed full permits and that everything was set up just so. Colin Strause concludes: “We love shooting in L.A., and what we accomplished with a few passionate people wouldn’t be possible anywhere else. We had a home-turf advantage from a filming

standpoint, but there were certain challenges while shooting. For example, we had a permit to create smoke and we had a giant smoker on the rooftop of the building. Then we started hearing one fire truck, then it was four, then it was 12 that showed up. They said they had three helicopters on the way as well.”

What was the brothers’ simple fix? Just cut down the smoke...a little bit.

ABOUT THE CAST

ERIC BALFOUR's (Jarrod) career in entertainment began at the age of 15, when a talent scout cast him as a series regular on the dancing and singing hit show *Kids Incorporated*. He has since established himself as a creative force for both the television and film communities, playing interesting and eclectic characters.

He can currently be seen on Syfy's newest drama series, *Haven*, which is based on Stephen King's novel "The Colorado Kid." The series follows an FBI agent who visits the small town of Haven, Maine, for a routine case. To the agent's curiosity, a range of supernatural afflictions affects the town and she remains in Haven to investigate these strange happenings. Balfour plays the charming yet mysterious Duke Crocker, a Haven local who appears to be a free spirit who lives a modest life on his boat. However, it becomes clear that his mellow behavior may conceal a much darker agenda.

Balfour was seen in several films including Dimension Film's *Hell Ride*, Mandate Film's *Horsemen*, opposite Dennis Quaid, and Lionsgate's *The Spirit*, alongside Eva Mendes. In addition to his film career, Balfour was seen in the Emmy- and Golden Globe-winning FOX television drama *24*, in which he reprised his season one role as Milo, the smart and eccentric resident computer expert at the Counter Terrorist Unit (CTU).

Balfour's extensive list of television credits includes a starring role in Dick Wolf's *Conviction*, on NBC, in which he played Brian Peluso, one of the young assistant district attorneys who battles some of the most difficult legal cases in New York. He was also seen as a series regular on the Golden Globe-winning HBO series *Six Feet Under*, for creator/writer Alan Ball. Balfour played Gabe, Claire's (Lauren Ambrose) drug-addicted and troubled boyfriend.

On the big screen, Balfour can be seen in several films including 20th Century Fox's *In Her Shoes*, starring opposite Cameron Diaz and directed by Curtis Hanson, and the remake of the cult classic hit *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, produced by Michael Bay, for his company Platinum Dunes, and

directed by Marcus Nispel. Balfour was also seen in the New Line Cinema feature *Secondhand Lions*, opposite Haley Joel Osment. His other credits include Revolution Studio's *America's Sweethearts*, opposite Julia Roberts and John Cusack, and Paramount Pictures' *What Women Want*, starring opposite Mel Gibson and Helen Hunt, and directed by Nancy Meyers.

Balfour is also involved in many other creative endeavors as a writer, director and producer for his recently formed production company Off the Grid Entertainment.

He currently resides in Los Angeles.

SCOTTIE THOMPSON (Elaine) is on the fast track to becoming one of Hollywood's leading ladies. She most recently starred as Diana Van Dine in a recurring role in the NBC show *Trauma*, alongside Derek Luke. She also appeared as Jeanne Benoit in recurring roles in the CBS crime drama *NCIS: Naval Criminal Investigative Service*, and appeared in Showtime's *Brotherhood*.

Thompson's additional film credits include a starring role in the U.K. production of *Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda* and a role, alongside Chris Pine and Eric Bana, in J.J. Abrams' 2009 reboot of the hit franchise *Star Trek*. She has made several guest appearances on television shows including *CSI: NY*, *Bones* and *Ugly Betty*.

Thompson studied performance studies and literature, and focused on French and postcolonial works, at Harvard University. It was during her time at Harvard that she discovered her love for acting. She performed in a number of plays such as *Macbeth* (2002), *Marisol* (2003) and *The Oresteia* (2005). She also helped choreograph several plays. In 2005, after she graduated from Harvard, Thompson relocated to New York to start her acting career.

Thompson grew up in Richmond, Virginia, with a love for dance and performance. She started taking ballet at an early age and, in 1994, played the role of Clara in the Richmond Ballet Company's *The Nutcracker*. Immediately following her high school graduation, Thompson took a year off from school to dance with the Richmond Ballet Company.

Thompson currently resides in Los Angeles.

BRITTANY DANIEL (Candice) stars as Kelly Pitts on the hit television show *The Game*, currently in its fourth season on BET.

Daniel is a native of Gainesville, Florida, and began her career starring opposite her twin sister, Cynthia, in the television series *Sweet Valley High*.

After making her feature film debut in *The Basketball Diaries*, she went on to guest star on *Dawson's Creek* and *That '70s Show*, and became a series regular on *That '80s Show*.

Daniel starred opposite Keenen Ivory Wayans in the feature film *Little Man*, which also stars Kerry Washington, Marlon Wayans and Shawn Wayans. She was nominated for Best Kiss at the 2007 MTV Movie Awards. Her other feature film credits include *White Chicks*, *Joe Dirt* and *Club Dread*.

Daniel resides in Los Angeles.

A former New York City police officer, **DAVID ZAYAS** (Oliver) began his acting career when he teamed up with Philip Seymour Hoffman at the LAByrinth Theater Company. Since then, Zayas has starred in more than 30 plays, including *Jesus Hopped the "A" Train*, *In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings* and *Our Lady of 121st Street*.

While performing theater in New York, he began to book roles on hit television shows such as *New York Undercover*, *Law & Order* and *NYPD Blue*, all while working for the New York Police Department. Zayas' success earned him a leading role on UPN's crime drama *The Beat*. Soon after, Tom Fontana (writer of *The Beat*) created the character Enrique Morales, the fierce leader of the Latino prisoners in HBO's *Oz*, especially for Zayas.

His feature film credits include *Bringing Out the Dead*, *The Yards*, *Undefeated*, *Wit*, *Angel* and *The Interpreter*. He also recently starred in the feature film *Michael Clayton*, opposite George Clooney, and *The Savages*, with Philip Seymour Hoffman. Zayas was also seen in *16 Blocks*, opposite Bruce Willis, and in the ABC miniseries *The Path to 9/11*. Most recently, Zayas starred on Broadway in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Anna in the Tropics*.

Zayas was recently seen portraying the villainous General Garza in *The Expendables*, alongside Hollywood heavy hitters Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Mickey Rourke. He will also be seen in the upcoming film *13*, in which he stars alongside Jason Statham, Mickey Rourke and Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson.

For his role in *Dexter*, Zayas won a Satellite Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role in a Series, Miniseries or Motion Picture Made for Television, earned two SAG Award nominations for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series and earned an Alma Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor in a Drama Series.

DONALD FAISON (Terry) starred for nine seasons as Dr. Christopher Turk on the Emmy-nominated hit series *Scrubs*. For his role, Faison received six NAACP Image Award nominations for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series and won two Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series Awards at the BET Comedy Awards.

Faison also starred in Summit Entertainment's *Next Day Air*, opposite Mos Def and Mike Epps. His additional film credits include Amy Heckerling's classic cult comedy *Clueless*, *Something New*, *Remember the Titans*, *Waiting to Exhale*, *King's Ransom*, *Uptown Girls*, *Josie and the Pussycats*, *Can't Hardly Wait*, *Big Fat Liar* and *Juice*.

Faison's additional television credits include two seasons as Tracy on the J.J. Abrams drama *Felicity*; *Clueless*, on which he reprised his role as Murray from the feature film of the same name; *Party of Five*; *Sister, Sister*; and *New York Undercover*. Faison also hosted the Spike TV series *The Playbook*, the ultimate guide for guys that was designed to show them how to navigate the trickiest situations, scenarios and circumstances. Faison has also lent his voice to the Cartoon Network's animated series *Titan Maximum* and *Robot Chicken*.

