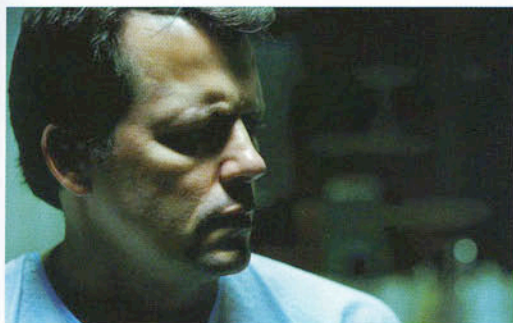


The film: *Refresh*

(www.refreshfilm.com)



The genre:

Short science-fiction thriller; 13 minutes

What it's about:

A wealthy but chronically unhappy businessman at the end of his rope hires a mysterious company that promises an effective – but irrevocable – solution to his problem.

What it's really about:

"How people can become so desperate leading lives they thought they wanted that they suddenly desire radical change," says director David Orr.

What inspired the production: "The tableau and mood were inspired by a visit to a sleep-study clinic – a place where you spend the night monitored by video cameras and electric sensors attached to your body," explains Orr. "I remember lying there in my pajamas, getting hooked up to a machine by an unfamiliar person, thinking, 'wow, this is just like a horror film!' I began writing the next day."

The biggest hurdles to financing: "Keeping the budget low enough that I felt comfortable financing it myself. It was designed to be incredibly low budget. The Canon 5D required a lot less light, compared to RED, so I needed fewer people for grip and electric. We were able to shoot by supplementing available light and got a great look."

The biggest production challenge: "Finding a location in LA willing to let us film for next to nothing. My wife [producer Sharon Lineker] works in healthcare and found St. Barnabas which actually hosts wonderfully-curated movie nights at their facility, so they were really film friendly. Also, working with the 5D. When we shot [in May 2009] no one had used the camera for a narrative project, so we were pioneers. There was no one [with] quick and easy answers. Even Canon didn't anticipate the camera being used this way."

The biggest postproduction challenge: "The 5D was so new it was difficult to know what was going to be possible: how 8-bit compressed footage might react to color correction — that kind of thing. We had difficulty doing conversions from 30 to 24 fps — a firmware upgrade allowing that frame rate was released after we wrapped. Based on early footage, Randal Kleiser invited me to be a panelist and screen excerpts for the DGA's Digital Day. That became our test run, taking the process from the beginning through projection in the DGA's Theater 1, one of the best rooms in the world. Even I wasn't prepared for how great *Refresh* would look – like SI 6mm!"

What's next for *Refresh*: "The film is doing the festival circuit, and I'm on my second draft of a feature script for *Refresh*. I'm using the short along with my commercial reel as a showreel for feature, series and branded-content projects."

I couldn't have made the film without: "The strong support of family and friends. As for the core group, when Christopher [Willoughby] and Andrew [Turman] told me they were interested I knew I'd be able to accomplish the project. A shout out to West EFX and Erick Brennan who did a great job on the practical fire and mask effects."

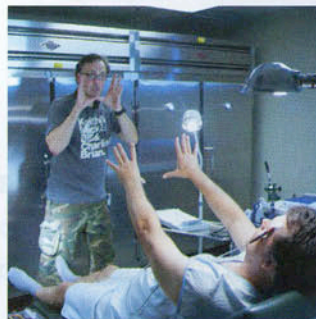
Lessons I'll take to the next film: "One of the things I learned early as a commercial director and which was reiterated with this film was the importance of prep. We tested everything ahead of time and did run-throughs all the way down the pipeline." 🍀

[Top]

Stephen Culp stars in *Refresh* as an unhappy businessman who finds an effective – but irrevocable – solution to his problem.

[Right]

Director David Orr discusses Stephen Culp's eyeline in *Refresh*.



Cast includes:

Steven Culp, Scott Michael Campbell

Director/producer/writer:

David Orr

Producers:

Paul Papanek, Sharon Lineker

DP:

Andrew Turman

Editor:

Christopher Willoughby

Colorist/HD conform:

Jim Bohn, Liquid/Venice, California

Postproduction sound:

Jeff Levy, mixer, Margarita Mix/Santa Monica

Music:

John Hill, composer, original score;
8MM band, end theme

Budget:

Under \$10,000

Acquisition format/camera:

HD video-enabled Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR

Locations:

St. Barnabas Senior Center and S. Mark Taper Foundation
Adult Day Care Center, Los Angeles

Equipment rental:

CAMTEC/Burbank (camera and accessories);
Tomzilla/Burbank (grip and electric)

Film festivals:

Premiered at Vail Film Festival; Newport Beach
Film Festival; LA Shortsfest