RAWHEAD REX

ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK

MUSIC BY COLIN TOWNS

COMPOSED & ORCHESTRATED BY COLIN TOWNS

01 RAWHEAD REX MAIN THEME
02 WELCOME TO IRELAND
03 RAWHEAD APPEARS
04 NICHOLSON'S FARM
05 "JUST YOU WAIT"
06 BOY RUNS FOR HIS LIFE THROUGH THE WOOD
07 MINTY - "GOTTA PEE"
08 THE VICARAGE
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11 HOWARD DISCOVERS A STRANGE GLASS WINDOW IN THE CHURCH
12 DECLAN GOES WILD IN THE CHURCH
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15 THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY

THE MAKING OF RAWHEAD REX

Interview with Director George Pavlou

Having made his feature film debut with Underworld in 1985, director George Pavlou teamed up again with acclaimed horror writer Clive Barker to make Rawhead Rex, about an Irish farmer who unearths an ancient demon that then goes on a murderous rampage.

With everything you had to contend with making Rawhead Rex it turned out well.

Thank you. After 30 years and with the film finally out on Blu-ray and the fans so enthusiastic for it, well, it's just pleased me enormously. For years I've been watching this horrible degraded, nasty 4x3 format version on YouTube and it was just depressing me so I spent ten years trying to acquire the rights in order to get the full wide screen negative sourced copy out there.

Ten years is a long time to chase the rights. What problems did you encounter?

MGM held all the materials in Los Angeles and they wouldn't hand them over until I had proof of ownership, or at least permission from the owners. The producer Kevin Attew had died in Thailand, so that was a dead end. I had to find out who the investors and the actual copyright owners were. As for MGM, I was backwards and forwards with them accepting all the paperwork that I was generating. You'd send an email off and then you'd wait six months before a reply and that was for 10 years. I think around 2002 their rights expired and they didn't know who to go to.

I understand that Clive Barker had seen a short film before you worked together on Underworld and Rawhead Rex.

There was a composer, Anthony, who I met at film school, who said he knew a young writer called Clive and it would be good for the two of us to get together. I think Clive had been doing some fringe theatre productions at that time. So they arranged a dinner, I went round there and we met and chatted. His books hadn't been published yet so he was a complete unknown at that time. I showed him a couple of short films I had made, one of which had won an award, and another called The Antagonist with Ed Bishop, star of UFO. Clive liked the films and we agreed to collaborate, so he wrote Underworld. That was about ten pages and I set about trying to raise money for that, which took me about three years.

David Dukes and Kelly Piper were your leads for Rawhead Rex. Were they cast for the film to be sold to the US market. Were they your choice or did you have others in mind?

It made sense to the financiers to have Americans for the US market and both Clive and myself went along with that. There were other people that I had interviewed and they flew me out to LA to do the auditions. I met with David and one other actor who was in a Brain DePalma movie. So it was filtered down between those two, but I felt David was far more of a sympathetic character and I got on with him as soon as I met him. He was very amiable, calm and friendly and a good fit for the kind of production we were doing.

The film was shot in County Wicklow for financial reasons. Was there anywhere else under consideration?

The UK was considered, but the budget came to over £5m. The crew costs to take them to a remote location in Devon or Cornwall or somewhere were just too prohibitively expensive for us. A lot of the money came from Ireland so it had to be spent there.

A large part of the budget never appeared. Was it ever a consideration to shut down production?

No, we were too far into it. I only discovered that two weeks into filming, when we were doing the night shoots. We had to wrap at midnight because once you went past that you were into treble time with the crew. It was mainly the electricians who weren't playing ball and once you have one unit not playing ball you can't do it. The other unions were OK with it. The frustration of having to wrap at midnight meant we were not able to complete scenes effectively. I mean, some of the scenes we were just shooting the rehearsal because there was no time. The crew would always have the camera standing by to shoot whatever we could get in the last half hour.

