

## Terror Tidbits (Fango #295)—If You're "FRAGILE," He'll "REC" Ya

Written by Michael Gingold and Calum Waddell  
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The eight films hitting DVD and VOD in the coming months—with one also receiving theatrical play—under the FANGORIA FrightFest banner (see [www.fangoriafrightfest.com](http://www.fangoriafrightfest.com) for details) represent a cross-section of horror subgenres and countries of origin. And for one of them—Jaume Balagueró's FRAGILE—the series represents a long-awaited resurrection. Produced more than five years ago and released across the world in the mid/late 2000s, the movie fell into U.S. limbo due to the financial troubles of the two distributors (MGM and Bauer Martinez Studios) that wound up with the Stateside rights.

While FRAGILE was floundering Stateside, Balagueró—who shot that film as the follow-up to his English-language debut, 2003's DARKNESS—returned to Spanish-speaking territory with TO LET, a much-admired entry in the 2006 series 6 FILMS TO KEEP YOU AWAKE. It was his next project, however, that would really open people's eyes: [REC], which he co-directed with Paco Plaza, shocked the hell out of the international genre scene with its high-powered *vérité* approach to the zombie/infected subgenre. In America, it was relegated to direct-to-DVD release only after the theatrical play of its Hollywood remake, QUARANTINE, but no matter; it was a big enough hit elsewhere that Balagueró and Plaza reteamed for [REC] 2 last year. The rare sequel that virtually matches the intensity of its predecessor, this film is also bucking the odds by achieving U.S. big-screen release from Magnolia Pictures, which opens it in select cities beginning July 9.



All this positive Stateside exposure has been a long time coming for Balagueró, who saw his debut feature THE NAMELESS tossed straight to DVD by Dimension, which also cut DARKNESS for its U.S. theatrical play. The director reveals that FRAGILE suffered ignominious treatment in other countries as well. "In France," he recalls, "the movie had a big success in festivals—it won four awards at the very well-known Gérardmer Film Festival there—but the

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company that owned the distribution rights there decided not to release it in theaters. It's a shame; I love the movie and feel very proud of it."

Set and filmed on Britain's Isle of Wight, FRAGILE takes place in a children's hospital that has been the scene of a railroad accident and is due to shut down after nearly a century of service. Calista Flockhart, from TV's ALLY McBEAL and BROTHERS & SISTERS, stars as Amy, an American nurse who is sent over from London to help out, and discovers that the eight kids who still reside there believe something invisible—and menacing—is haunting the premises. Balagueró, who wrote the script with Jordi Galcerán, based the story on his own personal experience. "When I was 9, I had acute bronchitis and spent six months in a hospital by the beach," he explains. "One night, someone told me a secret—a terrible story about the place, something that couldn't be told out loud; it had to be whispered in one's ear, secretly. This was because it was too awful, too twisted."

*For the whole story, pick up FANGORIA #295, on sale this month. Go [here](#) for full issue details, and [here](#) to subscribe to the magazine!*

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