



The
GRAVEDIGGER
A FRANKENSTEIN STORY

*Distributed by INDICAN PICTURES**

Starring

PAUL HOMZA, ARLETTE DEL TORO, TYLER CHARLES KANE and GISBERT HEUER

In

THE GRAVEDIGGER

Executive Producers

FRED BECK & LAWRENCE BECK

Composer

GEOFFREY SHORT

Editor

FERNANDO BARRON II

Director of Photography

FERNANDO BARRON II

Producers

MARC LANGLOIS, LAURA FINLEY, ERYNN DALTON

Writer

JOSEPH ZETTELMAIER

Director

ERYNN DALTON

Press Contact: Dan Hill

Running Time: 95 min 323-650-0832

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TAG LINE

A Frankenstein tale

LOG LINE

A Gravedigger's past comes back to haunt him after finding Frankenstein's monster frantic and hiding in a fresh grave. As the monster learns of the Gravedigger's role in his resurrection, Dr. Frankenstein hunts his creation, seeking bloody revenge

SYNOPSIS (LONG)

The Gravedigger is a gothic horror film with a unique take on Mary Shelley's original Frankenstein tale. Set in 1700s Bavaria, a lonely Gravedigger's (**Paul Homza**) life is forever changed when he stumbles upon a horribly scarred, violent man (**Gisbert Heuer**) hiding in the graveyard. After taking him in, the Gravedigger's past comes back to haunt him after learning that the man is actually the creation of a young Victor Frankenstein (**Tyler Charles Kane**) for whom the Gravedigger had been collecting body parts a year earlier. Meanwhile, Dr. Frankenstein is on the hunt for his monster, who had murdered his entire family in a fit of rage and escaped. As Dr. Frankenstein gets closer to finding his prey and exacting revenge, the monster begins to find his humanity with the help of his friend the Gravedigger, along with a beautiful gypsy (**Arlette Del Toro**) who he meets one night while she robs graves. As time runs out, Victor will cross paths with the monster and his new friends, forcing them to make a choice between letting the monster pay the ultimate price for his murderous past, or stopping Dr. Frankenstein before he can get his bloody revenge.

SYNOPSIS (LONG)

KURT VOLKER (**Paul Homza**) is a lonely, disheveled gravedigger who tends to a small Bavarian graveyard in the 1700s. Kurt is hired by a mysterious, wealthy young man, VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN (**Tyler Charles Kane**), to collect body parts from the graveyard for him. He grudgingly obliges and asks to never see Victor again once he has collected his gruesome prizes from him.

One year later, Kurt stumbles upon a hideously-scarred MAN (**Gisbert Heuer**), face covered in bandages, hiding in one of the graves. The man violently emerges from the grave, furious, telling Kurt he wants to die. In an act of mercy, Kurt takes the man in. Little does he know that the man is not really a man at all, but a monstrous, inhuman creation pieced together by Victor Frankenstein, made from the very same body parts gathered by Kurt one year ago.

Kurt and the Man-Monster develop a friendship throughout their days together, and Kurt allows the Monster to stay and dig graves for him. While roaming the graveyard one night, the Monster strikes up another unlikely friendship with a beautiful gypsy, NADYA (**Arlette Del Toro**), who he happens upon while she is stealing bones from a grave. Much to his surprise, Nadya is not afraid of him and for the first time, the Monster begins to understand what it means to be vulnerable and in love.

Through his interactions with Kurt and Nadya, the Monster finds his humanity and capacity to love, until his heart is shattered when Nadya, while reading his palm, realizes he truly is a monster, made of corpses. For the first time, Nadya is terrified of him and runs away, leaving the Monster in a state of rage and heartbreak.

In the meantime, Nadya has a meeting with a young man with vengeance on his mind - Victor Frankenstein- who has hired her to use her psychic abilities to locate someone. Victor explains that the man he is hunting is dangerous, brutally murdered his entire family and must be stopped. As Nadya peers into the candle wax, she realizes that Victor is searching for her disfigured friend, the Monster. After a violent confrontation, Victor offers her a bag of gold to tell him of the monster's whereabouts and Nadya reluctantly obliges.


