



eel girl

press pack

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In a military laboratory, a scientist has become obsessed with the half-human half-eel creature he's studying. When she beckons him to her, it's the call of a siren...

SYNOPSIS

Deep in a secret navy research facility, an armed security officer enters a secure observation room, filled with electronic monitoring equipment and shelves full of dissected fish specimens. The officer requests one of the scientists accompany her immediately. He protests, quoting navy protocols that require two people to remain in the room at all times, but the officer makes sure he knows he has no choice.

The remaining scientist watches them leave the facility on a security monitor. Satisfied he's on his own, he quickly begins to activate override commands on the computer. A warning begins to sound, and the scientist steps back to stand in front of a large observation window, which looks into a dark tiled and dirty room, in the center of which stands a large bath, filled with black viscous liquid.

Opposite the window is a large secure door, above which warning lights flash green, then red. The scientist becomes more agitated, breathing heavily, as he sees the door open, and a webbed hand curls around the door frame. Out of the darkness appears the Eel Girl, naked, her skin pale, gills visible in her cheeks, small fins on her forearms. Slowly she steps into the room, walks around the bath. The scientist watches as she slides into



the thick black liquid. In the observation room the computer begins to flash warnings.

Distracted by the computer, the scientist doesn't notice the Eel Girl climb slowly out of the bath. She steps up to the window, hands against the glass and looks through. The scientist sees her, moves to the window, places his hands against hers through the glass. She stares back, mouth opening and closing slowly, revealing rows of sharp teeth.

She signals with her eyes, and the scientist moves to the security door that connects his room to hers.

He activates the security code and opens the door.

Inside she is waiting for him. He walks into the room and embraces her. She reaches up, gently holds the back of his head with one hand. And suddenly - her jaw extends and she pulls his head into her mouth, then lifts him into the air and swallows him whole, vomiting up his shredded clothes.

She climbs back into the bath and lies there, caressing her now grossly distended belly, and the scientist inside it - still alive.

PRODUCTION

Eel Girl is a provocative and unsettling science-fiction horror short film that combines stunning visuals with the dark and visceral undertones of H.P. Lovecraft.

Inspired by the track 28 The Triangle by UK musician Sancho (Paul Hanford), as far back as 2003, the original intention was to make the film as a music video, but without enough experience or resources, director Paul Campion put the idea on hold.

4 years later, with his first short film Night of the Hell Hamsters completed and touring the festival circuit, Paul was looking for a second short film to direct, and went back to his original ideas and sketches for Eel Girl.

Pre-production began in early 2006, with visual effects tests to see if the swallowing sequence could be achieved on a limited budget. Production designer Mary Pike then joined the project: working from Paul's original ideas, she drew up plans and built a scale model of the set, while previs supervisor Alex Burt created 3D previs to plan camera work and help gain interest in the project.

Paul then approached makeup artist Gino Acevedo, who agreed to help out with the film's extensive special makeup effects. Gino, the Senior Prosthetics Supervisor at Weta Workshop then brought the project to the attention of Richard Taylor, head of Weta Workshop. Impressed by the pre-production work, Richard offered the services of the Workshop to help with the production.

Another crucial addition to the creative and technical team was Wellington-based director of photography Richard Bluck. With a CV that includes director of photography on Black Sheep and 2nd unit director of photography on King Kong and the Lord of the Rings trilogy, Richard's experience would prove invaluable to the production, especially with Paul's decision to shoot the film on 35mm.



Finally, bringing all those elements together were producers Jennifer Scheer and Elisabeth Pinto and 1st AD Eranka Weerasuriya - with Elisabeth flying to New Zealand from the UK, Jennifer flying in from Los Angeles and Eranka, who had worked with Paul and Elisabeth on Night of the Hell Hamsters, flying in from Singapore.

Despite Paul's background in visual effects, and an expectation that the film would be shot entirely bluescreen and the effects and set created using CGI, the film was shot over 3 days in April 2007 on a full size set built inside Weta Workshop.

The swallowing sequence was shot as much as possible in camera, using extensive prosthetic makeup and augmented with 2D

compositing in post production. The makeup for the eel girl took 4 makeup artists nearly 4 hours to apply, and Weta Workshop made over 45 gallons of black methocyl, the thick black liquid that fills the eel girl's strange bathtub.

With the filming complete, Wellington editor Jeff Hurrell began cutting the film, while Matt Holland oversaw work on the film's 37 visual effects shots. UK based sound designers James West and Lloyd Young, who previously created the sound effects for Night of the Hell Hamsters, began creating the sound effects.