A New York City native, Faison began his acting career as an enthusiastic five year old attending the Children's School of Intuitive and God-Conscious Art. His passion and talent led him to study theater at the Professional Children's School, where he developed into an amazing and talented actor.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Since moving to Hollywood as teens in the mid-'90s, **THE BROTHERS STRAUSE** (Directed by/Produced by) have charted a meteoric rise in the film world: from self-taught visual effects wizards to renowned directors. It's an incredible journey that's been documented everywhere from *Forbes* to the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*. With their boutique FX house, Hydraulicx, the brothers have contributed visionary sequences to a string of blockbuster films such as *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, *2012*, *300*, *X-Men: The Last Stand*, *The Incredible Hulk* and *The Day After Tomorrow*. Their work on the latter brought Greg a BAFTA for Best Achievement in Special Visual Effects and elevated the brothers to the upper echelon of visual effects supervisors. More recently, they worked on more than a third of the revolutionary age-altering shots in the Academy Award®-winning feature *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. Along the way, they've collaborated with some of the industry's most respected directors and producers, earning the trust of such luminaries as David Fincher, James Cameron and Roland Emmerich.

But it's in their capacities as filmmakers that the Brothers Strause really excel. With their unflinching commitment to storytelling and instantly recognizable aesthetic, they've created some of the decade's most imaginative music videos. In 2000, they first splashed onto the scene with Colin's MTV Video Music Award (VMA) for Best Art Direction for the Red Hot Chili Pepper's "Californication." The following year, the Brothers Strause were nominated for two VMAs (Best Rock Video and Best Directors) for Linkin Park's career-catapulting "Crawling." Their recent work includes 50 Cent's chart-topping, postapocalyptic "Get Up" and Usher's "Love in this Club," a 2008 VMA nominee (Best Male Video). Their uncanny vision and storytelling talents quickly garnered attention in the ad world, and the Brothers Strause have built an impressive commercial reel with campaigns for Toyota, Universal Studios, PlayStation's *God of War*, Gatorade, Coca-Cola, Ford, Pennzoil and Shell.

In 2007, the Brothers Strause reached new career heights: co-directing their first feature for 20th Century Fox, *AVPR: Alien vs. Predator—Requiem*. Heralded by *Variety* as “ingeniously creepy,” the brothers delivered on their promise to return the franchise to its horror origins. They recently reteamed with James Cameron, working their magic on *Avatar*, and worked on the upcoming visual effects epic *Gulliver’s Travels*, starring Jack Black.

Since he was eight years old, **LIAM O’DONNELL** (Written by/Produced by) has wanted to be a storyteller. Growing up under the influence of George Lucas’ *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* sagas fueled his early passion for creativity and mythmaking. Inspired by writers from Philip K. Dick to Michael Crichton, O’Donnell became obsessed with creating high-concept stories and the perilous journey of developing them to their full potential.

In 2005, O’Donnell began collaborating with Greg and Colin Strause on their commercial and music video treatments. Together they immediately booked several acclaimed campaigns for companies such as Gatorade, Mercury and Coca-Cola. O’Donnell went on to write the music videos for R&B superstar Usher’s “Love in This Club” and “Moving Mountains,” which the Brothers Strause directed. “Love in This Club” was later nominated for an MTV Video Music Award for Best Male Video. O’Donnell then worked with hip-hop impresario 50 Cent, writing the music video treatment for “Get Up,” directed by the Brothers Strause and shot by Academy Award®-nominated director of photography Claudio Miranda.

O’Donnell also had the opportunity to work closely with the Brothers Strause when he developed their pitch for *AVPR: Alien vs. Predator—Requiem*. Brought on as a creative consultant, O’Donnell worked on set with the brothers every day and refined the action and story with previsualization artist Joshua Cordes.

Although longtime friends and creative allies, *Skyline* marks the first time O’Donnell and Cordes have collaborated on a screenplay. The duo has since gone on to work together on numerous upcoming projects including *Skyline 2*. After executive producer Brett Ratner read their script for *Skyline*,

he brought O'Donnell and Cordes onboard several of his projects including a rewrite of the Activision video game *True Crime: Hong Kong*.

For Jon Favreau's *Iron Man 2*, O'Donnell and the brothers wrote and shot the Feebles sequences that featured the disastrous and comical results of foreign countries' failed attempts at creating their own Iron Man technology.

O'Donnell co-wrote the pitch trailer for the Internet sensation *Offline*, with director Matthew Santoro. The trailer debuted on Vimeo.com to widespread acclaim and plans for a theatrical film are underway.

O'Donnell currently works as the head of development for Hydraulx Entertainment, writing and producing several upcoming projects including *Skyline 2* and *War of the Ages*, an epic historical fantasy in which the greatest warriors of antiquity square off with the fate of mankind hanging in the balance.

Like with every other kid born in the late '70s, *Star Wars* propelled **JOSHUA CORDES'** (Written by) passion for cinema. But in the mid-'80s, something went horribly awry. Don't ask how or why, but two hippies who wouldn't let their son play with toy guns managed to raise a child with a passion for horror movies. School days were spent drawing his versions of cinematic nightmares. A cathedral populated by Jason, Freddy and Michael Myers got him sent to the principal's office. His afternoons were spent trying to sneak into the latest R-rated horror offerings.

Deft in English and the visual arts but unsure of where to focus, Cordes walked into a chilly air-conditioned theater in the summer of 1991 expecting genius, and instead found a revelation in the mind-blowing effects of *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. Six years later, he graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City and jumped right into the industry, working as an artist and visual effects supervisor on commercials and music videos. It took moving to Los Angeles in 2000 to fully achieve his dreams of feature-film fantasia. His credits as an animation supervisor include *Avatar*, *300*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* and *The Incredible Hulk*.

Hoping to make the leap from VFX artist to storyteller, Cordes wrote *Toxicity*, a horrific urban thriller set in the darkest corners of New York City. The script caught the eyes of the Brothers Strause, who tapped Cordes to co-write *Skyline*, with Liam O'Donnell.

During *Skyline*'s production, years of on-set supervision and previsualization paid off as Cordes stepped behind the camera as second unit director and "B" camera operator. He also served as animation supervisor, lead animator and previsualization supervisor, and has a cameo as Telescope Guy, thus winning the production's "Robert Rodriguez" award for most credits.

KRISTIAN JAMES ANDRESEN (Produced by) began his film career more than 15 years ago when he guarded a set parking lot on some of the poorest, most dense and most drug-addled streets in North America. At that point, he "turned pro" in Vancouver's infamous downtown Eastside, which marked the beginning of seemingly infinite obstacles to overcome and challenges to be met as Andresen learned the ropes in film.

His personality and workaholic attitude enabled successful navigation and ascension through the world of film production. Quickly becoming a well-respected producer in commercials and music videos, Andresen orchestrated and oversaw the collaboration of countless talented individuals and highly skilled technicians. Harnessing the talent and creative drive of those around him, Andresen founded Famous Kids in 2003, a sister company to commercial powerhouse Circle Productions that focuses on developing emerging talent and promoting international production. Shortly thereafter, Andresen was given the opportunity to take the reins at Circle Productions' Toronto office.

Spending just over a year in Toronto, Andresen restructured and redirected the company into a fully operational flagship production company, replete with new offices and staff, that now earns millions of dollars in profit annually.

In 2007, Andresen and a partner began their own business in Vancouver. Transmission Holdings looked to be a full-featured production company, enabling all processes from development through postproduction.

After a string of high-profile advertising work, Andresen moved to Los Angeles to serve as a producer on Transmission's first feature film (*Skyline*), partnering with Hydraulx VFX founders Greg and Colin Strause.