While Kurt and the Monster are out, Victor lies in wait for Kurt's return at the shack. Kurt returns alone and is confronted by Victor, who reveals what the Monster truly is, and that Kurt had a hand in his creation. In a flashback sequence, Victor shares with Kurt in great detail how the Monster brutally murdered his loved ones. Afterwards, to Victor's shock, Kurt reveals that he and the Monster have become friends and that he will not allow Victor to hurt him. Enraged, Victor pulls a gun on Kurt and forces him to another part of the shack.

Desperate to warn the Monster, Nadya searches for him in the graveyard. She stumbles upon him and reveals that she had met his "father" (Victor) and had disclosed the Monster's location to him. In a fit of rage, the Monster turns on Nadya and tries to kill her until she suddenly kisses him. Stunned, he drops her and walks away, crying. She consoles him, telling him that he has found his soul, but now he must leave in order to escape Victor and he reluctantly agrees. They share a tender moment and say goodbye forever.

The Monster returns to a dark shack. He whispers for Kurt, but is confronted instead by a gun-wielding Victor, who tells him he will never see his friend Kurt again unless he drinks from a vial in Victor's possession. In order to save Kurt, the Monster drinks and realizes the poison isn't meant to kill him, but to paralyze him so he can easily be tortured and shot. The Monster begs Victor to allow him to say goodbye to his friend Kurt. Shocked that the Monster cares for anyone at all, Victor reluctantly obliges and brings Kurt to the room, bound and gagged. Paralyzed, the Monster struggles to say goodbye as Victor raises the gun to shoot him. Suddenly, Victor has a change of heart, deciding to kill Kurt in front of the Monster so the Monster would know how it feels to lose a loved one. Shockingly, the Monster had been faking his paralysis the entire time and attacks Victor in a breathtakingly bloody fight sequence. With the Monster's hands squeezing Victor's bloody head like a melon, Kurt begs the Monster to stop and he reluctantly does, saving Victor's life.

Kurt hides the Monster and hands Victor to the authorities, but the Monster informs Kurt that he must leave for the frozen North, where very few men can live. He knows Victor will never stop hunting him, and therefore must live an isolated life to protect anyone who might care for him. Kurt sadly agrees and the two men share an emotional goodbye.

BIOS

	<p>PAUL HOMZA (Actor- Kurt Volker) Paul Homza plays the title role of the Gravedigger, also referred to as Kurt Volker in the film. His credits include Bloodline, The Glades and Passing Fancy.</p>
	<p>GISBERT HEUER (Actor- Anton the Monster) Gisbert Heuer plays Anton the monster. A veteran of the stage, <i>The Gravedigger</i> is Gisbert's feature film debut.</p>
	<p>ARLETTE DEL TORO (Actor- Nadya) Arlette Del Toro is both a seasoned actor of stage and film. Her film credits include Pompano Boy, The Naked Proof, and Shag Carpet Sunset.</p>
	<p>TYLER CHARLES KANE (Actor- Victor Frankenstein) Tyler Charles Kane is an actor both on stage and on screen, with film credits including A Life Untitled and Boy.</p>
	<p>ERYNN DALTON (Director) Erynn Dalton is a director for both stage and screen, known for founding Infinite Abyss Productions- a theater company that produces live horror productions both on stage and for immersive experiences. <i>The Gravedigger</i> is Ms. Dalton's feature film debut.</p>



JOSEPH ZETTELMAIER

(Writer)

Joseph Zettelmaier is a screenwriter and playwright whose plays have been produced worldwide. He is a four-time nominee for the Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association Award for best new play and is a recipient of the Edgerton Foundation's New American Play Award in both 2009 and 2011.