The film was finished using a 2k digital intermediate, and graded on a Lustre by colourist Joerg Bungert, and with a Dolby sound mix carried out at Park Road Post in Wellington.

THE FILMAKERS

PAUL CAMPION WRITER/DIRECTOR

Paul is an award winning short filmmaker with a reputation for entertaining storytelling coupled with rich visuals.



His first short film, *Night of the Hell Hamsters*, a cautionary and bloody little tale about the dangers of mixing the occult with small furry family pets opened on the festival circuit in 2006 to rave reviews, two Audience Favourite awards and a Best Director and Best Cinematography Award. The film has played at over 35 film festivals worldwide, and was recently picked up by Quat Media, a Canadian Short Film distribution company.

Paul began his career as a freelance artist, specializing in fiction book covers, creating illustrations for authors such as Ben Elton and Wilbur Smith.

In 2000, he retrained and completed a Masters Degree in Computer Animation at Bournemouth University, England. He subsequently moved to New Zealand to work at Weta Digital on the visual effects for Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy where he was responsible for creating the look of digital creatures such as the Balrog, mumakil, fell-beast and Shelob. Paul has since worked in San Francisco as a matte painter on *Constantine* and *Sin City*, and as a texture painter on *30 Days of Night*, *The Waterhorse*, and *Prince Caspian*. He is also the author of 2 best selling instructional DVDs on Digital Texture Painting from the Gnomon Workshop.

Paul is currently in full time development on 2 feature films: *Terminal*, a supernatural bank heist thriller based on the book by best selling US author Brian Keene, and *Lore of the Jungle* a British horror film, by UK writer Paul Finch.

ELISABETH PINTO PRODUCER

Elisabeth started her career as production and technical assistant for Maverick Television in Birmingham, before moving to London to work on a number of short films.



Following a Development Executive training scheme run by the Film Council and FT2, Elisabeth worked as a freelance script reader and editor for companies including Impact Pictures and Focus Features.

In 2004, Elisabeth produced *Rare Books And Manuscripts*, a 10 minute 35mm romantic comedy based on a Toby Litt short story. A recipient of an award from the Film Council Completion Fund, it premiered at the 2005 Edinburgh Film Festival and has screened at numerous festivals, both in the UK and abroad; it now features on the BBC Film Network and was the British selection for a special screening commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome at the 2007 Brussels Short Film Festival.

Further shorts as producer include *Night of the Hell Hamsters* and the comedy drama *Hoopla!*

In March 2007, Elisabeth completed the pilot Samuelson Skillset Producer Training Programme, a scheme aiming to fast-track the prospects of up-and-coming feature film producers.

JENNIFER SCHEER PRODUCER

Jennifer has been working in the film industry for 14 years, and began her career learning both production and visual effects at Pacific Title Digital in California.



In 2002, Jennifer worked at Disney's The Secret Lab alongside Oscar winning vfx supervisor Hoyt Yeatman, and producer David James. When the company shut its doors in 2003, Jennifer worked with Yeatman and James at their newly formed production company Whamaphram, helping to produce a teaser trailer and pitch for the live action/CG feature film *G-Force*, which revolves around a top secret unit of the NSA, comprised of intelligent talking animals. In 2005 *G-Force* was optioned by Jerry Bruckheimer along with Disney, and in 2007, officially sold to Disney. The feature film is currently in production with Yeatman directing, and due for release in 2009.

In 2003, Jennifer produced *Delirium*, an 18 minute 35mm short directed by Kevin Castro, which hit the film festival circuit in 2005, opening at the Beverly Hills Film Festival.

Jennifer's range of credits include work on many Hollywood blockbuster films, including James Cameron's *True Lies*, *Titanic*, *Heat*, *The Fifth Element*, Robert Rodriguez's *Sin City*, *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*, and *King Kong*.

CREDITS

eel girl > julia rose

perverted scientist > euan dempsey

military officer > robyn paterson

senior scientist > nick blake

written and directed by > paul campion

produced by > jennifer scheer & elisabeth pinto

director of photography > richard bluck

production designer > mary pike

art director > paul campion

costume designer > pranee mckinlay

visual effects supervisor > matt holland

editor > jeff hurrell

music > sancho (paul hanford)