Throughout his career Andresen has been involved in award-winning commercial work and renowned public service announcements. His efforts have placed him at the helm of everything from multimillion-dollar global projects to minuscule personal productions. But regardless of scale or budget, Andresen prides himself on giving his all towards successful completion of the project, simultaneously remaining collaborative, appealing and approachable to everyone involved.

RYAN KAVANAUGH (Executive Producer) is a successful producer and highly regarded expert in film finance as CEO and founder of Relativity Media, LLC. Relativity is a media and entertainment company that is engaged in creating, financing and distributing first-class, studio-quality entertainment content and intellectual property across multiple platforms, as well as making strategic partnerships with, and opportunistic investments in, entertainment-related companies and assets. Relativity has produced or financed more than 200 motion pictures, generating more than \$14 billion in worldwide box-office revenue and earning 43 Oscar[®] nominations.

Kavanaugh created business and financial structures for a number of studios, production companies and producers, and has introduced more than \$10 billion of capital to these structures. Past structures/deals include Sony Pictures, Universal Pictures, Warner Bros., Marvel and many others. Kavanaugh has acquired a wealth of strategic assets including the marketing and distribution operations of Overture Films and reaching a first-of-its-kind television pay deal with Netflix.

In 2008, Relativity Media finalized its acquisition of Rogue from Universal. The purchase of Rogue, a company that specializes in the production and distribution of lower-budget films, includes the label's entire library of films, as well as producing deals and more than 30 projects currently in development. Rogue has had particular success within the horror genre; the

first Rogue release under Relativity's ownership was *The Unborn*, starring Gary Oldman, Cam Gigandet, Odette Yustman and Idris Elba. *The Unborn* grossed more than \$19 million at the box office on opening weekend and has earned nearly \$60 million to date. *The Last House on the Left*, based on a Wes Craven film, opened to \$15 million at the box office, and *Fighting*, starring Channing Tatum and Terrence Howard, grossed a strong \$11.5 million opening weekend. The web site iamrogue.com is the first-ever media content network in which audiences can and will influence popular culture, media and society along with the insiders who will make it all happen.

As a producer, Kavanaugh's personal production lineup includes Tarsem Singh's *Immortals*, an epic action-adventure film in the vein of *300*, and David O. Russell's *The Fighter*, starring Mark Wahlberg and Christian Bale. Kavanaugh's recent films include Universal Pictures' *Despicable Me* and *Mamma Mia!*; Lionsgate's *Brothers* and *3:10 to Yuma*; The Weinstein Company's *Nine*; Sony Pictures' *Grown Ups*; and Screen Gems' *Dear John*. He also executive produced the reality thriller *Catfish*.

Kavanaugh was honored with the 2009 Hollywood Producer of the Year Award at the 13th Annual Hollywood Awards Gala, and *Daily Variety* recently published a special issue that honored Kavanaugh as a "Billion Dollar Producer."

BRETT RATNER (Executive Producer) has established himself as one of Hollywood's most successful directors and producers, with eight feature films grossing more than \$1.5 billion worldwide in a short amount of time. At 26 years old, he directed his first feature film, the surprise box-office hit comedy *Money Talks*, starring Charlie Sheen and Chris Tucker. His second film, the action-comedy *Rush Hour*, starring Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker, earned \$250 million worldwide and paved the way for the extremely popular and lucrative *Rush Hour* trilogy, which grossed more than \$740 million worldwide and featured an acclaimed international supporting cast. He is also one of the only directors in history who before the age of 30 made films that grossed \$100 million.

Following the success of *Rush Hour*, Ratner directed the romantic-fantasy drama *The Family Man*, a critical and box-office hit, starring Nicolas Cage and Téa Leoni. Ratner's fifth feature film and first suspense thriller was the much anticipated *The Silence of the Lambs* prequel *Red Dragon*, starring Edward Norton, Anthony Hopkins, Ralph Fiennes and Emily Watson. His next film, *After the Sunset*, starring Pierce Brosnan, Salma Hayek, Woody Harrelson and Don Cheadle, opened to great success.

Ratner's work has been recognized with many awards including an MTV Movie Award for Best Fight for *Rush Hour 2*, as well as a Tony Award for producing *Russell Simmons Def Poetry Jam on Broadway*.

Ratner recently signed on to direct Imagine Entertainment/Universal Pictures' *Tower Heist*, starring Ben Stiller. He is producing New Line Cinema's *Horrible Bosses*, starring Jennifer Aniston, Kevin Spacey, Colin Farrell, Jason Bateman and Jamie Foxx, and a new adaptation of *Snow White*. He has also produced the documentaries *Helmut by June*, about the legendary photographer Helmut Newton, and *I Knew It Was You: Rediscovering John Cazale*, both for HBO. He also executive produced the reality thriller *Catfish*.

In addition to success in film and music, Ratner has also teamed up with CAA's marketing department to create Brett Ratner Brands, a creative consulting company that provides brands with new ways to market their products and services in entertaining ways. He has shot advertising campaigns for Activision's Guitar Hero, Steve Wynn's Encore hotel, Oreo cookies and Atlantis Resorts, and conceptualized the new Mitchum deodorant campaign to find "the hardest working person in America."

Ratner has also segued into book publishing and photography. Through his Rat Press imprint, he published the controversial book "Naked Pictures of My Ex-Girlfriends" and authored "Hilhaven Lodge: The Photo Booth Pictures," which was released in October 2003. His photographs have appeared in *Vanity Fair*, *Interview* and *Heeb*, and have graced the covers of *Vogue*, *Homme*, *LIFE*, *Haute Living* and *Playboy*.

Ratner also serves on the dean's council of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and, most recently, became the youngest member of the

board of trustees of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Museum of Tolerance. He is also a board member of Best Buddies International and DoSomething.org.

Ratner currently resides in Los Angeles.

TUCKER TOOLEY (Executive Producer) began his producing career in 1997 and, over the course of the next decade, became a prolific and successful independent producer. Described as “the rarest of combinations” by *Fade In* magazine in its top-100 people in Hollywood issue, Tooley was able to consistently produce commercial films, package A-list talent and deliver films on budget and on schedule.

In 1999, Tooley established the production shingle Newman/Tooley Films with then producing partner Vincent Newman. Over the next seven years, the duo produced a successful slate of both independent and studio movies, working with some of the top talents in Hollywood.

In 2006, Tooley served as CEO of Tooley Productions and produced *Shadowboxer*, starring Academy Award® winner Helen Mirren and directed by Lee Daniels (*Precious*), as well as the critically acclaimed *Felon*, directed by Ric Roman Waugh.

After a decade of producing 12 feature films and television on his own, Tooley joined Ryan Kavanaugh’s Relativity Media as president of production. Along with Kavanaugh, Tooley has built the company’s Single Picture Films Division into a full-fledged production company, developing, financing and producing eight to 10 films a year. Tooley and his executive team currently oversee all of Relativity Media’s upcoming single pictures including *Immortals*, an action-adventure from the producers of *300* and acclaimed director Tarsem Singh; *The Fighter*, starring Academy Award®-nominated actor Mark Wahlberg, Academy Award®-nominated actor Amy Adams and Christian Bale; Academy Award® winner Steven Soderbergh’s *Knockout*; and the 3-D action picture *Sanctum*, from the legendary James Cameron. Tooley also executive produced the reality thriller *Catfish*.

Two recent pictures (*Nine* and *Brothers*) released by Relativity's Single Picture Films Division and overseen by Tooley were nominated for seven Golden Globe awards. Other recent releases include *MacGruber*; *Dear John*, directed by Academy Award®-nominated Lasse Hallström and starring Channing Tatum and Amanda Seyfried; and *The Spy Next Door*, starring Jackie Chan, George Lopez and Billy Ray Cyrus.

