Next week, THE DEVIL’S CARNIVAL enters the last leg of its Road Tour, which has seen director Darren Lynn Bousman, scripter Terrance Zdunich and their cohorts travel the country screening their horror musical as part of a multimedia show (see review here). Fango sat down with Bousman (who additionally has the MOTHER’S DAY remake hitting limited theaters this Friday and disc next Tuesday) and Zdunich (who also plays Lucifer in CARNIVAL) at their New York City stop at Times Scare last week, to discuss the experience, plans for CARNIVAL follow-ups and the director’s upcoming features THE BARRENS and NINETY.

FANGORIA: How has the New York experience been?

DARREN LYNN BOUSMAN (pictured right): It’s insane. Normally we do one show a night. We’re doing two shows tonight, and we got pulled over on the way here, so that threw us off about an hour. The minute we drove into New York City, we were pulled over and had three cops surrounding our van. It was pretty bad; seeing [associate producer] Spooky Dan in Times Square driving a big white van may not be the best thing [
laughs
]. But otherwise, it has been great. The fans are great, the venue’s amazing. This is punk rock filmmaking, so you never know what you’re gonna get. We had no idea what this place looked like until the minute we got out of the van.

FANG: So no one scoped out the venue for you?

BOUSMAN: We looked at the website, and all we saw was the front marquee, and we were like, “All right, Times Scare. Sounds good to us.”

FANG: Were you aware this used to be a peep show palace? It was called Show World; you can see it in Romano Scavolini’s NIGHTMARE.

BOUSMAN: All right, man! There you go! No, I did not know that. You learn something new every day.

FANG: Over the course of the tour, what’s the craziest thing you’ve seen or experienced?

BOUSMAN: Every aspect of it is pretty crazy. The mere fact that we’ve been able to get this kind of reaction and turnout all based on Twitter and Facebook is insane. The mere fact that people would pay money to come see something they know very little about, and that there’s no marketing scheme behind—we don’t have anyone out there promoting this film except us—that’s a testament to our fans, the REPO! community. That’s the faith they’ve put in us as filmmakers. We have some die-hard followers. As you can see right now, they’re dressed up, getting crazy, coming out and showing their colors. It’s pretty amazing.

FANG: You made THE DEVIL’S CARNIVAL in record time. You started shooting in January, and here you are, less than four months later and you’re halfway through the tour.

BOUSMAN: Yeah, we wrapped around the 22nd of January. We started post two weeks later and finished that February 26, and I was doing the mix the first week of March, and now here we are in April. There was no time, and it was awesome, because you don’t have a chance to second-guess yourself. It’s like, “This is it.” I think a lot of films start off great but become bad due to too many cooks in the kitchen trying to give their ideas and oversimplify: “Well, maybe the audience isn’t going to understand it.” This was a chance for us to not have any of that bullshit. It was just like, “This is the first edit, this is it—we’re going out with it.” And we shot the movie in one take.

FANG: Even all the choreography and song performances?

BOUSMAN: Some songs took two or three, but we shot the whole movie in seven 10-hour days. It was a crazy experience. Something like this really needs two, maybe three weeks to do.

FANG: How long was REPO!?

BOUSMAN: 41 days.

FANG: That’s what you would assume DEVIL’S CARNIVAL took. It’s not feature-length, but it’s still an hour-long musical.

BOUSMAN: Yeah, it’s only 14 minutes less than one of my other films that was feature-length. In retrospect, I should’ve added 14 minutes to DEVIL’S CARNIVAL and released it as a feature! But I think it’s cool, what we’re doing: taking it to the fans directly.

FANG: Where does it go after the tour as far as DVD or any other kind of release?

BOUSMAN: The hope is that we can do 20 more of these [movies]. We’ve written numerous ones, but it all depends on whether we can recoup our money. We’ve spent a small fortune on

this—not in the grand scheme of movies, but in the grand scheme of it coming out of a couple of guys’ bank accounts. So we have to recoup that money. And even the tour’s expensive as hell, because we’re seven people, seven hotel rooms every night, and so we have to recoup not only the film’s budget, but the budget for the tour. Once we do that, the minute we recoup, we’re going to greenlight part two, and we’re going to put DVDs out. We’ve just got to get to that point.

FANG: So the script for part two is finished?

TERRANCE ZDUNICH: Yes. I wrote a first draft of part two, but we’ve been talking, and it looks like part two may become part three. You know how it goes when you’re writing, but the honest answer is this: This is a world that deals with both heaven and hell, and 99 percent of this particular episode is in hell, with only a glimpse of heaven. If we continue the series, heaven will be just as explored as hell, and you’ll get to meet heaven’s carnies the same way you met hell’s carnies, and learn more about the relationship between the two worlds, and particularly how they collide.

[*At this point, a box of DEVIL’S CARNIVAL soundtrack CDs is brought over, and Bousman starts signing each one.*]

BOUSMAN: I’m going to say this right now: We basically show up to a city, and we have to sign hundreds if not thousands of things every night, before anyone comes in.

ZDUNICH: And I was in the back of the van on the way over here numbering these things, and it’s cramped. So this is the unglamourous part, the punk rock part: You’re sitting in the back of a van while it’s moving, and you have motion sickness and you’re underslept, and you’re breathing Sharpie fumes, which are noxious in a van with no windows. But at the same time, it’s kinda rad, because we’re here and getting to share our art in very real time with an audience that is expecting a lot from us. So there’s a lot of pressure in that, but they’re here and we somehow pulled it off. It’s crazy. We shot this in seven days and recorded the majority of the music in one day, and while it certainly doesn’t look like JOHN CARTER or something, I don’t think you would look at this and think it was a seven-day shoot.

[redacted]