makeup effects by > weta workshop

workshop director and effects supervisor > richard taylor

workshop manager > tania rodger

workshop production co-ordinator > melissa dodds

workshop supervisor > gareth mcghe

makeup special effects supervisor > gino acevedo

makeup special effects technician > frances richardson

sculptor > jamie beswarick

dentures > steve boyle

mould making supervisor > michael wallace

mould making > simon godsiff

special props (bath) > alex falkner / duncan brown / john harvey

props painters > sourisak chanpaseuth / les nairn

first assistant director > eranka weerasuriya

second assistant director > norman cates

special effects makeup artists > tash lees

costume props makers > pranee mckinlay / pete wellington

carpenter > clinton sparrey

painter > sally ford

props maker > paul mcinnes

focus puller / 1st ac > angus ward

clapper loader / 2nd ac > jymi best

video assistant > jacob medary

gaffer > dave brown

best boy > andy ayrton

spark > chris pert

key grip 1 > dion hartley

key grip 2 > melissa rinui

grip trainee > kyle clifton

previs supervisor > alex burt

script supervisor > mel james

personal assistant to miss rose > clare burgess

methocyl wranglers > norman (mr methocyl) cates / alex burt

stunt double > clinton sparrey

movement coach > carrie thiel

stills photographer > matt mueller

additional photographs > sally ford

senior composers > matt holland / tim hey / norman cates

compositor > paula bell

paint/roto artist > zoe lord

modeller > marco di lucca

camera tracking > matt mueller

technical director > paul mcinnes

texture painter > mel james

grading > joerg bungert

sound recordist > chris hiles

sound design > james west / lloyd young

sound mixer > john boswell

credits design > mal tween / aj jefferies

filmed at > weta workshop / wellington / new zealand

grip equipment > dion hartley

camera and lenses > panavision

lights supplied by > portsmouth rd

insurance > crombie lockwood

insurance > mahony trendall & jack (neg & public liability)

film supplied by > kodak

processing and telecine > park road post

scanning and output > pete williams / nick booth

off-line suite > martin square

sound mix studio > park road post

catering > eva dioxns

production company > chameleon pictures ltd

28 the triangle written and performed by paul hanford published by and courtesy of superglider records

making of documentary > darryl gray

website > ryan overeem

special thanks to > grant campbell at kodak, victoria university biology dept, graham, barry purves, hadyn green and amy galvin, john harvey, tiro o'daly, matt appleton, richard chasemore, richard taylor and gino acevedo, leonne kassler at portsmouth road, nat and jo at eva dixon's, kristina flach, eileen moran, weta digital, laki laban, park road post.

REVIEWS

"Eel Girl is only five minutes long but it is a ridiculously solid short film. What seems to be a love story turns quite macabre in a matter of minutes. What truly surprised me was the fact that the CGI in this short film is more impressive than the majority of much bigger budget movies, especially in the horror genre. In fact, the entire short looks fantastic. The lighting is perfect and the makeup used on eel girl is quite impressive."

- www.unboundzine.com

"A very disconcerting story, of a half girl half eel creature and her voracious appetite, the film is made even more unsettling by some great art direction, including a shade of beautifully distressed green that is uncomfortable just to look at. A grimy bath full of viscous KY shot with perfect symmetry and you know it's just going to be unpleasant and it is. A genuinely unsettling film, full of atmosphere, which is quite an achievement for so short a film"

- www.barrypurves.com

"His second film, shot on 35mm, is Eel Girl (2008), built around one stylized specialeffect. It is a three minute combination of sci-fi and horror, where the scientist of a military lab accidentally opens the door and meets his specimen. Shot in Weta Workshop's (Lord of the Rings) facilities, the film is visually spectacular, and according to the director, just below it's surface lies the timeless and mystic horror of H.P. Lovecraft. We can only hope the next project is a feature film."

- Blood Ceremony Magazine



SCREENINGS

A Night of Horror - Sydney, Australia, 2008
 Sci-Fi London - London, England, 2008
 Festival De Cannes Short Film Market - Cannes, France, 2008
 Revelation Film Festival - Perth, Australia, 2008
 Rushes Soho Shorts - London, England, 2008
 Rhode Island International Film Festival - Rhode Island, USA, 2008
 Homegrown - New Zealand, 2008
 Fantasia Film Festival - Montreal, Canada, 2008
 Atlanta Horror Fest - Atlanta, USA, 2008
 PiFan - Buchoen, Korea, 2008
 Show Me Shorts Film Festival - New Zealand, 2008
 Fantastic Fest - Austin, USA, 2008
 Fright Night Film Festival - Louisville, USA, 2008
 Atlanta Underground Film Festival - USA, 2008
 STIGES International Film Festival - Spain, 2008
 San Francisco International Short Film Festival - USA, 2008
 Dragon*Con International Film Festival - Atlanta, USA, 2008
 Court Métrange Film Festival - Rennes, France, 2008
 Sydney Underground Film Festival - Sydney, Australia, 2008
 Screampfest LA - Los Angeles, USA, 2008
 Magma International Short Film Festival - Acireale, Italy, 2008
 Encounters Short Film Festival - Bristol, England, 2008
 HP Lovecraft Film Festival - Portland, USA 2008
 Spooky Movie Film Festival - Washington, USA 2008
 Dark Carnival Film Festival - Bloomington, USA 2008
 Israeli Fantastic Film Festival - Tel-Aviv, Israel 2008
 ShriekFest - Los Angeles, USA 2008
 Terror Film Festival - Philadelphia, USA 2008
 Eerie Horror Fest - Erie, USA 2008
 British Fantasy Society Fantasy Con - Nottingham, England 2008
 Screamin' Athens Film Festival - Athens, Greece 2008
 Stockholm International Film Festival ifestival - Stockholm, Sweden 2008
 Melbourne Underground Festival - Melbourne, Australia 2008
 San Sebastian Horror and Fantasy Film Festival - San Sebastian, Spain 2008



