Makeup FX artist/designer Robert Hall is feeling the heat, both physically and metaphorically. On a scorching 97-degree Georgia day, even the air conditioning in the makeup trailer is laboring hard as Hall, four artists/technicians and the EPK team try to maneuver around an actor (who must remain nameless at this point), working hard to get the gruesome character ready for a major setup which will take the bulk of this day’s shoot on the QUARANTINE 2: TERMINAL set. (See an exclusive photo and a couple of other shots from the movie after the jump.)

The makeup, which involves over 30 appliances to the face, head and torso, should have taken just under five hours to apply. But it’s now close to noon, and Hall informs a querying production assistant to tell writer/director John Pogue that the actor will be on set within the hour. Hall allows the EPK photographer to shoot one more application sequence, then urges his crew, headed by rising local makeup FX maven Toby Sells, to get their skates on. “We need [the actor] on set in half an hour, tops. Move it, guys,” Hall urges before stepping outside into the parking-lot inferno to return a phone call.

“It’s great to be working with Rob again,” Sells tells Fango; he also seconded Hall on Brett Eisner’s remake of THE CRAZIES, lensed in south Georgia early last year. “But we’ve got a smaller budget and schedule and a lot to do on this film. In some ways, what we’re trying to do here is more ambitious than CRAZIES, because we have such limitations.” Not that Sells has had an easy time on movies with budgets bigger than QUARANTINE 2: TERMINAL; if it wasn’t dozens of infected on the George A. Romero remake, it was hundreds of the undead on ZOMBIELAND.

“This is an infection movie, not a zombie film,” stresses on-set producer Marc Bienstock, whose Sony sequel résumé also includes SINGLE WHITE FEMALE 2: THE PSYCHO and three WILD THINGS follow-ups. “And it is *not* a remake of [REC] 2. We want to make that clear.”

QUARANTINE, directed by John Erick Dowdle, was, of course, an almost shot-by-shot remake of Jaume Balagueró and Paco Plaza’s superior Spanish shocker [REC]. And while the recently U.S.-released [REC] 2 picks up minutes after the climax of the first film, this American sequel takes a totally different narrative departure. All Fango is allowed to reveal at this stage is that the infection has escaped the confinement of the first film’s apartment building and ends up traveling on a small commuter jet. Once the outbreak is identified, the plane is forced to land at an isolated airport, which is subsequently quarantined. But as horror fans know, trying to keep a good homicidal mutating virus under wraps is easier said than done. The cast includes Mercedes Masöhn, Josh Cook, Bre Blair (first three photos), John Curran (last photo) Mattie Liptak, Ignacio Serricchio and Noree Victoria.

“We wanted to try something different; I didn’t want to do a remake for my directorial debut,” explains first-time helmer Pogue, whose screenwriting credits include THE SKULLS, its sequel, the ROLLERBALL remake and GHOST SHIP. “The only thing QUARANTINE 2: TERMINAL has in common with [REC] 2 is that our film takes place almost immediately after the events of QUARANTINE.”

Pogue excuses himself from a corner of the immense, labyrinthine, vacant toweling factory in Griffin, GA, where the film is being shot, to return to the cramped confines of the live set where a violent fight is being rehearsed. It’s four days before the movie’s due to wrap, but Pogue appears calm and focused despite the pressure of bringing in a $5-million feature on time and budget, especially one as FX-intensive as this.

“There’s a lot of stuff we planned on doing that we had to drop because of time,” Hall, head honcho of FX outfit Almost Human, admits. “But there are at least three moments in the movie which will grab and excite the audience.” Hall then gives the prosthesis-coated actor a final seal of approval before they move in front of the camera to test the makeup under the lighting.

“Having Rob on board was logical, since he did the effects on the first, and he’s full of great ideas,” Pogue notes as he sits beside his monitor. “I’ll admit my original take on the material was…maybe a bit restrained, but Rob encouraged me to push it in places where I would have been more cautious. And he was right, and I’m excited by what we’ve done.”

No release date has been set yet for QUARANTINE 2: TERMINAL, but look for a full set report in a future issue of Fango.

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