

A REALM PICTURES FILM

# ZOMBLIES



# REALM

is comprised of hopes, wishes, and these guys;

**Director** – David M Reynolds

**Cinematographer & Editor** – Eve Hazelton

**Production Design** – Shahriar Abdullah

**Lighting Director & Colourist** – Timothy Bevan

**Production Manager** – Corinne Loynes

## Synopsis

When a private militia's rookie zombie hunters send out a distress call, it's up to the Rangers to cross The Wall and bring them back, as well as uncover the truth about a terrifying new breed of zombie.

Bewitched mill-workers, shambling corpses and rage-fuelled mobs; Zombies have evolved as their own unique form of cinema, bringing the un-dead to life countless times for the enjoyment of the living. Zomblies continues this rich tradition with its unique exploration of the evolution of zombie-cinema in a balls-to-the-wall film spectacular!



'NICKEL' TAKES AIM



'WALKER' IN A COSTUME FITTING

In the ten years following a devastating zombie pandemic, Britain has successfully rebuilt herself and scoured her lands of the plague – except for one region. The South West has been annexed, the victim of economic constraint, an enormous wall erected to hold the remaining infected and to prevent the foolish from entering: The perfect environment for studying the zombie phenomenon.

Enter the Rangers, a corporate sponsored militia tasked with procuring samples and studying the infected. After years of successful infiltration, the Rangers have become complacent and a newly formed rookie team 'Ranger Cubs,' sends out a distress call after a mission goes horribly awry.

**The virus has changed.**

A veteran team is assembled to rescue the lost Rangers but are there really any survivors? What has happened to the infected? Is their mission really all that it seems?

# The Cast

**Jack** – David M Reynolds

**Drew** – Danny Drew

**Nickel** – Scott Chester

**Bull** – Simon Ball

**Bear** – Shahriar Abdullah

**Walker** – Fraser Walker

**Horne** – Rachael Horne

**Anne Provice** – Lauren Shein

**General Frank Marshall** – Christopher Dane

**Porosa** – Dan Porosa

**Ruddick** – Mark Ruddick

**Bevan** – Tim Bevan

THE RANGERS HOLD BACK SOME ZOMBIES



# The Story of Realm

Realm was founded on the belief that independent film doesn't have to compromise itself in terms of scale and visual impact. Anything that can be done by the big studios can be done with a fraction of the budget and a fraction of the manpower, thanks to the progression of technology and the willingness to hold down a day-job and then spend the rest of the day doing the real work.

Realm's origins lie in a production entitled To Swim with Angels; a short feature created by David Reynolds and Jonathan DuPont straight out of secondary school, under the banner Three Arrows Productions. Keen to learn more about the craft, David entered a degree in film where he met his future significant other and cinematographer, Eve Hazelton. After becoming disenfranchised with the course, Dave and Eve left in order to learn the craft of filmmaking in a more practical way – by making movies. **Realm Pictures was born.**

ZOMBIE EXTRA MATT MARTIN



THE ULTIMATIUM

The ranks of Realm soon grew, with Shariar Abdullah forsaking a law degree for more creative pursuits and becoming production designer. Corrine Loynes signed up after completing her degree in Geography and took on the role of Public Relations Manager and Zombies Extra Coordinator. Finally photographer Tim Bevan completed the crew by assuming the role of Lighting Director and Colourist.

Realm's projects have ranged from advertising, to music videos and corporate film, always with an eye on one day creating their first feature production. Zombies represents the first step on that path and the company's real passion remains constant: the love of making cinema.

# Zombies Production

The project began life as little more than a short two minute effects test. On a whim two hours were spent one lazy Saturday afternoon filming a bunch of guys, some replica guns and a pack of 'zombies'. Six hours of visual effects later 'Zombies from the Moor' was born.

But when the exercise became an unexpected internet success, viewed by thousands of people all over the world, it was decided to embark on a more ambitious follow up. A simple 5 minute sequel was planned; a fast-paced 'action romp' with far more zombies; more of a plot, and some actual pre-planning.

Two years later, the final 40 minute short is at last done, complete with motorbike chases, helicopters, and far, far more Zombies.



## SUNSET IN ZOMBIES I

In many ways, the film has become an exploration of the evolution of the zombie genre in general, from the slow, shambling undead in Bela Lugosi's *White Zombie* from the 1930s and George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* in the 1970s to the fast, rage-fueled mobs of Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*. The complacency of the modern audience to the threat of the slow moving zombie is mirrored by the characters in *Zombies* as they are forced to face this new, fast moving or modern undead horror.