Ravenna Film Festival - San Sebastian, Spain 2008
 2nd Evergreen Film Festival - Ansan, Korea 2008
 Fancine Film Festival - Malaga, Spain 2008
 Daggers: The Short Festival of Short Horror - San Sebastian, Spain 2008
 Amberg Horror Fest - Amberg, Germany 2008
 Leeds International Film Festival - Leeds, UK 2008
 Rio De Janeiro International Short Film Festival - Rio De Janeiro, Brazil 2008
 Brest European Film Festival - Brest, France 2008
 Atlanta Horror Fest - Atlanta, USA 2008
 Rhode Island Horror Fest - Rhode Island, USA 2008
 Science + Fiction - Trieste, Italy 2008
 Vine Shorts Fest - Santa Monica, USA 2008
 Razor Reel Film Festival - Bruges, Belgium 2008
 NYC Horror Fest - New York, USA 2008

Omaha Film Festival - Omaha, USA 2008
 Yubari International Fantastic Film Festival - Yubari, Japan 2009
 Minimalen Short Film Festival - Yubari, Japan 2009
 Detroit Shorts International Film Festival - Detroit, USA 2009
 Dresden Film Festival - Dresden, Germany 2009
 Backseat Film Festival - Philadelphia, USA 2009
 Brussels Fantastic Film Festival - Brussels, Belgium 2009
 Amsterdam Fantastic Film Festival - Amsterdam, Holland 2009
 Worldwide Short Film Festival - Toronto, Canada 2009
 Motelx Film Festival - Lisbon, Portugal 2009

AWARDS

Honorable Mention - Best Short Film - Philadelphia Independent Film Festival, Philadelphia, USA 2009
Best Director - Landcrab Film Festival, England 2009
Best Special Effects - Backseat Film Festival, Philadelphia, USA 2009
Canal+ Cocette Minute - Brest Short Film Festival, Brest, France 2008
Grand Prix - Court Metrange Film Festival, Rennes, France 2008
Best Special Fx - Rhode Island Horror Film Festival, USA 2008
Best Visual Effects - A Night of Horror Film Festival, Sydney, Australia 2008
Best Special Effects - Dark Carnival Film Festival, Bloomington, USA 2008
Best Super Short - Shriekfest Film Festival, Los Angeles, USA 2008
Best FX - Eerie Horror Film Festival, Pennsylvania, USA 2008
Best Visual Effects- Tabloid Witch Awards, Los Angeles, USA 2008
Honorable Mention- Tabloid Witch Awards, Los Angeles, USA 2008
Best Short Film- HP Lovecraft Film Festival, Portland, USA 2008
Best Special Effects- HP Lovecraft Film Festival, Portland, USA 2008
Best Comedy- HP Lovecraft Film Festival, Portland, USA 2008



NOMINATIONS

Best Short Film - Ruses Soho Shorts, 2008
Outstanding Technical Contribution to a Short Film - Qantas Film and Television Awards, 2008
Best Short Film - Dark Carnival Film Festival, Bloomington, USA 2008
Best Special Cinematography - Dark Carnival Film Festival, Bloomington, USA 2008
Best Special Effects - Terror Film Festival, Philadelphia, USA 2008
Best Music - Terror Film Festival, Philadelphia, USA 2008

TECHNICAL SPECS

Panavision Golden Panaflex GII

Zeiss Prime Lenses

Kodak Vision 2
200T 5217

Digital Intermediate

2.35:1 Aspect Ratio

35mm Colour

5 minutes 30 seconds

Dolby Digital 5:1 Sound



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