Tooley was most recently honored with the 2009 Ischia Global Film & Music Fest Executive of the Year Award.

BRIAN TYLER (Executive Producer) is a composer of more than 50 films and was recently nominated for Film Composer of the Year by the International Film Music Critics Association. He composed and conducted the scores for films including *Eagle Eye*, for producer Steven Spielberg; the box-office hit *Fast & Furious*; *The Expendables* and *Rambo*, directed by Sylvester Stallone; *Law Abiding Citizen*, starring Jamie Foxx and Gerard Butler; and the thriller *Constantine*, starring Keanu Reeves and Rachel Weisz.

Tyler began scoring features shortly after he received his bachelor's degree from UCLA and his master's degree from Harvard University. In 2002, he won a World Soundtrack Award for his score for Bill Paxton's *Frailty*, and he was awarded Cinemusic's designation as Best New Film Composer of the Year. The following year, he received an Emmy nomination for his score for *Fitzgerald*, and has since won five ASCAP Film & Television Music Awards.

After composing the score for *The Hunted*, for Academy Award®-winning director William Friedkin, Tyler found himself on the cover of *Film Score Monthly* magazine and was dubbed "the future of film scoring." He then composed the score for Disney's *The Greatest Game Ever Played*, starring Shia LaBeouf, and later received an ASCAP Film & Television Award for *Eagle Eye*, *Fast & Furious*, *Law Abiding Citizen*, *The Final Destination* and *Constantine*. His score for *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift* hit No. 1 on iTunes' soundtrack sales chart, while his soundtrack for *Children of Dune* was the No. 4 best-selling album on Amazon.com in March of 2003.

His other credits include 20th Century Fox's science-fiction film *AVPR: Alien vs. Predator—Requiem, Timeline*, directed by Richard Donner, and the series *Hawaii Five-0* and *Star Trek: Enterprise*. His music has been used in a multitude of film trailers including *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, *The Departed* and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Tyler recently executive produced and composed music for the upcoming film *Columbus Circle*.

BRIAN KAVANAUGH-JONES (Executive Producer) is currently the president of Automatik, a Los Angeles-based production and financing entity. Automatik is a joint venture between IM Global and Alliance Films.

Previously, Kavanaugh-Jones was an agent in the film finance department at Creative Artists Agency, where he was instrumental in the financing and selling of many independent features. Among the many films Kavanaugh-Jones helped bring to fruition are Oren Peli's *Paranormal Activity*, which cost \$11,000 to make and went on to gross more than \$200 million worldwide; and Peli's next feature, *Area 51*, which will premiere in 2011; John Cameron Mitchell's *Rabbit Hole*, starring Nicole Kidman and Aaron Eckhart and based on David Lindsay-Abaire's play, which premiered at the 2010 Toronto International Film Festival; Larry Charles' *Religulous*, 2008's most successful documentary; John Woo's epic action-drama *Red Cliff*; *The Killer Elite*, starring Robert De Niro, Jason Statham and Clive Owen; and *It's Kind of a Funny Story*, starring Zach Galifianakis and co-written and directed by Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden.

He is currently in production or development on several features including *Protection*, starring Dwayne Johnson; *Safe*, starring Jason Statham; *Insidious*, from *Saw* director James Wan and the makers of *Paranormal Activity*; Rob Zombie's *Lords of Salem*; Barry Levinson's *The Bay*; and *Welcome to the Punch*, to be directed by Eran Creevy.

Kavanaugh-Jones received his fine arts degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

MICHAEL WATSON (Director of Photography) is a talented cinematographer. He was born in New Jersey but grew up in the Cayman Islands. As a teenager in Grand Cayman, Watson got his first taste for photography—underwater photography to be exact.

It was at an art institute where he studied film production, that he started his pursuit of cinematography. In a successful 12-year career as a camera assistant, Watson has worked with award-winning cinematographers such as Claudio Miranda (*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*), Amir Mokri (*Bad Boys II*) and Daniel C. Pearl on numerous music videos and television commercials.

Skyline is his feature film debut with the directing team the Brothers Strause.

DREW DALTON (Production Designer) was raised on a farm in Southeastern Idaho, where he learned to work with his hands and expand on the problem-solving merits of baling wire. He received a bachelor's degree in science from Utah State University. He worked as a builder, furniture designer, photographer and fly fishing guide until he found his way onto a commercial film set in Los Angeles, where he discovered an aptitude for the art department. As it turned out, farming and fishing shared similar hours and a work ethic. He met his wife, Patricia, on that very set, and together they began building careers in film.

Dalton worked his way through the ranks of the art department, learning the methods and materials of the craft while on the job. Soon, his photographer's eye and "can do" attitude led to art directing a national commercial for Backyard Productions. An ability to produce good work with a diverse skill set, a consolidated department and focus on the budget brought him more opportunities.

For 10 years, Dalton has established himself in the Los Angeles film community as a production designer. He is excited to be an integral creative

member in recent collaborations with the special effects visionaries and directing team the Brothers Strause.

NICHOLAS WAYMAN HARRIS (Editor) has been at the forefront of his profession for nearly 20 years. His consistently cutting-edge work is renowned throughout the feature, commercial and music video industries.

In 1990, Wayman Harris started his own editorial house in his native London, England, called NWH Editorial. He continued to operate and edit at NWH until 2004, when he moved to Los Angeles to advance his career as an editor in the United States.

Wayman Harris' regular clients include directors such as Douglas Avery, Anton Corbijn, Howard Greenhalgh, Paul Street, Kristian Levring, Philippe Andre, Walter Stern, Kevin Thomas, James Frost, Nabil Elderkin, Malcolm Venville, Nick Livesey, Matt Kirkby, Marcus Nispel and Jason Smith, to name a few. He has also worked with some of the biggest advertising agencies and production companies including RSA, BBC, DDB, MJZ, Furlined, Partizan, Believe Media, Streetlight Films, Saatchi & Saatchi, Deutsch Inc., McCann Erickson, Young & Rubicam, BBDO, M&C Saatchi and TBWA\Chiat\Day.

Wayman Harris has also worked on numerous music videos from diverse artists such as Björk, Diddy, The Verve, Duran Duran, Silversun Pickups and OK Go, to name a few. In 2009, he was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Short Form Music Video for Radiohead's "House of Cards." In 2010, he received an MTV Video Music Award for Best Rock Video for 30 Seconds to Mars' "Kings and Queens."

Following several short films, Wayman Harris' first foray into features came when he was asked by director Paul W.S. Anderson to cut the "visions of Hell" sequence in the hit film *Event Horizon*. His first full feature was Kristian Levring's Dogme 4 film *The King Is Alive*. Levring was one of the founders of the Danish collective known as Dogme 95. *The King Is Alive* featured BAFTA nominee Lia Williams, David Bradley and Jennifer Jason Leigh, who won best actress for her role in the film at the Tokyo International Film Festival.

Wayman-Harris was nominated for the Editing of the Year award at the 2002

Robert Festival (the Danish equivalent of the Oscars®). In 2000, *The King Is Alive* was picked as an official selection at the Cannes Film Festival and received critical acclaim.

Wayman Harris' second feature collaboration with Kristian Levring was *The Intended*, featuring Oscar® winners Olympia Dukakis and Brenda Fricker and Oscar® nominee Janet McTeer. It premiered at the 2003 Toronto International Film Festival and was released worldwide in the summer of 2004.

In 2006, Wayman Harris join forces with Marc Benardout to edit his first feature film in America, *Sinner*, which won Best Picture at the Boston International Film Festival.

