

# STABBIN' CABIN: Eugene's own scary home

University graduate Matthew Hanna uses all things Eugene in making his first feature-length film

BY KRISTEN GERHARD  
PULSE REPORTER

A young man lies in bed, though he is far from sleep. His sheets are pulled tight around his body and flush against his chin. His eyes dart warily around the room. He has already checked his closet twice and left the light on to ensure that whatever manner of monster is haunting his mind this evening does not appear without warning. This man is terrified. And he loves it.

"There's just something about being scared," explained the now not-so-young Matthew Hanna, a recent graduate of the University who is currently working on his first feature-length film — a horror flick titled "Stabbin' Cabin" — in Eugene. "It's kind of a rush. I like the feeling, when I'm watching a scary movie, of being comfortable and uncomfortable at the same time."

Since his youth, Hanna has been captivated by the horror genre. He remembers being fascinated by series like "Halloween" and "Jaws." According to Ted Robinson, Hanna's assistant director on "Stabbin' Cabin," the filmmaker owns more than 150 fright-inducing DVDs.

"With this movie though, we're gonna scare people in a different way," Hanna said. "You really won't know who the killer is until the very last second."

According to Hanna, the back story of "Stabbin' Cabin" will focus on a family of four — a father, mother, son and daughter — that lives in a remote cabin on a river. The father is abusive to both the females in the family, but the action really begins when one of the characters reaches his or her breaking point. Beyond this teaser, however, Hanna and his crew are hesitant to reveal any more about the film's plot.

"Let's just say this is a story about retribution," Hanna said. "It's about coming clean with your own identity."

The crew generally agreed the film is unique within the horror genre because of its exceptionally strong female characters. The male characters tend to serve more as comic relief, said Michael Van Pelt, the film's ground crew coordinator.

"It's basically a women's empowerment film," Hanna said. "It's almost like, 'Girl Power!'"

The shooting location — an isolated cabin on the McKenzie River — was cited by the crew as influencing the film's distinctive nature.

"The place we're filming at is amazing," Hanna said. "If you were to come up from Hollywood to film a horror movie, this is the place you'd want to film. It's better than the setting for '(The) Amityville (Horror)' or '(The) Blair Witch (Project).'"

With regards to movies that have influenced their careers, the unrated, low-budget "Evil Dead" series, directed by Sam Raimi, is a common favorite among the crew.

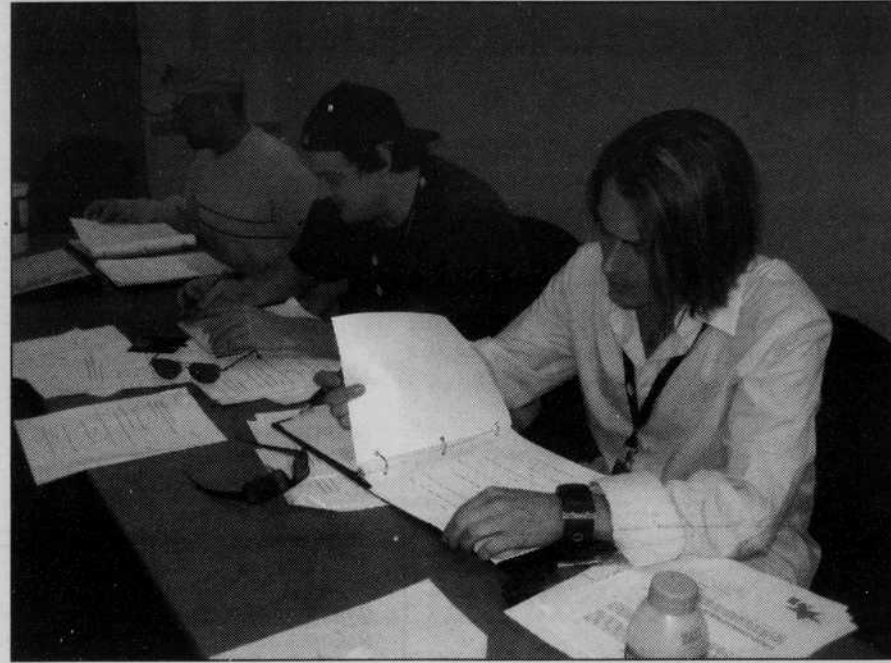
"Just for the record, our hero is Bruce Campbell," Hanna said before he had even begun to explain the plot of his own film. "His Ash character from the 'Evil Dead' series is one of the heaviest characters ever."

Brendan Redenius, the screenwriter of "Stabbin' Cabin," also said director Peter Jackson's "Bad Taste" is one of his personal favorites.

"It's perhaps one of the goriest movies ever," Redenius said. "It's one of those 'so bad, it's good' kind of things."

Despite this infatuation with fear, Hanna's focus was not always on horror, or even live-action movies for that

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(From left) "Stabbin' Cabin" screenwriter Brendan Redenius, assistant director Ted Robinson and director Matthew Hanna review scripts at a casting call for the film, held in the Metolius room of the EMU Friday.

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