GEOFFREY SHORT

(Composer)

Geoff Short is a music producer, theatrical director and marketing and entertainment specialist. He holds a Master's degree in Entertainment Business and a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Production, both from Full Sail University.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT- ERYNN DALTON

As a director who began my directing career in theatre, a compelling story is tantamount. If I am to ask patrons to suspend their disbelief in a darkened theater while actors on a stage bring a story to life, often on a single set, the thing that allows this to work is a great story with talented actors. When I set out to make my first feature, I knew a few things for sure- 1) I needed an amazing script, 2) it had to be horror and 3) I wanted it to have a small ensemble cast that could pull off these roles both on stage and screen (because we would be doing both).

So, as horror directors do, I spent a couple of evenings in a secluded cabin in the woods reading scripts that had been submitted to me over the years by playwrights from all over the world. As fate would have it, I came across one by renowned horror playwright Joseph Zettelmaier called *The Gravedigger* (I had this script sitting in my inbox for over two years and hadn't had the chance to read it). Once I finished it, I knew this was the one I wanted to produce- it had everything I wanted- gothic horror with recognizable characters (Victor Frankenstein and his monster), a small ensemble cast, and a terrific story.

Upon securing the rights for both the stage play and film from Joe Zettelmaier, we set out to do something that had never been accomplished before- putting the story up on stage for a 4-week run, then, using the same cast and script, make the feature film immediately after closing the stage production. While I'm not sure I'll ever have the opportunity to produce a feature that way again, I will always treasure the experience, which allowed the actors to form strong bonds with one another and their characters (we had 4 weeks of rehearsal, plus the 4 weeks of live shows) and I could really hone the performances to perfection over those 8 weeks. Additionally, we had the benefit of putting *The Gravedigger* up on stage in front of a live audience for 12 performances, so we learned what was working vs. what wasn't from the audience's perspective. This was incredibly valuable for someone directing her first feature and allowed me to focus more on the technical side of filming since the actors were more than ready to perform their roles for the camera.

We were fortunate to be an official selection (world premiere) at Popcorn Frights Film Festival in Fort Lauderdale, one of the top-tier genre festivals in the world, and it was a breathtaking experience. *The Gravedigger* played to a sold out house (over 250 people in the movie theater), and I'll never forget the moment everyone collectively cheered towards the end of the film (no spoiler here- you'll have to watch it for yourself to know when that happens)!



TECH SPECS:

THE GRAVEDIGGER

Directed by Erynn Dalton

Starring: Paul Homza, Arlette Del Toro, Tyler Charles Kane & Gisbert Heuer

Running Time: 95 minutes **Format:**

Progressive Scan, 24 fps

Sound: Stereo 5.1

Rating: Unrated

Country: USA

Language: English

Genre: Horror

Trailers: Available

Website: www.IndicanPictures.com/

GOING OUT

In 'The Gravedigger,' Fort Lauderdale director unearths Frankenstein's monster at Popcorn Frights Film Festival

By PHILLIP VALYS

SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

AUG 05, 2019 AT 7:00 AM



Erynn Dalton, director of "The Gravedigger," discusses the horror film's unique production and its premiere on August 15 at the Popcorn Frights Film Festival.



Last April, theater curtains fell on the final performance of Erynn Dalton's horror-drenched play "The Gravedigger," a gothic thriller that reanimates the familiar tale of Frankenstein's monster. Once the last patron shuffled out of the black-box theater in Wilton Manors, Dalton's real work began.

After a month of staging "The Gravedigger" the play, it was time to shoot "The Gravedigger" the movie. First, her crew ripped out the theater seats, then the risers, then the stage itself at Wilton Theater Factory. They soundproofed the walls with foam to muffle outside traffic noise. They adorned rustic sets with recycled stage props: rusty hooks and fake knives, candelabras and severed body parts. Meanwhile, every stage actor from "The Gravedigger" lingered behind to repeat their performance on camera.

"We couldn't afford to do big sweeping exteriors, like a big graveyard or a gothic-looking manor," says Dalton, a Fort Lauderdale actor-producer whose company, Infinite Abyss Productions, stages horror plays at the Factory. She's also director of "The Gravedigger" play and film. "So we turned this theater into an empty shell and built all our movie sets inside."

