

coverstory

BY GEORGE DICKIE

'Tales of the Walking Dead' an anthology of zombie apocalypse survivor stories



Olivia Munn and Terry Crews star in "Tales of the Walking Dead," premiering Sunday on AMC and AMC+.

Beware! "The Walking Dead" are multiplying – again.

The fourth entry in the zombie apocalypse television franchise premieres Sunday, Aug. 14, on AMC and AMC+, with "Tales of the Walking Dead," an anthology series of six hourlong stand-alone episodes revolving around new and established characters within the walker apocalypse. Each installment will have its own distinct point of view and tone as characters are faced with life-threatening situations and choices, thus giving viewers a look at the apocalypse through different sets of eyes.

Among the stars of the series, Samantha Morton stands out as Alpha/Dee, the leader of the survivor group known as the Whisperers who appeared in Seasons 9 and 10 of "The Walking Dead." One episode will be devoted to her.

Others in the cast include Olivia Munn ("The Newsroom"), Terry Crews ("Brooklyn Nine-Nine"), Parker Posey ("Lost in Space"), Poppy Liu ("Dead Ringers"), Anthony Edwards ("WeCrashed"), Jillian Bell ("Rough Night"), Embeth Davidtz ("Ray Donovan") and Danny Ramirez ("Top Gun: Maverick").

The idea for an anthology of one-off stories had been percolating among TWD producers for several years, but it gained traction when executive producer Scott Gimple pitched it as a weekly series with differing storylines and directors.

Beyond that, little else is known about what "Tales" are to come, save for a 15-second teaser that shows Posey's character being bitten by a walker. And these few hints from Gimple.

"This year is more about original stories in different genres," he explains, "with (series showrunner Channing Powell's) terrific Alpha story being our deep dive into TWD's rich past. We have fusions of TWD's survival horror with dark comedy, with a very heartfelt story about isolation, with a tense horror-mystery. Incredible characters in very different situations, giving us different, new looks into our dead world."

And for those for whom four series aren't enough, there will be more. Slated to premiere in 2023, "Isle of the Dead" reunites Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Lauren Cohan as enemies-turned-uneasy allies Negan and Maggie, who travel into a post-apocalyptic, crumbling Manhattan filled with the dead and those who have made the city their own world full of anarchy, danger, terror and beauty.

Then there is the untitled spinoff series starring Norman Reedus as ill-tempered survivor Daryl, also targeted for 2023. Originally, this was to focus on Daryl and his best friend Carol (Melissa McBride) as they embark on a road trip but McBride's subsequent departure canceled those plans and made it a Daryl-only project. Which appears as if it will give TWD fans further insight into the mind and backstory of their favorite loner.

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