Wayman Harris currently works at Union Editorial in Los Angeles, editing high-end commercials and music videos, while continuing to edit short and feature films. He is also a member of BAFTA.

BOBBIE MANNIX's (Costume Designer) credits include the television series *Supernatural*, *Dirty Dancing* and *For the People*, and the films *National Treasure*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (2003), *End of Days*, *Xanadu*, *The Long Riders*, *The Warriors*, *Uncle Joe Shannon* and *At Long Last Love*. Mannix has also designed for telefilms including *The Tomorrow Man*, *Christmas in Connecticut* and *The Renegades*. In addition, Mannix has worked on numerous music videos for artists including P. Diddy, Spice Girls, Bush, Fugees, Bone Thugs-n-Harmony, Lil' Kim and Tyrese.

In 2002, Mannix received the Costume Designers Guild Award for Excellence in Commercial Costume Design.

When **ALEC GILLIS** (Creatures Designed by) was a kid, his father told stories of makeup great Dick Smith and effects wizard Gene Warren, Sr. Having sold Dick Smith an insurance policy in the '50s and having an aunt who dated the elder Mr. Warren made his father somewhat of an expert in special effects, at least in young Gillis' eyes. With a burning curiosity about the tricks of filmmaking, Gillis decided, at age 13, to pursue a career in creature effects. Films like the original *Planet of the Apes* and the movies of Ray Harryhausen

inspired him to make his own amateur film projects. He learned the basics of monster making by reading books and setting up shop in his mother's garage. He teamed up with then truck driver and hopeful filmmaker James Cameron, building a stop-motion puppet in Cameron's kitchen. The two would later land jobs at Roger Corman's New World Pictures, participating in a variety of tasks, from model building to effects camera operating.

Gillis' stint at New World Pictures (*Battle Beyond the Stars*, *Galaxy of Terror*, *Android*) allowed him to work with future film notables such as Gale Anne Hurd (*Terminator*, *Aliens*, *The Hulk*), Robert and Dennis Skotak (visual effects Oscar® winners respectively for *Aliens* and *The Abyss*) and visual effects supervisor Pat McClung (*Armageddon*, *Dante's Peak*, *Charlie's Angels*). Many of the relationships forged in those early years continue to this day.

While still a novice in the world of visual effects, Gillis began attending UCLA's film school. It has always served him well as an effects artist also to be a filmmaker. Indeed, the worlds are one and the same; an "effects" film without story or character development is nothing more than a series of sequences.

After film school, Gillis worked for many of Hollywood's top makeup and creature effects artists, including Stan Winston. It was here that he was given the responsibility of helping manage the foremost creature shop in the industry. Gillis was also one of Winston's key designers on films such as *Aliens*, *Alien Nation* and *Leviathan*. It was also during this time that he met Tom Woodruff, Jr., with whom he would later form a new creature effects studio.

In 1988, with their mentor's blessings, Gillis and Woodruff left Stan Winston's company and formed Amalgamated Dynamics, Inc. Their first feature film was Gale Anne Hurd's *Tremors*, followed by David Fincher's sequel to the *Alien* franchise, *Alien³*.

The year 1991 was a big one for the team, with two of their films garnering Academy Award® nominations in the visual effects category. *Death Becomes Her* won the award over *Alien³* and helped kick-start the new company's efforts towards establishing Gillis and Woodruff as top artists in the field. Over the years, they have been fortunate to work with the best

filmmakers, win more awards (including receiving another Oscar® nomination for *Starship Troopers*) and expand the industry's perception of the value of animatronics and special makeup effects.

The two have also been busy diversifying the company with an emphasis on personal creativity. They have co-authored a book, "AVP—Alien vs. Predator: The Creature Effects of ADI," which documents the making of the creatures featured in *AVP—Alien vs. Predator*. Gillis and Woodruff's upcoming films include Universal Pictures' *The Thing* and MGM's *The Zookeeper*. They also recently worked on Disney's *G-Force*, *Race to Witch Mountain* and *Old Dogs*, Universal Pictures' *Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant* and Marvel Pictures/Universal Pictures' *The Incredible Hulk*.

As a solo author, Gillis has written and created the pictorial science-fiction book "Worlds," which chronicles the exploration of life-supporting planets. The nearly 100 photo-realistic images were designed by Gillis and realized by the talented artists at ADI.

Gillis is a member of the Directors Guild of America, the Screen Actors Guild, the Writers Guild of America and Local 706, has co-created a TV pilot for the USA network and has directed many short films. He and Woodruff are actively developing a slate of original scripts designed to capitalize on ADI's unique abilities in character design and creation.

Born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1959, **TOM WOODRUFF, JR.** (Creatures Designed by) developed an early interest in movies and monsters from watching late-night broadcasts of the now-classic Universal Pictures monster movies and the stop-motion effects of Ray Harryhausen. Seeing one of the *Planet of the Apes* films in a theater helped focus his attention on the craft of makeup, while getting his hands on his father's 8 mm home-movie camera, at 13 years old, simultaneously encouraged his interest in filmmaking.

Since he lived so far from Hollywood, Woodruff's only professional contact was through the mail, writing letters to the artists whose works he admired most, like John Chambers, who created the *Planet of the Apes* makeup. Early in high school, he began to crank out his own Super 8 movies,

using friends as cast members and saving money for his own camera equipment. In college, Woodruff was allowed to adapt an independent studies curriculum in theater to focus on filmmaking and writing, and continued to work on his own makeup creations, film work, story ideas and screenplays.

In 1982, Woodruff finally made his move to Los Angeles. After a year of working with small makeup effects houses, Woodruff joined Stan Winston's team on *Terminator*. That was the beginning of a five-year period that saw Woodruff become a key coordinator under Winston, with the opportunity to work on such features as *Aliens* and *Predator*, as well as television shows such as *Amazing Stories*. During this time, Woodruff began wearing the complicated makeup and costumes of the creatures designed at the studio. His physical build and tolerance, as well as his ability to perform as an actor, led to his portraying the title characters in such movies as *Monster Squad*, *Pumpkinhead* and *Leviathan*.

Woodruff continued to write, ultimately teaming up with another of Winston's designer-technicians, Alec Gillis, to co-produce, write and direct *The Demon With Three Tales*, a promotional piece designed to sell a feature anthology project. As interest was beginning to generate on the *Demon* project, Winston was in a position where letting two of his main crew members go would not interfere with his plans. Woodruff and Gillis formed Amalgamated Dynamics, Inc. primarily as an imposing-sounding source from which to pursue their own makeup and effects projects, also with the intent to use the company as an umbrella under which their own film productions could eventually grow.

Woodruff and Gillis quickly grew to become two of the major character-effects talents in the business today, with their work gathering numerous accolades and awards including an Academy Award® for *Death Becomes Her* and multiple Academy Award® nominations for *Starship Troopers* and *Alien*³.

Not content to create only the visual image, both Woodruff and Gillis continue to be personally involved in the performances of their characters. Woodruff continues to perform in a variety of creature and animal roles as lead characters in the features *AVP—Alien vs. Predator*, *Scary Movie 3*, *Looney*

Tunes: Back in Action, Evolution, Bedazzled, Hollow Man, Alien³, Alien: Resurrection, Jumanji and The X-Files, and television series such as Nip/Tuck, Chicago Hope and Seven Days.

In 1988, Woodruff joined the Directors Guild of America and directed a number of segments for the Dick Clark series *Beyond Belief*. He continues to create his own in-house projects with Gillis and work on solo efforts, which include writing, producing and directing short films. His extensive background in practical effects and his leadership skills allow him to take charge of 100-man crews, and make directing a logical and natural extension of the creative process that builds on his recognized expertise.

