

THERE WILL BE BLOOD...

DAVID GORDON GREEN AND ANDI MATICHAK
TALK **HALLOWEEN KILLS**

Words: Bryan Cairns

When David Gordon Green became attached to the Halloween franchise,

the Pineapple Express director never imagined his 2018 retelling would spawn two sequels. But after scaring up over \$256 million at the box office worldwide, clearly silent-masked stalker Michael "The Shape" Myer's [Nick Castle] reign of terror was far from over. Green admits the first sign they had something disturbingly special was even before that, at the final test screening of their Halloween.

"We all just looked at each other, after the crowd was really connecting with it, and thought, 'This was fun. This has been a great ride. Let's do it again,'" Green tells SCREAM Magazine. "That's when it became real. When Danny McBride and I first started talking to Blumhouse about getting involved in this franchise, we had a lot of ideas. We originally talked about doing multiple movies at once. We had weeks of brainstorming about where we would go, what we'd do and how to make this real. We got intimidated, I think, by the scope of a multi-picture project and thought, 'Let's just see if we don't get run out of town. Let's make one and see how it goes.'

I guess when we found that kind of acceptance from the audience, at least in our minds, we were feeling confident about where we landed with the first one before it came out," he continues. "We brought in a friend of ours that I had known for a long time, filmmaker Scott Teems, and started to formalise a plan to do more. We took a lot of those ideas Danny and I had in our sketchbook concepts and started bouncing those ideas around.

We all went in very different directions," he adds. "We wrote very different types of scenes and concepts and then got back together and glued them together. We had what I felt was a really compelling next two chapters for the Halloween franchise, that in our mind would tell the full ambition and scale."

Green, however, was determined not to fall prey to the sequel curse, namely that second instalments frequently, well, suck. Heck, even the self-referential *Scream 2* characters quibbled over whether a good sequel truly exists. Green admits his major gripe regarding follow-ups is "they do the same thing bigger and louder, and they sort of capitalise on their own inside jokes."

It makes me think of *Revenge of the Nerds*, where they have the belching contest," Green says. "Then, in *Revenge of the Nerds 2*, they go to the guru, and he belches twice as long and more vulgar. Trying to outdo yourself is not that interesting to me. I'm not a competitive person with anyone, much less myself."

I thought this was a great opportunity to take a different tone and texture," he continues "OK, we've landed enough of a validation from our audience that we can stay true to what we think are our genetic codes of a Halloween movie, and now not do the same thing at all again. The following two chapters are very different from each other. They are very different from the first one. They are all evolutions from the seed of characters and ideas that John Carpenter started in the '70s."

Taking a cue from 1981's *Halloween*, *Halloween Kills* revs up mere moments after its predecessor. After a harrowing night of terror, three generations of strong Strode women - Laurie [Jamie Lee Curtis], her daughter Karen [Judy Greer] and granddaughter Allyson [Andi Matichak] - caged Michael Myers in Laurie's booby-trapped basement and set the place ablaze. The result should have been extra-crispy Michael. But, of course, the nightmare isn't over.

Set to premiere on October 15, *Halloween Kills* trailer opens with Michael escaping the burning Strode home and savagely slaughtering the responding firefighters. In the wake of his continuing massacre, a mob of local residents gather to aid the police force in hunting him down. If the 2018 film capitalised on Laurie's PTSD, Green wanted the latest entry to tell a story of



"TIME HAS PASSED, AND WE ARE GOING BACK INTO OUR CONTEMPORARILY TIMELINE"

"fear based on misinformation."

"It's really been strange over the last couple of years, even since we wrapped the movie, to see a lot of that mob mentality of misunderstanding, miscommunicating, misrepresenting - sometimes intentionally, sometimes innocently - and how within a community that can unravel anxiety," Green notes. "That's always been a fascinating sense of paranoia for me, is when you don't know what's real and you are looking at someone believing something different than you and you have the same information that you're supposedly looking at. That's where this movie picks up. It picks up right after where the last one left off."

