

Gay of the Dead: Tim Kincaid a.k.a. Joe Gage

Written by Sean Abley
Sunday, 16 May 2010 08:28



Mention Joe Gage to any gay man of a certain age, and the response will be something along the lines of “L.A. TOOL & DIE is the best gay porn film...ever.” But unless they’re checking Gage’s IMDb credits, they probably don’t realize he also directed a handful of direct-to-video horror/sci-fi films in the '80s under the name Tim Kincaid, including MUTANT HUNT and ROBOT HOLOCAUST.



I discovered the Kincaid/Gage connection only recently, while negotiating the stage rights to his “Working Man Trilogy” of L.A. TOOL & DIE, KANSAS CITY TRUCKING CO. and EL PASO WRECKING CORP. (Yes, I’m doing stage versions of all three, but that’s a story for another magazine...) I was thrilled to find that my favorite porn director was also the man behind some of my earliest VHS exploitation purchases.

Kincaid/Gage is still busy as ever, but he graciously submitted to an e-mail interview.

SEAN ABLEY: When you started out as a filmmaker, did you have a preference for the types of films you made? Were you a porn filmmaker who was dying to make horror films? Vice versa? Neither?

TIM KINCAID/JOE GAGE: I was an actor who made my living principally doing TV commercials. Grew up devouring horror movies, was exposed to gay porn at the ripe old age of 21. Worked my way up on the other side of the camera as a crewmember on indies, and soft and hard porn. Got an offer to direct straight porn, did a few, then raised enough dough to finance a project of my own. And, following my tastes and instinct, went with gay porn. Eventually branched out to bargain-basement horror and science fiction, utilizing porn practices such as two- and three-day shoots.

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ABLEY: Your “Working Man Trilogy,” KANSAS CITY TRUCKING CO., EL PASO WRECKING CORP. and L.A. TOOL & DIE, are some of the most famous gay porn films of all time. They’ve been in constant circulation since you finished them. Until I saw your horror flicks, I just chalked up the more experimental aspects of the films to typical porn production—nonlinear narratives, jump cuts, crazy plot turns. But I’ve seen your horror films, and you’re obviously a filmmaker who can do straightforward narrative, so I have to surmise that the avant-garde aspects of the porn films are purposeful. Can you give me some insight into what you were trying to accomplish with these films?



KINCAID: As a underemployed actor in New York, I spent lots of days at the movies, in everything from fleabag 42nd Street theaters to art houses as well as first-run venues. I saw everything, including lots of underground Kuchar Bros./Kenneth Anger material. I’m a sponge, and KCTC was heavily influenced by both the work of experimental filmmakers and the likes of Russ Meyer, Dario Argento and Sergio Leone.

ABLEY: KANSAS CITY TRUCKING CO. ends in a very startling way. At the end of the final-act orgy, you push in on a close-up of the stunned expression on a young kid’s face. I get the impression that, although the character is now part of this gay world, we’re not supposed to take this development in a completely positive light.

KINCAID: I stole it. It’s the last shot in Truffaut’s THE 400 BLOWS. As Antoine Doinel stares into the unknowable void that is his future, so does Joe in my movie. And I don’t necessarily believe he’s become a part of the gay world.

ABLEY: What can you tell me about THE FEMALE RESPONSE?

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KINCAID: I was sitting in a hotel lobby waiting for my ride to Boston, where I was booked for a couple of weeks of extra/stunt-driving work in THE BOSTON STRANGLER, when I read a *New York Times* article about the burgeoning soft-porn industry. I instantly decided that was how I'd get my foot in the door as a director.

ABLEY: You made 11 porn films before making BAD GIRLS DORMITORY in 1986, when home video was just beginning to explode. What were the circumstances behind that project?

KINCAID: A pal of mine with a hardcore background made a women's-prison movie that became a surprise hit [CONCRETE JUNGLE]. I was inspired to try one, and took the jailbait approach. It ended up on USA cable's UP ALL NIGHT and played almost continuously on and off for a year or two.



ABLEY: I can actually remember the exact situation when I bought my copy of BREEDERS, in the big box! All that alien raping was awesome! Can you talk about working with Ed French, a special makeup FX guy who never got as much credit as he deserved for his work.

KINCAID: Ed was meticulous and extremely talented. Sadly, I lost track of him.

ABLEY: Teresa Farley made two films for you, BAD GIRLS DORMITORY and BREEDERS, and then totally disappeared. I'm sort of obsessed by her. What happened? Did she just stop acting?

KINCAID: She was a great beauty, with a mother who was her fierce protector. Kept company with Mario Van Peebles for a while. Took some acting classes with a top pro, then vanished off the grid.

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ABLEY: Your next film, ROBOT HOLOCAUST, starred Jennifer Delora (also in BAD GIRLS DORMITORY), who, at the time, was probably one of the best self-promoters in the low-budget biz. Any memories of working with her?

KINCAID: She was extremely cooperative and enthusiastic, up for anything I suggested. A real team player. All the other girls loved her.