So I walked into the makeshift production office and said to the producers, 'I can't continue like this. You're pressurising me to finish on schedule which I can't. That's it. I quit.' And I walked off set and went off down these dark country lanes in the middle of nowhere, with producer Kevin Attew chasing after me saying, 'George I'm sorry it's like this. The finance didn't come through blah, blah, blah. We have to continue we have to finish'.

So what was the story with that finance disappearing?

It didn't disappear, it never appeared. One rumour I heard, which I don't know whether it is true as I never got to the bottom of it, was that Empire were supposed to give a million guaranteed fee for US distribution rights and never paid up.

You considered Peter Mayhew to play Rex but ended up with a German student Heinrich Von Schellendorf. Was there no one in the UK you could have used?

We didn't source him from Germany he was actually in Ireland at the time.

Dave Prowse was also in the running but he was too expensive.

Heinrich was not an actor so how did you audition him?

That was part of the problem. I was very frustrated and very angry with the producers as well for not giving me what I wanted. It's one of those things when events overtake you and you go along with it and bite the bullet. He was a nice enough bloke and I thought he was worth a crack so let's just do it. He was very enthusiastic and I thought that he did OK. Obviously if it had been someone like Dave Prowse who'd worked in costume before it would have made my life easier but it is what it is.

Heinrich says he was quite star-struck when he realised he was sharing a hotel with U2.

Well my wife was second unit co-ordinator which is what she does anyway. She didn't go there to work but took on the role because that particular crew member was missing. She was in the production office in the hotel and her typewriter broke and she was trying to repair it.

This young guy was passing by and saw her struggling and said he'd try and help her fix the typewriter. Anyway, he fiddled about with it and couldn't do it and walked off and then the 1st AD walked over to her and asked, 'Do you know who that was?' She said, 'I've got no idea' and he told her, 'that was Bono from U2'. She said, 'I don't care who he is. He can't fix fucking typewriters!'

Clive Barker has been quite vocal about the film but it seems his main complaint is with the look of Rex. Was there any consideration of doing a Jaws and not revealing the face of Rex until some way into the film?

That would have been great if we could have done that to heighten the suspense and tension, but Clive wrote it in a certain way and the producers wanted a monster pic. You can't do a monster pic without showing the monster.

Rex was integral to the action, there was just no way of keeping him in the shadows, and I don't regret showing Rawhead in all his glory. It's a bit like doing King Kong and keeping King Kong in the shadows!

Prosthetic make up had made massive leaps after 1981's An American Werewolf in London but the effects in Rex were a bit dated.

I can only go by what the special effects team gave me at that time. If it was now it would probably be CGI, right? But we didn't have Rick Baker, we couldn't have afforded him. He would have taken the entire budget. In development we had lots of grand ideas about building a crane to get Rex's point of view as he swoops down but we just couldn't afford to do them. I wish that we had.

But there are some impressive shots in the film.

Well there are other things too, like having the most men on fire. Before that I think there was only six in The Towering Inferno and we had eleven or twelve.

On such a tight schedule that must have been a nightmare to shoot.

Peter Brayham was the stunt co-ordinator and it was his idea to do it like that. I don't know how much he got paid but flying over all those stunt people to do that from the UK... I mean we only had the local stuntmen. He must have got a very good deal to do that. But that scene took about three nights to do. It was quite time consuming.

Did you have any trouble with the censors? I'm thinking of the scene with Rex peeing on the vicar.

I don't recall any trouble with the censors but then it would have been the producers that would have had to have dealt with that. When it came to the desecration of the church where Rex destroys the interior we couldn't use a real church we had to build the interior. On such a low budget the art department did extremely well. The church would never have given us permission for a scene like that.

You've also got the obligatory topless woman in the film. Was that a producer instruction? I can't imagine Clive writing that into the scene.