Along with Alec Gillis, Woodruff co-wrote “AVP—Alien vs. Predator: The Creature Effects of ADI,” a book which documents the entire creative process behind creating the huge cast of creatures for the hit film *AVP—Alien vs. Predator*. They also recently worked on Disney’s *G-Force*, *Race to Witch Mountain* and *Old Dogs*, Universal Pictures’ *Cirque du Freak: The Vampire’s Assistant* and Marvel Pictures/Universal Pictures’ *The Incredible Hulk*.

Woodruff is also developing additional properties with new writers to create a slate of productions that will see Woodruff and Gillis continue their growth not only as character effects and makeup artists, but also as filmmakers.

MATTHEW MARGESON (Music Composed by) is a native of New Jersey, having studied classical piano performance at a very early age. While studying film scoring and composition at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, he learned the basics of contemporary film music and honed his skills as a piano player, performing in every state on the eastern seaboard.

In 2003, Margeson relocated to Los Angeles and was invited to start an apprenticeship with composer Klaus Badelt (*The Recruit*, *Catwoman*, *Constantine*). In 2005, Margeson took the position of chief technical engineer for composer James Dooley at Hans Zimmer’s studio, Remote Control Productions (RCP), in Santa Monica, California.

While at RCP, Margeson was able to further develop his composition technique and collaborate with Zimmer, as well as other composers, on both feature films and video games such as *Angels & Demons*, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* and *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*. He has also written music for various television commercials and web series. Orchestras in both Los Angeles and London, in addition to other groups throughout Eastern Europe, have recorded his music.

In 2007, Margeson participated in ASCAP's Television and Film Scoring Workshop, where he was awarded the ASCAP Foundation Steve Kaplan TV & Film Studies Scholarship.

He recently completed his original score to *Burning Palms*, for Films in Motion.

Interview from the I Am Rogue network by JimmyO

A few weeks ago, a handful of journalists were invited to take a tour of Hydraulx with Colin and Greg Strause showing us around. Yet there was something even more exciting, we were given a chance to take in a few scenes from their latest feature, Skyline.

The Hydraulx building is one of the most fascinating bits of architecture you will ever see. It certainly seems like it would be pretty joyful walking into that office on a daily basis. We had the chance to see every single part of the filmmaking process that goes into the effects side of things thanks to Greg and Colin. From the early stages on, it was a fascinating journey into the creation of special effects. If anything, my only complaint is that we didn't have enough time to sit back and really take it all in. The kind of work they do is pretty incredible

While we were guided through the premises, the Strause Brothers began talking about Skyline and what audiences had in store. Soon, we all made way into the screening room, a place where most of their work is done, and we watched several key scenes from the movie. While we were excited before, it definitely increased our enthusiasm for the special effect laden feature.

What we did see included a longer version of the rooftop sequence. This is just after the moment where Eric Balfour and Donald Faison witness the mass alien abductions and all those devastating blue lights. Things get pretty nasty for them as they soon realize a couple of the alien crafts are heading right for them. When the small ships (alien in form) get closer, they desperately try to get back inside the building from the rooftop entrance. It is an intense bit of action that soon has another character opening the door and looking into the blue lights. This is clearly a bad thing as it tends to mess up your skin and make you alien fodder for the taking. While we've witnessed bits and pieces of this footage, this more complete scene looks terrific. In other words, I can't wait to see this.

Next up, we see a few of the characters trying to escape the building in the parking garage. Now, truthfully, I'm not sure how messed up the building is for them to want to leave, being that all the alien ships are waiting outside, but I'm sure we'll have our reasons when we see the film. So our heroes are trying to leave, and not surprisingly, there is something waiting outside. And yes, it is something really big and nasty. The beastie is big and nasty and pretty damn powerful. In fact, we see a few more sequences with these monsters, and they are insanely scary f*ckers! One fellow has the unfortunate problem of losing his head thanks to one of the monsters. As violence goes, it looks like we'll get an eyeful when Skyline hits theatres this coming November 12.

After the footage, which was most definitely impressive, we sat around with The Strause Brothers and cast members, David Zayas, Brittany Daniel and Donald Faison as they talked about the experience of Skyline.

Can you take us back to the earliest stages of this? When did the idea come about?

Colin Strause: About eleven months ago, I think. Basically, we came up with this idea about two weeks before Thanksgiving. We shot basically a teaser test on Thanksgiving Day. We kind of had a concept for it and one of the reasons we called

the production company Black Monday was because there was this shitty meeting and we were just kind of tired of the whole process and everything. Literally, at that Monday lunch, we said, "You know? We should just do our own thing." One of our agents at CAA worked on Paranormal Activity and he said, "You guys should try an independent. Something you guys can actually control. Do your own shit and don't have anyone else tell you what to do. It'll be pretty liberating."

Greg Strause: We were sitting around a lunch table at Houston's and I pitched Colin and Liam and Joshua, the two co-writers, an idea that they rejected quickly, but the essence was that we shoot something in my house for 50 grand. That's kind of what it morphed into in two weeks. Colin: It was a terrible idea to start with. (Laughing) Basically, from there we started coming up with concepts and we decided to shoot this teaser as a test. Can we do it in the unit? Can we do the lighting there? When you're shooting in a residential location you can't have generators. There are all kinds of things you can't do. So part of it was finding out if we could actually pull it off. Liam had lived in the building for a couple of years as well as Greg, so we knew every inch of the building really intimately. It really helped when we were writing the script. Normally, you write a script and then you have to go and find locations. This was a case where literally every scene was written for exact places in the building. We know that this one chase scene takes you to that doorway. That doorway takes you to the swimming pool and then there's only one way out of the pool. We were literally able to map the movie out like that. Then we started casting in early December. We started shooting the movie with nothing at that point. We were self-financing everything and had no idea about distribution or anything. We just started shooting through it and, at the Berlin film festival, the script combined with that teaser we shot on Thanksgiving Day and got us some really good pre-sells from Berlin. From there, we showed our buddy Brett [Ratner] a little bit of the end of the movie. That's when he brought over Relativity which then got us to Universal. The whole thing sort of exploded from there.

So you had a full script when you started shooting?

Colin: Oh yeah, we did. Josh and Liam basically --

Liam O'Donnell: We had a first draft in December...

Colin: It moved fast because there's no one else to talk to. It's literally Josh, Christian, me and Greg and that's it. When we were doing casting, it would just be the five of us in the room. We liked someone and that was it. Normally you'd have to go to the studio and then have to get their head casting people through. Then you need to all the junior executives to approve. Then the co-president, who has to go to the chairman. It's just f*cking amazing how many assholes it takes to get a single decision made. It's the most frustrating part of the whole thing because you can't f*cking do anything. Then they wait you until the very end and you're stuck with whoever you get. We wanted to do something a lot different with this.

Greg: Hint, hint. Fox. (laughs)

Colin: One of the cool things is, for example, David's role. We actually wrote the role for David [Zayas]. It was the most awesome thing that we actually got David in the movie... From day one, we were saying David would be f*cking perfect for this. And that's kind of how we tuned the character. And it worked out. It was such an

interesting process. We literally told all the actors to come over here and we did the casting just down in the conference room. It was real intimate and real simple and the whole process lasted less than three weeks, I think.

Brittany Daniel: I think I came and met with you guys and you said, "Do you want to do it?" and I said, "Okay!"

Why do you think it is that has our culture so preoccupied with the idea of alien invasion right now?