ABLEY: RIOT ON 42ND STREET features Jeff Fahey, who would eventually accrue a long list of genre credits. Bonus points—I had a *complete* crush on him in LAWNMOWER MAN, and wrote him a mash-note fan letter. (Still waiting for my reply, Jeff...) One of the comments on IMDb for RIOT is, “What is Jeff Fahey doing in this film?” So, to help out that IMDb-er, what is Jeff Fahey doing in this film?

KINCAID: Jeff had just left a soap, ONE LIFE TO LIVE, and had accepted a role in SILVERADO, which was to go into production in several weeks. His acting coach knew about RIOT ON 42ND STREET and mentioned it to Jeff, who decided to get in front of a movie camera for me first to see how movie acting differed from TV work. He was a joy to work with; cried real tears in a monologue that was a high point in a messy project.

ABLEY: Kate Collins is also in RIOT. Her IMDb lists a grand total of three credits for her: RIOT, an episode of L.A. LAW and an 11-year stint on ALL MY CHILDREN. As an AMC fan, I’m thrilled she was in one of your films! How did you find her?

KINCAID: Kate’s agent brought her in. She was fresh, beautiful, talented and the daughter of astronaut Michael Collins—how could I not hire her?

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ABLEY: Rick Gianasi starred in six films for you, including MUTANT HUNT. Uh, that guy is more than easy on the eyes! Any chance that he's secretly a gay porn star and I don't realize it? Would he be the Uma Thurman to your Quentin Tarantino?

KINCAID: Rick was sort of my muse for a while. The ideal movie leading man. Tall, dark and handsome. Straight as an arrow. Worked in a soap for a time, then opened up a bar somewhere downtown with some college buddies.

ABLEY: According to the IMDb, you co-directed SINBAD OF THE SEVEN SEAS, which starred Lou Ferrigno—your second deaf star, after Jennifer Delora. Was this an Italian co-production? How was it working with an international cast?

KINCAID: I didn't work on this picture, a fact I have notified IMDb about for years. I also did not appear as an actor in something called COP BLOWERS, honest! Nor did I have anything to do with that yellow-hankie movie. They have yet to correct these mistakes.

ABLEY: SHE'S BACK starred Carrie Fisher! Whoa! Any non-litigious stories you'd like to share about Ms. Fisher?

KINCAID: No.

ABLEY: THE OCCULTIST not only involves the occult, but cyborgs! You have cyborgs in quite a few of your films. Is this a fetish?

KINCAID: Infected by the TERMINATOR virus.

ABLEY: I scoured your IMDb and could only find two guys from your pornos in your horror films. Most of the guys in your early stuff are actually good actors, so I was surprised that they aren't

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in your mainstream films. Was that a conscious decision, to avoid that crossover?

KINCAID: I auditioned a number of my hardcore actors for the mainstream stuff. There were just others who did better.

ABLEY: After THE OCCULTIST, there's a 12-year break from any filmmaking, and then you went back to porn in 2002. You seemed to be having a good little run there in low-budget horror. Why did you stop making movies?

KINCAID: I got married and started a family. My wife made it clear she would prefer it if I went into another line of business. I am no longer married.

ABLEY: You got married and had kids? Now, I hate to be the person that asks this very obvious question, but I know it's going to be the first one that my readers will want to know the answer to, so: Are you bisexual? Can you give me a bit more context to you getting married?

KINCAID: I don't publicly discuss my personal life, except to say that I was married for a number of years, had a couple of kids, raised 'em and am now divorced. I find identity politics a screaming bore and refrain from labeling myself at all. I'm just a guy. I guess I'm gonna have to write a book.

ABLEY: I have a friend who has a friend—don't you love stories that start out that way?—who insists that he knew you as a casting director in Hollywood right about the time you stopped making films. This sounds more like an urban legend, like an elusive "Joe Gage" spotting in the wild than a true story. What were you doing during your time away from gay porn and horror films?

KINCAID: The urban legend is semi-true. My producing partner back in the day was indeed a major television and motion-picture casting director, and was one for years afterward. I spent a good part of my hiatus in development hell, then wrote several contemporary potboiler novels under another name, before returning to the fold.

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ABLEY: When you came back from your break, why did you go back to porn rather than “legit” films?

KINCAID: I contacted several persons from the old days. Porn money was the first to come through.

ABLEY: I think it’s sort of sad that whenever someone mentions a gay porn star or director from the pre-condom era, the assumption is that they’re dead. And 90 percent of the time, that’s a correct assumption. The other side of that is when you realize someone from that era is still around, you’re amazed, especially if they’re still working. What’s your secret?

KINCAID: Clean living.

ABLEY: In the last 10 years, you’ve made 28 films. What keeps you working?

KINCAID: I love what I do.

ABLEY: Any last words for the fans of both genres in which you’ve worked?

KINCAID: In the words of the immortal R. Crumb, “Keep on truckin’.”

*If you’re over 18, you can check out “Joe Gage’s” blog [here](#) . Kincaid/Gage will host a screening of Russ Meyer’s legendary *FASTER, PUSSYCAT! KILL! KILL!* on Monday, July 26 at New York City’s [IFC Center](#) (323 Avenue of the Americas).*

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