I think Clive did write that into the scene. Yeah I think so. We wouldn't have arbitrarily put that in unless he wrote it. I followed the script quite faithfully. He had issues with the producers of Underworld because they actually got another writer in to rewrite his script.

The Carrie-type ending you were not happy with.

I didn't shoot that, it was second unit.
I had nothing to do with it .

So you would have ended it with Rex plunging into the pit?

That was not a very satisfactory ending either. That was shot with a skeleton crew because we'd run out of money completely by then. The producers wouldn't give me a penny more, which beggars belief really but in their wisdom they said, 'No, you can't shoot that'. So I just went round begging as many of the crew as I could to finish it.

The last feature film you did was Little Devils back in 1993. What have you been doing since?

I couldn't really afford to speculate any more because I had a young family and had obligations and responsibilities, so I opened up my own production company and produced commercials.

It was fine, I enjoyed it. It put food on the table. I did that up until a few years ago actually but now I'm developing some projects and hopefully the finance will come through and I'll be back on the movie scene.

There's one I have in development with the Northern Irish film board and another with the New Zealand film commission – it's an historical drama but I can't really say too much about that one. There's also an anthology horror series that I'm shooting that's self funded. There's another I'm developing with a writer friend of mine in Los Angeles called Strange X – it's a story about hybrids. It's a pretty cool story. We might reboot Rawhead Rex as well.

I'm also trying to do something called, Twisted Romance. It's the anthology one. Trying to do it as a low budget quite experimental film. We've got nine really good meaty stories and I'm going to film them all in one location in a little studio apartment.

So finally do you have a favourite horror film or favourite horror films?

What intrigued me as a child or a teenager was Quatermass and the Pit. I quite liked The Exorcist. Of course it is probably one of the best horror films ever made. They're horror films that hit such a nerve. It doesn't have to be bloody or gory.

These films affect your mind and stay with you for days or even weeks afterwards as opposed to shock horror, which I'm not a big fan of. Psychological horror is much more intriguing.

Interview conducted by Simon Hooper
Simon Hooper - Deputy Editor | www.anygoodfilms.com

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A NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

The first film I scored was Full Circle which starred Mia Farrow and is still in the BFI top ten for best scores for horror films.

I felt that film was more of a dark, scary mystery. Rawhead Rex on the other hand was clearly a horror film 100%. I visited the film set In Ireland during the filming to take in the atmosphere and meet the actors after which I decided to record the music at CTS in London with a sixty piece orchestra plus electronics.

I have always orchestrated my own work and had a wild time with Rawhead which is what I really love doing. The orchestra contained many wonderful musicians. For example - the classical trumpeter John Wilbraham (Jumbo) was a giant in the classical world and Derek Watkins played the high trumpet (screamer) parts on all the Bond films. A class band!

I hope you enjoy the madness of all this.

Colin Towns
May 2020

C R E D I T S

Composed and Orchestrated by **Colin Towns**
Recorded at CTS London June 1986

Sound design and keyboards by **Colin Towns**
Orchestra conducted by **Allan Wilson**
Leader of the orchestra **Rolf Wilson**
Engineered by **David Hunt**
Original Master recordings converted into digital sound by **FX Copyroom**
Tracks assembled and mastered by **Toby Wood**
Album produced by **Colin Towns**

All titles published by Colin Towns [PRS]

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Sleeve Artwork: **Deathstyle Graphics** (Instagram: **@deathstyle_graphics**)
Design and Layout: **Stuart Ford**

ALPINE PICTURES Presents A GREEN MAN Production RAWHEAD REX
Starring DAVID DUKES and KELLY PIPER Director of Photography JOHN METCALFE Music COLIN TOWNS
Screenplay CLIVE BARKER Executive Producers AL BURGESS PAUL GWYNN Produced by KEVIN ATTEW DON HAWKINS
Directed by GEORGE PAVLOU

R RESTRICTED UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

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DOLBY STEREO IN SELECTED THEATRES

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