Matichak also appreciated how there were no gaps between the two movies. "It's literally off in the back of the truck, moments later," she says

in a separate conversation. But what truly hit the 27-year-old actress about the *Halloween Kills* script was "how intense, brutal and epic it is."

"The movie really doesn't shy away," Matichak explains. "There's a lot of murder in this. The name is quite fitting. It's on the nose for a reason. One of my favourite things about this film is Haddonfield has been a secondary character for a very long time. It has so many interesting people, and such an interesting dynamic in the town, that being able to see the town as a main character stepping into a starring role as they take down the thing that has tormented and destroyed their town for the last 40 years, is pretty incredible."

Audiences have also witnessed Laurie unravel. After surviving Michael's vicious attack four decades

ago, a single-minded Laurie became obsessed with the Shape... spending every waking moment preparing for his return and plotting his ultimate demise. She, however, failed to stop the psychopath. That recent encounter left Laurie gravely wounded and recovering at Haddonfield Memorial Hospital. But knowing Michael is still out there, alive and slaying, only drives her more.

"Just as Michael is an essence of evil, Laurie is a force for positive possibility," Green offers. "She's been severely injured when we last saw her, and when we meet her again, she's heading to the hospital, so she doesn't die.

A lot of what comes next is that Laurie charisma and motivation," he continues. "As people are starting to get rallied up and the town is tuning into the horrors and tragedy of the evening, she's trying to be a voice of, 'Let's activate. Let's act now. Let's not be afraid. Don't let fear get in your way.' In wonderful Jamie Lee fashion, she's that very precise, outspoken, positive motivator."

Meanwhile, there's Karen and Allyson, who previously believed Laurie to be delusional about Haddonfield's bogeyman and what went down 40 years ago. But both have witnessed Michael's bloodshed firsthand. Allyson lost her father and many of her friends. That's a lot to process.



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"More than that, what Allyson is dealing with is the fact that her grandmother, who she did not believe for quite some time, and it did create a rift in their relationship, is now fighting for her life," Matichak says. "Allyson just needs to focus on that. And then, to ultimately make the shift to go out and take it upon herself, with the other people of Haddonfield, to hunt Michael down once and for all. One of the things that David and Danny did really well, along with Scott Teems, is they were able to infuse a lot of heart in this movie that equals the amount of intensity and brutality of this movie. You have the juxtaposition."

Furthermore, Allyson experiences some emotional whiplash. She begins the film feeling relieved that the Strodes did their job and finished off their tormentor. They can move on and rebuild their family as it stands. And, then someone drops the bombshell...

"To have that flipped on its head and find out that Michael is still alive, and not only still alive, but with a vengeance, is traumatic," Matichak offers. "But I also think the bravado it musters in her comes with being young and the fact she doesn't have much to lose."

Amongst the crowd gathering to track down Michael are some familiar faces, such as Lindsey Wallace [Kyle Richards] and Tommy Doyle [now portrayed by Anthony Michael Hall] - the two kids Laurie babysat in the original Halloween, but now they are all grown up.

Other former characters appearing include Allyson's boyfriend Cameron [Dylan Arnold], his father Lonnie [Robert Longstreet], Sheriff Brackett [Charles Cyphers] and Deputy Hawkins [Will Patton]. It's a safe bet most of them will wind up in the morgue.

"To me, it's about making a more fully-realised universe, rather than just Laurie versus Michael," reports Green. "It's an opportunity to expand the philosophies and approaches of so many characters. Sheriff Brackett comes back, and we see him in an evolved form. With Tommy and Lindsey, who we saw Laurie as their protector, now we get to see them trying to protect her. At least at the beginning of the film, Laurie is down for the count. We have to figure out what's going on with her and we've got two people who felt very protective by her when they were kids. Now they get to return the favour."

In addition, Halloween Kills features a variety of nods to other entries. Most notably, a few of Michael's butchered victims sport creepy Silver Shamrock masks seen in Halloween III. The Haddonfield Memorial Hospital, and the gurney Laurie finds herself resting on, harkens back to the hospital setting in Halloween II. And, of course, there are more hidden references.

