

Tom Atkins talks “DRIVE ANGRY”...and “HALLOWEEN III”!

Written by Michael Gingold
Monday, 15 March 2010 15:18

DRIVE ANGRY

At the just-concluded Monster-Mania convention in New Jersey, Fango got a chance to chat with genre-fave actor Tom Atkins, beloved from his roles in NIGHT OF THE CREEPS, THE FOG and others, about his soon-to-lens role in Patrick Lussier’s DRIVE ANGRY. In the course of the interview, Atkins also dropped some hints about another highly anticipated Lussier project to follow...

DRIVE ANGRY, which rolls this week in Shreveport, LA for 3-D Summit Entertainment release February 11, 2011, casts Atkins opposite Nicolas Cage (playing a guy who hits the road to rescue his kidnapped granddaughter from evil cultists who have murdered his daughter), David Morse, Billy Burke, Amber Heard, Katy Mixon, William Fichtner and Christa Campbell. It’s a reunion for Atkins, Lussier and scripter Todd Farmer from last year’s hit MY BLOODY VALENTINE remake. “We got along real well and hit it off on that,” Atkins tells Fango, “and Patrick knew he was going to do this and wanted me to be in it. He wanted me to play one of the bigger roles, but the studio wasn’t up for that, so he wrote me a part. It’s a nice little role, Cap—the captain of the Oklahoma State Troopers. They’re all getting started in Shreveport, and I’ll be down there in a couple of weeks.”



Atkins’ part may not be as large as Lussier wanted, but the actor reveals, “I am involved in the biggest car-truck crash in the movie. There are a number of them, but this is the biggest one.” However, he adds, “I’m not going to do any stunts. I just stand there and watch it all happen. I’m in charge of the roadblock, and my ‘stunt’ will be escaping with my life, getting out of the way of all the oncoming vehicles.”

They’ll be coming into the audience too, thanks to the magic of 3-D. While Atkins says this one

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may not have as much dimensional gore as VALENTINE, “there’s a lot of action, more than enough.” And he notes that acting in a 3-D production “isn’t much different than doing a regular, 2-D film. The camera guys have a lot more work to do, but the actors don’t.”

Beyond that, Atkins reveals that he, Lussier and Farmer plan to collaborate yet again—on the much-discussed HALLOWEEN III. The third entry in the new Michael Myers franchise begun by Rob Zombie hit a snag with the Weinstein Company a little while back, and the actor says, “They’re still looking for the money, but it’s pretty much set to go this December or early next year. Me and Scout Taylor-Compton are both going to do it.” And his role in the sequel? “Sort of like a Dr. Frankenstein—‘It’s aliiiiive!’ No, I’m a shrink in a mental hospital that Laurie [Taylor-Compton] is in with a bunch of other girls who have been up to no good. I’m trying to help them find a way to the light.”

Atkins has been undergoing a bit of a genre-career revival of late, though he points out that it’s just a small part of his recent activity. “I was particularly busy from this past October into the middle of January,” he says. “I shot a DVD of a one-man show that I’ve done in Pittsburgh for the past seven years called THE CHIEF. It’s about Art Rooney Sr., the founder and original owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers. It’s a wonderful, wonderful hour and a half in the theater, and we shot that on film and it’ll be released the beginning of the upcoming football season—this August, September, October, somewhere in there. Then I did Scrooge in A CHRISTMAS CAROL at the Pittsburgh CLO, plus the last run of THE CHIEF on stage at the Pittsburgh Public. So I was up to my ass in theater and film work, and I’m blessed to be the old white-haired guy who’s still working, still kicking.”

{comments on}