Gregg: Culturally? I'm not sure. We've always liked it... (DONALD FAISON ENTERS) One of the things about the genre is that it plays to ideas that are big visual concepts. There was this notion that Colin and I had a long time ago that we never turned into a story that was one of those visual ideas that maybe you use for a music video treatment or who knows where. You just sort of put it in mental storage. It was the idea that aliens would actually lure us out of our houses and places of refuge by using this kind of mesmerizing, beautiful-sounding light. So that was sort of the nexus of the whole thing. I didn't have a story wrapped around it. That's where Liam and Josh did such a great job. But it was this cool concept that we called "The Sirens". It was an idea based off the siren singing that would draw the sailors and crash their ships into the rocks. We asked, "What if aliens did that?" That would be a really cool MO for these guys. And the minute we're outside, whoosh! They abduct us. That was really the starting point for us. It was more of a notion than anything, but we just kind of built on it from that. We've been working on aliens since 1996 or 1997 when we were pretty young and just kind of fresh off the boat and had moved here from the Midwest. Every week we were doing some sort of different alien effect doing the visuals on The X-Files. It was just something that we fell into. We're sci-fi fans. You kind of migrate to what you like.

So what sets yours apart from some of the other ones?

Gregg: For this really smart independent, I think one of the things that sets it apart is that we've been able to really bring some big, disaster movie-sized visuals to it. That's one of the things we're really excited about. There are also a couple of different threads and subplots involving the aliens and their motives and how they navigate and what they're after. That'll kind of continue through the sequel. Those are kind of points we've made that are important to this story.

Colin: Also just the scale, too. It's not like its just attacking one city. Pretty much by act two, 99.9% of everyone is gone. There's an interesting scale to it where it's not like something where it's a little battle and can you fight back? It's basically, you're wiped out. How do these people survive the next day or so if 99% of the world is gone? And it's such a simplistic way that everyone is taken that everything stays untouched. It's not like cities are destroyed or anything. It's like everyone is literally vacuumed off.

Gregg: It's a biblical scale event.

Colin: And also the building is like having box seats to the end of the world. That's one of the cool things that, when we went into Gregg's place, we were talking about. We were sitting in his living room and you think of, like Terminator 2's nuclear bomb going off, it would be sweet to watch it from right here. You're going to see the

shockwave. One of our other partners in our digital cosmetics company, Lola, during the Northridge quake, was up on a mountainside. He actually watched, as the earthquake hit, and saw all the lights move up and down. He saw the shockwave deforming the earth. He said it was so amazing watching an event that big. And he just happened to be looking out the window when it hit. It was mind-boggling. So we thought, if you're in that building when something big happened, why not do it from that vantage point? It's kind of a neat perspective.

On a normal film, you wind up toning down FX for cost reasons. What the rule for that going into this?

Colin: The rule was to add twice as much.

Liam: We were actually responsible writing the script. We always thought we'd have some big things here and there, but we thought, "Okay. We're only going to get big when we have to." And then these guys come in and say, "Oh, you can add a couple more shots. It's okay." And it quickly doubled in size.

Colin: I think we have 700 shots at Comic-Con and now we're hitting north of nine hundred now.

Can the cast talk about their characters?

Brittany: I play a woman named Candice. I'm this self-absorbed LA socialite girl. Through the movie, she really has a comeuppance. She realizes that the world doesn't revolve around her. She doesn't exactly save the day, but she's one of the people that takes part. I live in this building so I'm able to help all of us get out when we need to get out. And kind of kick a little ass.

David Zayas: I play Oliver. He's the concierge of the building and he works in the building. He guides them in when there's a party and everything. After the event happens, he's one of the sole survivors of the people that live and work in the building. He kind of joins up with the rest of them and tries to escape.

Donald: I play Gregg and Colin Strauss, pretty much. I am a special effects genius and everybody pretty much works for me. When it all goes down, being that I'm Gregg and Colin Strauss, of course I'm the leader... I play Terry. He's pretty much based on these two guys. Gregg specifically.

Liam: It's Gregg's penthouse so we thought that the only way to make Gregg likeable is to have Donald play him.

You mentioned a sequel. Is this being developed as a franchise?

Colin: Yeah.

Gregg: Correct me if I'm wrong but, once we got the first draft in, we were playing around and addressing our own internal notes and going through the development process, we were saying, "This is kinda fun and cool." You never want to end it at that. There's a commercial side of it, but then there's just some ownership that develops around something that, once you see it through from treatment to script, you just want to keep going with it. We've had a lot of fun with it.

Colin: It ends in such an interesting, weird, dark place, too.

Liam: Yeah. We did so much heavy lifting to get the characters to this really cool place that you want to go on with them.

Gregg: Yeah. We've already got almost a forty page treatment of the second one done that we plan to shoot in the spring.

David: (Sarcastically) I can't wait to the sequel. I can't wait. (Laughing)

Gregg: We kind of worked the crew out quite a bit. One of your first days, you must have ran what, 20 fucking miles?

David: All I know is that one day I was standing around thinking, "I'm about 15 years older than everybody here." But I got in shape for that movie.

Donald: Independent means pretty much no stuntmen. So we all had to do our own. And Gregg is against CG monsters, so you've got to do a lot of ducking and a lot of jumping. A lot of falling. That hurts. Especially on independents.

Can you comment on the level of gore in this film? There was a lovely decapitation. Any other treats for gore-hounds?

Gregg: In that style, yeah. When we originally wrote it it was such a small budget that we were just going to do it R. Then we wrote the script out and, because of the way they were taking everyone's brains and everything, we thought that it really doesn't lend itself to R rated violence. It's technically PG-13, but just because there's no blood. It's all in the way that they atomize flesh and tissue. It's more that sort of style. What they do is not an inherently gory thing. They're literally snatching people and decapitating them. It's that sort of style of action. It's not creatures cutting people in half. But it's still some kind of creepy ass shit.

David: I'm bringing my grandson!

Colin: There's definitely some cool sci-fi moments in that vein. I don't want to give away too many of them here today, but we've done our really dark, really gory movie. We didn't want to repeat that with this. We have a broader audience and we don't need to kill seven year olds. We got that out of us.

Not only are there a lot of alien movies, but they're all evil forces. Do you think there's a reason we don't see friendly alien films anymore?

Liam: You just had one of the biggest alien hits ever a year ago where they weren't.

Besides District 9.

Colin: I thought you were talking about Avatar.

Liam: That too, yeah.

Colin: I think one of the differences, too is that -- and I don't want to give away too much of the plot -- but there's many different definitions of evil. There's evil as an

armed-force mechanized, politicalized creatures coming and doing something versus parasites or other types of creatures that are on more of a survival instinct doing their thing. That level of evil, to me, is all dependent on the side that you're standing on. I mean, we kill cows and eat hamburgers and I love fucking steak. I don't care about those cows. But if you're a fXcking cow, it's probably not that cool.

Donald: No, it's not!

Colin: So with our creatures, it's kind of like that. Ours are all organic. Even the mothership is a giant living thing. There's a very different sort of thing happening with them. Instead of them being hellbent on Earth's destruction, they're just kind of doing their thing. That, to me, is kind of what made it a little bit more interesting. We're not making a weird political statement. It's just an event. It's an event that's happening and now it's too late and it's how you deal with that. That, to me, is an interesting human struggle. You're losing people you love. Everyone's gone. Especially with Eric and Scottie's characters who are flown in from New York, they can't call their mother. They're cut off from what's going on. They're completely isolated. They're in an alien land. There are aliens taking over where they are. They have no homefield advantage. It's one of those things, too, where, with these types of movies, it's like a gaper's delay on a freeway when you see an accident. You don't want to see these things happen but, when they do, people like to watch. And it's the same thing where, if you look, that's the way that the creatures get us. It's such a simplistic attack on human nature that makes it so efficient. It kind of makes for a different way of telling the story.

Can you talk about the fan response as it already exists. It feels like Comic-Con really brought this film to the forefront.

Gregg: The internet has given us some pretty good buzz.