"I'm trying to pay respect to not just the masterpiece that Carpenter made, but also the fun that the franchise has had along the way and does have a lot

of fans," Green notes. "Even though we are not technically acknowledging their chronology and timeline in our reality, it's still fun for us to be able to appreciate the fact that those who have told the stories before us are still part of our legacy."

Without a doubt, *Halloween Kills* is not for the faint of heart. Michael typically relies on blades and kitchen knives to stab and slice. However, the movie's trailer teases Michael grabbing almost anything that can inflict pain and damage, including a chainsaw, a pickaxe and a crowbar. Gruesome and gore-filled, buckets of blood will be spilled and Green selected one of his standout slayings.

"One of my favourite actresses, who is recurring in a lot of my work, is Diva Tyler," Green explains. "She played the cemetery caretaker in our original film. She's in the trailer getting a fluorescent lightbulb to the throat. It's an interesting tapestry of characters here because we don't reference the fact that we saw her in a professional situation in the first film. She was wearing a hat and dressed differently. That was a fun one, and to be friends with her for so long and to come up with a unique way to take her down, I have to say, was a sick joy.



There's a higher body count than in the last one," he continues. "Some creative new kills that are super-fun to engineer. I try not to get too much into the psyche of Michael. I do look at him as a predator. He's not out for revenge. He doesn't have a masterplan. If he has a knife and you are in his way, or you are appealing to him in a specific moment, you have to watch out. I don't know if it says anything about him other than he is that essence of evil. Some people are drawn to him because they want revenge or want justice. Others run from away from

him because they want to get the hell out of there. It is all of our recognition and realisations of primal fear in a personified form."

Laurie, and Curtis, exemplify the quintessential "Final Girl" stereotype. The term - a trope in the horror genre - refers to the last female standing at the end of the movie, especially against a slasher. Laurie's multiple rounds with Michael earn her the title and, at the end of the day, the same can be implied about Allyson.

"Allyson is a 2018 version, in a lot of ways, of Laurie," concludes Matichak.



“That survivor mentality and quick thinking and guts that she has, is something really special. I love that Allyson mirrors a young Laurie, which is quite daunting to step into. Jamie Lee Curtis has pretty iconic shoes to fill, not that Allyson is even doing that. But you see moments and glimmers of a young Laurie in her.”

Halloween Ends, the third chapter, will complete the trilogy. According to Green, production will commence early next year, with a release date currently slated for October 14, 2022. He notes, “In a lot of ways, it’s a new lease.

Time has passed, and we are going back into our contemporarily timeline,” Green explains. “That night is years away in our rear-view mirror. Beyond that horrific volatile night in 2018 is what we are studying. Some people put the past behind them, and some can’t lay it to rest.

It’s still evolving,” he continues. “I’m still massaging it a bit. It’s been exciting to have this time period over the pandemic. I finished a draft a year and three months ago, put it away for a year, and so it’s been the last couple of months or so that I’ve dusted it back off and been playing with it again.”

Next up, Green will tackle a sequel to the Holy Grail of horror movies, The Exorcist. He’s once again envisioned the treatment as a trilogy. The project will build on the mythology of the franchise. He also acknowledges how distinct his approach to The Exorcist will be compared to Halloween.

“Knowing the Exorcist films very well, it’s just trying to feel what honours them, respects them and takes those stories and characters in a direction that I feel I can add my own personal signature to,” Green says. “They are such drastically different movies within the horror genre. It’s a very different exercise. One is very primal and intuitive. The other is very academic and intellectual. It’s been a very different type of writing process to do the degree of research and interviewing people.

Finding that authenticity and authority of an exorcism movie is way different than sitting around drinking beer with your buddies, that are co-writing with you, and trying to come up with creative kills,” he concludes. “It’s another planet. Both I take seriously and find them both satisfying, but they couldn’t be more different in our process.”



HALLOWEEN ENDS, THE THIRD CHAPTER, WILL COMPLETE THE TRILOGY





MY NAME IS TOMMY DOYLE...

ANTHONY MICHAEL HALL TALKS
HALLOWEEN KILLS

Words: Bryan Cairns

Anthony Michael Hall quickly discovered that the cutthroat world of high school is nothing compared to a run-in with Michael Myers.