After two months of shooting on a shoestring budget (about \$30,000) inside a cramped theater, "The Gravedigger" will have its world premiere on Thursday, Aug. 15, [at the Popcorn Frights Film Festival in Fort Lauderdale](#). The play and 90-minute film – both from an original script by Michigan-based playwright Joseph Zettelmaier – follows a lone gravedigger in 1700s Bavaria who discovers a hideously scarred man hiding in a fresh grave.

Taking an original horror script from page to stage to screen, of course, has left Dalton little time for sleep. Even now, a week before the premiere, the self-avowed "lifelong horror geek" is still editing the film on her dining-room table. Dalton says making the film satisfies a personal goal – to direct her first feature-length movie – after feeling inspired by the robust lineup of indie horror filmmakers at [last year's](#) Popcorn Frights Film Festival.

"If we had started from scratch with casting and locations, this would have been insanely expensive," Dalton says. "But it was an easy switch. This play had four characters and we already had the actors and sound people and set builders. We already think cinematically with the plays we produce."



"The Gravedigger" director Erynn Dalton says she turned her entire theater in Wilton Manors into an empty shell, removing chairs and risers, and built movie sets in their place. Dalton is the director of "The Gravedigger," a new horror movie premiering Aug. 15 at Popcorn Frights Film Festival. (Carline Jean / South Florida Sun Sentinel)

Adapting his character from stage to movies was hardly a challenge, says Paul Homza, who portrays the gravedigger but also wears a second hat as Infinite Abyss' set decorator.

"The theater is already intimate. It's not like we're in a 1,000-seat venue doing 'Oklahoma!'" he says. "The difference is, on stage, you're acting with your body and voice. On camera, you're acting with your face."

But why Frankenstein's monster, the nameless literary creation that has birthed an endless flood of parodies and adaptations, including [17.7 TV and film homages](#) – even more than Count Dracula?

Answer: Because she could. "I self-produce my stuff, I'm scrappy and I don't take no for an answer," Dalton says with a laugh. "The script was so well-written, we didn't have to change a word for the film adaptation.

Dalton and her crew filmed from midnight to 6 a.m. for a month inside Wilton Theater Factory, where Dalton's Infinite Abyss Productions shares space with companies such as Island City Stage. Set designers transformed the theater's tech booth into the Gravedigger's home, an isolated ramshackle hut in the forest. The main stage became the graveyard set. Actor Gisbert Heuer, who portrays Frankenstein's bandaged monster, dug holes in his Wilton Manors back yard to capture the film's gravedigging scenes.

Dalton is hardly a stranger to low-budget resourcefulness. Raised on a diet of 1980s slasher movies, she [opened Infinite Abyss in 2010 and began staging horror-themed plays there in 2014](#), inspired by New York's immersive theater scene.

During [these horror plays](#), actors often roam the black-box audience, and it's not uncommon for front-row guests to leave the theater splattered in blood. For that reason, Dalton's plays attract younger audiences, usually ages 30 to 50, she says. "If you've come to this theater to be comfortable, you picked the wrong venue," Dalton says.

"I love making horror and I grew up on those movies, which tended to be directed by men," Dalton says. "But there was always an element of female empowerment I liked because women survived until the end of the movie and emerged as bad-asses. The industry is coming around, and studios are realizing that horror makes money whether it comes from a male or female director."

"The Gravedigger" will have its world-premiere screening at 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 15, at Savor Cinema, 503 SE Sixth Ave., in Fort Lauderdale. The Popcorn Frights Film Festival will screen 73 feature-length and short films Aug. 8-16. Admission costs \$12 per screening, \$99 for a festival pass and \$169 for couples. Call 954-525-3456 or go to [PopcornFrights.com](#).



Hell hath no fury: Popcorn Frights Film Festival in Fort Lauderdale scares up horror movies by women

By PHILLIP VALYS

If the lineup at Popcorn Frights Film Festival is any indication, the future of horror movies is female.