DAVE SHOOTING FROM THE AIR



STUNT REHEARSALS

The biggest problem to overcome when planning *Zombies* was the issue of how to create a big budget action movie, with zombies, with no budget whatsoever and precious little time to devote to it. The term that was thrown around at the beginning which soon became the ethos of the whole project was 'Balls to the wall' – this had to be all or nothing. There might not be much of a budget to speak of, but it needed to look, feel and sound like a high budget action feature.

With this idea in mind they began by compiling what rebel filmmakers call a 'Rodriguez List' – a list of assets you have access to which could in any way be helpful during the production process. At the same time effects the film needed were examined, stripping them back to basics and trying to work out plausible and creative solutions in order to achieve what would conventionally be impossible without spending thousands.

Principal photography began in June 2008. Over the next two years production involved days in airless nuclear bunkers; winter afternoons in the freezing rain on Dartmoor; scores of extras sleeping on floors, willing to get covered in fake blood, mud, coffee and other miscellaneous dirt; a frenetic work pace, fueled by caffeine, nicotine and work addiction. This was a labour of love, with all members of Realm struggling to hold down day jobs whilst working into the small hours of the morning. Free time became a foreign concept, friends, family and the outside world became a distant dream. As Dave would frequently quote throughout: 'Pain is temporary, Film is forever'.

After two years of literal blood, sweat, tears and debt; costing twice as much and taking twice as long as originally planned; plagued by technical problems and personal crises, *Zombies* is finally ready to hit the big screen.

**Balls have hit walls.**

For more information on the production of *Zombies*, see the production diaries and production blog on [www.zombies.com](http://www.zombies.com).

## Interview with the Director

**- What was your inspiration for making the film?**

**Dave:** *Zombies* was really a trial-by-fire for the team. I am a great believer that you can talk about things, study things and so on and there are benefits - but it can also be a way of insulating yourself from actually having to go out and do it. There is no better way of learning than by throwing yourself in to the deep end, that way you make failure a non-option. So, I guess you would say the inspiration was to create an opportunity that a lot of people could get behind; an idea that would challenge us to breaking point with the craft of what we were doing and one in which the appeal would be obvious.

- What is the ethos of Realm Pictures and what makes you guys different?

**Dave:** The thing that makes us different is dedication, perhaps to a fault. The biggest asset the company has is not in technology or training – it is the team. We have an ever growing family of people that have dedicated their entire lives to this, understanding that no minute is wasted if it's spent working towards your dream.



THE TEAM DURING PRINCIPAL

- How do you guys manage to hold down fulltime jobs at the same time as making the film?

**Dave:** Sacrifice. Filmmaking is far from glamorous; anyone who has ever been on a film set will get that. The long term life implications of doing what we do and having to work a nine to five job stacking shelves only become apparent over time. It means never 'chilling out with your mates' never getting drunk on a Friday night. You have to sacrifice so much: a 'normal' life, sometimes even friendships and relationships. You have to ask yourself if that's what you want your life to be and if you think it's worth it. I do.

- Is it difficult to live and work with your friends?

**Dave:** Only in the same way it's difficult to live with your family. You have to accept people, warts and all. Some of the time it's like living in Friends, other times it's like living in the Big Brother house. The rest of the time you are too wired on coffee and sleep deprived to notice there is anyone else in the room. We consider each other family. It sounds twee but it's the closest analogy I can find for the way we live.

- What was your budget and how did you find the money to make it?

**Dave:** Budget is a difficult thing to define on a project like this with so many favours called in. If you ask me how much cash we had in the production bank account it was around £5,000, self raised. Then again, we also had almost 200 people involved as anything from extras to make-up artists to a helicopter pilot. Not a single person has or will make profit from this – everybody has given 100% of their time for free. Therefore, you might say the film had an incredibly low financial budget and an enormous debt of gratitude.

- How did you manage to achieve your effects on such a small budget?

**Dave:** It starts with something called a Rodriguez-List, after Robert Rodriguez, the king of DIY cinema. You make a list of all the weird and wonderful assets at your disposal - you have now cut your budget in half. For example, our list started with an old Honda Bros motorbike and a farming quad-bike. Thus a great action set-piece in the movie is now an escape on a motorbike from a horde of zombies in an abandoned factory, all filmed from the back of a speeding quad. You have to be resourceful in the extreme and willing to find new solutions to old problems that traditionally are solved by throwing money at them.