Liam: I think the best post was, "Despite the fact that Colin and Gregg are directing this movie, it looks really cool" (Laughing) It think that's the first really positive sign.

Gregg: Our feeling -- and we're kind of in this little isolated place where we are -- is that we've seen our kids out walking around Hollywood wearing a Skyline shirt and people will stop them and say, "Oh my god! I can't wait to see that. It looks awesome." That seems to be the response that is trickling back to us. Until I heard how silent you guys were when the footage stopped.

Given the quality of CGI and the scale you suggest, this feels like an event film. Do think we're moving into a new era where these kinds of films can be made without studios?

Colin: Yes. And we're not going to make another studio movie. We're going to always do this. And Universal has been great for marketing. You need studios for distribution. But for us it's the creation process. Movies can get really expensive. We've worked on 74 movies, I think, and we've seen hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on those films. To us, we know how to make the movies. We've done it. We've seen how many times people have f*cked up going the wrong way. We know how you can make that process better. One of the big things is, you have to own your own cameras. One of the big jokes is, if you look at a studio like Fox, if you want to shoot on Fox's stages, you need to be Universal or Warner Bros. or someone.

Because Fox makes more money renting their studios to someone else than letting their own movies shoot there. Distribution and everything is fantastic and that's where we need the love because we can't do that. But for making the movies, this is the way to do it. And this way, everyone is in on the movie. There's no trailers. There's nothing. Everyone is a partner, basically. The whole crew, everyone, did deferrals. Everyone believed in the project. It wasn't just a job and just a paycheck. Me and Gregg literally made eight bucks an hour. That's the DGA minimum for doing the film.

Donald: That being said, the way of doing films like this now is really going to weed out filmmakers who are not talented, that are not going to be able to do that under these circumstances. I think that, to the credit of Colin and Gregg, they actually made this happen because they knew what they were doing. They had a vision and they were able to execute whatever they needed to do with the limited funds that they had. That's not easy to do. If you have a filmmaker who gets 50 million dollars to make a film, they're going to get a lot of help. If you get \$500,000 to make a film, you're really going to have to be creative. I think that's going to weed out the really good filmmakers from those who aren't going to be able to cut it. If you go to see a movie like this, you're expecting to see Will Smith and Bruce Willis. Or Sylvester Stallone fighting the aliens. Something like this gives all of us an opportunity as well. People who don't make \$25 million a movie. So that being said, it's great that it gives guys like me a shot to do something that I've always wanted to do and that was to feel like a badass action hero fighting aliens.

David: It's also an opportunity to work in an environment that is all about what we're doing. It's all about the actual story of what we're doing. I mean, people really care. You go on the set and everybody gives a shit about what's happening. Everybody really cares about what's going on. They're not just there for a paycheck. They're there because they really believe in this project. And that, unfortunately, is not as common anymore. I think this was a really unique experience in that.

Can everyone in the cast talk about how you know the brothers?

David: I used to babysit them (Laughing). No, I just met them. I wasn't in LA when the original casting happened. I was dealing with family issues in Florida. So when I got here, I came into this very room. They showed me the trailer and I was like, "Wow!" I said, "Yeah. Let's do it." I was extremely excited. I saw the enthusiasm in their eyes and in how they presented the project to me. I was on-board. As an actor, I'm always hungry for enthusiasm. It's ultimately about a great story and making people feel a certain way. I got that from them. That's when I met them.

Brittany: And I used to date Colin (Laughing). Kidding. No, I kind of came in in the 11th hour. I just got a call from my manager to rush down to their offices here. I was just back from the gym and they were like, "You have to get down there now! There's an awesome script and they're interested in you. You have to go there and sit in a locked room and read the script right there. Then the guys are going to talk to you after." So I read the script and was like, "It's awesome! I love it!" Then they showed me the test footage and then, I think, in the car ten minutes later they called me and said they wanted me to do it.

Colin: Pretty painless.

Brittany: Yeah, it was great. I think we started rehearsal a couple of days later. It was kind of a quick process, but it was awesome.

Donald: You guys all have great stories. You came and they pretty much offered you the role. I had to audition for this bad boy. Twice! I came in the first time and said, "I'm just going to try to do my best to make these cats laugh." In all these alien movies, there's always some type of comic relief. So I went on the audition and I tried to make every line a punch line. It was clear that that was not what they were looking for.

Colin: Confirmed.

Donald: It was obvious when I walked out. So I thought I blew it. But I guess I got good people fighting for me. They said, "They'll see you again." I came in again and I guess I gave them a better performance. Then I read the script and I got to see all of the trailer and stuff like that. But it wasn't like, "Donald, come in and let us show you around Hydralx. You guys got the good stuff."

Do you get any comic moments in the film anyway? Does anyone? Are there lighter moments?

Donald: That's an argument that I've had with these guys. I've said, "At some point, I'm gonna say something funny." And they say, "It's the end of the world. Do you there's comedy at the end of the world?"

Colin: Yeah, the first act is a bit of recruiting seduction "come out to LA" kind of story. So there's a lighter to the first act, absolutely. You get to see the charming side of Donald.

Gregg: And the slightly sleazy side as well.

Donald: We're just giving away too much now, guys.

Gregg: But yeah, once the shit hits the fan, he's stone cold Donald Faison. But it's not dour.

How far into the movie is the nuke?

Gregg: Most of the biggest set pieces are all after that.

Bigger than a nuke?

Gregg: Yeah, it gets better.

The nice thing about doing a movie like this is that, when you started it, you weren't having to rush to make a release date.

Colin: Well now we are. Now there's eight guns pointed at the back of my head. But this thing could have literally just sat on a shelf. This could be our own little personal movie we're watching here. We had no idea. We knew what we were hoping for, but it was a giant gamble. We just kind of sat around and greenlit the movie ourselves at

that lunch and said, "Fuck it. We're doing it. Let's go." This thing could have ended a thousand different ways.

Liam: There's really no reason we decided on February for the start date, either. We just knew that if we kept the pressure on...

Colin: And then how quickly Brett and Relativity got it and then Universal got right in. It's been fantastic. Love started piling on this thing and we're trying to think about when we want this thing to come out. Maybe Christmas? Next year? Who knows? And then we're looking at the calendar and we found November.

Gregg: That was Universal. They had their date in November.

Colin: And we were like, "Let's go for it!" It seemed like suicide at first but, normally, when movies have too long for the release date, which we've seen so many times, there's no end pressure. So you get stuck in these perpetual jerk-off sessions where you spend two months doing what the director wants and two months doing what the producer wants. Then the studio. It's a swirling thing where, when you actually have that deadline, you get to do everything once the right way because there's no time to change it. That's what we've been doing on this since we don't have anyone else to prove it to but ourselves. We're just doing it the way we want it done. And once the shot is done, that's it. Move on to the next one. That pressure is actually great. It's been a little gnarly. We've been here seven days a week.

Gregg: There's a saying that a project will always expand to fill its calendar and there's just no reason, in this case, to allow that. So it's good they had the date. It doesn't matter who you are, it's human nature to procrastinate a little bit. Everyone needs a little shelf once in awhile.

Colin: But once the snowball starts coming down the mountain, it builds. It really helps. All the marketing and that kind of stuff brings it together and growing out of that...

How long was principal photography?

Gregg: 42 days.

Donald: It actually went by really fast. The great thing about shooting in an apartment building with a limited crew is that it really forces everybody to stick together and really form up. Shooting with these guys, that's what it felt like. After day three, you're best friends with the whole crew. Everybody has each other's back. I'll hold a boom mic. It really turns into, it sounds like a cliché, but a family type atmosphere. You come to work and really enjoy working with the people you work with. At the end of the day, it's like, "Great job everybody!" That's pretty much all I can say. These guys are great. I don't think any of us would show up today if they weren't.