Of the 73 shorts and feature-length films screening Aug. 8-16 at Savor Cinema in Fort Lauderdale, 12 are directed by women. That's a rarity in the male-dominated realm of horror, where slasher flicks and gory thrillers usually show hyper-masculine villains chasing frightened women with knives and other sharp tools of doom.

But female-centric horror movies directed by women are rapidly rising in mainstream Hollywood. (For a strong dose of nightmare fuel, watch "The Babadook" and "A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night.") At Popcorn Frights, female directors will debut films heavy on celebrity star power, including Milla Jovovich and Kyra Sedgwick, Emma Roberts and Awkwafina ("Crazy Rich Asians"), Bill Skarsgård ("It") and the late Rutger Hauer ("Blade Runner").

Here are the Popcorn Frights films promising the biggest summer scares in August.

Which films should be on my radar?

The fifth-annual festival boasts many, including 10 world premieres from 16 countries, with over-the-top plots that involve everything from punk feminist vampires to terrifying killer spiders.

“Haunt” (9:15 p.m. Aug. 8): The opening-night premiere at Popcorn Frights, this horror-thriller from Scott Beck and Bryan Woods (the two writers behind 2018 box-office hit “A Quiet Place”) follows friends on Halloween who encounter a haunted house that feeds on their darkest fears.

“Infección” (5:15 p.m. Aug. 11): Social satire meets the undead in this zombie thriller, which imagines a viral epidemic in politically divided Venezuela.

“Paradise Hills” (7:30 p.m. Aug. 14): Emma Roberts, Awkwafina and Milla Jovovich star in director Alice Waddington’s dystopian costume fantasy about women held against their will at a prisonlike finishing school.

“The Gravedigger” (9:30 p.m. Aug. 15): Earlier this spring, Fort Lauderdale director Erynn Dalton staged a full-blown play of the same name at Infinite Abyss Productions, her theater company in Wilton Manors. Over the summer, she turned it into a feature-length movie about a gravedigger who discovers Frankenstein’s monster hiding in a cemetery.

“BIT” (10 p.m. Aug. 16): This festival closer from director Brad Michael Elmore focuses on a transgender teen who joins a mysterious group of punk feminist vampires prowling the streets for predatory men.



BLOODY DISGUSTING

[Exclusive] Teaser Trailer for ‘Gravedigger’ Puts a New Spin on Classic ‘Frankenstein’ Story



Published on July 30, 2019 By
John Squires

A horror classic...reborn.

Set to have its World Premiere at the [Popcorn Frights Film Festival on Thursday, August 15th](#) is Erynn Dalton's *The Gravedigger*, and we've just dug up the teaser for you tonight.

“I’ve always been drawn to gothic horror stories with complex characters that can’t easily be labeled as ‘good’ or ‘evil’, which is why I chose *The Gravedigger* for my first

feature,” Dalton recently explained. “Also, [writer] Joseph Zettelmaier did such a beautiful job adding new dimensions to Mary Shelley’s classic ‘Frankenstein’ characters that I think the story will feel fresh and really resonate with the audience.”

She continued, “It’s beyond special for my directorial debut to be making its world premiere at Popcorn Frights. I’m such a big fan of this festival and am honored that *The Gravedigger* is part of it! I’ve worked with much of this cast and crew from *The Gravedigger* for a long time on other projects here in Fort Lauderdale, and we are such a tight-knit group, so the fact that we all get to be together for the world premiere here in our city will make this experience memorable for all of us.”

Dubbed “a Frankenstein story”, the film takes place in one of Bavaria’s forgotten cemeteries in the 1700s where a lone gravedigger discovers a hideously scarred man hiding in a fresh grave.

“What the gravedigger doesn’t know is that the man is none other than the legendary monster created by mad doctor, Victor Frankenstein. What the scarred man doesn’t know is the gravedigger’s hand in his creation. And what neither men know is that they are hunted by their shared past.”

Paul Homza, Arlette Del Toro, Tyler Charles Kane and Gisbert Heuer star

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