

Malcolm McDowell talks “CSI” and his future with Rob Zombie

Written by Michael Gingold
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At last weekend’s Monster-Mania convention in New Jersey, Fango got the chance to speak with Malcolm McDowell, the veteran actor whose most prominent recent genre role was Dr. Loomis in Rob Zombie’s pair of HALLOWEEN films, and who appeared earlier this month in Zombie’s “LA” episode of the hit CBS series CSI: MIAMI.

The show, which also featured HALLOWEEN vets William Forsythe, Sheri Moon Zombie and Kristina Klebe, plus Michael Madsen, saw two of the CSI team traveling to the City of Angels as part of their investigation of a pornographer accused of murder, who’s defended by McDowell’s lawyer character. “I had a great time because of my friend Rob,” McDowell tells Fango. “If it hadn’t been for him, of course, I wouldn’t have gone near it. To be honest with you, I’m used to doing HEROES and ENTOURAGE; that’s cutting-edge stuff. [The CSI: MIAMI team] do a terrific show for what it is, but I wouldn’t want to do another one.”

{youtube}iGw1MI1w79I{/youtube}

As grisly as the CSI shows can be, they certainly don’t match the levels of grue Zombie brings to his big-screen projects—but the actor notes that “LA” marked an opportunity for the filmmaker to stretch in a very visible showcase. “I believe Rob wanted to show that he can do something besides a horror movie, which he can; he’s a damn good director. But unless you actually show it to people, for some reason they can’t connect the dots. He did a fantastic job, and the episode was really good, we had some fun and he let me improvise a bit, which I was amazed at for network television. The writer, Barry O’Brien, was there and he’s a very nice guy, the producers were great and we had a very good crew. I believe it was smart of them to get somebody like Rob to take them out of their comfort zone. Maybe some of the [regular] cast didn’t appreciate that, but it sure worked.”

McDowell is now venturing back to the small screen with a significantly lighter project. “I’m about to start a series called FRANKLIN & BASH for Turner,” he says. “It’s a comedy about two renegade lawyers, young guys in their 20s, who are brought into a conventional law firm by this nutty character who wants these guys to give them something else, another way of looking at

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stuff. It’s really well-written, and I’m very happy to be doing it.”

And while nothing’s set in stone yet, he hopes to reunite with Zombie on future projects. “Oh yeah, we’ve talked about that. It would be fun to do something more classic, like Edgar Allan Poe. I would love to do that with Rob, because he’d do it brilliantly. We once discussed doing *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, which would be incredible, because it would show the filth and dirt of Dickensian London. It was a place of plague and thievery and God knows what, and also the greatest metropolis on the planet and a huge port; the world revolved around that city at the time. That would’ve been really cool.”

McDowell is also attached to a horror feature called *THE SPIDER*, to be directed by Robert Sigi (whose credits include the Fango Video slasher flick *SCHOOL’S OUT*). He’s set to play Von Wessel, a Jesuit priest who confronts a young female archaeologist possessed by the spirit of an ancient goddess, though he notes, “There’s really not much to say about that because I haven’t shot it yet. I’m supposed to be doing it and I hope to do it, because I’ve worked with the director before [on the Canadian-lensed sci-fi series *LEXX*], so I’m keeping my fingers crossed. They keep getting close to having the budget, and then it falls apart—like every independent movie right now. I think we’re very close on that, so I’m hoping it’s going to work out soon, but I never, ever like to talk about something before I’ve actually done it. I’ll just say that we hope to do it, and knowing Robert, he’ll actually get it together; it’s close. I keep getting e-mails—‘Be prepared, we’re ready to put the money in escrow’—so we’ll see.”

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