The *Breakfast Club* and *Sixteen Candles* actor will next be seen in *Halloween Kills* as Tommy Doyle, a character that first appeared in 1978's *Halloween*. Tommy was one of the young kids Laurie Strode [Jamie Lee Curtis] babysat the night of Michael's original killing spree.

In that timeline, Paul Rudd portrayed an adult version of that character in *Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers*. Of course, all the previous



sequels were wiped out of existence in the current reboot. Rudd was reportedly asked to reprise the role, but couldn't manage it due to a scheduling conflict.

Instead, Hall takes up the mantle as grown-up Tommy. He reunites with Laurie to lead the charge and end Michael's reign of terror... once and for all. Hall recently spoke to *SCREAM Magazine* about joining the *Halloween* franchise, weaponizing Tommy and gruesome deaths.

SCREAM: Anthony, these *Halloween* films are the stuff nightmares are made of. How familiar were you with this franchise?

ANTHONY MICHAEL HALL: Growing up, I wasn't a huge horror fan, per se. This is the one I saw. I remember seeing it as a kid and I loved it. I was always a fan of Jamie Lee Curtis all the way up to Trading Places. I was aware of the franchise since then. I'm just so pumped about this. I've never been so excited about being part of a project. It was a great experience.

SCREAM: How did the role of Tommy Doyle come about? Did director David Gordon Green reach out to you, or did you audition?

AMH: I did a little bit of both. When it came through my manager, I kind of said, "Let me take a meeting with David" and we just had a nice conversation. That's what unfolded. We met at a hotel in Los Angeles. and we just had a great talk. We started discussing his background. I had always been a fan of the TV shows he did. I loved Danny MacBride's comedy and the way they worked in that space.

SCREAM: Where do we meet Tommy?

AMH: What happens is this movie picks up where the other one left off. Everybody is commiserating at a local dive bar as to who we've lost, and the history of what Haddonfield has been through as a town and community. Then it kicks into high gear, right away. It's a

great role for me. I was really blessed and fortunate that everybody trusted me with this role. It's a very heroic character, something I've wanted to do for a long time.

SCREAM: Is it fair to say that Tommy is front and centre in this hunt for Michael Myers? He grabs that bat...

AMH: That's it. I don't want to expand on it too much, but that was what exciting for me. In some cases, when there's an action piece, something like this, it's cool to be down on dialogue. I like the character speaking through his actions. Tommy leads the charge along with Karen and Allyson and the rest of the town.

SCREAM: David wouldn't have brought Tommy back without a run-in with Michael. What was it like filming that scene?

AMH: That was the best. That was the fun part. If you remember pictures in the '70s like Billy Jack, Walking Tall and some of the better Bruce Lee stuff, that's sort of anti-hero action. That's a lot of what is there for Tommy.

As for the bat, it was something that David personalised. I don't know if he had it planned from the onset, but about a week or two in, he said, "Mike, I'm going to give you this weapon." I was like, "Cool." I was so into it.

SCREAM: You have a long and distinguished career, ranging from Sixteen Candles and The Breakfast Club to Weird Science and the Dead Zone TV series. But you haven't appeared in much horror. What surprised you about this shoot?

AMH: The first thing that came to mind is the spirit a comedy is made in, that sense of, "We are going to have more fun at work because we are doing this type of movie." It's the same thing for horror. Everyone is in on the joke. "We have to have a certain amount of fake blood on the set. There are some sets that are going to go down." They treat Michael like he's repped by CAA and has Brad Pitt's kind of deal. He has the whole squad working for him. They are hard-working, but there's a spirit of fun.

SCREAM: When you sign on to a Halloween movie, are you hoping for some creative, gruesome death?

AMH: Very tactful. What I would say is I didn't wish for that. I was just glad I was given a heroic role by David, Danny and Jason. And don't get me in trouble with Jason Blum. I want to work with Universal again.

SCREAM: Thanks for talking to us, Anthony.

AMH: You are very welcome.