STUNTWORK WITH THE ZOMBIES



TESTING THE STUNT HARNESS

- How did you manage to persuade 200 people to work for free?

**Dave:** Everybody loves zombies. That's the hook, that's how you pique people's interest. After that it's different things for different people. Some people want to improve their show-reel or CV; some want to gain experience; some just want to have fun. It goes without saying that you have to lead from the front in this. It is beyond immoral to ask people to work so hard for free just so you can make a quick buck. If you are doing it for the love of it, people get that and can get on board.

**- Was it difficult working with amateur actors?**

It's challenging working with any actor, amateur or otherwise, that's the beauty of being a director. There are obvious benefits to working with pros, but I think we have experienced some real advantages of having a less experienced cast - specifically in the casting of the troops. We wanted a group of people who could roleplay a situation in which they were fighting for their lives against hordes of the undead, armed to the teeth with machine guns. Any man between 14 and 40 who isn't totally devoid of imagination has already played that role a hundred times in his own head!

**- How did your team learn their skills?**

To start with it was all about trial and error. We would watch documentaries, read books, go out and play with the tools at our disposal and see what worked and what didn't. I don't think that ever stops - I hope it doesn't, I guess if you stop challenging yourself and finding new ways to overcome your obstacles then you stagnate.



MAKE UP DEVELOPMENT

**- What were the biggest problems you encountered during the production process?**

We have faced financial crisis, scheduling crisis, medial crisis, emotional crisis and genuine emergency. One of the worst situations was a spontaneous storm on Dartmoor. With the best laid plans in the world the weather up there can be lethal and small mistakes can snowball real quick. Fortunately the emergency services up there are efficient; otherwise things would have been a lot worse. In general though with any problem, you just have to grit your teeth, put your head down and have faith that you will come through the other side stronger and closer to those around you.

**- Aren't zombie films a little overdone these days?**

Totally, that is what the film is about. It's about the way zombie cinema has evolved as audiences have grown complacent to it. There are a lot of zombie movies out there, but the good ones, the great ones, you will notice they almost invariably bring something new to the table - that's cinema evolution taking place right before your eyes.

**- Was it all really worth it?**

If you learn something along the way - it's always worth it.



LEAP OF FAITH!



ENJOYING THE SCENERY BETWEEN TAKES

**- What's next for Realm?**

In the immediate short term we are producing a music video for The Quails new album, they are a fantastically talented bunch of guys who are really going places. After that - two of us are actually going 'full time' and trying to make a living in the harsh world of video and film production. We are currently running a writing competition, and building a production design team to produce a number of shorts in the next couple of years.

## Technical Data

**Running Time:** 50 mins (24p)

**Aspect Ratio:** 2.39:1 Scope

**Audio Format:** 5.1 surround

**Presentation Format:** 2K DCP

**Production Format:** XDCAMEX 1080p25

**Category/ Genre:** Action

**Year of Production:** 2010

**Language:** English

## The Crew

**Directed by** David M Reynolds

**Executive Producers** - Peter and Jacqui Hazelton

**Shot and Cut** - Evie Hazelton

**Light and Colour** - Tim Bevan

**Production Design** - Shahriar Abdullah

**Original Score by** Rob Westwood

**Visual Effects by** Shahriar Abdullah, David M Reynolds

**Unit Production Manager** - Corinne Loynes

**First Assistant Director** - Jonathan Dupont

**Sound Designers** - Luke Hatton, Michael Leaning

**Special Effects Make Up Supervisor** - Elliott Montello

**Prosthetics Make Up Supervisor** - John Parnham

**Hair & Make-up Artist** - Sarah Jane Marks

## Contact Info

<http://www.realm-pictures.com>

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## Acknowledgements:

Although the small crew of Realm is dedicated to its goals, it could never have come this far without the selfless contribution of countless individuals who over the years who have helped shape and form what the company and this production is now. All of this was almost entirely unpaid work, with long, tiring hours and surprisingly little complaining. This recognition is for all those incredible people who not only share Realm Pictures' passion for film and film-making, but their dedication to producing something we can all take pride in and call our own.

To all of you who made this possible – **Thank you.**